

# School of Communication

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**Associate Dean for Academic Affairs** Rose Ann Robertson

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J.A. Hendrix, J.E. Orwant, R.E. Sutton, L.W. Wolfson,  
J.S. Yamauchi

**University Professor** P. Aufderheide

**Professor** W.J. Campbell, L. DeNardis, L. Kirkman,  
C. Lewis, K. Montgomery, C. Simpson, L. Steinhorn,  
R.A. Streitmatter

**Associate Professor Emeritus/a** B.J. Diggs Brown,  
W. Cochran, J. Doolittle, L.M. Furber, J.C. Seigle,  
W. Swallow, A. Zelle

**Associate Professor** R. Blair, J.S. Douglass, L. Engel,  
L. Grace, J. Hall L. Jayaswal, A. Lih, B. Maher, M. Nisbet,  
J.A. Olmsted, R. Rockwell, R.A. Stack, M. Stogner, J. Watson,  
R.S. Zaharna

**Assistant Professor** C. Borum-Chatoo, C. Brown,  
A. Chuang, D. Fahy, D. Freelon, J. Graf, I.B. Krasnow,  
P. Kumar, C. Lawrence, W. Melillo, S. Menke-Fish, G. Puglisi,  
S. Talan

**Instructor** J. Erba, C. Hoare

**Distinguished Journalist-in-Residence** J. Sullivan,  
N. Clooney

**Distinguished Producer-in-Residence** C. Palmer

**Distinguished Filmmaker-in-Residence** R. Williams

**Executive-in-Residence** D. Lynch

**Artist-in-Residence** W. Gentile, G. Griffin

**Journalist-in-Residence** L. Perri, M. MacDonald

**Professorial Lecturer** D. Martinez

**Director of Writing Programs** C. Lawrence

The School of Communication (SOC) educates students to master a rapidly changing media and communication environment; one that reflects an increasingly complex global, interactive and diverse society. Through teaching, writing,

scholarship, and partnerships, SOC and its faculty empower graduates with the knowledge, skills, and insights to become responsible, ethical professionals in all areas of the communication field and to make a difference in the economy, politics, culture, and society. With a strategic blend of professional expertise and intellectual exploration, and a deep connection with the world's communication center of Washington, DC, the school creates a community of knowledge, practice, and impact that keeps students, alumni, and faculty at the leading edge of a society increasingly defined by media and communication. The school's hands on, practical programs tap the experts at work in Washington, DC, including TV, radio, print, and online journalists; media strategists in the nonprofit, government, and political arenas; and documentary, education, and social advocacy media producers. Internships, work opportunities, and class assignments all contribute to experience-based learning. The school's state-of-the-art technology supports student research, writing, photography, video and film production, digital video editing, motion graphics production, Web authoring, and graphic design. The school's four divisions - Communication Studies, Film and Media Arts, Journalism, and Public Communication - each offer undergraduate and graduate programs. Journalism and public communication have been accredited since 1976 by the Accrediting Council on Education in Journalism and Mass Communication (ACEJMC). The film and media arts program is one of only 16 US schools given membership in CILECT, the International Association of Film and Television Schools.

The **Communication Studies** division offers interdisciplinary degree programs at the bachelor's, master's, and doctoral levels, and are intended for students seeking a broad-based, intellectually challenging course of study that will allow them to expand and deepen their understanding of the political, social, cultural, and historical dimensions of the communications disciplines. The undergraduate program in Communication Studies is a liberal arts-oriented major that draws on the strengths and attributes of the School's journalism, public communication, and film and media arts curricula. The International Media master's program is a partnership between the School of Communication and the School of International Service, providing a combination of communication theory, media production skills, and academic research techniques to equip students for professional leadership positions in international and global communication. The PhD program in Communication is an accelerated, interdisciplinary curriculum designed around the intersections of media, technology, and democracy.

**Film and Media Arts** includes the undergraduate program and graduate film and electronic media programs. Students may study documentary or narrative filmmaking, digital media, or photography. A weekend graduate program offers an MA in Producing for Film and Video. In its commitment to providing the best preparation for students in film and emerging media, the Film and Media Arts Division requires all MA and MFA graduate students to enter the program with one of three Apple MacBook Pro laptops and Final Cut Pro. These systems are recommended for undergraduates as well. For more information visit [www.american.edu/soc/resources/fma](http://www.american.edu/soc/resources/fma).

**Journalism** offers undergraduate and graduate degree programs in print and broadcast journalism. The master's degree in journalism and public affairs includes specializations in broadcast, international, and investigative journalism. A weekend master's program is offered in interactive journalism.

**Public Communication** has undergraduate and graduate programs that teach communication strategies involved in creating messages, engaging audiences, working with media, and advocating for causes in a changing world of new media and cutting edge technology. The programs focus on strategic communication in politics, entertainment, health, science, business, social advocacy, and international relations.

The school also offers an undergraduate interdisciplinary program jointly with the College of Arts and Sciences, the BA in Foreign Language and Communication Media.

An undergraduate minor in communication, designed for users and consumers of mass media rather than practitioners, also is available.

Two interdisciplinary graduate degree programs are offered, the MA in International Media in collaboration with the School of International Service, and the MA in Political Communication with the School of Public Affairs.

For more information go to: [www.american.edu/soc/](http://www.american.edu/soc/).

### Faculty

The SOC full-time faculty blends traditional academic scholarship with hands-on professional experience. Faculty regularly develop ground-breaking courses, publish books and articles, speak at national and international conferences and forums, produce award-winning films, work for social justice, and help shape ethical practices in their individual fields. Full-time faculty have won Emmys and Academy Awards, been nominated for Pulitzer Prizes, and worked on presidential campaigns. SOC also appoints outstanding adjunct faculty, who bring depth and insight into the classroom. The adjunct faculty are working professionals in all three fields of study, including reporters who cover the White House, documentary filmmakers, and political strategists.

### Centers and Institutes

**The Center for Social Media (CSM)** analyzes and promotes cutting-edge strategies for media that matters, and generates codes of best practice that facilitate participatory public media. In addition to film series, workshops, and research, the center has resources on social documentaries and public media practices. Reports, studies, white papers, film profiles, film-

maker interviews, and case studies of successful outreach and audience engagement strategies and new media practices are available at [www.centerforsocialmedia.org/](http://www.centerforsocialmedia.org/)

**The Center for Environmental Filmmaking (CEF)** was founded on the conviction that films and new media are essential educational and policy tools in the struggle to protect the environment. The center's mission is to train students to produce films and new media that focus attention on the need to conserve the environment in a way that is effective as well as ethically sound, educationally powerful, and entertaining. The world faces unprecedented environmental challenges, from climate change to species extinction, but powerful images and films can capture our attention and alert millions to the value of protecting the natural world. With the right combination of creative thinking, enthusiasm, practical knowledge, altruism, and a commitment to the natural world, today's students will become tomorrow's environmental stewards. For more information, go to [www.american.edu/soc/cef](http://www.american.edu/soc/cef).

**The Investigative Reporting Workshop** is the only university research center in the world that specifically examines new models for enabling and disseminating investigative reporting. The Workshop undertakes significant, original, national and international investigative reporting projects for multimedia publication or broadcast in collaboration with others, and serves as a laboratory "incubator" to develop new economic models and techniques for conducting and delivering investigative journalism. For more information, go to <http://investigativereportingworkshop.org/>

**J-Lab: The Institute for Interactive Journalism** sponsors, rewards and trains traditional and emerging journalists to use digital technologies to reinvent journalism and develop new ways for people to participate in public life with projects on journalism innovations, entrepreneurship, citizen media, interactive storytelling, research, publications and e-learning web sites. J-Lab's programs, funded with a grant from the Knight Foundation, include J-Learning and the Knight Citizen News Network, Web-based, comprehensive community journalism instruction programs; the McCormick New Media Women Entrepreneurs Project, which provides seed funding and support for original news ideas proposed by women; and New Voices, which provides start-up funding and instruction for pioneering community news ventures in the United States. J-Lab, [www.j-lab.org/](http://www.j-lab.org/), also administers the Knight-Batten Awards for Innovations in Journalism, one of the profession's most prestigious honors.

**The AU Foreign Correspondence Network (FCN)** provides students tools and guidance needed to work overseas, through coursework and AU alumni living abroad. The FCN is a platform for discussion about the coverage of international issues affecting the United States, and is maintained under the guidance of a former foreign correspondent for UPI and Newsweek. For more information, go to: [www.american.edu/soc/partnerships/foreign-correspondence-network.cfm](http://www.american.edu/soc/partnerships/foreign-correspondence-network.cfm).

**The Backpack Journalism Project** is mapping the landscape of emerging techniques and technologies for visual storytellers and educating the next generation of video journalists in the spirit and tradition of photojournalism and documentary filmmaking. The project promotes the highest standards and showcases best practices in the effort to train, equip, and inspire backpack videomakers. For more information, go to [www.american.edu/soc/backpack/](http://www.american.edu/soc/backpack/).

**The Summer Film and Video Institute** provides hands-on experience for experienced film and digital media professionals as well as beginners through both credit and non-credit courses. The courses, taught by AU faculty and area professionals, and are offered in the evenings and on weekends, beginning in mid-May. The Summer in LA Program includes classes with entertainment industry professionals as well as internships at Hollywood studios and production houses. For more information, go to [www.american.edu/soc/film/film-digital-media-institute.cfm](http://www.american.edu/soc/film/film-digital-media-institute.cfm).

#### **Student Opportunities**

**Study Abroad** AU Abroad offers the opportunity for students to study abroad and gain full American University course credit. All students are encouraged to learn and work in another culture. AU Abroad enclave programs, many of which include internship opportunities, are offered in Beijing, Berlin, Brussels, Havana, London, Madrid, Nairobi, Paris, Prague, Rabat, and Santiago. In addition, through the AU Abroad Partner program students may spend a semester or year at prestigious universities across the globe, including Argentina, Australia, Brazil, Canada, Egypt, Japan, Italy, Korea, Mexico, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nigeria, Sharjah, U.A.E., South Africa, Turkey, and the United Kingdom. International study tours led by faculty members are offered during semester breaks and summer sessions. For more information on AU Abroad programs, call 202-885-1320 or 866-313-0757, e-mail [auabroad@american.edu](mailto:auabroad@american.edu) or go to: [www.auabroad.american.edu/](http://www.auabroad.american.edu/).

**Internships** Students are offered myriad opportunities for internships that offer students professional, real-world experience to enhance their resumes and help prepare them for post-graduation careers.

**Dean's Internships** are designed for a select group of students who are paired with SOC's media partners, that have included The Associated Press, *The Washington Post*, Smithsonian's National Museum of History, Gannett, tbd.com, and *USA Today*.

**Mentoring Program** The Alumni-Student Mentoring program strategically matches prominent alumni with top SOC juniors, seniors, and graduate students through a competitive

application process. Alumni mentors have included prominent filmmakers, journalists, and public communication specialists.

**Visions Festival** This annual awards event features the best student work both at the undergraduate and graduate level.

**American Observer** is an online magazine produced by graduate journalism students that publishes graduate and undergraduate student news stories, photography, columns, and audio and video. Read *American Observer* at: [www.americanobserver.net/](http://www.americanobserver.net/)

#### **Professional Partnerships**

**American Forum** The School of Communication collaborates with WAMU, American University's public radio station, to produce The American Forum, one-hour panels that bring together AU students with politicians, lobbyists, journalists and communication strategists to talk about media and public affairs.

**Washington Post Semester Consortium** Students are chosen in a competitive process each spring to spend a semester learning about the newspaper industry from the inside out as part of the Washington Post Semester Consortium, a weekly one-credit hour class at the paper's downtown office. SOC also works closely with *The Washington Post* to bring editors and reporters to campus as part of a regular speakers' series.

**NBC** The School of Communication has expanded its partnership with NBC and its Washington, DC affiliate, WRC, to involve SOC students in new content collaboration and distribution, brand marketing recommendations, onsite training, and internships. An agreement of cooperation between the School and NBC highlights their shared commitment to serious reporting, to training the next generation of journalists, and to experimenting with new approaches to delivering information and engaging and empowering audiences. Students may apply to take part in the NBC Consortium, a semester-long seminar held at NBC that gives students insights into the operation of a major television network.

**Reel Journalism** SOC produces this event with its media partner the Newseum and features films that explore the field of journalism and the media, demystify the news business, and provide a platform to discuss the important role of journalism in a democratic society.

**Named Fellowships** SOC graduate students may apply for a number of named fellowships.

## Undergraduate Programs

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*Note:* Any student who has earned 60 credit hours and has not achieved a cumulative grade point average of 2.50 will not be allowed to take courses in the school.

A strong liberal arts background is emphasized by the school. To ensure that communication majors attain this background, a significant portion of undergraduate coursework is taken outside the field of communication.

All students intending to major in communication begin to take core courses during their freshman and sophomore years. During the freshman year COMM-100 Understanding Media is required for all students and COMM-200 Writing for Communication is usually required during the sophomore year. Film and media arts majors also take COMM-105 during the freshman year, public communication majors take COMM-209 Communication and Society during the sophomore year, and journalism majors take COMM-320 Reporting following Writing for Mass Communication.

Students continue with one of the programs (print or broadcast journalism, public communication, film and media arts, or communication studies) and take a series of carefully chosen skills courses, and communication media studies courses which examine the history, current issues, and future of communication and the media. The ability to write correctly and clearly is stressed in all programs.

### **Bachelor of Arts (BA) Communication: Communication Studies**

#### **Admission to the Program**

Formal admission to the major requires a cumulative grade point average of 2.50 (on a 4.00 scale). Students should declare their major by the end of the sophomore year and no earlier than the end of the freshman year.

Students who are unable to achieve a cumulative grade point average of 2.50 and declare a major in communication are not allowed to take courses in the school after they have completed 60 hours of undergraduate credit.

#### **University Requirements**

- 120 credit hours with a cumulative GPA of 2.00 or better
- Completion of college writing requirement
- Completion of university mathematics requirement

#### **General Education Requirements**

- A total of ten courses, consisting of two courses from each of the five foundational areas
- At least one course from Area Five: The Natural and Mathematical Sciences must include a laboratory science component
- No more than two courses may be taken in the same discipline

#### **Concentrations**

History of the Media, International Media, Media and Government, or Media and Society

#### **Major Requirements**

- A minimum of 36 and a maximum of 40 credit hours with grades of C or better within the School of Communication including core, media ethics and legal aspects, concentration, and media studies courses.

With approval of the student's advisor, up to 6 credit hours taken abroad may be applied toward the communication major requirements.

- Related course requirements taken outside the School of Communication with grades of C or better.
- A minimum of 80 credit hours outside the field of communication, including 65 credit hours in the liberal arts and sciences, are required for the major.  
Subject to the approval of an advisor, a maximum of 12 credit hours in communication transferred from another university may be substituted for required communication courses. Transfer students majoring in communication studies are required to graduate with a total of 80 credit hours outside the field of communication.

- Students must maintain a minimum 2.50 cumulative GPA

#### **Related Course Requirements**

Students must complete the following with grades of C or better:

- 3 credit hours in United States history (HIST-xxx)
- 3 credit hours in economics (ECON-xxx)
- A minor or second major outside the School of Communication

#### **Communication Course Requirements (36 credit hours)**

##### **Core Courses (15 credit hours)**

- COMM-100 Understanding Media FA4 (3)
- COMM-105 Visual Literacy FA1 (3)
- COMM-200 Writing for Communication (3)
- COMM-209 Communication and Society (3)
- COMM-305 Digital Skills (3)

##### **Media and Legal Ethics Courses (3 credit hours)**

- One of the following:  
COMM-401 Communication Law (3)  
COMM-504 Journalism Ethics (3)  
COMM-533 Ethics in Strategic Communication (3)

##### **History of the Media Concentration (18 credit hours)**

- 18 credit hours from the following:  
COMM-270 How the News Media Shaped History FA2 (3)  
COMM-275 Dissident Media: Voices from the Underground FA4 (3)  
COMM-360 Myths of the Media (3)  
COMM-401 Communication Law (3) if not used to fulfill media and ethics requirement above  
COMM-504 Journalism Ethics (3) if not used to fulfill media and ethics requirement above



COMM-505 History of Broadcast Journalism (3)  
 COMM-511 History of Documentary (3)  
 COMM-514 Censorship and the Media (3)  
 COMM-516 Topics in Film and Media Arts (3) with permission of the student's advisor  
 COMM-517 History of Cross-Cultural Cinema (3)  
 COMM-520 History of Animation (3)  
 COMM-527 History of Photography (3)  
 COMM-533 Ethics in Strategic Communication (3) if not used to fulfill media and ethics requirement above  
 COMM-535 Special Topics in News Media (3) with permission of the student's advisor  
 COMM-586 History of Czech Cinema (3) (Prague)  
 COMM-558 Survey of American Cinema (3)  
 COMM-391 Internship (3)

*or*

COMM-491 Senior Professional Internship (3)  
 An approved elective outside of SOC

**International Media Concentration (18 credit hours)**

- 18 credit hours from the following:  
 COMM-280 Contemporary Media in a Global Society FA3 (3)  
 COMM-360 Myths of the Media (3)  
 COMM-507 News Media in Britain (3) (London)  
 COMM-514 Censorship and Media (3)  
 COMM-516 Topics in Film and Media Arts (3) with permission of the student's advisor  
 COMM-517 History of Cross-Cultural Cinema (3)  
 COMM-535 Special Topics in News Media (3) with permission of the student's advisor  
 COMM-538 Contemporary Media Issues (3)  
 COMM-539 International Public Communication (3)  
 COMM-546 Foreign Policy and the Press (3)  
 COMM-548 Global Journalism: Issues and Trends in the Twenty-First Century (3)  
 COMM-585 Directing (3) (Prague)  
 COMM-589 Sustainability Communication (3)  
 COMM-391 Internship (3)

*or*

COMM-491 Senior Professional Internship (3)  
 An approved elective outside of SOC

**Media and Government Concentration (18 credit hours)**

- 18 credit hours from the following:  
 COMM-275 Dissident Media: Voices from the Underground FA4 (3)  
 COMM-327 The PR Presidency (3)  
 COMM-360 Myths of the Media (3)  
 COMM-365 Digital Media and Culture (3)  
 COMM-401 Communication Law (3) if not used to fulfill media and ethics requirement above

COMM-504 Journalism Ethics (3) if not used to fulfill media and ethics requirement above  
 COMM-509 Politics and the Media (3)  
 COMM-514 Censorship and the Media (3)  
 COMM-515 Children, Youth, and Digital Culture (3)  
 COMM-516 Topics in Film and Media Arts (3) with permission of the student's advisor  
 COMM-531 Political Communication (3)  
 COMM-533 Ethics in Strategic Communication (3) if not used to fulfill media and ethics requirement above  
 COMM-535 Special Topics in News Media (3) with permission of the student's advisor  
 COMM-548 Global Journalism: Issues and Trends in the Twenty-First Century (3)  
 COMM-589 Sustainability Communication (3)  
 COMM-391 Internship (3)

*or*

COMM-491 Senior Professional Internship (3)  
 An approved elective outside of SOC

**Media and Society Concentration (18 credit hours)**

- 18 credit hours from the following:  
 COMM-275 Dissident Media: Voices from the Underground FA4 (3)  
 COMM-280 Contemporary Media in a Global Society FA3 (3)  
 COMM-360 Myths of the Media (3)  
 COMM-365 Digital Media and Culture (3)  
 COMM-401 Communication Law (3) if not used to fulfill media and ethics requirement above  
 COMM-503 Broadcast and Multimedia Journalism Management (3)  
 COMM-504 Journalism Ethics (3) if not used to fulfill media and ethics requirement above  
 COMM-510 Women in Journalism (3)  
 COMM-511 History of Documentary (3)  
 COMM-514 Censorship and the Media (3)  
 COMM-515 Children, Youth, and Digital Culture (3)  
 COMM-516 Topics in Film and Media Arts (3) with permission of the student's advisor  
 COMM-517 History of Cross-Cultural Cinema (3)  
 COMM-533 Ethics in Strategic Communication (3) if not used to fulfill media and ethics requirement above  
 COMM-534 Race and Gender in Communication and Media (3)  
 COMM-538 Contemporary Media Issues (3)  
 COMM-558 Survey of American Cinema (3)  
 COMM-589 Sustainability Communication (3)  
 COMM-391 Internship (3)

*or*

COMM-491 Senior Professional Internship (3)  
 An approved elective outside of SOC

### University Honors Program

To graduate with University Honors, students must be admitted to the University Honors Program, maintain a minimum cumulative GPA of 3.50, and receive grades of B or better in all University Honors coursework. There are three levels of University Honors course requirements: Level I (100-200-level); Level II (300-level and above); and Level III (Honors Capstone Project). The department Honors coordinator advises students in the University Honors Program regarding requirements for graduating with University Honors in the major.

### Combined Bachelor's and Master's Degrees

American University offers students the opportunity to earn both undergraduate and graduate degrees through its combined bachelor's/master's programs. For more information, see page 57 of this catalog.

## Bachelor of Arts (BA) Communication: Film and Media Arts

### Admission to the Program

Formal admission to the major requires a cumulative grade point average of 2.50 (on a 4.00 scale). Students should declare their major by the end of the sophomore year and no earlier than the end of the freshman year.

Students who are unable to achieve a cumulative grade point average of 2.50 and declare a major in communication are not allowed to take courses in the school after they have completed 60 hours of undergraduate credit.

### University Requirements

- 120 credit hours with a cumulative GPA of 2.00 or better
- Completion of college writing requirement
- Completion of university mathematics requirement

### General Education Requirements

- A total of ten courses, consisting of two courses from each of the five foundational areas
- At least one course from Area Five: The Natural and Mathematical Sciences must include a laboratory science component
- No more than two courses may be taken in the same discipline

### Major Requirements

- 39-42 credit hours with grades of C or better within the School of Communication including core, basic, professional, media studies, internship, independent study and independent reading courses.

With approval of the student's advisor, up to 6 credit hours taken abroad may be applied toward the communication major requirements.

- Related course requirements taken outside the School of Communication with grades of C or better  
Subject to the approval of an advisor, a maximum of 12 credit hours in communication transferred from another university may be substituted for required communication courses.
- Students must maintain a minimum 2.50 cumulative GPA

### Related Course Requirement

Students must complete the following with grades of C or better:

- 3 credit hours in United States history (HIST-xxx)
- 3 credit hours in economics (ECON-xxx)  
*or*  
MKTG-250 Fundamentals of Business and Marketing for Communications (3)
- A minor or second major outside the School of Communication

### Course Requirements (39-42 credit hours)

#### Core Courses (9 credit hours)

- COMM-100 Understanding Media FA4 (3)
- COMM-105 Visual Literacy FA1 (3)
- COMM-200 Writing for Communication (3)

#### Basic Courses (9 credit hours)

- COMM-250 Digital Imaging (3)
- COMM-330 Principles of Photography (3)
- COMM-331 Film and Video Production I (3)

#### Professional Courses (15-18 credit hours)

##### *Intermediate (9 credit hours)*

- COMM-382 Writing for Visual Media (3)
- At least 6 credit hours from the following:  
COMM-434 Film and Video Production II (3)  
COMM-435 Introduction to Studio Television (3)  
COMM-454 Motion Graphics and Effects (3)  
COMM-523 Fine Art Photography (3)

##### *Film and Media Studies*

- 6 credit hours from the following:  
COMM-503 Broadcast and Multimedia Journalism Management (3)  
COMM-511 History of Documentary (3)  
COMM-513 Producing Film and Video (3)  
COMM-514 Censorship and Media (3)  
COMM-515 Children, Youth, and Digital Culture (3)  
COMM-516 Topics in Film and Media Arts (3)  
COMM-517 History of Cross-Cultural Cinema (3)  
COMM-520 History of Animation (3)  
COMM-524 Producing Environmental and Wildlife Films (3)  
COMM-527 History of Photography (3)  
COMM-528 Community Documentary: Stories of Transformation (3)  
COMM-552 Social Media Strategies and Tactics (3)  
COMM-554 Motion Graphics and Effects II (3)  
COMM-558 Survey of American Cinema (3)  
COMM-564 Documentary Storytelling for Social Change (3)  
COMM-585 Directing (3) (Prague)  
COMM-586 History of Czech Cinema (3) (Prague)

*Advanced*

- Additional credit hours may be selected from the following to bring the total to 39-42 credit hours:

COMM-365 Digital Media and Culture (3)

COMM-438 Production Practicum (1-3)

COMM-456 Dramatic Production (3)

COMM-464 Directing for Camera (3)

COMM-486 Documentary Production (3)

COMM-391 Senior Internship (3)

*or*

COMM-491 Senior Professional Internship (3)

COMM-526 Photojournalism and Social Documentary (3)

COMM-529 Large Format and Commercial  
Photography (3)

COMM-556 Cross Cultural Film and Video Production (3)

COMM-557 Art of Visual Storytelling: From Concept to  
Storyboards (3)

COMM-560 Backpack Documentary (3)

COMM-561 Advanced Writing for Film (3)

COMM-562 Advanced Writing for Television (3)

COMM-565 Advanced Visual Media Portfolio (3)

COMM-566 Practice of Environmentalism: Policy,  
Science, and Communication (3)

COMM-584 Film Technology and Practice (6) (Prague)

**University Honors Program**

To graduate with University Honors, students must be admitted to the University Honors Program, maintain a minimum cumulative GPA of 3.50, and receive grades of B or better in all University Honors coursework. There are three levels of University Honors course requirements: Level I (100-200-level); Level II (300-level and above); and Level III (Honors Capstone Project). The department Honors coordinator advises students in the University Honors Program regarding requirements for graduating with University Honors in the major.

**Combined Bachelor's and Master's Degrees**

American University offers students the opportunity to earn both undergraduate and graduate degrees through its combined bachelor's/master's programs. For more information, see page 57 of this catalog.

**Bachelor of Arts (BA)  
Communication: Journalism****Admission to the Program**

Formal admission to the major requires a cumulative grade point average of 2.50 (on a 4.00 scale). Students should declare their major by the end of the sophomore year and no earlier than the end of the freshman year.

Students who are unable to achieve a cumulative grade point average of 2.50 and declare a major in communication are not allowed to take courses in the school after they have completed 60 hours of undergraduate credit.

**University Requirements**

- 120 credit hours with a cumulative GPA of 2.00 or better
- Completion of college writing requirement

- Completion of university mathematics requirement

**General Education Requirements**

- A total of ten courses, consisting of two courses from each of the five foundational areas
- At least one course from Area Five: The Natural and Mathematical Sciences must include a laboratory science component
- No more than two courses may be taken in the same discipline

**Tracks**

Broadcast Journalism or Print Journalism

**Major Requirements**

- A minimum of 36 and a maximum of 40 credit hours with grades of C or better within the School of Communication including core, professional, media studies, internship, independent study, and independent reading courses. With approval of the student's advisor, up to 6 credit hours taken abroad may be applied toward the communication major requirements.
- Related course requirements taken outside the School of Communication with grades of C or better

- A minimum of 80 credit hours outside the field of communication, including 65 credit hours in the liberal arts and sciences, are required for the major.

Subject to the approval of an advisor, a maximum of 12 credit hours in communication transferred from another university may be substituted for required communication courses. Transfer students majoring in journalism are required to graduate with a total of 80 credit hours outside the field of communication.

- Students must maintain a minimum 2.50 cumulative GPA

**Related Course Requirements**

Students must complete the following with grades of C or better:

- 3 credit hours in United States history (HIST-xxx)
- 3 credit hours in economics (ECON-xxx)
- A minor or second major outside the School of Communication

**Communication Course Requirements  
(36 credit hours)****Core Courses (9 credit hours)**

- COMM-100 Understanding Media FA4 (3)
- COMM-200 Writing for Communication (3)
- COMM-320 Reporting (3)

**Broadcast Journalism Track (27 credit hours)**

- COMM-305 Digital Skills (3)
- COMM-385 Digital Audio Production (3)
- COMM-401 Communication Law (3)
- COMM-428 Advanced Television and Video  
Production (3)
- COMM-432 Television Field Reporting (3)

## 246 School of Communication

- Four courses from the following:  
COMM-270 How the News Media Shaped History FA2 (3)  
*or*  
COMM-275 Dissident Media: Voices from the Underground FA4 (3)  
*or*  
COMM-280 Contemporary Media in a Global Society FA3 (3)  
COMM-365 Digital Media and Culture (3)  
COMM-391 Internship (3)  
*or*  
COMM-491 Senior Professional Internship (3)  
COMM-396 Selected Topics (3) with permission of the student's advisor  
COMM-433 Broadcast Delivery (3)  
COMM-490 Independent Study Project (3)  
COMM-503 Broadcast and Multimedia Journalism Management (3)  
COMM-504 Journalism Ethics (3)  
COMM-505 History of Broadcast Journalism (3)  
COMM-509 Politics and the Media (3)  
COMM-510 Women in Journalism (3)  
COMM-511 History of Documentary (3)  
*or*  
COMM-515 Children, Youth, and Digital Culture (3)  
COMM-514 Censorship and the Media (3)  
COMM-516 Topics in Film and Media Arts (3) with permission of the student's advisor  
COMM-535 Special Topics in News Media (3) with permission of the student's advisor  
COMM-546 Foreign Policy and the Press (3)  
COMM-560 Backpack Documentary (3)  
COMM-596 Selected Topics (3) with permission of the student's advisor

### **Print Journalism Track (27 credit hours)**

- COMM-305 Digital Skills (3)
- COMM-401 Communication Law (3)
- COMM-425 Advanced Reporting (3)
- Three courses from the following:  
COMM-325 Feature Article Writing (3)  
COMM-330 Principles of Photography (3)  
COMM-391 Internship (3)  
*or*  
COMM-491 Senior Professional Internship (3)  
COMM-502 In-Depth Journalism (3)  
COMM-521 Opinion Writing (3)

- COMM-535 Special Topics in News Media (3) with permission of the student's advisor  
COMM-545 Business and Economic Journalism (3)  
COMM-596 Selected Topics (3) with permission of the student's advisor

- Three courses from the following:  
COMM-270 How the News Media Shaped History FA2 (3)  
*or*  
COMM-275 Dissident Media: Voices from the Underground FA4 (3)  
*or*  
COMM-280 Contemporary Media in a Global Society FA3 (3)  
COMM-365 Digital Media and Culture (3)  
COMM-396 Selected Topics (3) with permission of the student's advisor  
COMM-490 Independent Study Project (3)  
COMM-504 Journalism Ethics (3)  
COMM-505 History of Broadcast Journalism (3)  
COMM-509 Politics and the Media (3)  
COMM-510 Women in Journalism (3)  
COMM-511 History of Documentary (3)  
*or*  
COMM-515 Children, Youth, and Digital Culture (3)  
COMM-514 Censorship and the Media (3)  
COMM-535 Special Topics in News Media (3) with permission of the student's advisor  
COMM-546 Foreign Policy and the Press (3)  
COMM-596 Selected Topics (3) with permission of the student's advisor

### **University Honors Program**

To graduate with University Honors, students must be admitted to the University Honors Program, maintain a minimum cumulative GPA of 3.50, and receive grades of B or better in all University Honors coursework. There are three levels of University Honors course requirements: Level I (100-200-level); Level II (300-level and above); and Level III (Honors Capstone Project). The department Honors coordinator advises students in the University Honors Program regarding requirements for graduating with University Honors in the major.

### **Combined Bachelor's and Master's Degrees**

American University offers students the opportunity to earn both undergraduate and graduate degrees through its combined bachelor's/master's programs. For more information, see page 57 of this catalog.



## **Bachelor of Arts (BA) Communication: Public Communication**

### **Admission to the Program**

Formal admission to the major requires a cumulative grade point average of 2.50 (on a 4.00 scale). Students should declare their major by the end of the sophomore year and no earlier than the end of the freshman year.

Students who are unable to achieve a cumulative grade point average of 2.50 and declare a major in communication are not allowed to take courses in the school after they have completed 60 hours of undergraduate credit.

### **University Requirements**

- 120 credit hours with a cumulative GPA of 2.00 or better
- Completion of college writing requirement
- Completion of university mathematics requirement

### **General Education Requirements**

- A total of ten courses, consisting of two courses from each of the five foundational areas
- At least one course from Area Five: The Natural and Mathematical Sciences must include a laboratory science component
- No more than two courses may be taken in the same discipline

### **Major Requirements**

- 39 credit hours with grades of C or better within the School of Communication including core, professional, internship, independent study, and independent reading courses  
With approval of the student's advisor, up to 6 credit hours taken abroad may be applied toward the communication major requirements.
- Related course requirements taken outside the School of Communication with grades of C or better
- A minimum of 81 credit hours outside the field of communication, including at least 65 credit hours in the liberal arts and sciences, are required for the major  
Subject to the approval of an advisor, a maximum of 12 credit hours in communication transferred from another university may be substituted for required communication courses. Transfer students majoring in public communication are required to graduate with a total of 84 credit hours outside the field of communication.
- Students must maintain a minimum 2.50 cumulative GPA

### **Related Course Requirement**

Students must complete the following with grades of C or better:

- 3 credit hours in United States history (HIST-xxx)
- 3 credit hours in economics (ECON-xxx)  
*or*  
MKTG-250 Fundamentals of Business and Marketing for Communications (3)
- A minor or second major outside the School of Communication

### **Communication Course Requirements (39 credit hours)**

#### **Core Courses (9 credit hours)**

- COMM-100 Understanding Media FA4 (3)
- COMM-200 Writing for Communication (3)
- COMM-209 Communication and Society (3)

#### **Professional Courses (30 credit hours)**

- COMM-301 Public Relations (3) (with grade of B or better)
- COMM-337 Public Relations Writing (3)
- COMM-346 Public Relations Case Studies (3)
- COMM-380 Public Communication Research (3)
- COMM-437 Public Relations Portfolio (3)
- 15 credit hours from the following, with no more than 9 credit hours from any one cluster:

#### *Skills*

- COMM-105 Visual Literacy FA1 (3)
- COMM-310 Public Speaking (3)
- COMM-330 Principles of Photography (3)
- COMM-521 Opinion Writing (3)
- COMM-535 Special Topics in News Media: Magazine Writing (3)
- COMM-552 Social Media Strategies and Tactics (3)

#### *Human Communication*

- COMM-300 Interpersonal Communication (3)
- COMM-470 Organizational Communication (3)

#### *Media Studies*

- COMM-327 The PR Presidency (3)
- COMM-365 Digital Media and Culture (3)
- COMM-401 Communication Law (3)
- COMM-509 Politics and the Media (3)
- COMM-514 Censorship and Media (3)
- COMM-515 Children, Youth, and Digital Culture (3)
- COMM-533 Ethics in Strategic Communication (3)
- COMM-534 Race and Gender in Communication and Media (3)
- COMM-589 Sustainability Communication (3)

#### *The Practice of Public Relations*

- COMM-531 Political Communication (3)
- COMM-536 Entertainment Communication (3)
- COMM-537 Sports Communication (3)
- COMM-539 International Public Communication (3)
- COMM-580 Strategic Health Communication (3)
- COMM-589 Sustainability Communication (3)

#### *Experiential Education*

- A maximum of 3 credit hours from:
  - COMM-391 Internship (3)
  - COMM-491 Senior Professional Internship (3)

### **University Honors Program**

To graduate with University Honors, students must be admitted to the University Honors Program, maintain a minimum cumulative GPA of 3.50, and receive grades of B or better in all University Honors coursework. There are three levels of Uni-

versity Honors course requirements: Level I (100-200-level); Level II (300-level and above); and Level III (Honors Capstone Project). The department Honors coordinator advises students in the University Honors Program regarding requirements for graduating with University Honors in the major.

#### **Combined Bachelor's and Master's Degrees**

American University offers students the opportunity to earn both undergraduate and graduate degrees through its combined bachelor's/master's programs. For more information, see page 57 of this catalog.

### **Bachelor of Arts (BA) Foreign Language and Communication Media**

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#### **Admission to the Program**

Students are admitted either to the School of Communication or to the Department of World Languages and Cultures in the College of Arts and Sciences. Formal admission to the Foreign Language and Communication Media (FLCM) major requires a cumulative grade point average (GPA) of 2.50. Students who are unable to achieve a 2.50 GPA and declare a major in FLCM are not allowed to take courses in the School of Communication after they have completed 60 credit hours of undergraduate credit.

#### **Program Tracks**

French, German, Russian, or Spanish combined with Broadcast Journalism, Print Journalism, Public Communication, or Film and Media Arts

#### **University Requirements**

- 120 credit hours with a cumulative GPA of 2.00 or better
- Completion of college writing requirement
- Completion of university mathematics requirement

#### **General Education Requirements**

- A total of ten courses, consisting of two courses from each of the five foundational areas
- At least one course from Area Five: The Natural and Mathematical Sciences must include a laboratory science component
- No more than two courses may be taken in the same discipline

#### **Major Requirements**

- 57 credit hours with grades of C or better  
With approval of the student's advisor, up to 6 credit hours taken abroad may be applied toward the communication requirements.
- Prerequisite competency in the major language at the intermediate level
- Students must maintain a minimum 2.50 cumulative GPA

#### **Course Requirements**

##### **Foundation (6 credit hours)**

- COMM-100 Understanding Media FA4 (3)
- COMM-200 Writing for Communication (3)

##### **Foreign Language (18 credit hours)**

- 18 credit hours of courses in the major language (French, German, Russian, or Spanish) at the 300 level or above taken in the Department of World Languages and Cultures

##### **Contemporary Culture (6 credit hours)**

- Two courses related to any contemporary culture as approved by advisor

##### **Linguistics (3 credit hours)**

- One of the following:  
ANTH-225 Language and Human Experience FA1 (3)  
ANTH-254 Language and Culture (3)  
TESL-5xx linguistics course as approved by advisor

##### **Communication (24 credit hours)**

- Three media studies courses from the School of Communication, with at least one at the 300-level or above; and five professional courses in one of the four communication program tracks: broadcast journalism, print journalism, public communication, or visual media:

##### *Broadcast Journalism*

- Three media studies courses with at least one at the 300-level or above, as approved by advisor
- COMM-305 Digital Skills (3)
- COMM-320 Reporting (3)
- COMM-385 Digital Audio Production (3)
- COMM-428 Advanced Television and Video Production (3)
- COMM-432 Television Field Reporting (3)

##### *Print Journalism*

- Three media studies courses with at least one at the 300-level or above, as approved by advisor
- COMM-305 Digital Skills (3)
- COMM-320 Reporting (3)
- COMM-425 Advanced Reporting (3)
- Two from the following:  
COMM-325 Feature Article Writing (3)  
COMM-326 Sports Journalism (3)  
COMM-330 Principles of Photography (3)  
COMM-502 In-Depth Journalism (3)  
COMM-521 Opinion Writing (3)  
COMM-545 Business and Economic Journalism (3)

*Public Communication*

- COMM-209 Communication and Society (3)
- Two additional media studies courses with at least one at the 300-level or above, as approved by advisor
- COMM-301 Public Relations (3) (with grade of B or better)
- COMM-337 Public Relations Writing (3)
- COMM-346 Public Relations Case Studies (3)
- COMM-380 Public Communication Research (3)
- COMM-437 Public Relations Media (3)

*Film and Media Arts*

- COMM-105 Visual Literacy FA1 (3)
- Two additional media studies courses with at least one at the 300-level or above, as approved by advisor
- COMM-250 Digital Imaging (3)
- COMM-330 Principles of Photography (3)
- COMM-331 Film and Video Production I (3)
- COMM-382 Writing for Visual Media (3)
- One additional course approved by advisor

**University Honors Program**

To graduate with University Honors, students must be admitted to the University Honors Program, maintain a minimum cumulative GPA of 3.50, and receive grades of B or better in all University Honors coursework. There are three levels of University Honors course requirements: Level I (100-200-level); Level II (300-level and above); and Level III (Honors Capstone Project). The department Honors coordinator advises students in the University Honors Program regarding requirements for graduating with University Honors in the major.

**Combined Bachelor's and Master's Degrees**

American University offers students the opportunity to earn both undergraduate and graduate degrees through its combined bachelor's/master's programs. For more information, see page 57 of this catalog.

**Minor in Communication**

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- 18 credit hours with grades of C or better with at least 12 credit hours unique to the minor

**Course Requirements**

- COMM-100 Understanding Media FA4 (3)
- COMM-200 Writing for Communication (3)
- Two courses from the following:
  - COMM-301 Public Relations (3)
  - COMM-310 Public Speaking (3)
  - COMM-320 Reporting (3)
  - COMM-322 Editorial Policies and Methods (3)
  - COMM-325 Feature Article Writing (3)
  - COMM-330 Principles of Photography (3)
  - COMM-331 Film and Video Production I (3)
  - COMM-435 Introduction to Studio Television (3)
  - COMM-470 Organizational Communication (3)
  - COMM-521 Opinion Writing (3)
- Two courses from the following:
  - COMM-401 Communication Law (3)
  - COMM-503 Broadcast and Multimedia Journalism Management (3)
  - COMM-509 Politics and the Media (3)
  - COMM-511 History of Documentary (3)
  - COMM-513 Producing Film and Video (3)
  - COMM-514 Censorship and Media (3)
  - COMM-515 Children, Youth, and Digital Culture (3)
  - COMM-517 History of Cross-Cultural Cinema (3)
  - COMM-527 History of Photography (3)
  - COMM-545 Business and Economic Journalism (3)
  - COMM-558 Survey of American Cinema (3)
  - COMM-596 Selected Topics (3) with permission of the student's advisor

## Graduate Programs

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Designed for students with diverse professional and educational backgrounds, the graduate programs fully utilize the resources of Washington, DC for both field work and classroom study. The many professional news organizations, public interest organizations, trade associations, government agencies, public relations firms, and media production organizations in the Washington area provide excellent opportunities for internships. Special seminars and events, including the school's American Forum and Media Center presentations, enable students to meet major public figures and film and media artists.

### Master of Arts (MA) Communication: Journalism and Public Affairs

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#### Admission to the Program

Applicants must meet the minimum university requirements for graduate study. Admission to the program requires a bachelor's degree from an accredited college or university with at least a 3.00 (on a 4.00 scale) grade point average in last 60 hours of undergraduate coursework. International students whose first language is not English should take the TOEFL examination to demonstrate proficiency in written as well as spoken English. All applicants must earn a satisfactory score on the Graduate Record Examination (GRE) General (verbal, quantitative, and analytical).

Previous professional or campus experience in communication is useful but not required. However, all applicants are required to show evidence of professional commitment and career direction related to the specialization and track they choose. Official transcripts, two letters of recommendation, and a 1,000-word essay on the applicant's commitment to pursuing graduate study in the program are submitted with the application. If available, samples of published professional or college news writing, scripts, or tapes should also be submitted.

A limited number of graduate fellowships and assistantships are awarded on the basis of merit as well as school and program needs.

Admission to the program is for the fall semester. Students are generally expected to complete the program in ten months.

Qualified undergraduate students may apply to a combined bachelor's/MA program and use up to 6 credit hours of 500-level courses to satisfy the requirements of both degrees.

#### Degree Requirements

- 33 credit hours of approved graduate work, as advised by the faculty, including 12 credit hours of core courses, 9 credit hours in a specialization, 9 credit hours of electives, and a 3 credit hour capstone experience (COMM-720 or COMM-725 with a grade of B or better)

Most students are required to take COMM-624 Boot Camp for Journalists and receive a grade of B or better.

Students who have earned a B or better in a news-media law course within five years of enrollment may petition to be exempted from COMM-601 Communication Law. International students are normally exempted from this course.

- Continuous full-time enrollment

- A grade point average of 3.00 maintained during all work toward the degree

#### Specializations

Investigative Journalism, International Journalism, or Broadcast Journalism

#### Course Requirements

##### Core Courses (12 credit hours)

- COMM-601 Communication Law (3)
- COMM-621 Online News Production I (3)
- COMM-624 Boot Camp for Journalists (3) (with grade of B or better)
- COMM-724 Reporting of Public Affairs (3)

##### Specialization (9 credit hours)

- 9 credit hours from one of the following specializations:

##### *Investigative Journalism*

- COMM-500 Investigative Journalism Practicum (3)
- COMM-501 Data-Driven Journalism (3)
- COMM-502 In-Depth Journalism (3)
- COMM-607 International Investigative Reporting (3)

##### *International Journalism*

- COMM-546 Foreign Policy and the Press (3)
- COMM-548 Global Journalism: Issues and Trends in the Twenty-First Century (3)
- COMM-607 International Investigative Reporting (3)
- COMM-648 Topics in International Media (3)

##### *Broadcast Journalism*

- COMM-632 Backpack Video Journalism (3)
- COMM-721 Digital Audio Production (3)
- COMM-722 Advanced Television and Video Production (3)

##### Electives (9 credit hours)

- 9 credit hours from the following:
  - COMM-503 Broadcast and Multimedia Journalism Management (3)
  - COMM-509 Politics and the Media (3)
  - COMM-514 Censorship and Media (3)
  - COMM-521 Opinion Writing (3)
  - COMM-522 Writing and Editing for Convergent Media (3)
  - COMM-535 Special Topics in News Media:
    - Fundamentals of News Design (3)
    - Health, Science, and Environmental Reporting (3)
  - COMM-544 Foreign Correspondence (3)
  - COMM-588 Race, Ethnic, and Community Reporting (3)
  - COMM-637 Multimedia Storytelling (3)
  - COMM-691 Graduate Internship (3)

##### Capstone Experience (3 credit hours)

- One of the following with grade of B or better:
  - COMM-720 Capstone Seminar in Journalism (3)
  - COMM-725 In-depth Broadcast Production Capstone (3)



## Master of Arts (MA) Communication: Producing for Film and Video

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### Admission to the Program

This weekend graduate program is designed for working adults who want to pursue careers in producing for film, video, television, and multimedia. Student cohort groups follow a planned curriculum, taking one course every seven weeks (two courses each semester) on Saturdays for a total of 10 courses. The 30-credit hour program is completed in 21 months. Previous academic or professional experience in film or video is not required, but all applicants must demonstrate a serious commitment to a career in this field.

Applicants must meet the minimum university requirements for graduate study. Admission to the program requires a bachelor's degree from an accredited college or university with at least a 3.00 (on a 4.00 scale) grade point average in last 60 hours of undergraduate coursework. International students whose first language is not English should take the TOEFL examination to demonstrate proficiency in written as well as spoken English.

Official transcripts, two letters of recommendation, and a 1,000-word essay on the applicant's commitment to pursuing graduate study in the program are submitted with the application. The application deadline is April 1.

### Degree Requirements

- 30 credit hours of approved graduate work
- Continuous enrollment
- A grade point average of 3.00 maintained during all work toward the degree

### Course Requirements

- COMM-570 Film and Digital Media Institute (3) (topics)
- COMM-574 The Business of Television (3)
- COMM-601 Communication Law (3)
- COMM-659 International Film and TV Markets (3)
- COMM-660 Developing Fiction Productions (3)
- COMM-661 Developing Nonfiction Productions (3)
- COMM-662 Production Planning and Management (3)
- COMM-671 The Media Enterprise I: Establishing the Enterprise (3) (with grade of B or better)
- COMM-682 Writing for Visual Media (3)
- COMM-702 Master's Portfolio Capstone (3) (with grade of B or better)

## Master of Arts (MA) Film and Video

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### Admission to the Program

Applicants must meet the minimum university requirements for graduate study. Admission to the program requires a bachelor's degree from an accredited college or university with at least a 3.00 (on a 4.00 scale) grade point average in last 60 hours of undergraduate coursework. International students whose first language is not English should take the TOEFL examination to demonstrate proficiency in written as well as spoken English.

Applicants must earn a satisfactory score on the Graduate Record Examination (GRE) General (verbal, quantitative, and analytical). Previous exposure to film study, film and video production, or script writing is not required, although all applicants are required to show evidence of professional commitment and career direction related to their program of study.

Official transcripts, two letters of recommendation, and a 1,000-word essay on the applicant's commitment to pursuing graduate study in the program are submitted with the application.

Admission is not limited to full-time students, however students must be available to take most of their coursework during the day. Students will normally be expected to complete the 36-credit hour program within 24 months.

### Degree Requirements

- 36 credit hours of approved graduate work
- Capstone experience: COMM-702 Master's Portfolio Capstone with grade of B or better
- A grade point average of 3.00 maintained during all work toward the degree

### Course Requirements

- COMM-513 Producing Film and Video (3)
- COMM-630 Principles of Photography (3)
- COMM-631 Film and Video Production I (4)
- COMM-634 Film and Video Production II (4)
- COMM-682 Writing for Visual Media (3)
- COMM-701 Graduate Seminar in Film Theory and Practice (3) with grade of B or better (taken in the first year)
- COMM-702 Master's Portfolio Capstone (3) with grade of B or better
- 13 credit hours in courses selected from the following areas: Film production or video production; film theory, history, and criticism; multimedia; and script writing. Students may emphasize one of these areas in the design of their program, but the program must include courses from all of these areas. Courses in related areas such as performing arts and photography may also be included.

## **Master of Arts (MA) Interactive Journalism**

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This weekend MA program is designed for professionals whose schedules make Saturday classes an excellent alternative to full-time study. The focus on converged media and online journalism allows the program, much like the industry, to adapt regularly and stay on the cutting edge. Students produce journalism for use in multiple digital platforms.

### **Admission to the Program**

In addition to meeting the minimum university requirements for graduate study, applicants must have at least three years of relevant work experience. Also, official transcripts, two letters of recommendation, and a 1,000-word essay on the applicant's commitment to pursuing graduate study in the program are submitted with the application. If available, samples of published professional or college news writing, scripts, or tapes should also be submitted.

A limited number of graduate fellowships and assistantships are awarded on the basis of merit as well as school and program need.

### **Degree Requirements**

- 30 credit hours of approved graduate work
- Capstone experience: COMM-720 Capstone Seminar in Journalism (3)

### **Course Requirements**

#### **Core Courses**

- COMM-050 Boot Camp for Journalists (0)
- COMM-522 Writing and Editing for Convergent Media (3)
- COMM-601 Communication Law (3)
- COMM-652 Web Studio (3)
- COMM-720 Capstone Seminar in Journalism (3)

#### **Other Required Courses**

- COMM-501 Data-Driven Journalism (3)
- COMM-535 Special Topics in News Media: Visual Storytelling (3)
- COMM-535 Special Topics in News Media: Visualization and Presentation of Interactive Journalism (3)
- COMM-535 Special Topics in News Media (3) (approved topic)
- COMM-625 Seminar in Media Entrepreneurship (3)
- COMM-632 Backpack Video Journalism (3)

## **Master of Arts (MA) International Media**

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The Master of Arts in International Media offers students a unique opportunity to learn international communication theory and research while at the same time developing professional production skills. This interdisciplinary MA program allows students to take concurrent courses in the School of Communication (SOC) and School of International Service (SIS) that emphasize strategic communication, research, inter-

national communication, and global media. In addition, students take hands-on courses designed to hone writing skills over a broad range of media, and production classes that introduce them to filmmaking, newswriting, digital imaging, web design, photography, and public communication writing. The media studies component of the program gives students a strong background in research skills, broad knowledge of global economic and political issues, and a deep understanding of how the media works, especially in an international environment. The production portion of the program provides students with the knowledge, skills, and ethical groundings to be professionally competent and literate managers/producers/commissioners.

### **Admission to the Program**

Applicants must hold an accredited bachelor's degree with a minimum cumulative grade point average of 3.30 or higher on a 4.00 scale. Some background knowledge of communication studies, or media/journalism professional experience, or international studies and international work experience is recommended.

All applicants are required to submit results of the Graduate Record Examination (GRE). In addition, international applicants whose first language is not English are required to submit results of the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL). A strong TOEFL score is necessary to ensure that students can fully benefit from the media production courses and analytical courses. All applicants must also submit two letters of reference evaluating undergraduate academic performance and suitability for graduate study in international affairs and communication.

Students apply to either SOC or SIS. Applications will be reviewed jointly by SOC and SIS, with both schools agreeing on student admission.

### **Degree Requirements**

- 45 credit hours of approved graduate work with a cumulative grade point average of 3.00, including 12 credit hours of core courses, 6 credit hours of professional courses, 6 credit hours of methods courses, and 6 credit hours of research/capstone courses. Students also take 15 credit hours of electives. Students choose a concentration in either SIS or SOC and complete a total of 24 credits hours in that concentration, including their research/capstone requirement. Students must take 24 credits in their home school (SIS or SOC) to fulfill degree requirements. Students may not take more than 24 credits in their home school.

Requests for the transfer of a maximum of six graduate credits will be considered only on an exceptional basis.

- SOC students: a paper discussing the capstone project's relationship to the field of International Media.
- Capstone experience: demonstration of research and writing skills through completion of the research/capstone requirement courses with grades of B or better.
- Proficiency in a modern foreign language: Research competence in English and another language relevant to the student's career objectives must be certified.

**Course Requirements**

**Core (12 credit hours)**

- COMM-648 Topics in International Media (3)
- SIS-640 International Communication (3)
- Two courses from the following:  
 COMM-640 Principles of Strategic Communication (3)  
 SIS-644 Communication and Social Economic Development (3)  
 SIS-645 International Communication and Cultural Policy (3)

**Professional (6 credit hours)**

- COMM-688 Media Writing (3)
- COMM-638 Production Practicum (1-3)

**Methods (6 credit hours)**

- SIS-600 Statistics, Research Design, and Research Methods for International Affairs (3)
- COMM-738 Research Methods in Communication (3)

**Research/Capstone Requirement (3–6 credit hours)**

- SIS-797 Master's Thesis Supervision (3-6) (may include 3 elective credit hours)  
 or SIS-793 Practicum in International Affairs (3)  
 or  
 COMM-795 Capstone Seminar in International Media (3)  
 and COMM-691 Internship (3)

**Electives and Concentration**

- SOC students: 15 credit hours in elective courses including 6 credit hours from the IC or SOC concentrations  
 or  
 SIS students: 18 credit hours in elective courses including 6 credit hours from the SIS or SOC concentrations

**International Communication (IC) (6 credit hours)**

- SIS-628 Advanced Topics in International Communication (1-3) (approved topics)
- SIS-633 Selected Topics in International Communication (1-3) (up to 3 credit hours of approved topics)
- Approved electives in other SIS fields related to International Communication

**School of Communication (SOC) (6 credit hours)**

*Theoretical*

- COMM-504 Journalism Ethics
- COMM-509 Politics and the Media
- COMM-511 History of Documentary

- COMM-512 Social Documentary
- COMM-514 Censorship and Media
- COMM-516 Topics in Film and Media Arts
- COMM-517 History of Cross-Cultural Cinema
- COMM-527 History of Photography
- COMM-531 Political Communication
- COMM-533 Ethics in Strategic Communication
- COMM-535 Special Topics in News Media
- COMM-539 International Public Communication
- COMM-541 Crisis Communication
- COMM-542 Media Relations
- COMM-546 Foreign Policy and the Press
- COMM-548 Global Journalism
- COMM-601 Communication Law
- COMM-711 Teaching Seminar in Communication
- COMM-735 Communication Theory

*Professional*

- COMM-502 In-Depth Journalism
- COMM-521 Opinion Writing
- COMM-522 Writing and Editing for Convergent Media
- COMM-524 Producing Environmental and Wildlife Films
- COMM-540 Social Marketing
- COMM-543 Speechwriting
- COMM-544 Foreign Correspondence
- COMM-551 Grassroots Digital Advocacy
- COMM-552 Social Media Strategies and Tactics
- COMM-567 Communication and Social Change
- COMM-573 Visual Strategies in Public Relations
- COMM-588 Race, Ethnic, and Community Reporting
- COMM-630 Principles of Photography
- COMM-631 Film and Video Production I
- COMM-632 Backpack Video Journalism
- COMM-635 Introduction to Studio Television
- COMM-644 Writing for Strategic Communication
- COMM-650 Digital Imaging and Design
- COMM-652 Web Studio

- 9 additional credit hours in approved elective courses  
 Students must take 24 credits in their home school (SIS or SOC) to fulfill degree requirements. Students may not take beyond 24 credits in their home school.

## **Master of Arts (MA) Media Entrepreneurship**

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The MA in Media Entrepreneurship is a ten course sequence to build on the growing need for, and interest in, media entrepreneurs. It crosses division boundaries within the School of Communication and also reaches across academic boundaries to work in conjunction with the established entrepreneurship curriculum of the Kogod School of Business. The program is designed for mid-career managers in technology, media, and public communication; media strategists; journalists; association executives; information-rich NGOs; content publishers and general managers; and media investors and creators of products not yet conceived.

### **Admission to the Program**

Applicants must meet the minimum university requirements for graduate study. Admission to the program requires a bachelor's degree from an accredited college or university with at least a 3.00 (on a 4.00 scale) grade point average in last 60 hours of undergraduate coursework. The ability to speak and write English well is essential. International students whose first language is not English should take the TOEFL examination to demonstrate proficiency in written as well as spoken English. All applicants must earn a satisfactory score on the Graduate Record Examination (GRE) General (verbal, quantitative, and analytical). Official transcripts, two letters of recommendation, and a 1,000-word essay on the applicant's commitment to pursuing graduate study in the program are submitted with the application. Interviews are not required, but may be recommended by the school.

### **Degree Requirements**

- 30 credit hours of approved graduate work
- Capstone experience: COMM-627 meets the university requirement
- A grade point average of 3.00 maintained during all work toward the degree

### **Course Requirements**

#### **Core**

- COMM-601 Communication Law (3)
- COMM-625 Seminar in Media Entrepreneurship (3)
- COMM-626 Media Technology Management (3)
- FIN-630 Financial Analysis of the Firm: Concepts and Applications (3)
- MGMT-633 Leading People and Organizations (3)
- MGMT-660 Entrepreneurship and Innovation (3)
- MKTG-612 Marketing Management (3)

#### **Capstone**

- COMM-627 Capstone: Media Entrepreneurship (3)

#### **Electives**

- 6 credit hours in additional graduate-level COMM courses as approved by advisor

## **Master of Arts (MA) Political Communication**

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The MA in Political Communication offers students a unique opportunity to prepare for professional careers in government, politics, public affairs, public policy, and communication through the study of political and communication theory, research, and practice. This interdisciplinary MA program allows students to take courses in both the School of Public Affairs (SPA) and the School of Communication (SOC) that emphasize thorough grounding in political science, strategic communication, research, and media. In addition, students take hands-on courses designed to teach applied politics and communication skills over a broad range of media and production classes that introduce them to news writing, persuasive writing, public opinion research, online advocacy, and campaign management. The program gives students a strong background in research skills, a broad knowledge of political issues, and a deep understanding of how the political process and media work. Students will gain the knowledge, skills, and ethical grounding to be successful as politicians, policy-makers, political communication professionals, and campaign executives.

### **Admission to the Program**

Applicants must hold an accredited bachelor's degree with a cumulative grade point average of at least 3.0 on a 4.0 scale. Applicants are required to submit results of the Graduate Record Examination (GRE), unless they have eight or more years of relevant work experience, in which case they may apply for a GRE-waiver by contacting the school through which they are applying. GRE-waiver applicants must provide the details of their relevant work experience and the dates they were so employed. In addition, international students whose first language is not English are required to submit results of the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL). A strong TOEFL score is necessary to ensure that students may benefit fully from the coursework. The preferred minimum TOEFL score is 600 on the paper-based test (PBT), 100 on the Internet-based test (iBT); or a 7 on the IELTS. All applicants must submit two letters of reference. Applicants who received their bachelor's degrees five or fewer years before the date of application should submit at least one letter that evaluates their undergraduate academic performance and suitability for graduate study in political science and communication.

Students apply to either SPA or SOC. Applications will be reviewed jointly by SPA and SOC, with both schools agreeing on student admission.

### **Degree Requirements**

- 36 credit hours of approved graduate work with a cumulative grade point average of 3.00
- Requests for the transfer of a maximum of 6 graduate credit hours will be considered in exceptional cases.
- Students take a comprehensive examination jointly administered by SOC and SPA at the conclusion of their required core courses.



**Course Requirements****Core Courses (24 credit hours)**

- COMM-531 Political Communication (3)
- COMM-628 Proseminar in Political Communication (1)
- COMM-640 Principles of Strategic Communication (3)
- COMM-735 Communication Theory (3)
- COMM-738 Research Methods in Communication (3)
- GOVT-536 Applied Political Writing (3)
- GOVT-620 Applied Politics and American Public Policy (3)
- 5 credit hours from the following:
  - GOVT-520 Advanced Studies in Campaign Management (4)
  - GOVT-521 Topics in Campaign Management (1)
  - GOVT-523 The Art and Craft of Lobbying (3-4)
  - GOVT-524 Topics in Public Affairs and Advocacy (1)

**Capstone (3 credit hours)**

- COMM-629 Capstone in Political Communication (3)

**Elective Communication Courses (9 credit hours)**

- 9 credit hours from the following:
  - COMM-509 Politics and the Media (3)
  - COMM-521 Opinion Writing (3)
  - COMM-539 International Public Communication (3)
  - COMM-540 Social Marketing (3)
  - COMM-541 Crisis Communication (3)
  - COMM-542 Media Relations (3)
  - COMM-543 Speechwriting (3)
  - COMM-546 Foreign Policy and the Press (3)
  - COMM-551 Grassroots Digital Advocacy
  - COMM-567 Communication and Social Change (3)
  - COMM-589 Sustainability Communication (3)
  - COMM-596 Selected Topics: Non-recurring (1-6)  
(approved topic)
  - COMM-644 Writing for Strategic Communication (3)

**Combined Bachelor's and MA in Political Communication**

American University offers students the opportunity to earn both undergraduate and graduate degrees through its combined bachelor's/master's programs. For more information, see page 57 of this catalog.

This program enables qualified students to earn, in a continuous plan of study, both a bachelor's degree and the MA in Political Communication.

**Requirements**

- Admission to the combined BA/MA program requires junior standing, a minimum cumulative grade point average of 3.5, a completed application form, a written faculty recommendation, an essay on the student's interests and abilities in political science and communication, and an interview with the Department of Government graduate advisor if the student is entering through the School of Public Affairs, or the advisor for the Division of Public Communication if the student is entering through the School of Communication. Students must apply for admission to the graduate program no later than the last undergraduate

semester. The Graduate Record Examination (GRE) is required for admission to the MA program.

- All requirements for a bachelor's degree in the student's major at American University. Undergraduate students may apply up to 9 credit hours of approved graduate-level coursework to satisfy the requirements for both degrees.
- All requirements for the MA in Political Communication, including a minimum of 18 credit hours completed in residence in graduate status after the undergraduate degree has been awarded. Students must finish the master's degree requirements within three years from the date of first enrollment in the master's program.

**Master of Arts (MA)  
Strategic Communication****Admission to the Program**

Applicants must meet the minimum university requirements for graduate study. Admission to the program requires a bachelor's degree from an accredited college or university with at least a 3.00 (on a 4.00 scale) grade point average in last 60 hours of undergraduate coursework. International students whose first language is not English should take the TOEFL examination to demonstrate proficiency in written as well as spoken English. All applicants must earn a satisfactory score on the Graduate Record Examination (GRE) General (verbal, quantitative, and analytical).

Previous academic or professional work in public communication is not required, but all applicants must demonstrate a serious commitment to a career in this field. The ability to speak and write English well is essential. Official transcripts, two letters of recommendation, and a 1,000-word essay on the applicant's commitment to pursuing graduate study in the program are submitted with the application. Interviews are not required, but may be recommended by the school.

Admission is open to both full-time and part-time students for the fall semester. Full-time students are generally expected to complete the program in ten months. Part-time students are expected to take a minimum of two courses each semester and complete their program in two years. The program is also available in a weekend format which takes twenty months to complete (see below).

Qualified undergraduate students may apply to a combined bachelor's/MA program and use up to 6 credit hours of 500-level courses to satisfy the requirements of both degrees.

**Degree Requirements**

- 30 credit hours of approved graduate work
- A grade of B or better in two of the following courses to fulfill the university's research requirement:
  - COMM-640 Principles of Strategic Communication
  - COMM-735 Communication Theory
  - COMM-738 Research for Strategic Communication
- A grade point average of 3.00 maintained during all work toward the degree

### Course Requirements

- COMM-640 Principles of Strategic Communication (3)
- COMM-642 Strategic Communication Management (3)  
*or*  
COMM-646 Public Communication Practicum (3)
- COMM-644 Writing for Strategic Communication (3)
- COMM-735 Communication Theory (3)
- COMM-738 Research for Strategic Communication (3)
- COMM-744 Strategic Communication Capstone (3)
- 12 credit hours from the following:  
COMM-542 Media Relations (3)  
COMM-552 Social Media Strategies and Tactics (3)  
COMM-573 Visual Strategies in Public Relations (3)  
COMM-580 Strategic Health Communication (3)  
COMM-589 Sustainability Communication (3)

Students also may take an internship as one of the elective courses. Other elective courses may be taken in communication or in other fields such as sociology, business, performing arts, education, government, justice, international service, psychology, anthropology, art history, literature, economics, or statistics.

### Weekend Graduate Program in Strategic Communication

With its emphasis on public relations, this program, conducted on Saturdays, is for experienced professionals who wish to enhance their skills in conducting and managing strategic communication campaigns, yet their schedules won't allow a full-time or even a part-time graduate program during the week. Admission requirements are the same as for the full-time program with the additional prerequisite of at least three years of work experience, and the program starts in the fall semester only. Degree and course requirements are also the same as the full-time program, but the 12 credit hours of elective courses will be determined by departmental offerings. Students are expected to complete the program within a twenty-month period.

### Combined Bachelor's Degree and MA in Strategic Communication

American University offers students the opportunity to earn both undergraduate and graduate degrees through its combined bachelor's/master's programs. For more information, see page 57 of this catalog.

This program enables highly qualified students to earn a BA or BS in any discipline and an MA in Strategic Communication.

### Requirements

- Admission to the combined program requires second semester junior or senior standing, a cumulative grade point average of 3.5, a formal application, two written faculty recommendations, a statement of purpose, and a positive review by the faculty admissions committee. The Graduate Record Examination (GRE) is not required unless applying for School of Communication Merit Awards.
- All requirements for a bachelor's degree in the student's major at American University

Undergraduate students may apply up to 9 credit hours of approved graduate-level coursework to satisfy the requirements for both degrees.

- All requirements for the MA in Strategic Communication, including a minimum of 18 credit hours completed in residence in graduate status after the undergraduate degree has been awarded. Students must finish the master's degree requirements within three years from the date of first enrollment in the master's program.

### Graduate Certificate in Digital Media

The certificate is designed for professionals with undergraduate degrees who need to produce digital media. The program enables students to retool with a focus on how to use social networking tools in the digital media landscape.

### Admission to the Program

Students must have a degree from an accredited college or university with at least a 3.0 grade point average (on a 4.0 scale) in the last 60 hours of undergraduate work. The GPA requirement may be waived for applicants with more than five years of full-time professional experience. An undergraduate degree in communication is not required. Admitted students must pass an online orientation exam before beginning the certificate program.

Applicants whose native or first language is not English must demonstrate proof of language proficiency by submitting satisfactory results from the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL), unless they have received a degree from an accredited U.S. institution. A minimum TOEFL score of at least 600 on the paper-based version (PBT) or 100 on the internet-based test (iBT) version is required. A minimum IELTS test score of 7.0 is also accepted.

American University does not provide immigration documents for entry to the United States for international students in this program.

### Certificate Requirements

- 15 credit hours of approved coursework with grades of B or better.

Grades of B- or lower in certificate program courses are not accepted toward the fulfillment of certificate requirements, although these grades will be included in the calculation of the GPA. Students must have at least a 3.0 GPA in certificate courses in order to be awarded a certificate.

All coursework is conducted via distance learning. Students are invited to attend an optional on-campus session at the end of the program to show their work and receive professional critiques.

### Course Requirements

- COMM-602 Digital Media Literacy and Skills (3)
- COMM-603 Web Development (3)
- COMM-604 Dynamic Content (3)
- COMM-605 Video for Social Media (3)
- COMM-606 Capstone: Digital Media Project (3)

## Master of Fine Arts (MFA) Film and Electronic Media

### Admission to the Program

Applicants must meet the minimum university requirements for graduate study. Admission to the program requires a bachelor's degree from an accredited college or university with at least a 3.00 (on a 4.00 scale) grade point average in last 60 hours of undergraduate coursework. International students whose first language is not English should take the TOEFL examination to demonstrate proficiency in written as well as spoken English. The Graduate Record General Examination (GRE) is required, but may be waived by the division director.

An undergraduate degree in one of the visual media is desirable, but applications from candidates who have majored in other fields will also be considered. Applicants with prior experience in the visual media should submit a portfolio illustrating relevant professional experience. Students without prior experience in film, video, photography, or digital media production or who do not demonstrate through their portfolio a level of minimum proficiency in media production will need to reconcile their deficiencies with additional coursework.

Official transcripts, two letters of recommendation, and a 1,000-word essay on the applicant's commitment to pursuing graduate study in the program are submitted with the application.

### Degree Requirements

- 51 credit hours of approved graduate work
- Capstone experience: production of a portfolio of original creative work in the areas of scriptwriting, film, or electronic media production under the supervision of a faculty committee and in conjunction with COMM-702 Master's Portfolio Capstone, with grade of B or better
- A grade point average of 3.00 maintained during all work toward the degree

### Course Requirements (51 credit hours)

#### Core (26 credit hours)

- COMM-513 Producing Film and Video (3)
- COMM-630 Principles of Photography (3)
- COMM-631 Film and Video Production I (4)
- COMM-634 Film and Video Production II (4)
- COMM-650 Digital Imaging (3)
- COMM-682 Writing for Visual Media (3)
- COMM-701 Graduate Seminar in Film Theory and Practice (3) (must be taken in the first year)
- COMM-711 Teaching Seminar in Media Arts (3)

With the advisor's approval, students with comparable prior experience or coursework may substitute other courses in production and writing or media studies.

#### Portfolio Requirement

- COMM-702 Master's Portfolio Capstone (6) with grade of B or better

### Media History

- 6 credit hours from the following:
  - COMM-511 History of Documentary (3)
  - COMM-516 Topics in Film and Media Arts:
    - Masters of European Cinema (3)
    - The Radical Image (3)
  - COMM-517 History of Cross-Cultural Cinema (3)
  - COMM-520 History of Animation (3)
  - COMM-527 History of Photography (3)
  - COMM-558 Survey of American Cinema (3)
  - COMM-747 AU-FAMU Exchange Program (1-12)\*

### Production and Writing

- 6 credit hours from the following:
  - COMM-526 Photojournalism and Social Documentary (3)
  - COMM-528 Community Documentary: Stories of Transformation (3)
  - COMM-529 Large Format and Commercial Photography (3)
  - COMM-556 Cross Cultural Film and Video Production (3)
  - COMM-557 Art of Visual Storytelling: From Concept to Storyboards (3)
  - COMM-560 Backpack Documentary (3)
  - COMM-561 Advanced Writing for Film (3)
  - COMM-562 Advanced Writing for Television (3)
  - COMM-564 Documentary Storytelling for Social Change (3)
  - COMM-565 Advanced Visual Media Portfolio (3)
  - COMM-566 Practice of Environmentalism: Policy, Science, and Communication (3)
  - COMM-570 Film and Digital Media Institute (1-6)
  - COMM-635 Introduction to Studio Television (3)
  - COMM-638 Production Practicum (1-3)
  - COMM-654 Motion Graphics and Effects I (3)
  - COMM-656 Dramatic Production (3)
  - COMM-664 Directing for Camera (3)
  - COMM-686 Documentary Production (3)
  - COMM-716 Advanced Topics in Film and Media Arts (3)
  - COMM-747 AU-FAMU Exchange Program (1-12)\*

### Media Studies and Producing

- 3 credit hours from the following (see note below):
  - COMM-511 History of Documentary (3)
  - COMM-512 Social Documentary (3)
  - COMM-514 Censorship in the Media (3)
  - COMM-515 Children, Youth, and Digital Culture (3)
  - COMM-516 Topics in Film and Media Arts:
    - Masters of European Cinema (3)
  - COMM-517 History of Cross-Cultural Cinema (3)
  - COMM-520 History of Animation (3)
  - COMM-524 Producing Environmental and Wildlife Films (3)
  - COMM-527 History of Photography (3)
  - COMM-552 Social Media Strategies and Tactics (3)
  - COMM-558 Survey of American Cinema (3)
  - COMM-589 Sustainability Communication (3)
  - COMM-601 Communication Law (3)

COMM-661 Developing Nonfiction Productions  
 COMM-747 AU-FAMU Exchange Program (1–12)\*

*Note:* One media studies elective may be taken in a related subject area with the approval of the faculty advisor. Related media studies courses include the following:

COMM-503 Broadcast and Multimedia Journalism Management (3)

LIT-646 Advanced Studies in Film (3) (topics)

PERF-557 Playwriting (3)

PERF-665 Theatre History I (3)

PERF-666 Theatre History II (3)

\* Courses offered in Prague, Czech Republic. Students may enroll in the film and theatre curriculum at the Prague Film Academy (FAMU). Courses taken at FAMU receive full credit toward the MFA in Film and Electronic Media.

**Electives**

- 4 credit hours in approved coursework  
 With the guidance of their advisor, students may further develop an area of concentration or expertise using the above course listings. COMM-690 Independent Study Project, COMM-691 Graduate Internship, and COMM-716 Advanced Topics in Film and Media Arts may also be used with permission of the student’s advisor.

**Doctor of Philosophy (PhD)  
 Communication**

The PhD in Communication draws from the offerings of the School of Communication (SOC) and from the diverse intellectual resources across American University and Washington, DC. Focused broadly on the intersections among media, technology, and democracy, the program combines humanistic and social scientific approaches to the study of communication to analyzes the complex interactions among various players, including news media, entertainment media, digital communications, nonprofit organizations, government, and business. In combination with research and scholarship, students have the opportunity to create, promote, and evaluate media projects and communication initiatives. The accelerated design of the program offers an 11-month mentoring and learning environment, enabling students to complete their degrees in three years.

**Admission to the Program**

Doctoral program applicants must have a master’s degree in Communication or a related field from an accredited college or university with a cumulative GPA of 3.3 or higher; a combined score of at least 1200 in the GRE General Aptitude test; two letters of recommendation; a written statement of purpose; and an interview with the PhD program director and admissions committee. Non-native English speaking applicants must submit results of the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL). The minimum TOEFL score is 100 on the Internet-based test (iBT) or 600 on the paper-based test (PBT).

**Degree Requirements**

- 72 credit hours of approved graduate coursework  
 Students may request to transfer in up to 30 credit hours from a master’s degree program towards their PhD degree

requirements. A minimum grade point average of 3.3 in all coursework is required to remain in good standing and to earn the degree.

- *Comprehensive Examination Advancement to Candidacy, and Dissertation*

No later than the end of the fall semester of their second year, students consult with their faculty advisor to select faculty members to serve on their comprehensive exam and dissertation committee. Committees are comprised of the student’s faculty advisor and three additional faculty members. At least two faculty members should be from the field of communication and at least one should be from an outside discipline. Committee members are subject to approval by the student’s faculty advisor and the program director. At least two committee members must be full-time, tenure-line faculty members at American University. The chair of the dissertation committee must be an AU faculty member who holds a tenured position. An untenured, tenure-line faculty member may be appointed as a co-chair, but must serve with a tenured faculty member.

In consultation with the faculty advisor and the student, each committee member assigns a written comprehensive exam question that tests core knowledge and competency in an area. After completion of the written exams, the student meets with the committee to orally defend the comprehensive exams. The committee must unanimously agree that the student has passed the comprehensive exam process.

After passing the comprehensive examinations, students complete a formal dissertation proposal, which must be approved by all the members of the committee and the program director. Following approval of the dissertation proposal, students advance to candidacy and proceed with the research and writing process. After completion of the dissertation, students submit it to the committee for oral defense and final approval. Committee members must unanimously agree that the dissertation meets program and university standards for rigor and quality.

**Course Requirements**

**Core**

- COMM-704 Media, Technology, and Democracy (3)
  - COMM-711 Teaching Seminar in Communication (3)
  - COMM-750 Advanced Media Theory (3)
  - COMM-751 Advanced Media Research Methods (3)
  - COMM-754 Media Law and Policy (3)
  - Approved graduate statistics course
  - Approved graduate research methods course
- Other courses may be substituted with approval of the student’s faculty advisor and the program director.

**Concentration**

- At least three approved courses, including courses from outside SOC, in a concentration area:

*Media Industries and Institutions*  
*Media, Public Issues, and Engagement*  
*Media, Technology, and Culture*

**Research and Writing Requirement**

- COMM-799 Doctoral Dissertation Seminar