

Department of Communication Studies

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Mission Statement

Tarleton State's Master of Arts in Communication Studies empowers a diverse range of individuals, from seasoned professionals to recent graduates, fostering excellence in the dynamic communication environment. Our mission is to deliver a transformative, versatile program, emphasizing new technologies and social media strategies alongside traditional foundations. We cultivate a vibrant learning community, focusing on critical thinking, collaboration, and ethical communication. Graduates leave Tarleton well-prepared to lead organizational communication initiatives, utilizing social media, understanding theoretical approaches and effective strategies, and staying ahead in the evolving communication landscape. Rooted in flexibility and accessibility, our program instills innovation and adaptability, enabling graduates to excel as impactful leaders, shaping their organizations and the broader world.

Students who complete the degree requirements will also receive certificates in Organizational Communication and Social Media Strategy.

Master of Arts in Communication Studies Program Requirements

COMM 5304	Organizational Communication Theory	3
COMM 5310	New Communication Technology	3
COMM 5311	Social Media Campaigns	3
COMM 5313	Social Media Analytics	3
COMM 5320	Communication Ethics	3
COMM 5321	Communication Research Methods	3
COMM 5352	Communication Theory	3
Electives		9
Total Hours		30

In addition to the master's degree graduates will also receive certificates in Social Media and Organizational Communication.

Organizational Communication Certificate

COMM 5304	Organizational Communication Theory	3
COMM 5320	Communication Ethics	3
COMM 5352	Communication Theory	3
Total Hours		9

Social Media Certificate

COMM 5310	New Communication Technology	3
COMM 5311	Social Media Campaigns	3
COMM 5313	Social Media Analytics	3
Total Hours		9

Graduate Faculty

- Edwards, Jennifer
- Gearhart, Christopher
- Helvie-Mason, Lora
- Howard, Charles
- Maben, Sarah
- Stafford, Paul

Courses

COMM 5086. Special Problems. 1-6 Credit Hours (Lecture: 1-6 Hours, Lab: 0 Hours).
 Conference course. Directed independent study under supervision of a senior faculty member.

COMM 5200. Communication Pedagogy. 3 Credit Hours (Lecture: 3 Hours, Lab: 0 Hours).
 Students will explore teaching and learning strategies for higher education courses in communication. Students will learn lesson planning, classroom management, contemporary teaching strategies, and methods for assessing learning outcomes. Some course elements will also focus on teaching social media for collegiate and professional settings.

COMM 5303. Communication Pedagogy. 3 Credit Hours (Lecture: 3 Hours, Lab: 0 Hours).
 Students will explore teaching and learning strategies for higher education courses in communication. Students will learn lesson planning, classroom management, contemporary teaching strategies, and methods for assessing learning outcomes. Some course elements will also focus on teaching social media for collegiate and professional settings.

COMM 5304. Organizational Communication Theory. 3 Credit Hours (Lecture: 3 Hours, Lab: 0 Hours).

This course is an advanced study of communication as it takes place in business, industrial, and non-profit settings. Special attention is given to managerial communication, communicator styles, channels and networks, and organizational communication consulting.

COMM 5310. New Communication Technology. 3 Credit Hours (Lecture: 3 Hours, Lab: 0 Hours).

This graduate course provides a historical foundation focused on new communication technology. This course also incorporates communication theories while focusing on the benefits and disadvantages of new communication technology. Students will also explore the ways these technologies are positively and negatively influenced by national/international: cultures, economies, intellectual capital, and politics.

COMM 5311. Social Media Campaigns. 3 Credit Hours (Lecture: 3 Hours, Lab: 0 Hours).

This graduate course is designed to introduce students to key concepts of social networking websites/applications, enable students to interact with others through hands-on experiences on social networking websites/applications, and provide students with experiences to critically analyze the positive and negative aspects of communicating (interpersonal, small group, organizational, etc.) with others through social networking.

COMM 5312. Computer-Mediated Communication. 3 Credit Hours (Lecture: 3 Hours, Lab: 0 Hours).

This graduate course provides a historical and futuristic perspective on the creation of the internet and computer-mediated communication. Students in the course will examine and critique scholarly research articles focused on a variety of computer-mediated communication contexts (i.e. - blogs, social networking websites, video chat, etc.).

COMM 5313. Social Media Analytics. 3 Credit Hours (Lecture: 3 Hours, Lab: 0 Hours).

This graduate course is designed to introduce students to key concepts of measurement of social networking websites/applications and web analytics. The course will enable students to interact with actual measurement techniques for social networking websites/applications, and provide students with experiences to critically analyze social networking. This course explores how basic statistics can be used to answer questions about social media outlets posed by a business or user.

COMM 5314. Generative Artificial Intelligence (AI) in Communication. 3 Credit Hours (Lecture: 3 Hours, Lab: 0 Hours).

This graduate course provides a foundational look at generative artificial intelligence in the communication field. It includes historical and futuristic perspectives on generative artificial intelligence (AI) in the communication landscape. Students will examine applications of generative AI in organizational and interpersonal communication, ranging from large language models, chatbots, audio and visual systems, and various multi-media tools. Students will explore the ethical and societal implications of adapting and evolving technological advances in communication.

COMM 5320. Communication Ethics. 3 Credit Hours (Lecture: 3 Hours, Lab: 0 Hours).

This graduate course provides perspectives on communication ethics, from historical underpinnings to theory to professional ethical codes to decision-making structures weighing values, principles and stakeholders. Students in the course will examine and critique ethical factors and decision-making with communication case studies.

COMM 5321. Communication Research Methods. 3 Credit Hours (Lecture: 3 Hours, Lab: 0 Hours).

This graduate course is a study of the two primary metatheoretical perspectives, the scientific and interpretive, and the assumptions, values, and methods associated with each. Strong emphasis is given to understanding and applying a variety of research methodologies to selected topics of study. Research methods such as surveys, interviewing, experiments, ethnography, and others may be covered.

COMM 5323. Small Group Communication. 3 Credit Hours (Lecture: 3 Hours, Lab: 0 Hours).

This advanced course explores the concepts, models, and theories of group interaction and teamwork as it applies to group communication. Special attention is paid to the processes of decision-making and problem solving within organizational groups as well as examining case studies of group processes and outcomes.

COMM 5340. Environmental Communication. 3 Credit Hours (Lecture: 3 Hours, Lab: 0 Hours).

This course focuses on the role human communication plays in creating and sustaining relationships with nature. Topics can include Public Participation, Environmental Conflict, promoting environmental sustainability, etc. Students in this courses will be exposed to a variety of research methods and perspectives on environmental policy topics which will include; public participation in environmental decision-making, communication in environmental conflict, environmental risk communication, and communication in environmental advocacy. Prerequisite: Graduate standing.

COMM 5352. Communication Theory. 3 Credit Hours (Lecture: 3 Hours, Lab: 0 Hours).

This course is an advanced study of communication theory exploring the concepts, models, and theories of human communication. Prerequisite: Graduate Standing.

COMM 5385. Special Topics. 3 Credit Hours (Lecture: 3 Hours, Lab: 0 Hours).

Content varies according to the needs and desires of the students. When topic varies, course may be taken for credit more than once. Open to students of graduate classification.

COMM 6304. Organizational Communication Theory. 3 Credit Hours (Lecture: 3 Hours, Lab: 0 Hours).

This course is an advanced study of communication as it takes place in business, industrial, and non-profit settings. Special attention is given to managerial communication, communicator styles, channels and networks, and organizational communication consulting. Credit will not be awarded for both COMM 5304 and COMM 6304.

COMM 6311. Social Media Campaigns. 3 Credit Hours (Lecture: 3 Hours, Lab: 0 Hours).

This graduate course is designed to introduce students to key concepts of social networking websites/applications, enable students to interact with others through hands-on experiences on social networking websites/applications, and provide students with experiences to critically analyze the positive and negative aspects of communicating (interpersonal, small group, organizational, etc.) with others through social networking. Credit will not be awarded for both COMM 5311 and COMM 6311.

COMM 6312. Computer-Mediated Communication. 3 Credit Hours (Lecture: 3 Hours, Lab: 0 Hours).

This graduate course provides a historical and futuristic perspective on the creation of the internet and computer-mediated communication. Students in the course will examine and critique scholarly research articles focused on a variety of computer-mediated communication contexts (i.e. - blogs, social networking websites, video chat, etc.).

COMM 6340. Environmental Communication. 3 Credit Hours (Lecture: 3 Hours, Lab: 0 Hours).

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