

# Communication Studies



We all communicate with others. We send messages, share ideas and tell stories. Sometimes we communicate with large audiences, like on the Internet, television and other media. Other times communication is on a small scale — between friends, family or co-workers.

You will learn to analyze messages from historical, critical and social scientific perspectives and how to produce effective messages. You will learn how to listen actively, communicate strategically and engage your listeners.

## Program Details

Most classes are small which allows for close working interactions between students and faculty.

### **Advocacy and Public Communication:**

Courses focus on helping you become an effective and ethical speaker and a more alert critic of information and argumentation. You will gain responsible advocacy and leadership skills that are essential in business, nonprofit and civic settings.

**Media Studies:** Coursework includes instruction in screenwriting, media production, internet studies, media history, film and television criticism. You will learn how to analyze audio and visual media as well as how to create your own digital stories.

### **Organizational/Corporate**

**Communication:** This emphasis combines a common core of courses in communication with classes that examine communication systems, training and consulting.

## Student Experiences

**Reality Bytes** is an independent student film festival organized by Communication Studies students. The annual competitive festival is held in April and features short films from around the world. Students review films as well as organize and promote the event.

**Forensics** is a student organization devoted to a wide range of competitive and noncompetitive speech activities. Our speech and debate team has a rich history of providing students hands-on training in argumentation, advocacy, public speaking and performance.

**Public Relations Student Society of America (PRSSA)** is the foremost organization for students interested in public relations and communications. This organization provides opportunities for professional development, workshops and networking.

## Engaged Learning

You can engage in a wide variety of hands-on learning opportunities including working with faculty on research projects, interdisciplinary video productions, websites and much more. You are encouraged to complete internships in preparation for careers post-graduation.

*“I am learning how to improve my communication skills and how to apply communication principles to anything in life. It will help my career (in management or public relations). I think I will be well-prepared when I graduate.”*

— (COMS student, 2017)



NORTHERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY

**Department of Communication**

College of Liberal Arts and Sciences

# B.A. or B.S. in Communication Studies

Each of the areas in the Department of Communication requires courses best suited to preparation for that particular emphasis. The courses include hands-on training, theory and ethics courses, historical and critical analysis courses as well as courses in communication and the law. We offer certificate programs in digital media production and film and television studies.

Requirements for each emphasis can be found at [go.niu.edu/commstudies](http://go.niu.edu/commstudies).



## Advocacy and Public Communication (33-34 credits)

Students prepare to be effective and ethical speakers, listeners and writers. Courses focus on communication skills, performance, advocacy, rhetorical analysis, as well as elective options. You will gain responsible advocacy and leadership skills that are essential in business, nonprofit and civic settings.

## Media Studies (35-40 credits)

Students take both production and studies courses for their major. Production students use an array of sophisticated media tools from HD cameras and digital editing software to studio control room equipment. Studies courses include film and TV, history, theory and criticism, advertising and political communication.

## Organizational/Corporate Communication (34-36 credits)

Students explore a common core of courses in communication with classes that examine communication systems, training and consulting, as well as advertising and corporate advocacy in various settings. Courses may focus on organizational communication, interpersonal communication, public relations, communication skills and more.

## Who Studied Communication at NIU?

Melanie Schlenker, B.S. '15 – Digital Communication Coordinator  
Cori Frankenberg, B.A. '14 – Baseball Communications Assistant, Minnesota Twins  
Danielle Brouillette, B.A. '11 – Meeting Planning Coordinator  
Elizabeth Dawson, B.A. '07 – Market Researcher  
Marcus LeShock, B.A. '03, M.A. '05 – Feature Reporter, WGN-TV  
Dave Naze, B.A. '00, M.A. '02 – Dean of Academic Excellence and Support, Joliet Junior College  
Michael Kirch, B.A. '87 – Dean of Business and Social Sciences, Normandale Community College  
Bill Weinman, B.A. '84 – Editor-Writer-Producer, Disney ABC Television Group

## Contact Information

Department of Communication  
Watson Hall 217  
Northern Illinois University  
DeKalb, Illinois 60115  
Email us: [comsadvising@niu.edu](mailto:comsadvising@niu.edu)

[niu.edu/comm](http://niu.edu/comm)

## Careers In Communication

Advertising Copywriter/Manager  
Campaign Research Specialist  
Communications Manager  
Retail Sales  
Public Relations Representative  
Community Relations Director  
Speech Writer  
Corporate Communication Staff  
Human Rights Officer  
Public Information Officer  
Recruiter  
Advertising Sales Agent  
Broadcast News Analyst  
Interpreters and Translators  
Meeting and Convention Planner  
Media Director/Manager  
Media Producer/Videographer  
Film Editor  
Screenwriter  
Filmmaker



Northern Illinois  
University

