COMMUNICATION, PHD

Banner Code: LA-PHD-COM

102 Northeast Module
Fairfax Campus

Email: commgrad@gmu.edu
Website: communication.gmu.edu/programs/la-phd-com

The PhD in Communication explores key issues in the discipline such as communicating complex information, social influence and behavior change, the digital divide, public advocacy, intercultural sensitivity, media literacy, and national security. The PhD program offers three major areas of emphasis: health communication, science communication, and strategic communication. Faculty and students conduct research concerning health communication, risk communication, climate change communication, science communication, crisis management, organizational communication, media systems, public communication campaigns, new information technologies, communication policy, and media advocacy.

Admissions & Policies

Admissions

Applicants to all graduate programs at George Mason University must meet the admission standards and application requirements for graduate study as specified in Graduate Admissions (http://catalog.gmu.edu/admissions/graduate-policies/). For information specific to the PhD in Communication, see Application Requirements and Deadlines (http://communication.gmu.edu/programs/LA-PHD-COM/application/).

Policies

For policies governing all graduate degrees, see Graduate Policies (http://catalog.gmu.edu/policies/academic/graduate-policies/+).

Reduction of Credit

For students entering the doctoral program with a master's degree, the number of required credits may be reduced by a maximum of 30 credits, subject to approval of the program faculty and the dean. Requests for reduction of credit are reviewed only after acceptance to the doctoral program.

Program Requirements

To receive the PhD in Communication, students must complete a minimum of 90 credits, 60 beyond the master's degree, including core courses in theory and research methods, coursework in substantive fields of study, and a research practicum. Following completion of all required coursework, students must pass a written qualifying examination and an oral defense of it, after which they are advanced to candidacy by the dean and complete a dissertation, an original and independent research project.

If specific requirements are waived, students must complete substitutions, which are recorded on their Program of Study. All substitutions to degree requirements must be approved by the graduate committee.

Requirements

Degree Requirements

Total credits: 90

Students should be aware of the specific policies associated with this program, located on the Admissions & Policies tab.

Core Courses

Four Theory Courses

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Credits</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>COMM 700</td>
<td>Building Social Science Theory</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Select one additional theory course from the following:</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COMM 602</td>
<td>Theories and Research of Mass Communication</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COMM 605</td>
<td>Intercultural Communication</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COMM 632</td>
<td>Persuasion Theory</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COMM 634</td>
<td>Theories of Interpersonal Communication</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COMM 635</td>
<td>Organizational Communication</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Select two additional theory courses from the following:</td>
<td>6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COMM 602</td>
<td>Theories and Research of Mass Communication</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COMM 605</td>
<td>Intercultural Communication</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COMM 620</td>
<td>Health Communication</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COMM 630</td>
<td>Theories of Public Relations</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COMM 632</td>
<td>Persuasion Theory</td>
<td></td>
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<td>COMM 635</td>
<td>Organizational Communication</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COMM 639</td>
<td>Science Communication</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COMM 642</td>
<td>Science and the Public</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COMM 706</td>
<td>Strategic Communication</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total Credits: 12

Three Research Methods Courses

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Credits</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>COMM 650</td>
<td>Research Methodologies in Communication</td>
<td>3</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Qualitative Methods Course

Select 3 credits from the following:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Credits</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>COMM 725</td>
<td>Qualitative Methods</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COMM 750</td>
<td>Research Methods II</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COMM 775</td>
<td>Media Content Analysis</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

One additional course at the 700-level or above. 1 | 3

Total Credits: 9

1 This course should be chosen to help prepare for the dissertation and must be approved by the graduate committee.

Substantive Field of Study

Students choose one of the following substantive fields of study.
### Health Communication

**Code** | **Title** | **Credits**
--- | --- | ---
COMM 620 | Health Communication | 9
COMM 705 | Intercultural Health and Risk Communication | 9
COMM 720 | Consumer-Provider Health Communication | 9
COMM 820 | Health Communication Campaigns | 9

Select three elective courses chosen with approval of the advisor and director | 9

Total Credits | 18

### Science Communication

**Code** | **Title** | **Credits**
--- | --- | ---
COMM 632 | Persuasion Theory | 9
COMM 639 | Science Communication | 9
COMM 642 | Science and the Public | 9
COMM 660 | Climate Change and Sustainability Communication Campaigns | 9

Select three courses from the following: | 9

Select three elective courses chosen with approval of the advisor and director | 9

Total Credits | 18

### Strategic Communication

**Code** | **Title** | **Credits**
--- | --- | ---
COMM 630 | Theories of Public Relations | 9
COMM 705 | Intercultural Health and Risk Communication | 9
COMM 706 | Strategic Communication | 9
COMM 735 | Crisis Communication | 9

Select three courses from the following: | 9

Select three elective courses chosen with approval of the advisor and director | 9

Total Credits | 18

### One Research Practicum

**Code** | **Title** | **Credits**
--- | --- | ---
COMM 701 | Communication Science Research Practicum | 3

Total Credits | 3

### Elective Courses

**Code** | **Title** | **Credits**
--- | --- | ---
Students complete the remaining credits through additional elective courses chosen in consultation with an advisor | 0-30

Total Credits | 0-30

### Advancement to Candidacy

To advance to candidacy, students must complete all coursework required on their approved program of study. Students must also successfully pass a written qualifying exam and an oral qualifying exam. In addition, students must have a dissertation committee appointed by the Dean's Office as well as an approved proposal. Evidence of the approved proposal must be on file in the Dean's Office before a student can advance to candidacy.

### Dissertation

Once enrolled in COMM 998 Doctoral Dissertation Proposal, students in this degree program must maintain continuous registration for at least 1 credit. Once enrolled in COMM 999 Doctoral Dissertation Research, student must maintain continuous registration each semester (excluding summers) until the dissertation is submitted to and accepted by the University Libraries. Once enrolled in COMM 999 Doctoral Dissertation Research, students must follow the university's continuous registration policy as specified in AP.6.10.6 Dissertation Research (http://catalog.gmu.edu/policies/academic/graduate-policies/#ap-6-10-6). Students who defend in the summer must be registered for at least 1 credit of COMM 999 Doctoral Dissertation Research.

Students complete a minimum of 3 credits of COMM 998 Doctoral Dissertation Proposal and 3 credits of COMM 999 Doctoral Dissertation Research. They must apply a minimum of 18 dissertation credits (COMM 998 Doctoral Dissertation Proposal and COMM 999 Doctoral Dissertation Research combined) to the degree. Because of the continuous registration policy, students may be required to register for additional credits of these courses.

**Code** | **Title** | **Credits**
--- | --- | ---
At least eighteen credits of the following: | 18
COMM 998 | Doctoral Dissertation Proposal | 18
COMM 999 | Doctoral Dissertation Research | 18

Total Credits | 18