COMMUNICATION, PHD

Banner Code: LA-PHD-COM
A307 Robinson Hall
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, influencing health behaviors, the digital divide, public advocacy, intercultural sensitivity, media literacy, and national security. The PhD program offers two major areas of emphasis: health and strategic communication. Students may also emphasize science communication in conjunction with either of these. Faculty and students conduct research concerning consumer-provider relationships, risk communication, crisis management, organizational communication, media systems, health campaigns, new information technologies, communication policy, media advocacy, and health communication interventions.

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
COMM 700  Building Social Science Theory  3
Select one additional theory course from the following:  3
COMM 602  Theories and Research of Mass Communication
COMM 605  Intercultural Communication
COMM 632  Persuasion Theory
COMM 634  Theories of Interpersonal Communication
COMM 635  Organizational Communication
Select two additional theory courses from the following:  6
COMM 602  Theories and Research of Mass Communication
COMM 605  Intercultural Communication
COMM 620  Health Communication
COMM 630  Theories of Public Relations
COMM 632  Persuasion Theory
COMM 634  Theories of Interpersonal Communication
COMM 635  Organizational Communication
COMM 639  Science Communication
COMM 642  Science and the Public
COMM 706  Strategic Communication

Total Credits  12

Three Research Methods Courses
Methods Course
COMM 650  Research Methodologies in Communication  3
Qualitative methods course
COMM 725  Qualitative Methods  1  3
Additional Research Course
Select one course at the 700-level or above.  2  3
Total Credits  9

Or another course at 700-level or above as approved by the graduate committee.

Substantive Field of Study
Students choose one of the following substantive fields of study.

Health Communication
Select three courses from the following:  9
COMM 620  Health Communication
COMM 705  Intercultural Health and Risk Communication
COMM 720  Consumer-Provider Health Communication
COMM 820  Health Communication Campaigns

Select three elective courses chosen with approval of the advisor and director 9
Total Credits 18

**Strategic Communication**
Select three courses from the following: 9

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course Code</th>
<th>Course Title</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>COMM 630</td>
<td>Theories of Public Relations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COMM 705</td>
<td>Intercultural Health and Risk</td>
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<td>Communication</td>
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<tr>
<td>COMM 706</td>
<td>Strategic Communication</td>
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<tr>
<td>COMM 735</td>
<td>Crisis Communication</td>
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</tbody>
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Select three elective courses chosen with approval of the advisor and director 9
Total Credits 18

**One Research Practicum**
Select 3 credits from the following: 3

<table>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>COMM 604</td>
<td>Communication Research Practicum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COMM 890</td>
<td>Special Topics in Communication</td>
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<tr>
<td>COMM 896</td>
<td>Independent Study</td>
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</table>

Total Credits 3

**Elective Courses**
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. 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.

At least eighteen credits of the following: 18

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<tr>
<td>COMM 998</td>
<td>Doctoral Dissertation Proposal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COMM 999</td>
<td>Doctoral Dissertation Research</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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Total Credits 18