

MAJOR IN COMMUNICATION STUDIES, RHETORIC, DEMOCRACY, AND SOCIAL ADVOCACY CONCENTRATION

Students who complete the Major in Communication Studies with a Rhetoric, Democracy, and Social Advocacy Concentration will be knowledgeable about the history and practice of our discipline in rhetoric, democracy, civic engagement and social advocacy. Students will be able to explain the utility of theories from these areas and be able to utilize research methods to explore questions from each area of inquiry.

Additionally, students graduating with a degree in Communication Studies will have skills that allow them to apply their knowledge of the major as they address contemporary issues salient to their personal, professional, and civic lives. They will be skilled in both oral and written communication, being able to develop and deliver coherent, well-organized claims to specific audiences. Students will also develop critical thinking skills that allow them to analyze texts, situations, or issues using credible evidence and following a logical, systematic, and/or precise structure.

Learning Objectives

Upon successful completion of this program, students will be able to:

1. Demonstrate knowledge of the history, theory, and research methods of film, media, popular culture, rhetoric, democracy, civic engagement, interpersonal, organizational, and cultural communication with a focus on rhetoric, democracy, and social advocacy communication.
2. Develop and utilize oral communication skills across the study of communication.
3. Develop and utilize written communication and research skills across the study of communication.
4. Develop and utilize critical thinking and analysis in support of ethical, effective human communication.
5. Transfer the knowledge and skills gained in the communication studies program to a meaningful trajectory in their personal, career, and/or civic lives after graduation.

Requirements Effective Fall 2026

Students may enroll in either the standalone major or (at most) one of the concentrations under the Major in Communication Studies.

Freshman

		AUCC	Credits
CO 150	College Composition (GT-CO2)	1A	3
SPCM 100	Communication and Popular Culture (GT-AH1)	3B	3
SPCM 130	Foundations of Human Communication (GT-SS3)	3C	3
SPCM 200	Public Speaking		3
1B (https://catalog.colostate.edu/general-catalog/all-university-core-curriculum/aucc/#aucc)		1B	3
1C (https://catalog.colostate.edu/general-catalog/all-university-core-curriculum/aucc/#aucc)		1C	3
Biological and Physical Sciences (https://catalog.colostate.edu/general-catalog/all-university-core-curriculum/aucc/#biological-physical-sciences)		3A	7
Electives			6
Total Credits			31

Sophomore

SPCM 201	Introduction to Rhetoric (GT-AH3)	3B	3
SPCM 207	Public Argumentation		3
Select one of the following AUCC Category 2 (Advanced Writing) courses:			3
CO 300	Writing Arguments (GT-CO3)	2	
CO 301A	Writing in the Disciplines: Arts and Humanities (GT-CO3)	2	
CO 301B	Writing in the Disciplines: Sciences (GT-CO3)	2	
CO 301C	Writing in the Disciplines: Social Sciences (GT-CO3)	2	
CO 301D	Writing in the Disciplines: Education (GT-CO3)	2	
HIST XXX			3
Additional Arts and Humanities ¹			3
Additional Social and Behavioral Sciences ²			3
Historical Perspectives (https://catalog.colostate.edu/general-catalog/all-university-core-curriculum/aucc/#historical-perspectives)		3D	3
Electives			9
Total Credits			30

Junior

SPCM 311	Speeches and Social Change	4A,4B	3
SPCM 337	Persuasion		3
SPCM 412	Rhetorical Criticism	4A,4B	3
SPCM 420	Political Communication	4A,4B	3
Communication Studies Electives ³			3
Minor, Interdisciplinary Minor, or Second Major ⁴			15
Total Credits			30

Senior

SPCM 479	Communication Studies Capstone	4C	3
Select 12 credits from the following			12
SPCM 300	Advanced Public Speaking		
SPCM 320	Communication and Human Trafficking		
SPCM 330	Leadership and Communication		
SPCM 333	Career Communication		
SPCM 335	Gender and Communication		
SPCM 342	Critical Media Studies	4A,4B	
SPCM 346	Digital Media Cultures		
SPCM 347	Visual Communication		
SPCM 349	Freedom of Speech		
SPCM 353	Rhetoric and Racial Justice		
SPCM 357	Film and Social Change		
SPCM 401	Rhetoric in Social Movements		
SPCM 407	Facilitation Collaborative Problem Solving		
SPCM 408	Applied Deliberative Techniques		
SPCM 433	Organizational Communication		
SPCM 460	Making Hybrid Fiction Nonfiction Film		
Minor, Interdisciplinary Minor, or Second Major ⁴			6
Electives ⁵			8
Total Credits			29
Program Total Credits:			120

¹ Select three credits from the following subject codes: ART, D, E, ETST, L**, MU, PHIL, TH, or WS.

² Select a total of three credits from the following: AREC 202, GR 100, courses with subject codes ANTH, ECON, ETST, HIST, JTC, POLS, PSY, SOC, or WS.

³ Select a total of 3 credits of SPCM subject code courses excluding SPCM 479 and SPCM 495.

⁴ Students must complete a university approved minor, interdisciplinary minor, or second major.

⁵ Select enough elective credits to bring program total to a minimum of 120 credits, of which at least 42 must be upper-division (300- to 400-level).

Major Completion Map**Freshman**

Semester 1		Critical	Recommended	AUCC	Credits
CO 150	College Composition (GT-CO2)	X		1A	3
SPCM 100	Communication and Popular Culture (GT-AH1)	X		3B	3
1C (https://catalog.colostate.edu/general-catalog/all-university-core-curriculum/aucc/#aucc)		X		1C	3
Biological and Physical Sciences (https://catalog.colostate.edu/general-catalog/all-university-core-curriculum/aucc/#biological-physical-sciences)			X	3A	3
Elective					3
Total Credits					15

Semester 2		Critical	Recommended	AUCC	Credits
SPCM 130	Foundations of Human Communication (GT-SS3)	X		3C	3
SPCM 200	Public Speaking	X			3
1B	(https://catalog.colostate.edu/general-catalog/all-university-core-curriculum/aucc/#aucc)	X		1B	3
	Biological and Physical Sciences (https://catalog.colostate.edu/general-catalog/all-university-core-curriculum/aucc/#biological-physical-sciences)		X	3A	4
	Elective		X		3
	CO 150 must be completed on the end of Semester 2.	X			
Total Credits					16
Sophomore					
Semester 3		Critical	Recommended	AUCC	Credits
SPCM 201	Introduction to Rhetoric (GT-AH3)	X		3B	3
HIST XXX		X			3
	Additional Arts and Humanities (see allowable subject codes in footnote 1 of the Concentration Requirements tab)	X			3
	Additional Social and Behavioral Sciences (see allowable subject codes in footnote 2 of the Concentration Requirements tab)	X			3
	Historical Perspectives (https://catalog.colostate.edu/general-catalog/all-university-core-curriculum/aucc/#historical-perspectives)		X	3D	3
Total Credits					15
Semester 4		Critical	Recommended	AUCC	Credits
SPCM 207	Public Argumentation	X			3
	Select one course from the following:	X			3
CO 300	Writing Arguments (GT-CO3)			2	
CO 301A	Writing in the Disciplines: Arts and Humanities (GT-CO3)			2	
CO 301B	Writing in the Disciplines: Sciences (GT-CO3)			2	
CO 301C	Writing in the Disciplines: Social Sciences (GT-CO3)			2	
CO 301D	Writing in the Disciplines: Education (GT-CO3)			2	
	Electives	X			9
	AUCC 1C, AUCC 3A (Biological and Physical Sciences), AUCC 3D (Historical Perspectives) must be completed by the end of Semester 4.	X			
Total Credits					15
Junior					
Semester 5		Critical	Recommended	AUCC	Credits
SPCM 311	Speeches and Social Change	X		4A,4B	3
SPCM 337	Persuasion				3
	Minor, Interdisciplinary Minor, or Second Major Courses	X			9
Total Credits					15
Semester 6		Critical	Recommended	AUCC	Credits
SPCM 412	Rhetorical Criticism			4A,4B	3
SPCM 420	Political Communication			4A,4B	3
	Communication Studies Electives	X			3
	Minor, Interdisciplinary Minor, or Second Major Courses	X			6
Total Credits					15
Senior					
Semester 7		Critical	Recommended	AUCC	Credits
	Select 12 credits from the following:	X			12
SPCM 300	Advanced Public Speaking				
SPCM 320	Communication and Human Trafficking				
SPCM 330	Leadership and Communication				
SPCM 333	Career Communication				
SPCM 335	Gender and Communication				

SPCM 342	Critical Media Studies			4A,4B	
SPCM 346	Digital Media Cultures				
SPCM 347	Visual Communication				
SPCM 349	Freedom of Speech				
SPCM 353	Rhetoric and Racial Justice				
SPCM 357	Film and Social Change				
SPCM 401	Rhetoric in Social Movements				
SPCM 407	Facilitation Collaborative Problem Solving				
SPCM 408	Applied Deliberative Techniques				
SPCM 433	Organizational Communication				
SPCM 460	Making Hybrid Fiction Nonfiction Film				
Minor, Interdisciplinary Minor, or Second Major Course		X			3
AUCC 2 (Advanced Writing) and SPCM 100, SPCM 130, SPCM 200, SPCM 201, SPCM 207 must be completed by the end of Semester 7.		X			
Total Credits					15
Semester 8		Critical	Recommended	AUCC	Credits
SPCM 479	Communication Studies Capstone	X		4C	3
Minor, Interdisciplinary Minor, or Second Major Course		X			3
Electives		X			8
The benchmark courses for the 8th semester are the remaining courses in the entire program of study.		X			
Total Credits					14
Program Total Credits:					120