

# Communication Major Resource Guide



Produced by the Department of Communication

Welcome to the 2022-2023 Communication Major Resource Guide. This guide is an advising tool that will acquaint you with the majors, faculty, and requirements of the Department of Communication. There are also sections to help you plan for the future, including internship opportunities, resume and cover letter writing, and graduate school information. If you use it to prepare for pre-registration and track your progress each semester, it will help you through your college career without problems. We hope you find it helpful.

## **Table of Contents**

Academic Policies	4
Double dipping	
Double major	
Minimum standards	
Probation	
Standards of behavior	
Academic Deadlines	5
Advising	5
Course load	
Finding courses	
Signing up	
Preparing for advising	
<b>COMM Majors Google Groups</b>	6
Guidelines for using google groups	
<b>Extracurricular Activities</b>	7
Campus media	
Communication clubs	
Other clubs	
Facilities	8
Faculty	8
Graduation	9
Independent Study	10
Internships	10
Types of internships	
Finding an internship	
Getting credit	
<b>Learning Center</b>	11

<b>Majors</b>	<b>12</b>
Communication core	
Audio/Radio production	
Communication studies	
Journalism	
Media management	
Public relations	
Video production	
<b>Minor</b>	<b>13</b>
Requirement	
Study abroad option	
Minor worksheet	
<b>Parking</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>Scholarships</b>	<b>15</b>
Department scholarships	
Other scholarship opportunities	
<b>Textbooks</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>The Future</b>	<b>16</b>
Graduate education	
Career development	
Radio, audio in media, and the recording industry	
Television and video	
Advertising	
Public relations	
Journalism	
<b>Professional Tools</b>	<b>19</b>
Telephone contacts	
Email etiquette	
Resumes	
Cover letter	
Portfolio	
Interviewing	

## Academic Policies

It is your responsibility to be familiar with university and departmental academic policies. Here are some highlights of department policies:

**Double Dipping.** Certain minors and double majors include some communication courses that may fulfill course requirements for that minor. The Department of Communication will allow students to use (double dip) ONLY ONE communication course (maximum 4 credits) required for their communication major to be used in fulfilling course requirements for the minor.

**Double Major.** Students may opt to obtain a second major within or outside the Department of Communication. A second major within the department requires students to complete the requirements for both majors; in addition, at least 15 hours must be taken in one major not used in the other.

**Minimum Standards.** Communication majors must earn at least a C grade in all courses in the major. A student who receives a grade below the C in a course may repeat that course only once. If a student does not achieve a C or better the second time, he/she will be required to change to a major outside of the Department of Communication. Any student whose cumulative average in the major falls below 2.3 for three consecutive semesters in the department will be required to change to a major outside of the Department of Communication.

**Probation.** Students who have a cumulative QPA that falls below 2.0 are placed on academic probation. They will receive a letter asking them to report to the department's probation advisor to develop a "contract." Probationary students are then required to meet with their regular advisor three times during the semester to ensure the contract is fulfilled.

For details on the above policies, refer to the Academic Policies folder under the Info tab on the department's webpages.

**Student Behavior.** The Department of Communication advocates the following standards of behavior for all students:

1. Academic honesty is expected.
2. Attendance is expected at all class-related meetings.
3. Punctuality is expected for all class- and department-related meetings.
4. Courteous classroom behaviors should be enacted at all times.
5. A respectful classroom environment should be maintained for classmates and instructors, regardless of differing viewpoints.
6. All university/department equipment or properties should be used with care and respect.
7. The campus sustainability policy, should be supported by using department and other resources responsibly.
8. Cell phones should be turned off during all class meetings.

9. Laptops are a potential distraction in the classroom and in some classes may be allowed only to accommodate students with documented disabilities.
10. Email communications should use standard professional formatting.
11. A minimum of three hours of study time should be devoted for each in-class or credit hour.

Further explanation and examples of each of the above are located at <https://www.fredonia.edu/academics/colleges-schools/college-liberal-arts-sciences/communication/standards>

## Academic Deadlines

There are strict deadlines for adding, dropping, and withdrawing from courses. These are listed on the registrar's calendar, located at <https://www.fredonia.edu/about/offices/academic-affairs/academic-calendar>. This calendar also includes when the semester starts and ends, when registration occurs, dates when there are no classes, and the deadline for applying for graduation.

## Advising

You have been assigned a faculty advisor. Get to know him or her; your advisor can be very helpful in guiding you through your undergraduate education.

After mid-term grades are issued every semester, you will meet with your advisor to register for classes for the following semester (however, that will hopefully not be the only time you visit your advisor throughout the semester). Advisors have 35 to 40 advisees to keep track of. You have only yourself. The advisor is only a guide; YOU are responsible for meeting degree requirements. Advisors sometimes make errors or do not catch an unfulfilled requirement. Avoid this issue by knowing what courses you have taken and what courses you need to take.

**Course Load.** The average course load is 15 credit hours; the minimum full-time load is 12 hours. You are permitted to take up to 18 credits per semester any more requires the approval of the department chairperson.

**Finding Courses.** Shortly before advising, you will be able to see what courses are being offered for the upcoming semester. You can find this at [https://connect.fredonia.edu/yourconnection/bwckschd\\_frd.p\\_disp\\_dyn\\_sched](https://connect.fredonia.edu/yourconnection/bwckschd_frd.p_disp_dyn_sched). This site allows you to search by department, course, instructor, time of day, and other filters. To view course descriptions, visit the college catalog at <http://fredonia.smartcatalogiq.com/2015-2016/catalog>. These descriptions will also help you to plan ahead by showing how often courses are offered (for example, every semester or once a year). Be sure to pick alternatives to all of your courses, especially during your first two years. You may not get courses that are selected during pre-registration. Alternative courses enhance your chances of getting a full course load.

**Signing Up.** Advisors will post a sign-up sheet outside their office one week prior to preregistration or advise you through email of electronic scheduling. Choose a convenient date and time to go over your proposed schedule.

**Preparing for Advising.** The most common approach to course selection is to: Focus on department core courses and Fredonia Foundation requirements your first year. Your second year emphasizes completing department core courses and specialization courses, complemented with a few more Fredonia foundation requirements, and possibly one or two courses in your minor. The third and fourth years are devoted to specialization electives, completing the Fredonia Foundations, and minor courses. Transfer students should emphasize all needed department and specialization courses, followed by courses to fulfill the minor (*Note: select minor immediately to graduate on time*). The second year for transfer students would emphasize specialization courses and completing any Fredonia Foundations or minor requirements.

Additional information on building your schedule can be found on the department's webpage side under Info in the Advising folder.

## COMM MAJORS Google Groups

The department has created the COMMAJORS google groups to share communication related information about things like course changes, club news, information about members, jobs, internships, learning about communication, etc. This google group is open to the posting of COMMUNICATION RELATED MESSAGES ONLY by any of its members. Before posting a message, ask yourself, Will this information be useful to some members related to their involvement with the study, profession, and the community of communication folks? If the answer is yes, send it.

The COMMAJORS google group is our effort to **DO** communication, not just talk about it. It is meant to help us build a community for mutual survival and personal benefit. Use it in the spirit it was meant.

### Guidelines for Using google groups

Post ONLY about communication-related matters, anything that can be useful about communication or information helpful to students in communication.

INDICATE in subject header the nature of information sent to help members determine if it is of interest to them.

DO NOT REPLY to any message unless requested or if it needs clarification. Reply to message sender only not the entire group

DO NOT BE RUDE, aggressive or condescending in replies; explain yourself when making judgments or evaluations of others' ideas or opinions.

NO sexual, racist ethnocentric, homophobic, and sexist humor that is not clearly related to learning about communication and explained as such (i.e., an example that is used to point out ethnocentric

communication or use of English language abroad that shows humorous consequences of misinterpretation).

## **Extracurricular Activities**

There is a wealth of useful and enjoyable opportunities for development outside of class. The following groups are a great way to get involved on campus to apply and develop skills that you have learned. Graduates tell us over and over again how much participation on campus has helped prepare them for the real world.

## **Campus Media**

**Fredonia Radio Systems.** Two radio stations are based at Fredonia: WCVF 88.9 FM, "The Voice," and WDVL 89.5, The Inferno. WCVF, which is noncommercial, reaches northern Chautauqua County, which consists of roughly 40,000 listeners. This station is managed by students. WDVL is also student run and staffed; however, WDVL is a commercial station and follows a Top 40 format.

**The Leader.** Fredonia's student-run weekly newspaper offers positions in journalism, advertising, and graphic design.

**WNYF.** At this student-run television station, students learn all aspects of how a TV station is run and aid in creation, programming and management.

## **Student Groups**

**Applied Communication Association.** The goal of ACA is to enable its members to apply their communication knowledge and skills outside the classroom environment. ACA also prepares student members with experience and portfolio materials to give them a competitive edge in the job market.

**Lambda Pi Eta.** This by invitation only organization is the National Communication Association's official honor society. To be eligible, students must be a major in any of the department's six majors, complete 60 credit hours, and earn an overall GPA of 3.5 and a GPA of 3.25 in communication courses.

**PRSSA.** The Public Relations Student Society of America seeks to cultivate a favorable and mutually advantageous relationship between students and professional public relations practitioners.

More information on campus media and communication clubs can be found on the department web pages, in the Student Groups folder, on the department webpages at: <https://www.fredonia.edu/academics/colleges-schools/college-liberal-arts-sciences/communication/clubs>.

## **Other Campus Groups**

There are many other groups on campus. An Activities Night is held at the beginning of each semester to introduce students to the variety of organizations. Be sure to look for communication opportunities in non-communication clubs. For example, you could do publicity, event planning, etc., while focusing on other interests like music, multicultural affairs, and science.

## **Facilities**

The Department of Communication houses digital film design and production facilities including a large sound stage for single camera productions and four editing suites for advanced students. Field equipment includes professional high-definition cameras, lighting kits, sound recording equipment, etc.

Audio/radio production facilities include three multi-track control rooms, one stereo control room, one voice-over booth, and one large studio. Digital recording/editing capabilities are featured, as well as a variety of sound processing equipment.

The department's multimedia Sheldon Lab, consisting of 19 Macintosh workstations, is used for learning about such topics as desktop presentation, electronic photography, web design, multimedia authoring, and digital audio/video editing. Each computer also has Avid and the Adobe Creative Suite for digital audio/video editing. Software and hardware are updated every three years.

A multi-camera television studio is located on the first floor of Thompson Hall. The control room houses a video monitoring system consisting of two wide-screen flat panel wall processors and a new Ross Vision series video production switcher. The studio also houses a meeting room and a set storage area.

## **Faculty**

There are 10 full-time faculty members in the Department of Communication and several parttime faculty members who teach courses for the department. All bring extensive professional experience and scholarly achievements in their areas of expertise. Class sizes in production and other advanced courses are kept small so that each student receives personal attention. The faculty members provide services to the campus and community, as well as investing their time in research and creative projects beyond their classroom activities. You are encouraged to get to know the entire faculty. They can be valuable resources in your academic and future professional career. Full-time faculty are:



Roslin Smith, Chair of Department Associate Professor, video production

[roslin.smith@fredonia.edu](mailto:roslin.smith@fredonia.edu), 311 McEwen, 673-4729

Mark Kiyak, Associate Professor, video production

[mark.kiyak@fredonia.edu](mailto:mark.kiyak@fredonia.edu), 302 McEwen, 673-3826

Mike Igoe, Associate professor, journalism

[michael.igoe@fredonia.edu](mailto:michael.igoe@fredonia.edu), 322 McEwen, 673-3824

Chris Dahlie, Assistant Professor, audio/radio production

[christopher.dahlie@fredonia.edu](mailto:christopher.dahlie@fredonia.edu) 315E McEwen, 673 3410

Amanda Lohiser, Comm Studies

[lohiser@fredonia.edu](mailto:lohiser@fredonia.edu), 314 McEwen, 673-3633

Tracy Marafiotte, Associate professor, communication studies

[tracy.marafiotte@fredonia.edu](mailto:tracy.marafiotte@fredonia.edu), 316 McEwen, 673-3825

Elmer Ploetz, Associate Professor, journalism

[elmer.ploetz@fredonia.edu](mailto:elmer.ploetz@fredonia.edu), 315B McEwen, 673-4900

Angela McGowan-Kirsch, Assistant Professor, Communication Studies, Internship Coordinator

[mcgowan@fredonia.edu](mailto:mcgowan@fredonia.edu), 304A McEwen, 673 3260

Vincent Quatroche, lecturer, communication studies/production [vincent.quatroche@fredonia.edu](mailto:vincent.quatroche@fredonia.edu),  
205D McEwen, 673-3269

Branden Birmingham, Full time lecturer, Public Relations

[branden.birmingham@fredonia.edu](mailto:branden.birmingham@fredonia.edu) 304 McEwen, 673-3410

Learn more about the faculty by reading their bios on the department website at

<https://www.fredonia.edu/academics/colleges-schools/college-liberal-arts-sciences/communication/faculty>

## Graduation

It is your job to make sure you keep on track toward your anticipated graduation date.

### Checkpoint 1

- You must pass at least 120 credit hours recognized by the college
- You must maintain at least a 2.0 overall GPA
- You must take at least 66 credits *outside* of Communication
- You must take **at least 45 credits in 300/400 level classes**

### Checkpoint 2

- You must complete the College Core Curriculum (see College Catalog)
- You must get transfer credits approved

### Checkpoint 3

- You must complete a Communication major (Audio/Radio Production, Communication Studies, Journalism, Media Management, Public Relations or Video Production)

- You must have a 2.5 GPA in your major; students whose cumulative average in the major falls below 2.3 for three consecutive semesters will be required to change to a major outside of the Communication Department
- You must earn a C or better in all Communication courses counting toward the major • At least 18 hours of your major need to be taken at Fredonia; in some cases, the major's capstone must be taken at Fredonia
- Certain courses in video must be taken in consecutive semesters: COMM 462 & 464, COMM 454 & 464 and COMM 358 & 401.

**Checkpoint 4 You must complete one of the following:**

- Minor outside of the Department of Communication
- Second major outside of the Department of Communication
- Full semester study abroad
- Be an international student studying at Fredonia

You may want to take advantage of Degree Works, a degree audit and planning tool for you to effectively and easily map out your time at Fredonia using a variety of tools. There is a GPA calculator, clear and concise audit of your current standing at Fredonia, and a "What If" analysis for students looking to add to their current program or change programs altogether. It can be found at <https://www.fredonia.edu/academics/academic-advising/degreeworks>

## Independent Study

Communication majors may select to develop an independent study (COMM 490) for course credit. Under a faculty member's guidance, students may study a particular aspect of communication or participate in an approved project not otherwise available through course offerings. Independent study courses cannot be used in lieu of requirements for the major, but can be used toward the 120 hours needed for graduation. An Independent Study Proposal form must be completed by the faculty sponsor and student, and then forwarded to the department chair for approval.

## Internships

Internships are important for students in order to gain real world experience while in college. The Department of Communication recommends that you seriously consider doing an internship before you graduate. When applying for a job in any field, there will be stiff competition. You have to market yourself to show why you are more qualified for that position. There is no better way to do that than by presenting the skills you have acquired from an internship. The benefits are numerous. They offer:

- an opportunity to develop and learn new skills
- job experience for a resume
- experience in a career field to help students decide whether made the right choice
- a possible job upon graduation

- contacts and networking possibilities
- a chance to earn college credit or sometimes a salary confidence in applied skills

### **Types of Internships**

Communication students can obtain an internship in many fields. It is, however, better to research the field you wish to gain experience in before you make a final decision. Talk to your advisor and see if he/she can put you in contact with alumni who have been a part of the field. By seeing the paths others have taken with a communication degree, you will gain a better perspective of the path you need to take in the internship process. There are many places you can go to obtain an internship. The following are some places other communication students have found their desired internship. Remember not to limit yourself to these possibilities.

- TV and radio stations
- newspapers and magazines
- human resources or training specialists
- advertising agencies
- public relations agencies
- athletic teams
- audio or video production companies
- organizations with in-house public relations (hospitals, Chamber of Commerce, nonprofits, etc.)

**Finding an Internship.** The three main ways students can find internships are through networking, cold calling, and the university's Career Development Office. Tips on finding an internship are located on the department webpage site in the Internship folder

<https://www.fredonia.edu/academics/colleges-schools/college-liberal-arts-sciences/communication/internships>

**Getting Credit.** You can receive one academic credit for each 40 hours worked at an internship.

To receive credit for an internship, you must complete a Learning Contract and register for COMM 480. The learning contract and other forms you will need are located on the Career Development Office's website at <https://www.fredonia.edu/student-life/career-development-office/x-main>

Before you take that step, however, please read carefully the documents in the Internship folder under the Info tab on the department website. For additional information, contact

Dr. Angela McGowan-Kirsch, Assistant Professor, Internship Coordinator  
[mcgowan@fredonia.edu](mailto:mcgowan@fredonia.edu), 304A McEwen, 673 3260

## **Learning Center**

Fredonia's Learning Center provides academic support to all students at the university. The center offers peer tutoring on a drop-in basis in most subject areas. Supplemental instruction for high-risk courses, English as a Second Language assistance, academic assistance for Full Opportunity Program students, and help overcoming communication apprehension also are available.

Support services are available for students with documented physical or learning disabilities who identify themselves to the Office of Disability Support Services for Students located in the Learning Center. You will receive a letter from ODSSS if you have students in any of your classes who have identified themselves with the office. The letter will outline what special assistance students need from the instructor, such as:

- Reduced-distraction testing environment
- Extended time for tests
- Oral testing
- Test readers
- x Use of a writer in test situations x
- Use of word processing for essay tests x
- Enlargement of written materials
- Tape recorded classes and books on tape x
- Notetakers
- Use of a calculator
- Use of a dictionary or electronic spelling device

For assistance, call the staff at ext. 3550 or visit the centers website at <http://www.fredonia.edu/tlc/>.

## Majors

**The Communication Core.** All six majors within the Department of Communication are required to take the following courses:

COMM 101: Fundamentals of Communication

COMM 105: Public Speaking

COMM 199: Communication Orientation

In addition, each major has its own required core courses as well. Students taking or having taken courses at other schools should note that at least 18 credits (and possibly certain courses) must be taken at Fredonia.

**Audio/Radio Production.** The art of listening forms the basis of the Audio/Radio Production curriculum. The goal is to develop critical listeners who can understand sound as well as use audio principles and techniques in a variety of applications. These include recording, writing for the ear, announcing, interviewing, sound design for television and theatre, Internet applications, and radio production and programming.

**Communication Studies.** This major emphasizes the study of human interaction in both mediated and non-mediated communication. Courses will cover theories and skills regarding relational development, group decision-making, public speaking, communication ethics, research and evaluation, and organizational communication. The goal of the major is to develop the student's ability to understand and apply theories and skills in communication performance,

message construction, and communication analysis and evaluation across social and professional settings.

**Journalism.** The free flow of news lies at the very core of a democracy. The increase in the number of news outlets and the development of new technologies has changed the traditional study of journalism and future journalists need to be prepared by being exposed to a multidisciplinary curriculum, a global approach to journalism, and a convergent approach to journalism. The overarching aim of this program is to produce graduates who are professionally oriented and technically proficient, well-prepared for the world of work and also responsive critical thinkers and reflective practitioners who will make significant contributions in their chosen fields. NOTE: At least 18 credits must be taken at Fredonia

**Media Management.** The Media Management curriculum teaches the skills and theories necessary for non-production careers in media. This major includes a variety of topics pertaining to the role of the media as well as the promotion and usage of media productions. Coursework includes media sales, programming, promotion, new technologies, research and survey methods, and organizational communication.

**Public Relations.** The Public Relations curriculum teaches students how individuals and organizations establish, maintain, and strengthen communication within their group as well as with their publics. Courses stress theories and ethics of communication as well as mediated and non-mediated communication skills of by public relations practitioners.

**Video Production.** The Video Production curriculum is inclusive of all aspects of visual media. Students learn critical, theoretical, and applied aspects of creating video. Course work includes beginning and advanced courses in writing; live multi-camera production, field production, post production, and digital applications. Students complete a sequence, in either video drama, documentary production, or television studio production, with a capstone project.

Check sheets listing the required courses for each major are located in the Advising folder under the Info tab on the department s ANGEL site.

## Minor

**Requirement.** Successful completion of a minor is required for all communication majors. You need not choose a minor immediately, but be sure to choose a minor early enough to allow you to easily work it into your schedule. A good rule of thumb is to have chosen and accumulated credits toward your minor by junior year. Scheduling conflicts are much more frequent when you try to fulfill requirements of both a major and minor.

There are three ways to fulfill the minor requirement:

- Select a minor outside the Department of Communication. Most minors consist of 18-24 credits and require approval by the advisor in the minor department. The specific criteria

vary with each program. Speaking with the advisor in the department is recommended. The advisors may provide good suggestions and even help find a way for you to complete the requirements sooner. You must achieve an average of at least 2.0 in your minor. A list of minors can be found in the College Catalog at

<http://fredonia.smartcatalogiq.com/2018-2019/Catalog/All-Minors>

- Select a second major outside the Department of Communication and achieve an average of at least 2.0
- Participate in a study abroad.

**Study Abroad Option.** Communication majors may choose to complete an approved full semester study-abroad program of at least 18 credits. Students must maintain a 2.0 GPA in their study abroad program. If a student does not successfully fulfill these requirements for the study abroad option, he/she would have to complete a regular minor. International students who have spent at least one semester studying in a university at least one semester outside of or other than their home country shall be given credit for the study abroad and would only need to supplement this with the related Fredonia. See Study Abroad webpage

<https://www.fredonia.edu/academics/study-abroad>

## Minor Worksheet

Minor in Department of \_\_\_\_\_

*Minors usually consist of 18-24 credits designed with, and approved by, your advisor in the minor department.*

Notes/Possible courses:

Minor Advisor: \_\_\_\_\_

Required Minor Courses:

Semester/Grade:

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Elective Minor Courses:

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Required Minor Courses:

Semester/Grade:

---

---

---

---

## Parking

For a complete overview of parking regulations, visit the University Police website at <https://www.fredonia.edu/about/offices/university-police/parkingregulations>. Be forewarned: the lots fill up early and finding a good spot after 9 a.m. may be a challenge. You might want to try out the university's Park and Ride shuttle service: <https://www.fredonia.edu/about/offices/university-services/park-and-ride>

## Scholarships

**Department Scholarships.** The Department of Communication offers several scholarships. There is no application process; rather, they are awarded based upon student's academic proficiency. The only way for students to apply is to excel in their academics and display involvement in extracurricular activities—all the makings of well-rounded, successful individuals. By applying yourself, you could become a candidate for one or more of the scholarships. For a complete list of department scholarships, visit the department website at <https://www.fredonia.edu/academics/colleges-schools/college-liberal-arts-sciences/communication/scholarships>

**Other Scholarship Opportunities.** Fredonia offers approximately \$3 million in merit and need based scholarships to academically qualified new and returning students each year. For more information, visit Fredonia's scholarship website page at <https://www.fredonia.edu/admissions-aid/financial-aid/scholarship-opportunities>

## Textbooks

According to the University Bookstore, a full-time college student should expect to pay between \$500 and \$600 on textbooks and supplies per semester. You should be able to see what textbooks will be required for your classes when you register for classes by clicking on the book icon next to the course title in the semester course listings on Your Connection [https://connect.fredonia.edu/yourconnection/twbkwbis.P\\_WWWLogin](https://connect.fredonia.edu/yourconnection/twbkwbis.P_WWWLogin). By looking at the textbooks ahead of time, you can shop around for the best price. A good place to start is the bookstore's online store, which does some comparisons for you: <http://fredonia.verbacompare.com/>

At the end of the semester, you may want to sell some books back to the bookstore. Visit <http://fsa.fredonia.edu/Bookstore/TextbookBuyBack.aspx> for more information.

# Your Future

## Graduate Education

You are graduating. Then what? There may be a number of paths to take upon graduation, but choosing the right one can be difficult. Graduate school is just one of many choices. It should not be selected as a way to escape the real world. Choose graduate school because you want advanced education to prepare yourself for future employment opportunities where advanced degrees are needed. The National Communication Association Web site provides a database on graduate programs in Communication.

**Experience counts.** Hopefully you have attained enough experience in your time at Fredonia to have an idea of what you want to do post-graduation. It is that valuable experience that can separate you from the rest of the applicants upon hunting for the first job in your new career. A hefty portfolio displaying what you have done can be just as, or more, powerful than a piece of paper boasting further education.

**Education counts.** Your degree opens the doors to not only a career in your studied field, but also a career in any number of related fields. Oftentimes graduates end up in careers for which they were not formally educated. What is more, a graduate degree can open even more doors. You may not need a Master's or PhD to get the job you want, but that job is not likely to be the beginning and end of your career path. A graduate degree may allow for future career changes and/or advancement.

You may already know what you want. If graduate school is part of that goal, plan early. Research what degree you need for your desired career and what schools offer the degree. Research the schools' requirements. Furthermore, research what companies offer positions in your chosen career. A great way to begin researching is to simply talk to people. Your professors and the staff at the Career Development Office can help.

You took the SATs, now it is time for the Graduate Record Examinations (GREs). Although there are a few types of tests for graduate admission, most schools require applicants to take the GREs. Like the SATs, these tests cost money and may require intense studying. There are classes, books, and software available to help boost your test scores. The score needed varies from school to school, as do most admissions requirements. Your research into the schools, with the assistance of the Career Development Office, will be invaluable.

## Career Development

In today's work environment, communication professionals are finding jobs in various communication industries such as publishing, film studios, radio and television broadcasting



companies, advertising/public relations agencies, media sales, and training. Each of these areas requires specific skills necessary in the creation and distribution of messages.

The following pages will provide you with information pertaining to these career options and how to prepare for the careers (resume writing, cover letters, internships, interview preparation, etc.).

- × Businesses look for graduates who are smart, energetic, articulate, resourceful individuals with strong writing, speaking, critical thinking, and problem-solving skills. They also look for people who can work in groups, who are open-minded, flexible, and practical.
- × The Department of Communication can only expose you to the enormous varieties of communication careers that are available. If you want to achieve a mastery in a certain area while you are here, you must supplement your class work with extra-curricular and internship experiences.

**Radio, Audio in Media, and the Recording Industry.** Today there are over 12,000 radio stations in the United States and 30,000 worldwide, broadcasting to over 95 percent of the world's population. Despite competition from cyberspace and television, radio remains a vital medium for its immediacy, local appeal, low cost, and wide reach. Radio provides jobs for broadcast journalists, announcers, DJ s, on-air hosts, news writers/editors, scriptwriters, production and technical staff, sales and marketing professionals, and radio/audio engineers and technicians. Working at a radio station can be both exciting and challenging. Your best source for identifying radio stations with specialized programming formats in a particular geographic region is *Broadcasting and Cable Yearbook*.

Recommended Online Resources:

National Association of Broadcasters (NAB) [CLICKHERE](#)

Radio-Television News Directors Association (RTNDA) [CLICK HERE](#) ×

American Women in Radio and Television [CLICK HERE](#)

**Television and Video.** Television has become and continues to be the instant informer, effective teacher, primary persuader, and great entertainer for our society. Through these different specialties, television has come to impose a great influence upon our society in a variety of ways. Ever-smaller digital and iPhone have become an integral part of our culture, from professionally made movies to amateur video. Rapid technological advances have widened the scope of the use of television and video in all sectors of life, including business, for applications such as training and marketing. The largest commercial enterprises are well-known TV networks: Columbia Broadcasting System (CBS), National Broadcasting Company (NBC), American Broadcasting Corporation (ABC), and the FOX Network. However, the growth of independent entities, both broadcast and internet-based, point to the future in ever more complex and interesting ways.

**Film.** Working in the film industry provides you with creative opportunities. Movies today are classified as features, commercials, music videos, documentaries, industrials, and governmental or educational films. In 2011, the film and television industry employed 272,000 people, according to the MPAA. Most of these jobs were in the area of film production, duplication, and distribution. Sales and movie theatres accounted for another large part of the employment positions. Some of the job positions in the movie industry are: scriptwriter, producer, production

manager, director, unit production manager, assistant directors, art directors, scenic artists, cinematographer, camera operator, sound recording engineers, and editors.

Recommended Online Resources:

**Advertising.** Advertising is a multibillion-dollar industry with a main-purpose: motivating people to buy every kind of product. For that reason, the primary communication tool used is persuasion. The aim is to get people moving, to support an idea, to vote for a person, to buy a certain product, to listen to a certain channel, and so on. The advertiser, who has control over what is said, pays for the advertising messages. There is always a greater supply than there are people who buy. That is why manufacturers are always competing through the different means of media to reach as many people as possible. Some of the media most often used are: television, radio, newspapers, and magazines. In addition, outdoor advertising is being used, such as billboards, blimps, etc. to increase awareness of the products or company. Also, direct mailing and telemarketing are often found useful by advertisers. To enter the world of advertisement, students can take different courses in writing, photography, broadcasting, public relations, graphic design, etc.

Recommended Online Resources:

The Advertising Council <http://www.adcouncil.org>

The American Advertising Federation <http://www.aaf.org/>

American Association of Advertising Agencies

<http://www.aaaa.org/> [www.media recruiter.com](http://www.media recruiter.com)

[www.mediajobs.net](http://www.mediajobs.net)

[www.admedia.org](http://www.admedia.org)

[www.rab.com](http://www.rab.com)

[www.tvb.org](http://www.tvb.org)

**Public Relations.** Public Relations is the activity conducted by an organization to communicate effectively with its various audiences. It is a deliberate effort, designed to build and maintain an image of the organization that will enable it to function smoothly and productively within society. The primary responsibility of a public relations practitioner is to develop and maintain two-way communication between an organization and its publics. In addition to media relations, public relations require research and planning skills. Today's PR representatives focus on the substance of the message as well as its presentation. According to the U.S. Department of Labor, public relations specialists held about 158,000 jobs in 2002, and employment is expected to increase even faster than the average for all occupations through the year 2112. One of the main reasons for this increase is that more and more organizations depend on public relations services to maintain their image with the public. The Public Relations Society of America (PRSA) is the foremost trade association for the group of public relations specialists and practitioners. PRSSA Code of Ethics emphasizes a practitioner's ethical responsibilities.

A public relations specialist must have knowledge and skills in a wide range of areas including the following: journalism, speech, communication techniques, as well as computer skills, sociology, political science, and psychology. Top-levels require training in finance and managerial duties as well.

**Journalism.** Newspapers, magazines, and broadcast stations provide a great variety of services. Besides reporting and interpreting the news, they also entertain the audience with a variety of feature materials. These different kinds of media are constantly competing with each other to capture an audience because it is crucial to their advertising revenue and sales. Daily newspapers and weekly newspapers constitute the third largest industry in the United States, employing over 450,000 people. Large or medium-sized newspapers include the following departments: news, editorial, advertising, production, circulation, and business. In smaller papers, most of the time these functions are combined. Magazines provide more freedom of creativity to writers, editors, and artists. There are at least 10,800 magazines in the United States. There are a variety of job positions offered when working for a magazine such as editorial assistants, researchers, executive and managing editors, staff writers, artists, photographers, and sales positions. The growth of broadcast journalism in the United States has created a steady increase of jobs for journalists as well. Radio and television have become the main source of news for the majority of the population. Most radio and television stations dedicate airtime to news coverage. In addition, news features, interviews, documentaries, etc. that are aired every day require the service of journalists.

Recommended Useful Resources:

American Journalism Review <http://www.newslink.org>

Columbia Journalism Review <http://www.cjr.org>

Folio <http://www.mediacentral.com/Folio>

## Professional Tools

### Telephone Contacts

Professionalism calls for recording over those annoying answering machine messages you had in college with a professional sounding message. If you have no choice, tactfully explain to your friends/roommates that you may be receiving professional, job related calls, and ask them to be congenial and professional answering the phone and taking messages. Have a confidant call you once in a while to be sure your messages are getting delivered and the phone is being answered properly. A rude person answering the phone will likely be the kiss of death for your job interview.

**Email Etiquette.** Emails should use professional formatting. This includes a clear subject heading, a courteous greeting, proper spelling and grammar, respectful content, and an identifying "signature." Stay away from icons, smiley faces, and abbreviations. Check for proper spelling and grammar.

**Résumés.** Consider both the appearance along with the content of your resume:

### ***Aesthetic Considerations***

Lots of white space

White paper, off-white or gray only colored does not copy or scan well × 25 percent + cotton bond paper will make your resume stand out, but is often not necessary with many resumes being scanned, etc.

Do not fold it; get large envelopes

Do not be too creative unless you are applying to a creative field ×

Use single font and common font ×

Play with your layout until you have one that is easy to read/follow ×

Always have excellent copies.

Do not use poor quality copies.

### ***Content***

Keep it short; one to two pages should suffice. × Resumes should be high quality and professional; no errors. Spell check and proof read your resume many times.

Use key words and short descriptive sentences (fragments) where possible. Do not write complete paragraphs. × Arrange to stress your strengths. You may want a topical or combination resume rather than a chronological resume, depending upon your work experience or strengths.

Never have gaps in employment that are not accounted for.

If you have been affiliated with more than a few organizations, activities, etc., do not list them all. Use the half-dozen most relevant/recent.

Do not list every class you have taken in your field, but list the most important/relevant ones. Arrange these lists rhetorically.

If you will list GPA, make the most of it. Don't bother listing overall GPA if it is not very good. You may want to list your GPA in your major instead. If that is not very good, leave it off. × Do not list interests unless these will suggest you possess some additional value to the organization.

A resume does not list every part-time/full-time or volunteer work experience you have had. Indicate job titles, duties, supervisor, and accomplishments. Include short courses, special training, seminars, etc., that might be relevant to the employer.

List accomplishments, awards, leadership positions, publications and citations.

Include complete contact information: address, telephone, and e-mail.

The resume is your chance to sell yourself. Never lie. Always adapt to your audience.

Your resume is an argument that says, I am more qualified than that other guy/gal. I'm also smarter, nicer, and people like me.

Describe your career goals; do not be pedantic, egotistical, vague, or mercenary.

Describe your career aspirations in terms relevant to the employer and type of work. Do not be too narrow.

Describe your goals in terms of the position you are applying for, but also in terms of the supervisor position for the job you are applying for.

Your resume should reflect your own individuality, uniqueness, creativity, flair, style, *Kairos*, and *savoir-faire*.

Update and revise it often to keep your resume fit.

You may want to create several versions of your resume.

**Cover Letter.** The cover letter tells your potential employer how you could benefit the organization. It allows you to highlight different aspects of your experiences or backgrounds that are not stressed as much in the resume. The cover letter should be personalized and targeted to the individual company. The cover letter should:

- × Emphasize and expand upon aspects of your resume related to the job. ×

- × Be brief and to the point.

- × It is the first thing employer s see of you; it must be well thought out and attention getting.

- × Be informative, not a copy of your resume.

- × It is an opportunity to highlight your skills, experiences, training, etc. that best match the job requirements

- × The last sentence in the cover letter should imply that you will either call to schedule for an interview, or that you are available at any time.

**Other Technical Tips** × Type your letter; make sure there are no misspellings. × Avoid unusual typefaces, such as script. × Address the letter to an individual, using the person s name or title. To obtain this information, call the company. If answering a blind newspaper ad, address the letter To Whom it May Concern or omit the salutation.

- × Send the original letter, not a photocopy with your resume. Keep a copy for your records. × Include a phone number and e-mail address where you can be reached. × Make your cover letter no more than one page. × Avoid trite language and have someone read it over to react to its tone, content, and mechanics.

- × For your own information, record the date you sent out the resume and the cover letter.

**Portfolio.** A portfolio is an interview tool, an attractive package of written documents, photographs, slides, tapes, sketches, and projects that represent your best efforts. The main purpose of putting a portfolio together is to display the full range of your skills and abilities. Just like the resume, the portfolio should be concise and to the point, yet representative of your work over the past years.

Multimedia and video portfolios could include scripts, photographs, slides, floor plans, lighting schemes, etc. In the video industry, a video portfolio with clips of your work is a good way to display your skills and experience. However, this video should not be longer than five to six minutes. Ideas for your portfolio include your group project binder or any other project binder, user guides, a printed presentation, brochures, press releases, and any item created during an internship or an independent study.

If you are a journalist, your portfolio should contain clippings of articles or other pieces you have written. However, this does not mean that you should include everything you have ever written.

The best works should always be selected, in all majors, also keeping in mind the materials in which your employer would be interested.

The physical form your portfolio should take will depend on the format, size, and media of your work samples. Many portfolios and demo reels (show reels) are now on line. You will want to present your samples in a way that shows off your skills and abilities. Also, your portfolio has to be portable enough to carry with you from one interview to another.

**Interviewing.** Interviews are most people's nightmare when it comes to looking for a job or applying to graduate school. However, there are a few easy steps that will release your tension and will help you get through an interview successfully. × Make yourself familiar with the employer. This not only impresses the employer, but it also helps to reduce the fear of the unknown. Check out their web page and do a google search.

- × Dress properly. A carefully chosen attire maximizes your chances of a favorable interview.
  - For Men this is what comprises the all-American look in the business world: navy blue suit, white long-sleeve dress shirt, blue striped tie, and dress shoes.
  - For Women a dress suit or pantsuit should be worn, preferably in subdued colors and fabrics. Avoid the following: high hemlines, V-necks, too much jewelry (or jewelry representing any religious organization), oversized bags, excessive make-up, or heavy perfume.
- × Arrive alone. Bringing someone with you makes you appear unprofessional in front of an interviewer.
- × Leave home early. Arrive on time.
- × Act out the Magic Four Hello. It consists of these four simultaneous acts:
  - A smile
  - Direct eye contact
  - The words, Hi, I'm (first name) (last name). It's a pleasure to meet you.
  - A firm but gentle handshake.
- × Avoid assuming a subordinate role. Don't say thank you for everything, and do not compliment everything that exists in an interviewer's office. Instead, concentrate on what he/she says, because the more he/she says, the more you learn. × Align with the interviewer. The great human motivation is that people like people who are like them. So, somewhere along the line, show that you are like the interviewer and agree with him/her.
- × Say positive things about your present employer. × Admire the achievements of the employer. People appreciate honest and sincere praise.
- × Be extremely observant. By this time, 80 percent of the interview should be over; however, do not show signs of boredom (never look at your watch).
- × Be prepared for tough questions:
  - What is your greatest weakness?
  - Where do you see yourself in 5 years?
  - What can you bring to the company?

- Do you have any questions?
- × Finally, use the Magic Four Goodbye, which consists of the following:
  - A smile ○ Direct eye contact
  - The words, This sounds like a great opportunity. I look forward to hearing from you. ○ A firm but gentle handshake