

# Communication

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## Department Information

- **Department Chair:**  
Stephenson Beck, Ph.D.
- **Graduate Coordinator:**  
Justin Walden, Ph.D.
- **Department Location:**  
Minard Hall 338
- **Department Phone:**  
(701) 231-7705
- **Department Web Site:**  
[www.ndsu.edu/communication/](http://www.ndsu.edu/communication/) (<http://www.ndsu.edu/communication/>)
- **Application Deadline:**  
Ph.D - March 1; M.A. - March 15, October 15
- **Credential Offered:**  
Ph.D., M.A.
- **Test Requirement:**  
GRE
- **English Proficiency Requirements:**  
TOEFL ibT 100, IELTS 7 for admission; TOEFL ibT 100, IELTS 7 for teaching assistantship; Duolingo 125

The graduate program in communication offers graduate study leading to the Master of Arts (M.A.) and Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.) degrees. The program prepares students for academic and management positions, as well as advancement within current career fields.

The department tailors student research projects and academic programs to individual needs and interests. Students may take interdisciplinary graduate course work to enhance their program of study. Information is available on the department's website, [www.ndsu.edu/communication](http://www.ndsu.edu/communication) (<https://www.ndsu.edu/communication/>).

## Admission Requirements

Programs are open to students holding baccalaureate degrees from accredited universities or colleges.

### Master of Arts

To be admitted with full status to the program, the applicant must meet the Graduate School requirements; have adequate study in communication, journalism or a related area; and provide a score for the Graduate Record Examination (GRE).

### Doctor of Philosophy

To be admitted with full status to the program, the applicant must meet the Graduate School requirements. In addition to materials required by the Graduate School applicants must submit:

- A CV or resume which clearly identifies your current position, including your responsibilities, your professional publications and papers, your service and professional activity, and your teaching and training experiences.
- A scholarly writing sample where the candidate is first author (single authorship preferred), such as a master's thesis, proposal, or chapter, a conference paper, or a final course paper.
- Evidence of effective teaching **potential** (please include one or more of the following): teaching evaluations, teaching philosophy statement, recommendation letter(s) that speak to experience or potential of applicant, peer evaluations/observations, sample syllabi, sample lesson plan/assignment, etc.
- Graduate Record Examination (GRE) scores.
- TOEFL test results (required for international students).

## Financial Assistance

Students admitted at full or conditional status will be considered for teaching assistantships at the master's or doctoral degree level, based on the strength of their application materials. Initially, teaching assistants conduct lab sessions for the COMM 110 Fundamentals of Public Speaking class. Teaching assistants may have opportunities to teach other classes during their program.

In addition to the stipend, graduate assistants receive a graduate tuition waiver. Tuition waivers cover base tuition for NDSU graduate credits only. Students are responsible for differential tuition, student fees, and tuition for non-graduate level credits taken or Cooperative Education credits.

## Master of Arts Program

The Master of Arts program is designed for students who are interested in conducting quantitative, qualitative, or humanistic/rhetorical research. The program requires completion of 30 credit hours of graduate coursework with an overall GPA of 3.0 or better. The student can elect to complete a research-based thesis, for which six of the 30 credits are awarded, or a written examination, for which three credits are awarded. A prospectus meeting and final defense of the thesis/written examination is required.

Code	Title	Credits
<b>Core</b>		
COMM 700	Research Methods in Communication	3
COMM 711	Communication Theory	3
<b>Research Tools</b>		
Select at least two of the following:		6
COMM 704	Qualitative Research Methods in Communication	
COMM 707	Quantitative Research Methods in Communication	
COMM 767	Rhetorical Criticism	
SOC 700	Qualitative Methods	
SOC 701	Quantitative Methods	
STAT 725	Applied Statistics	
<b>Elective Specialization</b>		<b>12-15</b>
Thesis Option - minimum of 12; Examination Option - minimum of 15		12-15
Students may also choose graduate-level electives from other departments that may enhance specialized communication study goals.		
<b>Thesis or Examination (Thesis Option - 6 credits; Examination Option - 3 credits)</b>		<b>3-6</b>
COMM 798 or COMM 799	Master's Thesis Master's Examination	
<b>Total Credits</b>		<b>30</b>

## Doctor of Philosophy

The Ph.D. program is designed to be completed in four (4) years, and requires at least 60 credit hours beyond the master's degree. These hours will be in a planned course of study approved and overseen by the student's adviser and supervisory committee.

Students with a master's degree in another discipline may be required to complete additional graduate course work in specific areas of communication deemed necessary by the student's adviser and advisory committee. Graduate work taken beyond the master's degree may be judged applicable by the advisory committee, but post-master's graduate credits beyond 9 semester hours will not count toward the 60 credit minimum required for the Ph.D.

Students are strongly encouraged to take all Summer Scholar courses.

## Course Requirements

Minimum of 60 credit hours in core or content concentration:

Code	Title	Credits
<b>Core Courses</b>		
COMM 700	Research Methods in Communication	3
COMM 702	Introduction to College Teaching in the Humanities and Social Sciences	3
COMM 711	Communication Theory	3
COMM 735 or COMM 783	Theories of Media, Technology, and Society (or organizational communication theory course) Advanced Organizational Communication I	3
<b>Content Concentration</b>		
COMM 700-level courses in the student's major concentration area		12
COMM 700-level courses in the student's minor concentration area		9
<b>Research Methods Courses</b>		<b>12</b>
Exclusive of COMM 700. Maximum of 6 credit hours of independent study		

**Dissertation**

15

COMM 899

Doctoral Dissertation

## Preliminary Examination

When coursework is nearly completed, the Director of Graduate Studies will consider the program of study and student's professional presentations and publications to determine readiness for the preliminary examination process. Doctoral students will meet with their advisers to prepare for the preliminary examination.

After completion of the written examination, the doctoral committee will evaluate the written work. If the committee deems the work to be acceptable, the advisor will schedule an oral examination in which the student will defend his or her examination.

## Dissertation

Under the guidance of an adviser and advisory committee, doctoral candidates will submit and defend a dissertation prospectus and ultimately a completed dissertation.

**Stephenson J. Beck, Ph.D.**

University of Kansas, 2008

Research Interests: Group and Organizational Communication, Interaction Analysis, Communication Strategy

**Ross F. Collins, Ph.D.**

University of Cambridge, 1992

Research Interests: Media History, International Media

**Elizabeth Crisp Crawford, Ph.D.**

University of Tennessee, 2007

Research Interests: Visual Storytelling, Advertising Message Strategy, Advertising Education

**Shuning Lu, Ph.D.**

University of Texas at Austin, 2019

Research Interests: Mass Communication, Digital Journalism

**Zoltan Majdik, Ph.D.**

University of Southern California, 2008

Research Interests: Rhetoric, Computational Study of Language, Digital Humanities

**Carrie Anne Platt, Ph.D.**

University of Southern California, 2008

Research Interests: Rhetoric of Cultural Politics, Gender and Technology, Media in Society

**Melissa A. Vosen Callens, Ph.D.**

North Dakota State University, 2010

Research Interests: Online Pedagogy, Emerging Media and Classroom Technology, Representations of Race and Gender in Popular Culture

**Justin A. Walden, Ph.D.**

Pennsylvania State University, 2013

Research Interests: Organizational Communication, Organizational and Individual Technology Adoption, Employee/Brand Advocacy

**Catherine Kingsley Westerman, Ph.D.**

Michigan State University, 2008

Research Interests: Organizational Communication, Workplace Friendships

**David Westerman, Ph.D.**

Michigan State University, 2007

Research Interests: Computer Mediated Communication, Interpersonal Communication

**Cheng Zeng, Ph.D.**

University of Jyväskylä, Finland, 2018

Research Interests: Organizational Communication

## Emeritus

Ann Burnett, Ph.D., Professor Emerita

Robert S. Littlefield, Ph.D., Professor Emeritus

Paul E. Nelson, Ph.D., Professor Emeritus  
Charles Okigbo, Ph.D., Professor Emeritus  
Judy C. Pearson, Ph.D., Professor Emerita  
Gerald A. Richardson, M.A., Professor Emeritus  
Lou Richardson, M.S., Professor Emerita