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.

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.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Credits</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>COMM 700</td>
<td>Research Methods in Communication</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COMM 711</td>
<td>Communication Theory</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Research Tools**

Select at least two of the following:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Credits</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>COMM 704</td>
<td>Qualitative Research Methods in Communication</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COMM 707</td>
<td>Quantitative Research Methods in Communication</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COMM 767</td>
<td>Rhetorical Criticism</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SOC 700</td>
<td>Qualitative Methods</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SOC 701</td>
<td>Quantitative Methods</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>STAT 725</td>
<td>Applied Statistics</td>
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**Elective Specialization**

Thesis Option - minimum of 12; Examination Option - minimum of 15

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Credits</th>
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<tr>
<td>COMM 798</td>
<td>Master's Thesis</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>or COMM 799</td>
<td>Master's Examination</td>
<td>3</td>
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</table>

**Total Credits**

30

**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 coursework 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:

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Title</th>
<th>Credits</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>COMM 700</td>
<td>Research Methods in Communication</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COMM 702</td>
<td>Introduction to College Teaching in the Humanities and Social Sciences</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COMM 711</td>
<td>Communication Theory</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COMM 735</td>
<td>Theories of Media, Technology, and Society (or organizational communication theory course)</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>or COMM 783</td>
<td>Advanced Organizational Communication I</td>
<td></td>
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</table>

**Content Concentration**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Credits</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>COMM 700-level courses in the student's major concentration area</td>
<td>12</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COMM 700-level courses in the student's minor concentration area</td>
<td>9</td>
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</table>

**Research Methods Courses**

12

Exclusive of COMM 700. Maximum of 6 credit hours of independent study
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