

COMMUNICATION ARTS, MA

REQUIREMENTS

MINIMUM GRADUATE SCHOOL REQUIREMENTS

Review the Graduate School minimum degree requirements (<https://guide.wisc.edu/graduate/#requirements>) and policies (<https://guide.wisc.edu/graduate/#policies>), in addition to the program requirements listed below.

MAJOR REQUIREMENTS

MODE OF INSTRUCTION

Face to Face	Evening/ Weekend	Online	Hybrid	Accelerated
Yes	No	No	No	No

Mode of Instruction Definitions

Accelerated: Accelerated programs are offered at a fast pace that condenses the time to completion. Students typically take enough credits aimed at completing the program in a year or two.

Evening/Weekend: Courses meet on the UW–Madison campus only in evenings and/or on weekends to accommodate typical business schedules. Students have the advantages of face-to-face courses with the flexibility to keep work and other life commitments.

Face-to-Face: Courses typically meet during weekdays on the UW–Madison Campus.

Hybrid: These programs combine face-to-face and online learning formats. Contact the program for more specific information.

Online: These programs are offered 100% online. Some programs may require an on-campus orientation or residency experience, but the courses will be facilitated in an online format.

CURRICULAR REQUIREMENTS

Requirement Detail

Minimum Credit Requirement	40 credits
Minimum Residence Credit Requirement	16 credits
Minimum Graduate Coursework Requirement	20 credits must be graduate-level coursework. Refer to the Graduate School: Minimum Graduate Coursework (50%) Requirement policy: https://policy.wisc.edu/library/UW-1244 (https://policy.wisc.edu/library/UW-1244/).
Overall Graduate GPA Requirement	3.00 GPA required. (See below for GPA requirement of coursework taken within the department.) Refer to the Graduate School: Grade Point Average (GPA) Requirement policy: https://policy.wisc.edu/library/UW-1203 (https://policy.wisc.edu/library/UW-1203/).

Other Grade Requirements A cumulative GPA for coursework within the department of 3.5 or above.

Assessments and Examinations To assess satisfactory progress toward the degree and to facilitate determinations of good standing, graduate students must complete a Professional Activities Report (PAR) each spring. A PAR indicates a student's academic and professional activities on and off campus each year. Faculty will use the PAR in their annual evaluations of student progress. A PAR represents one means of communication between graduate students and faculty, providing graduate students with an opportunity to enumerate their activities in a single document. PARS must be completed by April 1 each spring.

MA comprehensive examinations or theses are generally done in the student's fourth semester of study. To take comprehensive exams or complete a thesis, a student must be in good standing, and must have completed the basic and specific area course requirements. Additional requirements vary by area of study. They are as follows:

- Communication Science students continuing on to the PhD program must complete and defend an MA thesis. Those completing the MA as a terminal option will pursue the non-thesis option. For this option, in lieu of the thesis and oral defense, two of the courses in Communication Science must be numbered 800 or above, and students must pass a four-hour written comprehensive examination which covers communication theory, research methodology, and a topic area of the student's specialization.
- Film students' Comprehensive Exam consists of six hours of writing and an oral defense. The writing portion is divided into three two-hour sittings concentrating respectively on the areas of film theory, film history, and film analysis and criticism. The oral defense—affording students an opportunity to correct, inflect, or expand upon their written answers—takes place a week or two later and typically runs about an hour. There is no option to write a thesis in lieu of the comprehensive exam.
- Media and Cultural Studies students' comprehensive exam, consists of six hours of writing, normally distributed across four questions, followed by an oral defense. Exam areas are drawn from the coursework the examinee has taken in media and cultural studies. Reading lists are determined in consultation with the student's advisor and core faculty members. There is no option to write a thesis in lieu of the comprehensive exam.
- Rhetoric, Culture, and Politics students continuing on to the PhD program must complete and defend an MA thesis. Those completing the MA as a terminal option will pursue the non-thesis option. For this option, students may complete the non-thesis, terminal option by taking a comprehensive exam consisting of three, one-hour written exams addressing theory, critical method, and public discourse.

Language Requirements Students interested in writing a dissertation on a national cinema other than the US are expected to complete two years of foreign language study.

REQUIRED COURSES

Each area of graduate study has further specific requirements for the completion of the MA.

Communication Science Pathway¹

Code	Title	Credits
COM ARTS 760	Advances in Communication Theories	3
COM ARTS 762	Communication Research Methods	3
Four additional Communication Science courses numbered 500 or above ²		12
At least two courses in statistics (see below for options)		6
COM ARTS 904	Communication Science Colloquium ³	4
Electives		12
Total Credits		40

¹ These pathways are internal to the program and represent different curricular paths a student can follow to earn this degree. Pathway names do not appear in the Graduate School admissions application, and they will not appear on the transcript.

² Only one of these courses may be COM ARTS 990 Research and Thesis. Colloquium does not satisfy this requirement.

³ One credit of COM ARTS 904 Communication Science Colloquium must be completed each semester.

Code	Title	Credits
Statistics Course options		
ED PSYCH 760	Statistical Methods Applied to Education I	3
ED PSYCH 761	Statistical Methods Applied to Education II	3
ED PSYCH 762	Introduction to the Design of Educational Experiments	3
ED PSYCH 763	Regression Models in Education	3
ED PSYCH 773	Factor Analysis, Multidimensional Scaling and Cluster Analysis	3
ED PSYCH/CURRIC/ LIS 803	Computational Research Methods	3
ED PSYCH 871	Test Theory II	3
ED PSYCH 960	Structural Equation Modeling	3
ED PSYCH 964	Hierarchical Linear Modeling	3
ED PSYCH 965	Applied Bayesian Statistics for Education Research	3
SOC/C&E SOC 360	Statistics for Sociologists I	4
SOC/C&E SOC 361	Statistics for Sociologists II	4
SOC 362	Statistics for Sociologists III	4
SOC 952	Seminar-Mathematical and Statistical Applications in Sociology	3
PSYCH 610	Design and Analysis of Psychological Experiments I	4
PSYCH 710	Design and Analysis of Psychological Experiments II	4

POLI SCI 812	Introduction to Statistical Methods in Political Science	4
POLI SCI 813	Multivariable Statistical Inference for Political Research	3
POLI SCI 818	Maximum Likelihood Estimation	3

Film Pathway^{1,2}

Code	Title	Credits
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Production Course

COM ARTS 355	Introduction to Media Production	3-4
or COM ARTS 609 Special Topics in Production		

Required Courses

COM ARTS 454	Critical Film Analysis	3
COM ARTS 669	Film Theory	3

National Cinema Courses

Select one of the following:

COM ARTS 455	French Film	
COM ARTS 556	The American Film Industry in the Era of the Studio System	
COM ARTS 613	Special Topics in Film ³	

Modes-and-Practices Courses

Select one of the following:

COM ARTS 358	History of Documentary Film	
COM ARTS 461	Global Art Cinema	
COM ARTS 463	Avant-Garde Film	
COM ARTS 552	Contemporary Hollywood Cinema	
COM ARTS 556	The American Film Industry in the Era of the Studio System	
COM ARTS 613	Special Topics in Film ³	

Power, Identity, and Representation Course

Select one of the following:

COM ARTS/ GEN&WS 418	Gender, Sexuality, and the Media	
COM ARTS 613	Special Topics in Film ³	

Seminar

One seminar numbered 900 or above		3
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Film Colloquium

COM ARTS 902	Film Colloquium ⁴	4
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Electives

Total Credits		15
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² Some required courses may be transferred if the student already has taken equivalent courses. A determination about transferring courses is made by a student's advisor after reviewing syllabi and other relevant materials. Students who enter the program without an undergraduate degree in film may be required to take additional coursework.

³ As COM ARTS 613 Special Topics in Film includes a range of offerings, students should work with their advisor to select appropriate topics.

⁴ One credit of COM ARTS 902 Film Colloquium must be completed each semester.

Media and Cultural Studies Pathway^{1,3}

All students are required to complete at least 24 credits numbered 600 and above.

Code	Title	Credits
Media Production Elective		
COM ARTS 355 or COM ARTS 609 Special Topics in Production	Introduction to Media Production	3-4
Seminar		9
Three MCS Seminars numbered 900 or above ²		
Colloquium		
COM ARTS 903	Media and Cultural Studies Colloquium ⁴	4
Electives		24
Courses numbered at least 400 and above. At least 9 credits must be in MCS (in addition to those listed above). Students may take COM ARTS 609 as an elective if it was not taken as a Media Production Elective.		
Total Credits		40

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² Seminar options include COM ARTS 950 Seminar-Radio Television Film and COM ARTS 955 Media History and Historiography.

³ Students who enter the program without an undergraduate degree in media studies may be required to take additional coursework.

⁴ One credit of COM ARTS 903 Media and Cultural Studies Colloquium must be completed each semester.

Rhetoric, Politics, and Culture Pathway^{1,2}

Code	Title	Credits
COM ARTS 570	Classical Rhetorical Theory	3
COM ARTS 969	Seminar: Contemporary Rhetorical Theory	2-3
Seminar		
COM ARTS 976	Seminar in Rhetorical Criticism	3
Colloquium		
COM ARTS 905	Rhetoric Colloquium ³	4
Electives (courses numbered 300 above)		27
At least two courses must be in COM ARTS.		
At least two courses must be numbered 700 and above.		
At least one course must have primary content focused on issues of race and ethnicity.		
Total Credits		40

¹ These pathways are internal to the program and represent different curricular paths a student can follow to earn this degree. Pathway names do not appear in the Graduate School admissions application, and they will not appear on the transcript.

² Some of the preceding courses may be transferred if a student has taken the equivalent elsewhere. All other courses should be chosen in consultation with the student's advisor. Of the remaining courses, at least two courses must be numbered 700 or above.

³ One credit of COM ARTS 905 Rhetoric Colloquium must be completed each semester.