

Communication (CO)

Courses

CO 101 Oral Communication: 3 semester hours

This course aims to develop competency in basic oral communication skills necessary in the workplace and all of life. The focus is upon interpersonal, group, and public speaking, and based upon a core of theory students will engage in a variety of skill-based activities and assignments designed to enhance their capacities as oral communicators. This course meets the university oral communication competency requirement.

CO 102 Public Speaking: 3 semester hours

This course focuses on the development of public speaking competency necessary for success in the workplace and all of life. Based upon a foundational understanding of the nature of communication and the role of public speaking in society, the course will focus on skill development through varied exercises and speech assignments.

CO 111 Introduction to Communication Studies: 3 semester hours

Introducing Communication majors and minors to the conceptual foundations and occupational parameters of the field of communication is the aim of this class. Students will review core concepts involving the common elements and diverse forms of communication, become acquainted with the areas and methods of study in the field, and explore the range of career options for those with a college education in Communications.

CO 120 Introduction to Journalism: 3 semester hours

This is a basic course in journalistic writing that covers the role and responsibility of the press in a free society as well as the fundamentals of news gathering and news writing for the print, broadcast, and online media. Writing assignments will progress from basic news gathering and news stories to human-interest stories, trend stories, and in-depth feature stories. In addition to class assignments, students will write stories for the Mount Mercy Times. Students majoring in English, education, speech, those working for the Mount Mercy Times, or other publications, or who have career aspirations in journalism, and publishing or writing should find this course beneficial. Prerequisite: core curriculum writing course.

CO 130 Basic Media Grammar for Professional Writing: 2 semester hours

Basic Media Grammar for Professional Writing reviews formal rules of English grammar as applied by media writers. This is a required course for journalism and public relations students. The course surveys formal rules of grammar using a text that puts those rules in a media context.

CO 140 Introduction to Mass Media in the United States: 3 semester hours

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CO 180 Introduction to Public Relations: 3 semester hours

Public relations are a much misunderstood profession, and this course seeks to orient students towards an authentic understanding of the actual practice. Students will be introduced to fundamental concepts of public relations, catch a brief glimpse of past and contemporary practice, and be encouraged to choose their own emphasis from among the many types of public relations. The course serves as a foundation for all the other theory and skill classes in the major/minor. Prerequisite: one course selected from core curriculum writing course.

CO 242 Media Theory: 3 semester hours

In the 21st century we are all immersed in media, as both consumers and producers. The effective practice of both requires not just comprehension of mechanics (software, machines, etc.), but a broader understanding of how media, in all forms, works as a mode of communication and medium of culture. This class is framed with an overview of the different perspectives on the nature of theory, and proceeds through an investigation of key theories of both mass and social media. Prerequisite: CO 111.

CO 250 Effective Group Communication: 3 semester hours

Working in teams to analyze and solve problems is common in most careers today. In most careers it is important to learn certain skills of group communication if one is to contribute to the success of work teams. This course will utilize a core of theory in enabling students to learn such skills by putting them into practice. Prerequisite: CO 111.

CO 260 Intercultural Communication: 3 semester hours

Cross cultural contact is a fact of everyday life, and its frequency will only increase. To assist students in successfully navigating such encounters this course will introduce the theoretical background and problems involved with contemporary attempts to communicate between cultures, with a special focus on the attendant problems of interacting with specifically non-western cultures. In addition to theory, students will be exposed to certain skills necessary to make such encounters succeed in everyday life.

CO 270 Interpersonal Communication: 3 semester hours

This course integrates theory and practice. Students study the premise of symbolic interaction theory - it is only through our interactions with others that we define ourselves as individuals. The course deals with the basic concepts of person-to-person communication, such as the relationship between verbal and nonverbal language, the intent and result of message sharing, and the variables in communicative efforts. Students will learn and apply relational/interactional theory and perceptual, dramaturgical, and dialogic theory as they engage in practical education experiences. Knowledge of theoretical perspectives of communication enables students to create, assign meaning to and disseminate and evaluate messages as they interact in relationships. Prerequisites: CO 101 and CO 111.

CO 280 Writing For Public Relations: 3 semester hours

This course covers basic writing techniques common to public relations, such as writing news releases and writing for newspapers, magazines, institutional publications; writing for broadcast and electronic media; writing features for publications. Prerequisite: core curriculum writing course.

CO 281 Newspaper Reporting: 3 semester hours

This is an intensive course covering the role, functions and responsibilities of a newspaper or magazine writer. Students will gain experience with interviewing covering events and writing stories under deadline. Topics covered will include news beats, public affairs reporting, meeting and speech coverage, sports writing, obituaries, news analysis editorials and columns. Students will gain experience through classroom exercises and by writing stories for the Mount Mercy Times or other approved media outlet. Students will also be able to complete a freelance article to submit for an off-campus publication. Prerequisite: CO 120 or approval of instructor.

CO 282 Research In Public Relations: 3 semester hours

The PR practitioner needs to be capable of a wide variety of tactics, and in the 21st century research is fast becoming vital to the practice. The course will overview the unique role of quantitative and qualitative research work in the public relations process, focusing on research as a tool enabling the effective planning of relationship enhancement strategies between organizations and their publics. Within this framework, the course will introduce students to the construction, administration, and interpretation of surveys and focus groups. To enable the appropriate interpretation necessary for application of data to PR planning, this course will introduce students to basic features of SPSS. Prerequisites: MA 135 or BA 270 or instructor permission, CO 111, CO 180.

CO 290 News Processing for Journalism and Public Relations: 4 semester hours

This course covers the process of taking materials and organizing them into coherent publications. Topics include: editing, writing headlines, magazine and newsletter layout and production, processing of news and features for print and for the web, the printing process, an intensive review of Associated Style, and a review of the copy editor and copy editing roles. This course is a follow-up application course to CO 280 or CO 120. Prerequisites: CO 280 or CO 120 and AR 130.

CO 311 Communication Analysis: 3 semester hours

Fully understanding the nature of communication involves being able to analyze the qualities of communication acts. This course will provide an overview of various means of examining a wide range of communication acts, with the aim of achieving competency in working critically with communication texts. Prerequisites: CO 111, CO 360.

CO 330 Music and Communication: 3 semester hours

Beyond its status as art or entertainment, music communicates, and in this role does different kinds of work in human affairs: from selling products, to protest, to sustaining culture, and more. This course will survey some of these functions, review the dimensions and elements of music that allow it to work as a communication medium, and develop in students the ability to discern the communicative function of a given piece of music.

CO 340 Newspaper/Magazine Copy Editing and Design: 3 semester hours

This is a detailed introduction to the functions of a copy editor and page designer on a newspaper and magazine. The role of the copy desk is to coordinate, finish and design all the elements that comprise the editorial content of the "news hole" in a newspaper or magazine. This course builds on the experience a student gains in CO 290 by focusing on the role of copy editing specifically in a news media context. Students will learn how to recognize and correct common writing errors, how to spot sloppy reporting, how to write snappy headlines and how to design attractive newspaper pages and magazine layouts. Prerequisites: CO 120, CO 290, AR 130.

CO 345 Strategies and Tactics in Public Relations: 3 semester hours

Whether maintaining or initiating relationships with key publics, public relations professionals need to be able to creatively combine theory and skills into coherent plans that meet situational needs. Through case study and practical application, students will gain experience in devising strategies of public relations action, as well as developing their ability to utilize the specific tactic of special event planning. Prerequisites: CO 120, CO 180, CO 280, CO 282.

CO 350 Contemporary Perspectives on Public Relations: 3 semester hours

An education in Public Relations should go beyond skills and tactics to include an ability to think beneath and beyond practice - to explore why things work the way they do and what they can become. This advanced class focuses on contemporary theory and research regarding the nature and practice of PR, and includes a specific focus on PR ethics. Prerequisite: CO 345.

CO 360 Law and Ethics of Mass Media: 3 semester hours

This course is designed to provide students with an internal look at the professional media industry from a historical and legal perspective. The class emphasizes key legal concepts that all professional communicators should understand, such as libel, trademark and copyright. Students will also learn the internal structure of the media industry from a historical perspective, and study media ethics. Junior status recommended.

CO 372 Communication Practicum: 1 semester hour

This course is designed to provide Journalism Majors or other Communication Majors practical experience and leadership experience through an editing role on the Mount Mercy Times or other approved media outlet or project. This course is designed to give students a professional-level experience that will prepare them for CO 280: Internship in Communication. Students enrolled in CO 372 will undertake a specific leadership role to include planning story assignments, overseeing beats within the editorial area of responsibility overseeing the editing of pages and providing ongoing strategic planning for the Times or other approved media outlet. Besides working on the Mount Mercy Times, students may arrange a leadership or creative experience through other outlets. Prerequisites: Approval of the instructor. Normally, students should complete CO 290 before enrolling in this course.

CO 380 Internship in Communication: 3 semester hours

This course will provide placement in offices and organizations that will give students exposure to the field of communication. Examples are: public relations, corporate communication, design, multimedia positions in companies, non-profit organizations, etc. Students will spend a minimum of 10 hours per week for 12 weeks in a professional setting arranged through the Communication Department. Instructor approval is required before registration. Prerequisites: completion of all 100 and 200 level required courses in the communication major.

CO 445 Independent Study: 3 semester hours

Directed readings and research in the communication discipline. Topics to be determined by the student and faculty director.

CO 480 Seminar in Communication: 3 semester hours

This is the capstone course in the Communication major, and so is typically the last class students take in the major. At that point students stand at a junction: looking back over all they've learned in their college years, and looking ahead at their imminent career. This course aims to assist students in developing their vision for both directions. Through discussion, a major senior project, and preparation of career materials (resume, portfolio) students will recognize and demonstrate their accumulated mix of knowledge and skills and how that orients them toward their future.