

DIRECTOR, GRADUATE PROGRAM

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ABOUT THE PROGRAM

The Master of Arts in Communication is a fully online 30-credit graduate degree designed to develop and refine communication skills for multiple audiences. With a strong emphasis on theory, research, analysis, and writing, students develop a sense of the varied communication needs of organizations. Our diverse student population brings experience of many organizational settings to our classes, which allows rich discussions of how differences in organizational structure and culture impact communication. As students move through our curriculum, they are introduced to leadership styles, take on leadership roles in project development, and develop strategies for dealing with conflict. Through a combination of group and individual projects, students are encouraged to develop expertise in their area of interest, connecting theory to real-world situations from day one.

The strong leadership content in this degree sets it apart from many other graduate degrees in Communication. It infuses the values and skill sets needed to build relationships and act as a catalyst for change, enabling graduates to transform their environments. The balance of theory and application coupled with Marist's thesis/non-thesis option provides the educational flexibility for students seeking professional advancement as well as those continuing on to doctoral work in Communication.

At the end of this program students should be able to:

- Address communication questions from a variety of theoretical perspectives.
- Write effectively for multiple audiences.
- Conduct research in communication.
- Demonstrate strong analytical skills.
- Understand leadership styles.
- Develop strategies for dealing with conflict.
- Evaluate communication questions from multiple ethical perspectives.

FORMAT

Part-Time Option—The part-time option is offered fully online. There are two rounds each in fall and spring, and one round in summer. Each round is 8 weeks long. Students take one course in each round, allowing them to complete their M.A. in two years. The application deadline for the part-time option is August 1.

Full-Time Option—The full-time option is offered fully online. There are two rounds each in fall and spring, and one round in summer. Each round is 8 weeks long. Students take two courses in each round, allowing them to complete their M.A. in one year. The application deadline for the full-time option is May 1.

THESIS/NON-THESIS OPTION

The Master's thesis represents a guided research effort by a graduate student seeking to demonstrate mastery of the theoretical and applied knowledge he or she has gained in the Master's program. The thesis option at Marist is highly competitive and requires a formal approval by the Graduate Committee. Students who wish to apply for this option must notify the graduate director of their intent to pursue a thesis by October 1 of their first year in the case of full-time students, and October 1 of their second year in the case of part-time students. Students will submit a formal proposal for a thesis and must be granted permission to proceed by their thesis committee. Upon approval of the proposal, research will be conducted and, once completed, will be approved, presented, and defended before their thesis committee. A limited number of students will be accepted into the thesis track each year. Students may register for thesis in any semester, subject to approval of their thesis supervisor. As with any research, thesis work may not always go according to the timeline, which may result in delayed graduation.

For those not seeking research opportunities or transition to a Ph.D., the non-thesis option requires a final seminar course and comprehensive examination.

COMPREHENSIVE EXAMS

Comprehensive exams may only be taken by students who have completed all ten courses with a cumulative grade-point average of at least a 3.0. Comprehensive exams will cover three areas: Communication Theory, Research Methods, and an Applied Area in Communication. The Graduate Committee will grade the exams. Full-time and part-time students will normally take exams in July/August after completing all coursework. If a student fails or if a student is unable to take the exam in August for some reason, he/she can petition the Graduate Committee to retake the exam in December of that year.

ADMISSION

Admission to the M.A. in Communication is competitive and based on undergraduate performance, a satisfactory score on the Graduate Record Exam (GRE), and a candidate's professional credentials or demonstrated interest in the Communication field. The Graduate Director and/or Admissions Committee is/are committed to looking at the entire application packet and will evaluate professional and academic qualifications holistically.

Applicants to the Master of Arts in Communication must submit:

- a completed application for graduate admission;
- a \$50 non-refundable application fee;
- official transcripts from all undergraduate (including two-year colleges) and graduate institutions including evidence of an earned BA or BS degree in Communication or a related field from an accredited college or university with a cumulative GPA of 3.0;
- an official score report showing an acceptable score on the Graduate Record Examination (GRE);
- a current résumé;
- a written statement of purpose;
- three letters of recommendation.

NOTE: *Marist graduate programs require a minimum of a baccalaureate degree or its equivalent from an accredited college or university. Also, if a student has taken graduate-level coursework at another college/university the student may apply for a transfer of credits. The application for transfer of credits will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis. Under no circumstances will more than 6 transfer credits be allowed.*

DEGREE CONFERRAL REQUIREMENTS

To qualify for the Master of Arts in Communication, a student must:

- complete a total of 30 credits as described in the curriculum requirements with a passing grade on the comprehensive exams or a successful defense of the thesis;
- maintain at least a 3.0 cumulative grade-point average.

STUDENT ADVISEMENT

The Director of the Graduate Program in Communication will assign an advisor to students in the M.A. program. Students are encouraged to contact their advisor to discuss academic progress and planning.

ACADEMIC STANDING

The maintenance of a minimum cumulative grade-point average (GPA) of 3.0 is required for good academic standing. Students must have a minimum cumulative GPA of 3.0 after completion of one semester of full-time study or its equivalent. Any student whose cumulative GPA in any semester falls below that required for good standing, or who receives a letter grade of F, will be subject to academic review and may be placed on probation or dismissed from the program. Students placed on probation will receive a statement of requirements necessary to achieve good standing and will be given a limited time period in which to meet these requirements. Failure to achieve probationary requirements will result in dismissal.

THE MASTER OF ARTS IN COMMUNICATION

Curriculum Summary

COMG 500	Communication Theory	3 credits
COMG 501	Research Strategies & Methods	3 credits
COMG 502	Persuasion	3 credits
COMG 503	Media Relations	3 credits
COMG 600	Organizational Communication	3 credits
COMG 601	Interpersonal Communication	3 credits
COMG 620	The Role of Communication in Conflict and Negotiation	3 credits
COMG 621	Leadership Communication	3 credits
MPA 530	Managing Organizational Change	3 credits
		27 credits

Choose one from:

COMG 602	Seminar in Communication OR	3 credits
COMG 700	Thesis*	3 credits
		3 credits

* The thesis option is very competitive. Students must submit a formal proposal and be accepted into the thesis track by the Graduate Director. All others will take COMG 602 and will be required to take comprehensive exams.

Program Options and Class Schedules

The Full-Time Option is a fully online program allowing students to complete their MA in one year. Full-time students enroll in four courses in the fall and spring semesters, with the final two courses scheduled during the summer session. All courses are offered in eight-week formats with students participating in two courses at a time. All coursework, comprehensive exams, or thesis writing and defense can generally be completed by summer.

Fall

COMG 500	Communication Theory	3 credits
COMG 501	Research Strategies & Methods	3 credits
COMG 600	Organizational Communication	3 credits
COMG 601	Interpersonal Communication	3 credits

Spring

COMG 502	Persuasion	3 credits
COMG 503	Media Relations	3 credits
COMG 620	The Role of Communication in Conflict and Negotiation	3 credits
MPA 530	Managing Organizational Change	3 credits

Summer

COMG 621	Leadership Communication	3 credits
COMG 602	Seminar in Communication OR	
COMG 700	Thesis	3 credits

The Part-Time Option is fully online, enabling students to complete the degree in two years. Part-time students enroll in two eight-week courses in the fall and spring semesters, and one course during the summer session. Comprehensive exams are scheduled in August after the completion of the final seminar. Those writing a thesis can generally complete and defend their work during the second summer of their studies.

Fall I

COMG 500 Communication Theory
COMG 501 Research Strategies & Methods

Spring I

COMG 502 Persuasion
COMG 503 Media Relations

Summer I

COMG 621 Leadership Communication

Fall II

COMG 600 Organizational
Communication
COMG 620 The Role of Communication
in Conflict & Negotiation

Spring II

COMG 601 Interpersonal
Communication
MPA 530 Managing
Organizational Change

Summer II

COMG 602 Seminar in Communication
& Comprehensive Exams OR
COMG 700 Thesis

Graduate Courses in Communication

COMG 500

Communication Theory

3 Credits

This course examines a variety of communication theories, how they are constructed, tested, and revised. Several theories are examined and critiqued (e.g., systems, discourse analysis, critical) with reference to their theoretical traditions. Connections between theory and research methods are explored, as well as the need for consistencies across theoretical and methodological approaches.

COMG 501

Research Strategies and Methods

3 Credits

This course provides a solid foundation for students to understand the process of fact-finding as well as knowledge creation. Students are provided with an in-depth understanding of data analysis and data-collection methods (qualitative and quantitative) commonly used by communications researchers as well as ways of synthesizing and analyzing scholarly literature.

COMG 502

Persuasion

3 Credits

This course examines theories of persuasion and reviews persuasion's role in society. Students will gain increased familiarity with concepts, theories, methods, and research findings; increased ability to apply theories in persuasion; increased ability to compare and evaluate approaches; increased sensitivity to problems of ethics in persuasion; and increased sophistication as persuader and one who is being persuaded.

COMG 503

Media Relations

3 Credits

This course will provide students with an understanding of how organizational relationships with news media influence man-

agement of issues and public relations, and how these communication functions are essential to effective strategic management and leadership of organizations. The course will focus on analysis of advanced cases in media relations.

COMG 600

Organizational Communication

3 Credits

This course will provide students an historical and thematic overview of organizational communication theory and research. It will provide a systematic but critical basis on which to discuss communication in complex organizations and will analyze assumptions and pragmatic solutions associated with these theories. It will also enhance students' research, analysis, writing, and presentation skills.

COMG 601

Interpersonal Communication

3 Credits

This course will introduce students to basic patterns of human communication in order that they may develop a better understanding of the interpersonal-communication process. Through exploration of theories of communication, perception, self-perception, language, and nonverbal interaction, students will develop their theoretical and practical understanding of how interpersonal relationships are achieved through communication in a variety of settings, including family, friendship, romantic, workplace, and intercultural encounters.

COMG 602

Seminar in Communication (Rotating topics)

3 Credits

This course is intended to provide students with an advanced understanding of a specific communication dynamic, context, or other aspect deemed worthy of focus by the faculty of the School of Communication and the Arts.

COMG 620**The Role of Communication in Conflict and Negotiation***3 Credits*

This course examines the role of communication in managing conflict in various relationships: interpersonal, inter-organizational, and international. Special emphasis is given to how the application of communication processes like negotiation can influence outcomes. Current cases are studied to reveal how organizational leaders incorporate ethical decisions and strategic communication in conflict and change management.

COMG 621**Leadership Communication***3 Credits*

This course examines both the theoretical and applied dimensions of leadership, focusing on the communicative aspects of leaders and leadership. Course content covers: managing group members and tasks, models of leadership, situational dynamics of leadership, charismatic-versus-emergent leadership, team theory, trait-versus-situation orientations toward leadership, leadership ethics, and cultural differences in leadership style and identification.

COMG 700**Thesis***3 Credits*

Students accepted for the thesis option will work very closely with his/her thesis director. The student will have to examine a theoretical model related to communication, supported by an in-depth review of the relevant literature; the student should come up with research hypotheses or research questions. These hypotheses or questions will be examined/tested through primary quantitative or qualitative research methods. The final draft of the thesis will be read and approved by a thesis committee. After the thesis is approved, it will have to be orally defended. All Marist faculty will be invited to attend the thesis defense. The final submitted thesis must be written in accordance with the style guidelines for APA publication.

MPA 530**Managing Organizational Change***3 Credits*

Managing Organizational Change covers the theory and practice of improving organizational effectiveness through planned, systematic interventions and change. Typical topics include analyzing organizational cultures, structures, processes, and capabilities; designing needed interventions; and assessing the motivational, educational, and other tools needed for successful implementation.

Faculty

KATHLEEN BOYLE Professional Lecturer. *Degrees:* B.A., Iona College; M.B.A., Iona College

JENNIE DONOHUE Professional Lecturer. *Degrees:* B.A., Syracuse University; M.B.A., Suffolk University

JEN EDEN Assistant Professor. *Degrees:* B.A. & M.A., Northern Illinois University; Ph.D., Arizona State University

LORI BETH GREENAN Professional Lecturer. *Degrees:* B.A., Bryant University; M.S., New York University

NADINE C. HOFFMANN Assistant Professor, *Degrees:* Undergraduate Studies, Rheinische Friedrich Wilhelms-Universität Bonn, Germany. M.Sc., University of Kansas, Ph.D., University of Georgia

MICHAEL H. KOCH Professional Lecturer. *Degrees:* B.A., Richmond American International University; M.A., Ohio University, Athens; Ph.D., Ohio University, Athens

SUE LAWRENCE Assistant Professor. *Degrees:* B.S., University of Missouri-Columbia; M.A., University of Missouri-Columbia; Ph.D., University of Missouri-Columbia

CAROLYN LEPRE Associate Professor. *Degrees:* M.A., Miami University; M.S., Ohio University; Ph.D., University of Florida

KEVIN M. LERNER Assistant Professor. *Degrees:* B.A., University of Pennsylvania; M.A., Columbia University; Ph.D., Rutgers University

G. TIMOTHY MIRABITO Assistant Professor. *Degrees:* B.S., Ithaca College; M.S.Ed., University of Miami; Ph.D., University of Tennessee

JENNIFER L. ROBINETTE Assistant Professor. *Degrees:* B.A., Marshall University; M.A., Marshall University; Ph.D., University of Kentucky

RYAN P. ROGERS Assistant Professor. *Degrees:* B.A., University of Notre Dame; M.A., Syracuse University; Ph.D., University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

SHANNON ROPER Associate Professor. *Degrees:* B.A., Marist College; M.A., William Paterson University; Ph.D., Rutgers University

SUBIR SENGUPTA Associate Professor. *Degrees:* B.A., Jadavpur University; M.A., University of Georgia; Ph.D., University of Georgia

KAREN SCHRIER SHAENFIELD Assistant Professor. *Degrees:* B.A., Amherst College; M.S., Massachusetts Institute of Technology; Ed.D., Columbia University

KEITH STRUDLER Associate Professor. *Degrees:* B.A., Cornell University; M. Ed., University of St. Thomas; Ph.D., University of Florida

ADAM ZARETSKY Professional Lecturer. *Degrees:* B.F.A., University of California at Davis; M.F.A., The School of the Art Institute of Chicago; Ph.D., Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute