

CommStudies Major 2020-2021

The Communication Studies major at Southwestern University focuses on the critical cultural study of communication. The major prepares students for a life of learning and ongoing active engagement with many different communication phenomena. Our curriculum is organized around two subject areas that represent the distinct yet interrelated focal points of the major: Rhetorical Studies and Critical Media Studies. COM courses are numbered according to subject area, not level of difficulty. The basic structural aim of the CommStudies curriculum is to ensure that students have worked in the full range subject areas in the major as well as in an intensive writing and methods class in preparation for the Capstone, which involves a significant original research project.

The CommStudies major requires a total of 8 courses (29-32 credits), comprised of 5 required courses and 3 elective courses in the major. These courses are sequenced to build your theoretical, methodological, and analytical expertise before engaging in original research.

CommStudies Major course sequence:

Typically taken in the first year or sophomore year, this course is required for all other core classes:

Critical/Cultural Communication Studies (COM 75-134)

Typically taken in the sophomore or junior year, both of these courses are required for the major and are pre-requisites for the Methods course:

Rhetorical Theory (COM 75-204) (pre-req: 75-134) Offered every spring
Media and Culture (COM 75-604) (pre-req: 75-134) Offered every fall

Typically taken in the Junior or Senior year as a prelude to Capstone:

Critical/Cultural Methods (COM 75-804) (pre-reqs: 75-134, 204, 604)

Typically taken in the Senior year (application is due in February prior to Capstone year):

Capstone Research Seminar (COM 75-964) (pre-reqs: 75-134, 204, 604; 804)

Electives can be taken at any time, by students at any level

Three CommStudies Elective courses are required for the major.

Choices include:

Rhetorics of Resistance	Race, Ethnicity & Comm	Road Movies
Rhetoric of Civil Rights	Environmental Comm	Journalism
Rhetoric of Women's Rights	Communication & Memory	Identity and Media
Rhetorics of Health	Gender and Communication	Music & Identity
Rhetoric of Surveillance	Communicating Leadership	Film Studies
	Visual/Material Communication	Muslims and the Media
	Public Speaking	

The Department also regularly offers Special Topics courses (75-304) and Academic Internships, which can count as CommStudies elective courses but are not located in a specific subject area. To ensure that you are experiencing a range of CommStudies classroom pedagogies, only one internship or one Independent Study can count toward the major.