

COMMUNICATION ARTS AND SCIENCES, B.S.

Begin Campus: Any Penn State Campus

End Campus: University Park

Program Description

The B.S. in Communication Arts and Sciences promotes an understanding of fundamental facets of human communication, knowledge of theories and research that illuminate communication processes, and expertise in practical applications of communication research to civic, cultural, family, health, interpersonal, organizational, and social contexts. The ability to communicate effectively in personal, social, professional, and multicultural situations is an essential skill in modern society. Discovering how to improve practices of communication in any of those situations—whether from a humanistic or scientific perspective—is equally vital. Students of Communication Arts and Sciences will therefore learn to argue persuasively, think critically, solve problems collaboratively, understand and manage conflict, influence people ethically, form and keep relationships, and participate constructively in civic life. The flexibility of this program offers preparation for a variety of careers, which include administration, business, health, higher education, human resources, law, public service, social or political advocacy, and more. For these reasons, majoring in Communication Arts and Sciences also offers an excellent concurrent degree program: a substantive understanding of human communication—which is valuable in numerous forms of personal, social, or professional life—can significantly enhance students' preparation in many fields of study.

What is Communication Arts and Sciences?

Communication Arts and Sciences (CAS) privileges the study and practice of communication in interpersonal, organizational, public, and intercultural contexts. Using methods and theories that span the humanities and social sciences, faculty and students create knowledge about the history, present state, and prospects of the fact that we can and do influence one another. This major inspires students to be more effective and ethical in the personal, professional, and public roles their futures have in store for them.

You Might Like This Program If...

- You want to learn about the history and theory of communication from both social scientific and humanistic perspectives.
- You are curious about relationships, group dynamics, power, and conflict.
- You want to learn to craft powerful, ethical messages that make a difference.
- You want to develop analytical and critical thinking skills to understand how messages influence people and shape situations and institutions.

Entrance to Major

In order to be eligible for entrance to this major, a student must:

1. attain at least a C (2.00) cumulative grade-point average for all courses taken at the University; and

2. have at least third-semester classification (<https://www.registrar.psu.edu/enrollment/semester-classification.cfm>).

READ SENATE POLICY 37-30: ENTRANCE TO AND CHANGES IN MAJOR PROGRAMS OF STUDY (<https://senate.psu.edu/policies-and-rules-for-undergraduate-students/37-00-entrance-to-a-college-or-major/>)

Degree Requirements

For the Bachelor of Science in Communication Arts and Sciences, a minimum of 120 credits is required:

Requirement	Credits
General Education	45
Electives	21
Requirements for the Major	54

Per Senate Policy 83-80.5, the college dean or campus chancellor and program faculty may require up to 24 credits of course work in the major to be taken at the location or in the college or program where the degree is earned. For more information, check the Suggested Academic Plan for your intended program.

Requirements for the Major

A grade of C or better is required for all courses in the major. To graduate, a student enrolled in the major must earn at least a C grade in each course designated by the major as a C-required course, as specified by Senate Policy 82-44 (<https://senate.psu.edu/policies-and-rules-for-undergraduate-students/82-00-and-83-00-degree-requirements/#82-44>).

Code	Title	Credits
Prescribed Courses		
<i>Prescribed Courses: Require a grade of C or better</i>		
CAS 101N	Introduction to Human Communication	3
CAS 301	Rhetorical Theory	3
CAS 303	Communication Theory	3
CAS 304	Quantitative Methods for Communication Research	3
CAS 311	Methods of Rhetorical Criticism	3
Additional Courses		
<i>Additional Courses: Require a grade of C or better</i>		
Select 9 credits from the following 200-level foundational course options:		9
CAS 203	Interpersonal Communication	
CAS 210	Landmark Speeches on Democracy and Dissent	
CAS 215	Argumentation	
CAS 220	Persuasion	

Supporting Courses and Related Areas

Select 15 credits of other CAS courses. At least 12 credits must be at the 400 level. A maximum of 3 credits from CAS 494, CAS 495, CAS 496, and CAS 499 may satisfy this requirement. CAS 126 and CAS 195 may not be counted as part of the major.

Select 12 credits in quantification from department list. Department list includes courses in MATH (MATH 38, MATH 110, MATH 111, MATH 140, MATH 141, MATH 211, MATH 318, MATH 319) and Statistics (STAT 100, STAT 200, STAT 301, STAT 318, STAT 319, STAT 401, STAT 414, STAT 415, STAT 416, STAT 418, STAT 440, STAT 460, STAT 461, STAT 462, STAT 464, STAT 466, STAT 470W, STAT 480, STAT 482, STAT 483).

Select 3 credits in related disciplines from departmental list of approved courses

3

General Education

Connecting career and curiosity, the General Education curriculum provides the opportunity for students to acquire transferable skills necessary to be successful in the future and to thrive while living in interconnected contexts. General Education aids students in developing intellectual curiosity, a strengthened ability to think, and a deeper sense of aesthetic appreciation. These are requirements for all baccalaureate students and are often partially incorporated into the requirements of a program. For additional information, see the General Education Requirements (<https://bulletins.psu.edu/undergraduate/general-education/baccalaureate-degree-general-education-program/>) section of the Bulletin and consult your academic adviser.

The keystone symbol appears next to the title of any course that is designated as a General Education course. Program requirements may also satisfy General Education requirements and vary for each program.

Foundations (grade of C or better is required and Inter-Domain courses do not meet this requirement.)

- **Quantification (GQ):** 6 credits
- **Writing and Speaking (GWS):** 9 credits

Breadth in the Knowledge Domains (Inter-Domain courses do not meet this requirement.)

- **Arts (GA):** 3 credits
- **Health and Wellness (GHW):** 3 credits
- **Humanities (GH):** 3 credits
- **Social and Behavioral Sciences (GS):** 3 credits
- **Natural Sciences (GN):** 3 credits

Integrative Studies

- **Inter-Domain Courses (Inter-Domain):** 6 credits

Exploration

- **GN**, may be completed with Inter-Domain courses: 3 credits
- **GA, GH, GN, GS, Inter-Domain courses.** This may include 3 credits of World Language course work beyond the 12th credit level or the requirements for the student's degree program, whichever is higher: 6 credits

University Degree Requirements

First Year Engagement

All students enrolled in a college or the Division of Undergraduate Studies at University Park, and the World Campus are required to take 1 to 3 credits of the First-Year Seminar, as specified by their college First-Year Engagement Plan.

Other Penn State colleges and campuses may require the First-Year Seminar; colleges and campuses that do not require a First-Year Seminar provide students with a first-year engagement experience.

First-year baccalaureate students entering Penn State should consult their academic adviser for these requirements.

Cultures Requirement

6 credits are required and may satisfy other requirements

- **United States Cultures:** 3 credits
- **International Cultures:** 3 credits

Writing Across the Curriculum

3 credits required from the college of graduation and likely prescribed as part of major requirements.

Total Minimum Credits

A minimum of 120 degree credits must be earned for a baccalaureate degree. The requirements for some programs may exceed 120 credits. Students should consult with their college or department adviser for information on specific credit requirements.

Quality of Work

Candidates must complete the degree requirements for their major and earn at least a 2.00 grade-point average for all courses completed within their degree program.

Limitations on Source and Time for Credit Acquisition

The college dean or campus chancellor and program faculty may require up to 24 credits of course work in the major to be taken at the location or in the college or program where the degree is earned. Credit used toward degree programs may need to be earned from a particular source or within time constraints (see Senate Policy 83-80 (<https://senate.psu.edu/policies-and-rules-for-undergraduate-students/82-00-and-83-00-degree-requirements/#83-80>)). For more information, check the Suggested Academic Plan for your intended program.

Integrated B.S. in Communication Arts and Sciences and M.S. in Human Resources and Employment Relations

Available at the following campuses: University Park

Requirements for the Integrated B.S. in Communication Arts and Sciences and M.S. in Human Resources and Employment Relations can be found in the Graduate Bulletin (<https://bulletins.psu.edu/graduate/programs/majors/human-resources-employment-relations/#integratedundergradgradprogramstext>).

Integrated B.S. in Communication Arts and Sciences and M.A. in Media Studies

Requirements for the Integrated B.S. in Communication Arts and Sciences and M.A. in Media Studies can be found in the Graduate Bulletin (<https://bulletins.psu.edu/graduate/programs/majors/media-studies/#integratedundergradgradprogramstext>).

Integrated B.S. in Communication Arts and Sciences and Master of Public Policy

Requirements for the Integrated B.S. in Communication Arts and Sciences and Master of Public Policy can be found in the Graduate Bulletin (<https://bulletins.psu.edu/graduate/programs/majors/public-policy/#integratedundergradgradprogramstext>).

Program Learning Objectives

- **Content Knowledge:** Learn communication concepts and theory.
- **Limited Difficulty Outside Classroom:** Ability to focus on material owing to limited serious challenges beyond classroom.
- **Research Practice and Methods:** Learn the practice of rhetorical or communication science research.

Academic Advising

The objectives of the university's academic advising program are to help advisees identify and achieve their academic goals, to promote their intellectual discovery, and to encourage students to take advantage of both in-and out-of class educational opportunities in order that they become self-directed learners and decision makers.

Both advisers and advisees share responsibility for making the advising relationship succeed. By encouraging their advisees to become engaged in their education, to meet their educational goals, and to develop the habit of learning, advisers assume a significant educational role. The advisee's unit of enrollment will provide each advisee with a primary academic adviser, the information needed to plan the chosen program of study, and referrals to other specialized resources.

READ SENATE POLICY 32-00: ADVISING POLICY (<https://senate.psu.edu/policies-and-rules-for-undergraduate-students/32-00-advising-policy/>)

University Park

Liberal Arts Academic Advising
814-865-2545

Use the Liberal Arts Meet the Academic Advisers web page (<https://la.psu.edu/student-services/academic-advising/meet-the-academic-advisers/>) to see the contact information for the specific adviser(s) of this program

Suggested Academic Plan

The suggested academic plan(s) listed on this page are the plan(s) that are in effect during the 2023-24 academic year. To access previous years' suggested academic plans, please visit the archive (<https://bulletins.psu.edu/undergraduate/archive/>) to view the appropriate Undergraduate Bulletin edition (*Note: the archive only contains suggested academic plans beginning with the 2018-19 edition of the Undergraduate Bulletin*).

Communication Arts and Sciences, B.S. at University Park Campus

The course series listed below provides **only one** of the many possible ways to move through this curriculum. The University may make changes in policies, procedures, educational offerings, and requirements at any time. This plan should be used in conjunction with your degree audit (accessible in LionPATH as either an **Academic Requirements** or **What If** report). Please consult with a Penn State academic adviser on a regular basis to develop and refine an academic plan that is appropriate for you.

First Year

Fall	Credits Spring	Credits
ENGL 15 (or honors equivalent (GWS))*	3 CAS 100 (or honors equivalent (GWS))*	3
CAS 101N*	3 CAS Additional course (work with adviser)*	3
Quantification (GQ)*	3 Humanities (GH) + (US)	3
Social and Behavioral Sciences (GS) (FYS)	3 Natural Sciences (GN)	3
Elective	3 Supporting Course (work with adviser)*	3
	15	15

Second Year

Fall	Credits Spring	Credits
CAS Additional course (work with adviser)*	3 CAS Additional course (work with adviser)*	3
Quantification (GQ)*	3 Natural Sciences (GN)	3
Arts (GA) + (IL)	3 Humanities (GH)	3
Social and Behavioral Sciences (GS)	3 Supporting Course (work with adviser)*	3
Elective	3 Arts (GA)	3
	15	15

Third Year

Fall	Credits Spring	Credits
CAS 301*	3 CAS 303*	3
CAS 4XX-level course (work with adviser)*	3 CAS 311*	3
Natural Sciences (GN)	3 Supporting Course (work with adviser)*	3
Supporting Course (work with adviser)	3 ENGL 202A, 202B, 202C, or 202D*	3
Elective	3 Elective	3
	15	15

Fourth Year

Fall	Credits Spring	Credits
CAS 304*	3 CAS 4XX-level course (work with adviser)*	3
CAS 4XX-level course (work with adviser)*	3 CAS 4XX-level course (work with adviser)*	3
Supporting CAS course (work with adviser)*	3 Supporting Course (work with adviser)*	3
Health and Wellness (GHW)	1.5 Health and Wellness (GHW)	1.5
Elective	3 Elective	3
Elective	3	
	16.5	13.5

Total Credits 120

- * Course requires a grade of C or better for the major
- ‡ Course requires a grade of C or better for General Education
- # Course is an Entrance to Major requirement
- † Course satisfies General Education and degree requirement

University Requirements and General Education Notes:

US and IL are abbreviations used to designate courses that satisfy Cultural Diversity Requirements (United States and International Cultures).

W, M, X, and Y are the suffixes at the end of a course number used to designate courses that satisfy University Writing Across the Curriculum requirement.

General Education includes Foundations (GWS and GQ), Knowledge Domains (GHW, GN, GA, GH, GS) and Integrative Studies (Inter-domain) requirements. N or Q (Honors) is the suffix at the end of a course number used to help identify an Inter-domain course, but the inter-domain attribute is used to fill audit requirements. Foundations courses (GWS and GQ) require a grade of 'C' or better.

All incoming Schreyer Honors College first-year students at University Park will take ENGL 137H/CAS 137H in the fall semester and ENGL 138T/CAS 138T in the spring semester. These courses carry the GWS designation and satisfy a portion of that General Education requirement. If the student's program prescribes GWS these courses will replace both ENGL 15/ENGL 30H and CAS 100A/CAS 100B/CAS 100C. Each course is 3 credits.

Advising Notes

This document is only for planning purposes and cannot replace working with an academic adviser. Each student is unique, and some campuses may not offer many CAS courses. Most students are "off the plan" after one semester.

Students need at least 24 credits in CAS courses completed at UP due to competency requirements. Campus advisers may work with the UP CAS adviser if they have questions about what their current students might take.

Two general education courses (GQ, GN, GA, GH, GS) must be integrative studies courses - Inter-Domain or Linked.

Supporting courses include four Methodology courses and one related disciplines course.

Students are required to take one Writing across the Curriculum course. There are three CAS 4XX-level courses that will fulfill this requirement, but any W course will work.

Career Paths

CAS graduates are analysts, strategists, persuaders, facilitators, negotiators, collaborators, connectors, and leaders. The CAS B.S. equips students for success in the workforce, graduate and law school, and civic life.

Careers

The CAS B.S. prepares students for success in careers that value a rigorous and diverse understanding of communication practices. Graduates thrive in careers in business, government, law, public relations, human relations, public policy, public health, healthcare, and more.

MORE INFORMATION ABOUT POTENTIAL CAREER OPTIONS FOR GRADUATES OF THE COMMUNICATION ARTS AND SCIENCES PROGRAM (<https://cas.la.psu.edu/undergraduate/careers-in-cas/>)

Opportunities for Graduate Studies

The CAS B.S. provides excellent preparation for graduate study in communication science, as well as fields such as business, human resources and employment relations, law, public policy, and public health. CAS at University Park has three integrated undergraduate-graduate degrees through which approved CAS majors can earn an undergraduate and graduate degree in five years instead of six: Public Policy, Human Resources and Employment Relations, and Media Studies. The first two are good fits with the B.S. degree.

MORE INFORMATION ABOUT OPPORTUNITIES FOR GRADUATE STUDIES (<https://cas.la.psu.edu/undergraduate/integrated-undergraduate-graduate-programs/>)

Professional Resources

- National Communication Association (<https://www.natcom.org/>)
- International Communication Association (<https://www.icahdq.org>)

- Lambda Pi Eta (<https://www.natcom.org/student-organizations/lambda-pi-eta/>)

Contact University Park

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<https://cas.la.psu.edu/>