

Graduate Catalog 2006-2007

Communications

Major Adviser: Diane Gayeski, Interim Chair of Graduate Program, gayeski@ithaca.edu

The master of science degree program in the Roy H. Park School of Communications prepares graduates to pursue professional careers as organizational communication and learning system designers and managers. Alumni of the program include media producers and communication managers in business, education, and human services; instructional designers; marketing media and public relations specialists; trainers; independent consultants and producers; and communication analysts. Students from all disciplines and professions are encouraged to apply to the communications program.

In addition to the courses described below, selected topics and contemporary issues courses regularly offer opportunities to study such topics as technical communication, global communication and learning, and integrated marketing and training strategies. A speaker series brings noted researchers and practitioners to campus to meet and address our students and faculty.

The Roy H. Park School of Communications is housed in an attractive facility that includes an interactive media and website development lab, desktop publishing and computer-based presentation support media systems, television studios, teleconferencing units, video field production and digital postproduction equipment, digital photo and audio labs, computer-based research and writing facilities, and a graduate student office and computer lab. These facilities, plus a faculty actively engaged in current research and practice, allow students to pursue interests in the areas of

- Organizational communication
- Multimedia, Internet, and intranet site development
- Organizational video and teleconferencing
- E-learning and electronic performance support systems
- Design of learning systems and promotional campaigns
- Communication technology assessment
- Communication consulting and management
- Print and graphics design and layout
- Organizational culture and diversity

Application Requirements

Applicants to the graduate program in communications should include with their application a short letter stating their purpose for pursuing graduate study at Ithaca College and describing any relevant educational or professional experience.

Admission Requirements

To be eligible for admission to the master's degree program, the candidate must have earned a baccalaureate degree from an accredited institution. Overall grade point average at the undergraduate level and academic and/or professional recommendations are among the criteria considered for admission to the program. A personal interview is recommended. The program welcomes applicants from disciplines other than communications.

Master of Science in Communications

A minimum of 36 credits is required to complete the master's degree program, including 18 credits of required coursework and 9 credits of the required elective courses, as listed below. The remaining credits may be selected, with the adviser's approval, from the elective courses provided in the program. Candidates who wish to pursue a thesis may do so upon approval by the graduate committee. Up to 6 credits of related graduate work from an accredited institution may be transferred with approval of the candidate's adviser, if the course grade is B or better and if the work was completed no more than three years before the request for transfer of credit.

Normally, full-time students can complete the 36-credit program in three semesters or in two semesters and two summer sessions. Applicants interested in part-time study are also invited. All coursework must be completed within six years of matriculation into the program.

Required Courses -- 18 credits

- COMM-52000 Organizational Media Production
- COMM-64000 Designing Systems and Messages
- COMM-64100 Management of Organization
Communication, Learning, and Design
- COMM-64300 Research Methods in Communication
- COMM-64400 Communication, Learning, and
Organization Theory
- COMM-68000 Seminar: Theory in Practice

Required Elective Courses -- 9 credits

Media Production (select one)

- COMM-54000 Visual Design and Organizational
Presentations
- COMM-57000 Corporate Communication Media
- COMM-65700 E-Learning

Organizational Communication and Management (select one)

- COMM-58000 Organizational Culture and Diversity
- COMM-58500 Communication Technology and
Organizations

Applications (select one)

- COMM-53000 Communication Campaigns
- COMM-53500 Learning Systems

Elective Courses -- 9 credits

- COMM-51000/51100 Selected Topics*
- COMM-54100 Contemporary Issues*
- COMM-55000 Organizational Video Design and
Production

COMM-56000 Online Learning and Collaboration
COMM-59000/59100 Internship
COMM-65000/65100 Independent Study*
COMM-69000/69100 Thesis (or any other remaining course
in the program)

*May be used with permission of graduate chair to satisfy required electives

Graduate Assistantships

A limited number of graduate assistantships are awarded each semester based on the applicants' scholastic records and their ability to assist faculty members in teaching and research. Financial assistance consists of two parts -- a scholarship and a taxable work-related salary. The appointment normally requires 8-12 hours of work per week. Graduate assistants are normally assigned to work with faculty in the Departments of Journalism, Television-Radio, Cinema and Photography, and Strategic Communication. They assist with classes, tutor students, conduct research, supervise labs, and work in related professional areas such as organizing speaker series and coordinating media programs. Duties and responsibilities of each graduate assistant are arranged by the graduate chair.

Graduate Research Fellowships

A research fellowship may be awarded to one matriculated graduate student who is already enrolled in the program, based on demonstrated excellence in coursework and/or potential for scholarship. The research fellowship consists of a tax-free scholarship equivalent to a graduate assistantship (without the weekly work requirement).

Academic Advising

The chair of the graduate program in communications serves as the academic adviser for all students enrolled in the program. Students writing a thesis select, with the approval of the chair, a thesis adviser and two readers from among the graduate faculty in the Park School.

Pass/Fail Option

Degree candidates must take all courses that count toward the master of science in communications degree, whether required or elective, for a letter grade. The only exceptions are internships, which are only offered on a pass/fail basis.

Thesis Option

The thesis option is designed for students who wish to pursue theoretical or applied research and make an original contribution to knowledge in the field of communications. Students must receive approval from the communications graduate committee and show evidence of a detailed research plan as well as mastery of the research skills, tools, and concepts needed to conduct the proposed research. Upon approval by the graduate committee, the student selects, with the chair's approval, a thesis adviser and two additional committee members who then evaluate a thesis proposal. An oral defense of the thesis is required. The thesis process is described in greater detail in the *Graduate Program in Communications Thesis Guidelines*, available from the graduate program chair.

Students enrolled in the thesis option who have completed all coursework except the thesis will be required to enroll in at least 1 credit of thesis each semester until they finish their degree. Students should work with their program adviser to plan an appropriate course and credit schedule. For international students this schedule will be reflected in the immigration paperwork.

Comprehensive Examinations

All degree candidates are required to pass a written comprehensive examination covering material from the required courses as well as current theory and practice. To be eligible for this examination, a student must have a minimum 3.00 GPA and have completed at least 24 credits by the end of the semester in which the exam takes place, including

- COMM-52000 Organizational Media Production;
- COMM-64000 Designing Systems and Messages;
- COMM-64100 Management of Organizational Communication, Learning, and Design;
- COMM-64300 Research Methods in Communication; and
- COMM-64400 Communication, Learning, and Organization Theory.

Communications Course Descriptions

COMM-51000/51100 Selected Topics

In-depth investigation of a particular topic in the field. Students examine current theory and practice in a given area. A different topic is selected each term. Examples of topics include knowledge management, development and fund-raising, and communication in managed care organizations. Elective. 1-3 credits each (up to 6 credits total).

COMM-52000 Organizational Media Production

Introduction to the design and production of media for use in organizations, including digital images, presentation software, desktop publishing, website design, multimedia, and video production. Emphasis is on creative use of these media in organizational settings. Required. 3 credits.

COMM-53000 Communication Campaigns

The course emphasizes the theoretical foundations of the art of persuasion and the strategic applications of such theories in communication campaigns. Students critically analyze a variety of internal and external communication campaigns, including attempts to improve an organization's image, to sell products and services, to affect attitudes on an issue, and to motivate employees. Additionally, students will design organizational communication campaigns. Elective. 3 credits.

COMM-53500 Learning Systems

An in-depth exploration of theories, models, and principles of design, learning, and instruction and their applications in creating integrated processes and products that help people learn. Along with readings and discussions, a series of projects develops a rich understanding of analysis, design, and evaluation processes geared specifically to learning systems such as training programs, courses, formal or informal learning activities, and self-instructional materials. Elective. 3 credits.

COMM-54000 Visual Design and Organizational Presentations

An examination of the design and production of visual media to be used in organizational presentations. Study of visual literacy theory and research, and principles of visual design, as well as the structuring and delivery of presentations. Students apply visual theories and principles to create still and motion images for messages in stand-up and stand-alone presentations. Elective. 3 credits.

COMM-54100 Contemporary Issues

A survey and analysis of current issues in contemporary organizations, including sociological, technological, and regulatory issues. Sample topics include ethics, new media systems, and globalization. Elective. 3 credits (up to 6 credits total with permission of graduate chair).

COMM-55000 Organizational Video Design and Production

Principles of and experience in planning, scripting, managing, and producing nonbroadcast video programs. Analysis of instructional, promotional, and informational video formats, field production, and all aspects of pre- and postproduction. Elective. 3 credits.

COMM-56000 Online Learning and Collaboration

This online course gives students hands-on experience in using and choosing tools for virtual team collaboration, education, and training. Focuses on applications such as groupware, portals, blogs, expert systems, and online course management systems. Students learn to design and facilitate online learning and web-based meetings and apply research and theory to typical organizational situations. Elective. 3 credits.

COMM-57000 Corporate Communication Media

Models and principles from persuasion, visual design, and project management provide backdrop for the creation, management, and evaluation of linear, mediated organizational communications activities. Promotional and informational websites and print documents developed for internal and external audiences are the primary focus. Elective. 3 credits.

COMM-58000 Organizational Culture and Diversity

Organizational culture provides the theoretical orientation for examining diversity issues in the workplace. Emphasis is on understanding organizations as cultures and as existing within cultures. Both domestic and international organizations are examined. Current organizational practice is assessed, with particular attention to issues such as gender, race, age, ethnicity, nationality, class, sexual orientation, and disability. Elective. 3 credits.

COMM-58500 Communication Technology and Organizations

An exploration of new and emerging communication technologies in organizations and their impact on work design, decision making, interpersonal interaction, organizational structures, and cultures. A review of major theories of technologically mediated communication and empirical research on computer-supported collaborative work equips students to critically select, implement, use, and evaluate communication technologies and develop related organizational policy. Elective. 3 credits.

COMM-59000/59100 Internship

Jointly supervised work experience in the field of communications with a cooperating organization. Intended to provide the intern with an opportunity for professional growth. No more than 6 credits of internship and/or

tutorial may be counted toward the 36 required credits. Prerequisites: Completion of 12 graduate credits with a GPA of 3.00 or better and permission of the graduate chair. Pass/fail only. Elective. 1-6 credits each (up to 6 credits total).

COMM-64000 Designing Systems and Messages

An overview of the theory and practice of analyzing organizational strategies, and applying communication and learning theory, as well as models of practice, to designing appropriate methods of enhancing those strategies. Readings and projects focus on branding and image, change management, persuasion, and instructional design using a variety of contemporary strategies and media. The course includes a group project during which students work with a client to design systems, strategies, and messages to accomplish a specific organizational goal. Required. 3 credits.

COMM-64100 Management of Organizational Communication, Learning, and Design

Develops competencies in the leadership and administration of communication and training departments and projects, preparing students to assume roles as managers and independent consultants. Specific attention is given to the structure and funding of organizational communication and training departments, the development of internal and external communication standards and policies, the management of internal staffing plans and external contracts, and the assessment of learning and communication systems as long-term business assets. Students use case studies and projects to develop their skills in managing client expectations, proposing projects, and managing budgets and staffs. Required. 3 credits.

COMM-64300 Research Methods in Communications

An examination of various communication research and evaluation methods and their theoretical underpinnings. Includes study of quantitative and qualitative paradigms and methods such as experimentation, statistical analysis, interview and survey techniques, participant observation, and ethnography. Emphasis on critical examination of research reports and on basic techniques of applied research in organizational settings. Required. 3 credits.

COMM-64400 Communication, Learning, and Organization Theory

Comprehensive overview of communication theories, learning theories, and theories of organizing as they apply to contemporary organizational practice. Emphasis on analytical understanding of underlying assumptions and major theoretical paradigms from the humanities, social sciences, education, and management. Required. 3 credits.

COMM-65000/65100 Independent Study

Individually designed program of study or project in a specific area of research and/or practice. Prerequisites: Successful completion of at least 9 graduate credits and prior approval of a written proposal by the tutorial mentor and the graduate chair. No more than 6 credits of internship and/or tutorial may be counted toward the 36 required credits. Elective. 1-3 credits each (up to 6 credits total).

COMM-65700 E-Learning

The theory and practice of technology-enhanced learning environments. Focus is on the creation, management, and evaluation of e-learning systems. Emphasis on applying instructional design and learning theory to the development of e-learning products. Elective. 3 credits.

COMM-68000 Seminar: Theory in Practice

Capstone course in which students examine relationships of theory and practice in conducting an applied project for a client organization. Includes study of project management and consulting. Prerequisite: All other required courses must be completed or in progress. Required. 3 credits.

COMM-69000/69100 Thesis

Significant independent research project. Permission of graduate chair and graduate faculty required before enrolling. Elective. 3 credits per course (total of 6 credits).