

COMMUNICATION STUDIES

Contact Information

Division

Liberal Arts

Dean

Patrick Marasso

Associate Deans

Soni Verma, Maria Villasenor

Division Office

W 107, Rocklin Campus

Overview

The Communication Studies program focuses on how people use messages and symbols to generate meaning, critique and relate to one another across various contexts, cultures, channels and media. Providing inquiry into performances of the self and our communities, attending to issues of power and diversity and producing works of media and performance toward social justice; communication is a diverse discipline that serves as the basis for an ever-expanding understanding of how we all communicate.

Students may transfer as Communication Studies majors to the university level and/or use their education as introductory training for careers in social science, media, journalism, broadcasting, public information, media research, public opinion analysis, government and multimedia design.

Faculty

Julie D. Bruno

Professor, Communication Studies

B.A., San Francisco State University
M.A., San Francisco State University

Kimberly Cantrell

Professor, Communication Studies

B.A., San Diego State University
M.A., Arizona State University

Tara Franks

Professor, Communication Studies

B.A., California State University, Sacramento
M.A., San Diego State University
Ph.D., Arizona State University

Aryana Gooley-Carson

Assistant Professor, Communication Studies

B.A., California State University, Sacramento
B.A., California State University, Sacramento
M.A., California State University, Sacramento

Jenifer R. Vernon

Professor, Communication Studies

B.A., The Evergreen State College
M.A., University of Oregon
Ph.D., University of California, San Diego

Degrees/Certificates

Associate Degrees for Transfer

- Communication Studies for Transfer 2.0 (p. 1)
- Journalism for Transfer (p. 2)

Communication Studies for Transfer 2.0

AA-T Degree

Communication Studies is a broadly based discipline that includes public speaking, mass and mediated communication, journalism, interpersonal, intercultural and group communication. The degree program allows students to critically analyze information and arguments, evaluate and create effective oral and written messages, write and deliver effective presentations and formulate communication solutions to problems in professional and personal contexts. This degree program will prepare students to transfer as Communication Studies majors to the university level as well as use their education as an introduction to careers in fields such as journalism, public relations, fundraising, law, broadcasting, mediation, human resources, customer relations, business management and education.

The Associate in Arts in Communication Studies for Transfer degree (AA-T) prepares students to transfer into the CSU system to complete a bachelor's degree in Communication Studies or a major deemed similar by a CSU campus. Students earning an associate degree for transfer and meeting the CSU minimum transfer admission requirements are guaranteed admission with junior standing to the CSU system, but not to a particular campus or major. Upon transfer, students will be required to complete no more than 60 additional prescribed units to earn a bachelor's degree.

To earn the Associate in Arts in Communication Studies for Transfer degree, students must complete 60 CSU-transferable semester units with a minimum grade point average of 2.0, including both of the following:

- completion of all courses required for the major with grades of "C" or better; and
- California General Education Transfer Curriculum (Cal-GETC) (<https://catalog.sierracollege.edu/archive/2025-2026/student-resources/general-education/california-general-education-transfer-curriculum-cal-getc/>)

The exact wording of the law pertaining to associate degrees for transfer may be found in Education Code Section 66746.

It is highly recommended that, prior to transferring, students complete courses that satisfy the CSU United States History, Constitution and American Ideals graduation requirement. In all cases, students should consult with a counselor for more information on university admission and transfer requirements.

RESTRICTION: International coursework from non-United States regionally accredited institutions cannot be applied to associate degrees for transfer.

Required Courses

Code	Title	Units
COMM C1000	Introduction to Public Speaking	3
COMM 0008	Interpersonal Communication	3
Select 9 units from the following:		9
COMM 0002	Argumentation and Rhetorical Criticism	
COMM 0003	Small Group Communication	

COMM 0007	Intercultural Communication	
COMM 0010	Communication Theory, Methods, and Practice	
COMM 0070	Mass Communication: Media and Society	
COMM 0073	Introduction to Public Relations	
Select 3 units from the following or unused course from the preceding area:		3
COMM 0005	Communication Foundations	
COMM 0006	Performance of Diverse Literatures	
COMM 0012	Visual Communication (also AAD 0012)	
COMM 0071	Newswriting and Reporting Techniques	
COMM 0072	Multimedia Reporting	
Total Units		18

Journalism for Transfer

AA-T Degree

The Associate in Arts in Journalism for Transfer (AA-T) degree program provides students with a strong foundation in Journalism by engaging, researching and producing works in a variety of accepted media, journalistic (AP) and performance-based styles.

The Associate in Arts in Journalism for Transfer degree (AA-T) prepares students to transfer into the CSU system to complete a bachelor's degree in Journalism, Communication with a Journalism or Media Studies concentration, or a major deemed similar by a CSU campus. Students earning an associate degree for transfer and meeting the CSU minimum transfer admission requirements are guaranteed admission with junior standing within the CSU system. Students are also given priority admission consideration to their local CSU campus but not to a particular campus or major. Upon transfer, students will be required to complete no more than 60 additional prescribed units to earn a bachelor's degree.

To earn the Associate in Arts in Journalism for Transfer degree, students must complete 60 CSU-transferable semester units with a minimum grade point average of 2.0, including both of the following:

- completion of all courses required for the major with grades of "C" or better; and
- California General Education Transfer Curriculum (Cal-GETC) (<https://catalog.sierracollege.edu/archive/2025-2026/student-resources/general-education/california-general-education-transfer-curriculum-cal-getc/>)

The exact wording of the law pertaining to associate degrees for transfer may be found in Education Code Section 66746.

It is highly recommended that, prior to transferring, students complete courses that satisfy the CSU United States History, Constitution and American Ideals graduation requirement. In all cases, students should consult with a counselor for more information on university admission and transfer requirements.

RESTRICTION: International coursework from non-United States regionally accredited institutions cannot be applied to associate degrees for transfer.

Required Courses

Code	Title	Units
COMM 0070	Mass Communication: Media and Society	3

COMM 0071	Newswriting and Reporting Techniques	3
COMM 0078	Media Production I	3
Select 3 units from the following:		3
COMM 0012	Visual Communication (also AAD 0012)	
COMM 0072	Multimedia Reporting	
COMM 0079	Media Production II	
COMM 0073	Introduction to Public Relations	
Select 6-7 units from the following:		6-7
COMM C1000	Introduction to Public Speaking	
COMM 0002	Argumentation and Rhetorical Criticism	
COMM 0007	Intercultural Communication	
COMM 0010	Communication Theory, Methods, and Practice	
ENGL C1000	Academic Reading and Writing	
ENGL C1001	Critical Thinking and Writing	
POLS C1000	American Government and Politics	
STAT C1000	Introduction to Statistics	
or MATH 0011	Data Science for All	
or PSYC 0142	Introduction to Psychological Statistics	
or SOC 0015	Introduction to Statistics in Sociology	
Total Units		18-19

Courses

Understanding course descriptions (<https://catalog.sierracollege.edu/archive/2025-2026/student-resources/course-information/understanding-course-descriptions/>)

ATTENTION: Effective Fall 2025, the California Community College system will implement Common Course Numbering (CCN) per state mandate (AB1111). CCN courses will be common across all California Community Colleges. One course in Communication Studies has been included in CCN effective Fall 2025: COMM C1000 (formerly COMM 1).

COMM C1000. Introduction to Public Speaking

Units: 3

Formerly known as COMM 1

Advisory: Eligibility for ENGL C1000

Hours: 54 lecture

In this course, students learn and apply foundational rhetorical theories and techniques of public speaking in a multicultural democratic society. Students discover, develop, and critically analyze ideas in public discourse through research, reasoning, organization, composition, rhetorical sensitivity, creative expression, delivery to a live audience and evaluation of various types of speeches, including informative and persuasive speeches. (C-ID COMM 110) (CSU, UC-with unit limitation)

COMM 0002. Argumentation and Rhetorical Criticism*Units: 3*

Prerequisite: Completion of ENGL C1000 with grade of "C" or better

Hours: 54 lecture

Argumentation and rhetorical criticism focuses on methods of critical inquiry, advocacy, and argumentative writing through the written and oral traditions. Students will refine and strengthen critical thinking skills necessary to identify, analyze, and evaluate communicative messages and arguments in a variety of forms. Theoretical components will introduce students to perspectives toward argument analysis to develop and use basic criteria for identifying and evaluating effective, ethical arguments. Significant emphasis will be placed on the sophistication of writing assignments surrounding argument and rhetoric producing at least 5,000 words for the semester. (C-ID COMM 120) (CSU, UC)

COMM 0003. Small Group Communication*Units: 3*

Advisory: Eligibility for ENGL C1000

Hours: 54 lecture

The study of small group communication through the analysis and evaluation of communication theories. Includes planning and completing small group projects and presentations to implement problem-solving methods, conflict management, and decision-making to develop effective communication skills. (C-ID COMM 140) (CSU, UC)

COMM 0005. Communication Foundations*Units: 3*

Advisory: Eligibility for ENGL C1000

Hours: 54 lecture

Introduction to communication theories, concepts, and effective communication skills for a variety of social contexts. Includes practical experiences and skill building in public speaking, interpersonal, intercultural, and small group settings. (C-ID COMM 115) (CSU, UC-with unit limitation)

COMM 0006. Performance of Diverse Literatures*Units: 3*

Advisory: Eligibility for ENGL C1000

Hours: 54 lecture

Introduction to performance studies and issues of diversity and social justice with works that bring these issues to light. Through the analysis, selection, and interpretation of genres such as poetry, oral history, prose, humor, and drama, students deepen their appreciation for literature, gain skill in performance, and insight into the role of voice, identity, and social justice in spoken arts. Focus on critiquing performance in context with key concepts from the field. Includes analysis of literature for themes, script writing, delivery, and the co-production of solo and/or group performance events. (C-ID COMM 170) (CSU, UC)

COMM 0007. Intercultural Communication*Units: 3*

Advisory: Eligibility for ENGL C1000

Hours: 54 lecture

Explores communication between people of different cultural communities both globally and locally. Intercultural communication is grounded within historical, political, organizational and interpersonal contexts that shape our individual interactions. This course focuses on intercultural communication theories and research to help students analyze identity, perception, conflict, and how power, privilege and oppression are perpetuated in societies. (C-ID COMM 150) (CSU, UC)

COMM 0008. Interpersonal Communication*Units: 3*

Advisory: Eligibility for ENGL C1000

Hours: 54 lecture

The study of interpersonal communication through an examination of theory and research findings. This course investigates the application of the principles of verbal and nonverbal transactions, key interpersonal concepts, and the dynamics of communication in personal and professional contexts. (C-ID COMM 130) (CSU, UC)

COMM 0010. Communication Theory, Methods, and Practice*Units: 3*

Advisory: Eligibility for ENGL C1000; completion with grade of "C" or better or concurrent enrollment in COMM C1000 or 5

Hours: 54 lecture

The study of human communication through hands-on research methods that serve as specializations to the field of Communication Studies. This course explores human communication patterns through an examination of critical approaches, key concepts, and founding theories. Students engage in original inquiry, research and data gathering, analysis and discovery. (C-ID COMM 180) (CSU, UC)

COMM 0012. Visual Communication*Units: 3*

Also known as AAD 12

Hours: 54 lecture

Study of visual communication including design principles, aesthetics, visual perception, non-verbal messages, relationship to verbal communication, audience analysis, mass media and persuasion. Historical overview of visual media as well as current trends and technology. (C-ID JOUR 170) (CSU, UC)

COMM 0028. Independent Study*Units: 1-3*

Designed for students interested in furthering their knowledge at an independent study level in an area where no specific curriculum offering is currently available. Independent study might include, but is not limited to, research papers, special subject area projects, and research projects. See Independent Study page in catalog. (CSU)

COMM 0031A. Introduction to Digital Filmmaking and Video Production*Units: 3*

Also known as AAD 79 and PHOT 79

Hours: 90 (36 lecture, 54 laboratory)

Use of digital cameras for producing short form video projects. Introduction to principles, techniques and the terminology of video production and digital filmmaking. Guided classroom exercises and projects, including pre-production planning, storytelling, video and audio recording techniques, on-location set-ups and studio set-ups, lighting for filmmaking, and basic video editing and output. (CSU)

COMM 0070. Mass Communication: Media and Society*Units: 3*

Advisory: Completion of ENGL C1000 with grade of "C" or better

Hours: 54 lecture

Focuses on the intersections of mass communication, media and society. This course examines the evolution of mass communication through modern media (modalities, content and trends), as well as the role of journalism in matters of ethics, perception, representation, and globalization. (C-ID JOUR 100) (CSU, UC)

COMM 0071. Newswriting and Reporting Techniques*Units: 3*

Hours: 54 lecture

An introduction to gathering, synthesizing/organizing and writing news in journalistic style across multiple platforms. Students will report and write based on their original interviews, research, and storytelling to produce news stories. Experiences may include covering speeches, meetings and other events, writing under deadline and use of diversity and AP Style guides. Includes the role of journalists in democracies and relevant legal and ethical issues in reporting news for communities. (C-ID JOUR 110) (CSU, UC)

COMM 0072. Multimedia Reporting*Units: 3*

Formerly known as COMM 30

Hours: 54 lecture

Introduction to multimedia storytelling with a journalism emphasis. Techniques explored include use of audio, video, photos, animation, and text to convey interactive news and feature stories through the Internet and other electronic media. The course also integrates skills in digital research, critical thinking, and synthesis. (C-ID JOUR 120) (CSU)

COMM 0078. Media Production I*Units: 3*

Hours: 72 (36 lecture, 36 activity)

Media practicum that produces journalistic stories for campus, community, and online audiences. Students take on professional roles as various kinds of journalists and editors to report and publish work on digital platforms. Includes weekly news assignments, publication, and distribution through social media and audience engagement strategies. Practical experience in layout, writing or scripting news and feature stories, integrating original visuals and audio, multimedia journalism, and emerging mass communication technologies. Student-produced with student leadership. (C-ID JOUR 130) (CSU)

COMM 0079. Media Production II*Units: 3*

Prerequisite: Completion of COMM 78 with grade of "C" or better

Advisory: Completion with grade of "C" or better, or concurrent enrollment in ENGL 1B or ENGL C1001

Hours: 72 (36 lecture, 36 activity)

Intermediate student journalism and media practicum that regularly produces a news or non-fiction feature product by and for students and distributed to a campus or community audience. Students take on leadership roles as editors and produce stories. Includes weekly news assignments that provide practical experience in design/layout, visual, online, multimedia journalism, emerging technologies, and performance. May include a variety of student media across multiple platforms, including print, broadcast, podcast, radio, and online. Student produced with student leadership. (C-ID JOUR 131) (CSU)

COMM 0095. Internship in Communication Studies*Units: 0.5-4*

Designed for advanced students to work in an area related to their educational or occupational goal. Provides new on-the-job technical training under the direction of a worksite supervisor, allowing students to expand knowledge and skills in the chosen field. Mandatory orientation session and faculty approval to determine eligibility. One unit of credit is equal to 54 hours of work. Students may earn up to a total of 16 units in internship courses (any course numbered 95 and PDEV 94). (CSU-with unit limitation)

Program Student Learning Outcomes (PSLOs)

- Perform in relation to individuals and audiences in a variety of communication contexts.
- Recognize and engage culture, power, and the diversity of human experience in communication.
- Critique symbolic and relational communicative processes through face-to-face and digital interaction.
- Produce works of media and performance toward social justice.