

COMMUNICATION, M.A.

Saint Louis University's master's program in communication is a generalist program designed to teach students to be conscientious thinkers and leaders who communicate effectively in a diverse world and who understand the social implications of media and communication technology.

Through their coursework, SLU's Communication, M.A. students develop fluency in communication theory that can be used to solve practical problems. Students learn to ask thoughtful questions and find engaging answers by building the skill sets necessary to develop research protocols, evaluate messages, analyze data and share these findings with various stakeholders.

Our program allows students to deepen their understanding of communication theory and research. A course in each of the following areas is typically offered at least once in each two-year coursework rotation cycle:

- Health communication
- Intercultural communication
- Interpersonal communication
- Organizational communication
- Media studies
- Rhetoric and public dialogue
- Social justice communication
- Strategic communication

Curriculum Overview

There are three required courses in the 30-credit degree. Beyond that, communication students can develop a personally tailored program of study that fits their individual goals and interests. Communication students have three options for completing the Master of Arts degree:

- Applied project
- Comprehensive exams
- Thesis

Degree Completion Options

Working professionals and those seeking careers as organizational practitioners may be more attracted to the applied project or the comprehensive exam degree completion options, while students anticipating research-based careers or who might progress to doctoral programs should consider the thesis degree completion option. Students select one of three degree-completion options:

- **Comprehensive exams:** Students complete 30 credits of coursework and take their comprehensive exams in their final semester.
- **Applied projects:** Students complete 27 credits of coursework and register for Applied Project (CMM 5890) in their final semester, contingent on a successful oral defense of their applied project proposal in their second-to-last semester.
- **Theses:** Students complete 24 credits of coursework and six hours of Thesis Research (CMM 5990). The six hours of Thesis Research (CMM 5990) may be taken in the final semester or divided between the third and fourth semesters. For the final semester, Thesis Research (CMM 5990) is contingent on a successful oral defense of their thesis proposal in their second-to-last semester.

Careers

SLU's communication program prepares students for greater responsibilities in a range of professions including corporate communications, higher education, journalism, politics, research, organizational development, non-profit organizing, and social justice communication.

Recent graduates work for companies such as Bayer, the Dallas Stars, Federal Reserve Bank of St. Louis, Maritz, the National Catholic Reporter, National Equity Fund, Inc. and SLU. In addition, Saint Louis University's Department of Communication (<https://www.slu.edu/arts-and-sciences/communication/>) has an excellent track record of placing graduates in strong Ph.D. programs for students who want to continue their graduate work in communication.

Admission Requirements

An undergraduate communication degree or a degree in a related discipline with possible prerequisites in communication research is required.

There is no minimum GPA requirement. Successful applicants typically have an overall GPA of 3.0 or above.

GRE scores are not required but may be submitted to strengthen an application.

Applicants whose records vary from these guidelines may be admitted based upon fit with the program, past experiences or letters of recommendation.

Application Requirements

- Application form
- Three letters of recommendation
- Transcript(s)
- Résumé
- Statement of purpose
- Writing sample

Statement of Purpose: The statement of purpose should be about 400-600 words in length. An effective statement of purpose will articulate why a candidate wants to pursue an M.A. in communication, why the candidate is particularly interested in the M.A. program at Saint Louis University (SLU), as well as the candidate's goals for study in the program. We are interested in the content of the purpose statement and the quality of writing demonstrated by applicants. Candidates should discuss the following elements in the statement of purpose:

1. What are your professional or civic goals, and how will an M.A. in communication from SLU help you achieve them? How will the graduate program at SLU support your goals?
2. How have your educational and professional experiences, interests, and civic activities influenced your decision to pursue an M.A. in communication? How has your background prepared you for graduate study and what will you bring to the program?

Writing Sample

Applicants should submit a writing sample that demonstrates their best academic work, particularly in terms of research capacity and critical-thinking skills (e.g., academic research paper, senior thesis, seminar paper, conference paper). The writing sample should be written independently by the applicant and not written with a partner or team.

The sample should be no longer than 25 double-spaced pages (excluding references). The sample should begin with an introductory statement of no more than 150 words describing the context under which the writing sample was produced (e.g., the nature of the assignment for which it was written or conference for which it was developed). The writing sample will allow the review committee to assess an applicant's writing and analytic ability.

Applicants who do not have a recent academic writing sample may submit an alternate writing sample. The scholarly essay should be a minimum of five pages long, integrate at least five academic sources to support ideas and claims, and include a bibliography (any citation style). The essay should address the following prompt:

Prompt: Select a significant communication issue that you would like to investigate further during your graduate studies. Explain how a communication-centered approach can provide valuable insights into this issue. Discuss the potential strengths and limitations of this approach.

Academic Integrity and AI During the Application Process

Academic integrity is of vital importance at Saint Louis University. Although AI tools can be valuable when ethically employed, using AI-generated content in one's *Statement of Purpose* and *Writing Sample* (e.g. copying and pasting content you did not create directly into an application) is considered a **violation of academic integrity**. Application materials will be screened for violations of academic integrity and will be subject to rejection for such violations.

Requirements for International Students

The communication program is reading and writing intensive. International students who achieve success in the program tend to have IBT TOEFL scores at or above 100/120 Total (25/30 Reading and 25/30 Writing), IELTS scores of 7.5/9 Total (7/9 Reading and 6.5/9 Writing), or DuoLingo scores at or above 130. If the language of instruction of an applicant's post-secondary institution is English, applicants do not need to demonstrate further evidence of English Language proficiency.

All admission policies and requirements for domestic students apply to international students. International students must also meet the following additional requirements:

- Demonstrate English Language Proficiency (<https://catalog.slu.edu/academic-policies/office-admission/undergraduate/english-language-proficiency/>)
- Academic records, in English translation, of students who have undertaken postsecondary studies outside the United States must include:
 - Courses taken and/or lectures attended
 - Practical laboratory work
 - The maximum and minimum grades attainable
 - The grades earned or the results of all end-of-term examinations
 - Any honors or degrees received.
- WES and ECE transcripts are accepted but not required.
- In order to be issued an I-20 for your F-1 visa application, students must submit financial documents. Proof of financial support that must include:
 - A letter of financial support from the person(s) or sponsoring agency funding the student's time at Saint Louis University
 - A letter from the sponsor's bank verifying that the funds are available and will be so for the duration of the student's study at the University

Application and Assistantship Application Deadlines

Students who want to be considered for an assistantship must submit their application for admission and an assistantship application by Jan. 31. Find more information about assistantships on our graduate curriculum and funding opportunities page (<https://www.slu.edu/arts-and-sciences/communication/academics/graduate-experience.php>). Students can find the assistantship application in the admission portal (<https://www.slu.edu/admission/graduate/>).

U.S. students not applying for an assistantship who want to be considered for admission must submit their applications by July 1 for the fall semester.

International students not applying for an assistantship who want to be considered for admission must submit their applications by May 1 for the fall semester.

Students interested in applying for admission for the spring semester should contact the graduate program coordinator via email by Sept. 15.

Review Process

The Department of Communication carefully reviews each applicant's material as a package to gain an overall understanding of an applicant's background, goals and abilities.

Tuition

Tuition	Cost Per Credit
Graduate Tuition	\$1,400

Additional charges may apply. Other resources are listed below:

Net Price Calculator (<https://www.slu.edu/financial-aid/tuition-and-costs/calculator.php>)

Information on Tuition and Fees (<https://catalog.slu.edu/academic-policies/student-financial-services/tuition/>)

Miscellaneous Fees (<https://catalog.slu.edu/academic-policies/student-financial-services/fees/>)

Information on Summer Tuition (<https://catalog.slu.edu/academic-policies/student-financial-services/tuition-summer/>)

Scholarships, Assistantships and Financial Aid

For priority consideration for a graduate assistantship, apply by the program admission deadlines listed. Fellowships and assistantships provide a stipend and may include health insurance and a tuition scholarship for the duration of the award.

Explore Scholarships and Financial Aid Options (<https://www.slu.edu/financial-aid/types-of-aid/>)

Learning Outcomes

1. Graduates will be able to communicate effective messages for scholarly and public audiences.
2. Graduates will be able to conduct and evaluate communication research.
3. Graduates will be able to apply communication theories to address problems in a broader context.

4. Graduates will be able to demonstrate intercultural communication competence.
5. Graduates will be able to apply theories and/or practices of social justice and civic engagement.
6. Graduates will be able to analyze the ethical implications of communication and apply ethical principles.

Requirements

Code	Title	Credits
Required Courses		
CMM 5000	Graduate Study of Communication	3
CMM 5801	Quantitative Research Methods for Communication	3
CMM 5802	Qualitative Inquiry for Communication and Social Justice	3
Choose from the following options:		0-6
<i>Applied Project Option (3 credits)</i>		
CMM 5890	Applied Project	
<i>Comprehensive Exam Option</i>		
Comprehensive Exam		
<i>Thesis Option (6 credits)</i>		
CMM 5990	Thesis Research	
Communication Graduate Electives		15-21
CMM 5###	5000-level Communication Electives [†]	
Total Credits		30

- [†] Students may complete no more than a total of nine credits of the following options for their electives:
- up to six credits of graduate courses outside of communication
 - up to six credits of 4000-level communication courses
 - up to three credits of CMM 5980 Graduate Independent Study in Communication (1-3 cr)

Non-Course Requirements

Each of the three degree completion options (thesis, applied project, comprehensive exam) requires a final oral examination.

Continuation Standards

Students must maintain a cumulative grade point average (GPA) of 3.00 in all graduate/professional courses.

Roadmap

Roadmaps are recommended semester-by-semester plans of study for programs and assume full-time enrollment unless otherwise noted.

Courses and milestones designated as critical (marked with !) must be completed in the semester listed to ensure a timely graduation. Transfer credit may change the roadmap.

This roadmap should not be used in the place of regular academic advising appointments. All students are encouraged to meet with their advisor/mentor each semester. Requirements, course availability and sequencing are subject to change.

Course	Title	Credits
Year One		
Fall		
CMM 5000	Graduate Study of Communication	3
CMM 5801	Quantitative Research Methods for Communication	3
Credits		6
Spring		
CMM 5802	Qualitative Inquiry for Communication and Social Justice	3
Elective		3
Elective		3
Credits		9
Year Two		
Fall		
Completion of thesis proposal OR applied project proposal (if applicable)		
Elective		3
Elective		3
Select one of the following:		3
CMM 5990	Thesis Research	
Elective		
Credits		9
Spring		
Completion of thesis OR applied project OR comprehensive exams		
Elective		3
Select one of the following:		3
CMM 5990	Thesis Research	
CMM 5890	Applied Project	
Elective		
Credits		6
Total Credits		30

Program Notes

Students select one of three degree-completion options:

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Students may complete no more than a total of nine credits of the following options:

- up to six credits of graduate courses outside of communication
- up to six credits of 4000-level communication courses

- up to three credits of Graduate Independent Study in Communication (CMM 5980)

Contact Us

For additional information about graduate study in communication, please contact commdept@slu.edu or call 314-977-3510 and ask for the graduate program coordinator.