

# Communication Studies Catalog Course Descriptions

## **COMS 110 Introduction to Mass Communication**

**Three hours**

Prerequisite(s): None

An overview of the role of print and electronic media in the dissemination of information to a mass audience.

## **COMS 210 Communication Perspectives**

**Three hours**

Prerequisite(s): None; COMS 101 and ENGL 100 strongly recommended (or advanced standing on the English placement test)

As a broad-based introduction to communication theory, this course surveys scientific and interpretative approaches to the study, analysis, and explanation of communication within a variety of contexts.

## **COMS 220 Mass Communication Writing**

**Three hours**

Prerequisite(s): None

This course provides a survey of mass communication media formats and writing techniques from news for print and broadcast, to advertising and public relations. The course is designed to enhance the appreciation of the mass communication professional as well as provide an understanding of the basic techniques used by the professional to inform and/or persuade audiences. Students will write news stories, produce copy for broadcast news, create an advertising package, and develop a public relations announcement. Lab fee.

## **COMS 222 Desktop Publishing**

**Three hours**

Prerequisite(s): Completion of INFT requirements and COMS 110 Introduction to Mass Communication.

The ability to type and a knowledge of the computer keyboard is needed. As a caution, students without this basic skill may find this deficit to hinder their progress. Desktop publishing skills and/or topics include a brief history of typography and printing; theory, principles, and procedures of typography; rudimentary design principles; page layout software features that specify type, format style sheets, set up a design grid, appear on tool palettes, permit modification of graphics and text files, etc. Production of desktop publishing projects including simple components generated either by replication or by creation. Acquisition of a working knowledge of a professional page layout program. Introductory use of a scanner. Lab fee.

## **COMS 223 Audio & Video Basics**

**Three hours**

Prerequisite(s): None

An introduction to the hardware and process of video and audio production. Student will learn through a combination of lectures, tutorial and both video and audio projects. Lab Fee

## **COMS 232 Digital Illustration**

**Three hours**

Prerequisite(s): ARTS 110.

Using the computer, a professional drawing program and color theory to create drawings and illustrations for the printed page or the Internet. Production techniques. Training in a professional drawing software program and a 'paint-type' program. Portfolio preparation and presentation. Lab fee.

## **COMS 234 Copy Editing**

**Three hours**

Prerequisite(s): Successful completion of COMS 220 with a grade of C or better or the permission of the instructor.

A writing course that emphasizes advanced grammar skills, copyediting, and proofreading, as well as reporting and headline writing, tease and tag writing, legal and ethical considerations, portfolio preparation, and minimal attention to layout and design. Lab fee.

**COMS 301 Basic Photography** **Three hours**

Prerequisite(s): Permission of the instructor

Introduction to the techniques of taking and processing black and white photographs with consideration of the composition of both still and moving photography. Techniques of taking color transparencies for use in slide and slide-tape presentations, including title boards, graphics, and other imaging techniques. Legal and ethical implications. Portfolio preparation. 35 mm camera with interchangeable lens required. Lab fee.

**COMS 307 Principles of Advertising and Public Relations** **Three hours**

Prerequisite(s): Successful completion of COMS 110 is the only prerequisite for this course.

This survey course examines the principles and theory of both Public Relations and Advertising to help the student better recognize in which discipline he or she is better suited. Special emphasis will be given to the theory and practices, while less time is devoted to the actual production (writing) of advertising and public relations communications.

**COMS 315 Oral Interpretation** **Three hours**

(Offered fall semester)

Study and practice of the art of using speech to communicate literature to an audience.

**COMS 323 Scriptwriting for Visual Media** **Three hours**

Prerequisite(s) COMS 220

A study of writing for television and Internet distribution. Student will learn dramatic and documentary writing techniques and develop scripts in both genres.

**COMS 324 Announcing** **Three hours**

Prerequisite(s): COMS 101

An introduction to the practice of announcing and pronunciation with the development of individual vocal skills and microphone technique in broadcast. Intensive practical experience in developing individual announcing ability and critiquing announcers. Lab fee.

**COMS 325 Interpersonal Communication** **Three hours**

A study of the nature of interpersonal communication and relationships. Attention is focused upon personal responsibilities, interactive factors, message and contextual variables in relationships. Personal skills in stimulating friendships and resolving conflict are examined through exposure to theory, practical exercises, and analysis of personal relationships.

**COMS 330 Small Group Communication** **Three hours**

Study and practice of the theories and methods of group communication.

**COMS 333 Video Production** **Three hours**

Prerequisite(s) COMS 220, COMS 223, and COMS 323

A study of the theory and practice in planning, directing and producing various video productions with emphasis on skill development and production techniques. Prerequisite(s) Lab Fee

**COMS 334 Audio Production** **Three hours**

Prerequisite(s) COMS 220 and COMS 223.

Intensive, practical experience in planning, coordinating, directing and producing various audio productions for broadcast. Lab Fee.

**COMS 335 Argumentation** **Three hours**

Study and practice of principles of analysis, reasoning, evidence, organization, and speaking needed to logically demonstrate and defend a position before an audience.

**COMS 340 Publication Design****Three hours**

Prerequisite(s): Completion of INFT requirements, COMS 110 and the completion of both COMS 220 and COMS 222 with a grade of C or better.

This design course is for the student who wants to work in the field of newspapers, magazines, advertising, or public relations. It is an introduction to the terminology for newspaper production and covers basic design principles: typography, copy fitting, cropping, layout, photo sizing, use of art, and printing processes. Design and production of a newspaper will be required. The students will work on other projects such as a brochure, a newspaper and web pages. Students will use software to create final projects. Portfolio preparation. Lab fee.

**COMS 341 Graphic Design****Three hours**

Prerequisite(s): Completion of INFT requirements, ARTS 110, COMS 222, and COMS 232.

Theory and application of graphic design principles, creative typography, layout, digital illustration, introductory image handling, and printing processes. Application, extension, and integration of skills learned in prerequisite courses. Design and production of basic projects for the printed page. Critiquing of designs. Portfolio presentation. Lab Fee

**COMS 345 Persuasion****Three hours**

Prerequisite(s): None

(Offered spring semester) Analysis and practice of techniques used to change attitudes, beliefs, and behavior in various communication contexts.

**COMS 346 Advertising Copywriting and Design****Three hours**

Prerequisite(s): COMS 222, COMS 220, and COMS 340

An introduction to advertising copywriting techniques for commercial, public service and direct marketing organizations with experience in various types of electronic and print media. Portfolio preparation. Lab fee.

**COMS 351 Digital Imaging****Three hours**

Prerequisite(s) ARTS 110 recommended.

Importing digitized images into the computer via a scanner, a digital camera, or the Internet. Then, modifying the digitized art and preparing it for electronic media or the printed page through electronic pre-press techniques such as black and white tone targeting; color corrections; rotating, scaling, and cropping photographs; retouching; selecting color models; making color separations; and trapping. Training in a professional image-editing program. Lab fee.

**COMS 354 News Writing****Three hours**

Prerequisite(s) COMS 220 and 234 or written permission of the instructor.

The study and practice of news story preparation, including a step-by-step breakdown of each stage of story development for both print and electronic media. The student will concentrate on learning to write reporting style, which is different than expository writing. The student will develop responsibility for the accuracy and clarity of the work from gathering the information to assembling it into an article intended to inform and perhaps persuade. Lab fee.

**COMS 355 Organizational Communication****Three hours**

Prerequisite(s): COMS 101.

A theoretical overview of communication functions and issues in a variety of contexts within organizations. study and development of effective communication skills within the challenging, diverse workplace and other organizational settings.

**COMS 356 Direct Marketing Communication****Three hours**

Prerequisite(s): COMS 220, COMS 307, and COMS 340.

A study of the principles and strategies of direct and interactive marketing communication, including the writing and design of direct mail, telemarketing scripts, direct-response advertising, and digital media.

**COMS 357 Public Relations Writing****Three hours**

Prerequisite(s): COMS 220, COMS 307, and COMS 340.

This course builds upon the news writing techniques taught in COMS 220 and COMS 234 and the principles of advertising and public relations taught in COMS 307, while orienting the student toward the types of written products generated by public relations professionals. This advanced course will refine a student's writing skills while paying close attention to the various formats such as press releases, media advisories, crisis plans, press kits, etc.

**COMS 360 Professional Communication****Three hours**

Prerequisite(s): COMS 101.

This course will integrate principles of persuasive and informative speaking into professional contexts and will integrate written and oral communication through the preparation and delivery of formal presentation, both individually and corporately. The course emphasizes various types of presentations, and organizational communication functioning.

**COMS 367 Public Relations Strategies****Three hours**

Prerequisite(s): COMS 357.

A comprehensive study of public relations strategy, decision making and program planning featuring a case-study approach to learning.

**COMS 371 Advanced Graphic Design****Three hours**

Prerequisite(s): Completion of INFT requirements, ARTS 110, COMS 222, COMS 232, COMS 341 and COMS 351.

Advanced study in graphic design, which integrates desktop publishing, digital illustration, digital imaging, page layout, and pre-press techniques with emphasis on the design process from visualization to production. Design and production of major projects for print including an extensive business identity package and a magazine project produced through both individual and group work. Critiquing designs. Portfolio preparation and presentation. Lab fee.

**COMS 373 Editorial and Opinion Writing****Three hours**

Prerequisite(s): Successful completion of COMS 220 with a grade of C or better.

A study in presenting opinions in a persuasive manner through research and writing. Students will develop skills to produce commentary on contemporary issues that inform, persuade and change attitudes and actions. Lab fee.

**COMS 374 Magazine Writing and Editing****Three hours**

Prerequisite(s): Requirement for admission to 374 is the successful completion of COMS 220, and 234 or permission of the professor. Competency on word-processing machines is required.

An advanced magazine writing course focusing on writing and selling full-length magazine articles with additional emphasis on magazine article editing and knowledge of the marketplace. Lab fee.

**COMS 399-01 Champion Practicum****\*One hour**

\*Note: Although 1 credit per semester; students need 3 hours of COMS 399.

Prerequisite(s): COMS 110, ENG 101 with at least a C, and COMS 220.

This course provides opportunities to apply what has been explored in the classroom through the operation of *The Liberty Champion*, our Liberty University student-run newspaper. Practicum is designed to enhance those acquired skills and knowledge and provide the student with the opportunity to build a portfolio for employment. (Ad/PR students should request a sales assignment.)

Lab fee.

**COMS 399-02 Selah Practicum****\*One hour**

\*Note: Although 1 credit per semester; students need 3 hours of COMS 399.

Prerequisite(s): COMS 110, ENG 101 with at least a C, and COMS 220.

This course provides opportunities to apply what has been explored in the classroom through *Selah*, Liberty University's yearbook. Designed to enhance acquired skills and knowledge and provide the student with the opportunity to build a portfolio for employment. Lab fee.

**COMS 399-03 Novice Radio Practicum****\*One hour**

\*Note: Although 1 credit per semester; students need 3 hours of COMS 399.

Prerequisite(s) COMS 101. Students who have completed COMS 324 will receive preference in enrollment & radio shifts.

This course provides practical hands-on experience in the day-to-day operation of the radio station. Students will gain experience in on-air and production skills as well as an overview of broadcast programming and operations. Lab fee.

**COMS 399-04 Radio (90.9 The Light) & TV (Channel 19) Ad Sales Practicum****\*One hour**

\*Note: Although 1 credit per semester; students need 3 hours of COMS 399.

Prerequisite(s): None

A practical hands-on experience in raising support for noncommercial radio and TV through sales.

**COMS 399-05 Advertising /PR Agency Practicum****\*One hour**

\*Note: Although 1 credit per semester; students need 3 hours of COMS 399.

Prerequisite(s): Permission of the instructor. While priority will be given to Advertising/PR concentration students, this course is open as an elective to students majoring in Business with the Marketing or Management specialization or to Sport Management majors.

Students will work in support of the Advertising and Public Relations agency operated in the Department of Communication Studies under the wing of the Advertising/PR concentration. Students must enroll in this class if they plan to compete in Ad Team or Public Relations Student Society of America (PRSSA) contests. This practicum gives students the experience needed prior to getting an internship or a job in advertising or public relations or marketing or management. (Note: This practicum is dependent on realization of the space committed in the DeMoss expansion project devoted to the advertising agency and public relations agency created for this practicum. The agencies will be operated in the Department of Communication Studies under the wing of the Advertising/PR concentration.) Lab fee.

**COMS 399-06 Graphic Design Practicum****\*One hour**

\*Note: Although 1 credit per semester; students need 3 hours of COMS 399.

Prerequisite(s): Permission of the instructor and ARTS 110, COMS 222, COMS 232, COMS 341, COMS 351, and COMS 371.

Advanced hands-on experience in one or more of these skill areas: layout and design, digital illustration, digital imaging, and web design. Designed to enhance acquired classroom skills and knowledge and provide the student with the opportunity to build a portfolio for employment. Practicum publications vary. Lab fee.

**COMS 399-07 Advanced Radio Practicum****\*One hour**

\*Note: Although 1 credit per semester; students need 3 hours of COMS 399.

Prerequisite(s) COMS 399 Novice Radio Practicum, COMS 334 Audio Production, COMS 220, and knowledge of how to use the audio equipment in the studio.

Practical hands on experience in the overall operation of the radio station. Including experience in on-air and digital production skills, as well as an overview of broadcast programming and operations. This class may be repeated. Lab fee.

**COMS 399-08 Scriptwriting for Visual Media Practicum****\*One hour**

\*Note: Although 1 credit per semester; students need 3 hours of COMS 399.

Prerequisite(s) COMS 101 and COMS 323 Scriptwriting for Visual Media.

Practicum in writing for visual media. Different genres will be addressed from semester to semester.

**COMS 399-09 Television Practicum****\*One hour**

\*Note: Although 1 credit per semester; students need 3 hours of COMS 399.

Prerequisite(s) COMS 101 and COMS 333. COMS 323 Scriptwriting for Visual Media recommended but not required.

Practicum for broadcast-oriented students using on-campus TV facilities. Lab fee.

**COMS 399-10 King's Players Practicum****\*One hour**

\*Note: Although 1 credit per semester; students need 3 hours of COMS 399.

Practical application of dramatic and ministry principles. Student activities include acting, costuming, publicity/promotion, set construction, sound reinforcement, and stage lighting.

**COMS 454 Radio News Production****Three hours**

Prerequisite(s): COMS 110, COMS 220, COMS 324 Announcing, and either COMS 334 Audio Production or COMS 354 News Writing.

A study of the theory and practice of writing and preparing news copy and packages for radio broadcast. Students will write and produce regular newscasts for 90.9 FM. Lab Fee.

**COMS 455 Communication Theory****Three hours**

(Offered fall semester) A study of modern theories of communication with application to various contexts of speech communication.

**COMS 464 Media Applications****Three hours**

Prerequisite(s): Completion of INFT requirements

This "integrated studies" course is for non-COMS majors or for Communication Studies majors who are not going to take COMS 472 Interactive Multimedia Design. This course is a practical study of the preparation of visual media: basic digital presentation tools, basic web design, and/or interactive multimedia. Students will develop the ability to research, analyze, and evaluate visual communication methods and to integrate technology within traditional disciplines.

Lab fee.

**COMS 465 Rhetorical Theory****Three hours**

(Offered spring semester)

A historical survey and study of rhetorical theory in the past and present. Attention is given to Greek and Roman rhetorical theory, theories prevalent in the Middle Ages and Renaissance, and modern rhetorical theory.

**COMS 472 Interactive Multimedia Design****Three hours**

Prerequisite(s): Completion of INFT requirements and COMS 351.

Study of both visual media design concepts and site management for web development. Practical experience in the preparation of digital materials while developing standards to evaluate the presentation of information with these tools. Training in industry-standard digital media and multimedia authoring programs guided by principles of design, including graphic design and user interface design. Lab fee.

**COMS 473 TV News Production****Three hours**

Prerequisite(s): COMS 110, COMS 220 and COMS 333 or COMS 354.

A study of the theory and practice of writing and preparing news copy and packages for TV broadcast. Lab Fee.

**COMS 474 Advanced Audio Production****Three hours**

Prerequisite(s) COMS 220 Mass Media Writing, COMS 324 Announcing and COMS 334 Audio.

Writing and production of dramatic & documentary programs for radio and Internet distribution. Portfolio development. Lab Fee.

**COMS 475 Criticism of Public Address****Three hours**

Prerequisite: COMS 210.

The investigation of public address through historical and rhetorical critical methods. Focus on the development of competent critics through oral and written presentations.

**COMS 482 Specialized Publications** **Three hours**

Prerequisite(s): COMS 340 and COMS 354.

A hands-on approach that allows students to experience the print publication process from the development of an idea through distribution. Students will be responsible for creating the content and design of a publication. Publication management principles will be studied including the costs of publishing, employee relations, logistics of deadlines and distribution, advertising and subscriptions. Portfolio preparation. Lab fee.

**COMS 483 Advanced Video Production** **Three hours**

Prerequisite(s) COMS 323 and COMS 333.

Writing and production of dramatic & documentary programs for television and Internet distribution. Portfolio development. Lab Fee.

**COMS 484 Communication Law and Ethics** **Three hours**

Prerequisite(s): Junior status or permission of the instructor.

A study of the historical development and present status of U.S. communication law and FCC regulations. As well as contemporary codes of media ethics.

**COMS 485 Investigative Reporting** **Three hours**

Prerequisite(s): COMS 354.

An in-depth study of research, story development, interview techniques and writing for investigative stories in mass media. Critical thinking and analysis will be developed as students review court documents and interview witnesses of cases and seek to evaluate the evidence. Research will be developed into a news story. Lab fee.

**COMS 488 Survey of Media Business Practices** **Three hours**

Prerequisite(s): Senior status.

This course is designed to give the student an understanding of the many tasks and duties involved in a media production or delivery business. This will be accomplished via lectures, discussion, individual case study assignments, and, if possible, guest lecturers.

**COMS 489 Communication Campaigns** **Three hours**

Prerequisite(s): Permission-of-instructor and COMS 220, COMS 340, plus at least one of the following courses: COMS 346 Advertising Copywriting and Design, COMS 357 Public Relations Writing, or COMS 356 Direct Marketing Communication.

An in-depth study of the research, planning, development and message creation for complete multi-media communications campaigns, integrating all marketing promotion techniques including advertising, public relations, direct marketing and sales promotions.

**COMS 492 Professional Practices in Graphic Design** **Three hours**

Prerequisite(s): Senior status or permission of instructor.

A senior-level course to further aid students in their upcoming transfer from the college setting to a graphic design work setting. Topics and issues related to professional practices followed by graphic designers relative to relationships with clients, design firms, and employees, as well as free lancing, working as an independent contractor, resources on starting and operating a small graphic design studio, careers in graphic design, professional organizations, and portfolio presentation.

**COMS 495 Directed Research** **One to three hours**

Prerequisite(s): Completion of 15 hours of communication study courses and written consent of the department chairperson. May be repeated to a maximum of three hours.

**COMS 496 Workshop in Communication** **Three hours**

Lab fee.

**COMS 497 Special Topics****Three hours**

Topics of special interest not included in the regular department offerings. May be taken more than once, but no topic may be repeated.

**COMS 499 Internship****One to six hours**

Prerequisite(s): Completion of a minimum of 24 hours of Communication Studies courses and written consent of the department chairperson. Written application must be approved during the previous semester. The course is not intended to be duplicated for additional credit. (Most students take the internship the summer after junior year or during their senior year.)

An internship is designed to allow upper level students to experience the professional world while they are still involved in their academic training. This provides them with both an understanding of the relationship of their academic preparation to their career aspirations and the demands that will be placed upon them in the professional world.