COMMUNICATION STUDIES MA

Admission to the Master of Arts in Communication Studies is currently suspended. Please contact the Communication Arts and Sciences Department to learn the current status of the program.

The Master of Arts in Communication Studies merges advanced skills with advanced academic study. Graduates from the program move on to law school, corporate leadership, PhD programs, nonprofit work, and teach at community colleges. Students receive training in advanced multiple research methods allowing them to study a diversity of phenomena. Students also benefit from advanced classes in specialty areas like organizational, health, political, and intercultural communication. Many of our graduate students also have paid teaching positions while earning their graduate degrees. The MA in communication studies opens doors to understanding the world and to different employment opportunities.

Advising Requirement

Advising is mandatory for this program. Consult your department advisor or program coordinator for information.

Requirements for the MA in Communication Studies

1. Completion of all requirements as established by the department graduate committee, the graduate advisory committee, and Graduate Studies, to include:
   a. Completion of an approved program consisting of 30 units of 400/500/600-level courses as follows:
   b. At least 24 of the units required for the degree in 600-level courses. With Graduate Coordinator and Graduate Advisory Committee approval, graduate students may take up to six units of 400/500-level courses at California State University, Chico.
   c. At the discretion of the academic program, a maximum of six semesters units of special session credit earned in non-matriculated status combined with all transfer coursework may be counted toward the degree requirements. This applies to special session credit earned through Open University, or in courses offered for academic credit through Professional & Continuing Education.
   d. Not more than 15 units taken before admission to classified status.
   e. Not more than a total of six units of Independent Study (697) and not more than three units of Master's Thesis (699T) or Master's Project (699P).
   f. Not more than six units in any one disciplinary area outside Communication Studies.
2. Completion of one of the following plans:
   a. **Thesis or Project Plan:** Requires three units of Master's Thesis (699T) or Master's Project (699P), plus at least 27 units of graduate-level courses. A public presentation and/or oral defense of the thesis or project is required. Students who are planning to continue their education to the doctoral level or who are interested in communication research are encouraged to choose the Thesis Plan.
   b. **Comprehensive Plan:** Requires 30 units of graduate-level coursework, including at least 24 units in Communication Studies. The Graduate Advisory Committee will administer and evaluate six hours of written comprehensive examinations, plus oral review, covering the student's major emphasis of study (e.g., interpersonal communication, rhetoric, organizational communication, or communication philosophy). All components of the exam must receive a grade of "pass" for the degree to be awarded. A failing grade will prohibit the student from continuing graduate work until the comprehensives are passed. Exams may normally be repeated only once, at the discretion of the committee, no later than the following semester. The committee may allow partial rewriting of the exam, but only once. A second failure will result in termination of the student's course of study.
      i. Students selecting the Comprehensive Plan are required to have completed at least 24 units of their approved graduate program, including: CMST 601, CMST 602, CMST 603, and CMST 612 or CMST 613 prior to taking exams. Comprehensive Exams are administered and evaluated by the graduate advisory committee and the Graduate Coordinator.
3. Approval by the department graduate committee and the Graduate Council on behalf of the faculty of the University.

Students without an undergraduate degree in communication and/or significant coursework in speech, rhetoric, public address, communication theory and philosophy, interpersonal communication, organizational communication, small group communication, or intercultural communication may be required to take prerequisite coursework prior to enrolling in graduate classes in communication studies.

Students must satisfy the Graduate Literacy Requirement before they may be advanced to candidacy, prepare a thesis prospectus, or schedule comprehensive examinations.

Course	Title	Units
CMST 601	Seminar in Communication Studies	3
CMST 602	Seminar in Communication Research Methods	3
CMST 603	Qualitative Research Methods	3
CMST 612	Seminar in Rhetorical Theory	3
or CMST 613	Seminar in Rhetorical Criticism	
Select 15-18 units from the following: [1]		15-18
CMST/POLS 604	Seminar in Political Communication	
CMST 606	Seminar in Interpersonal Communication Theories	
CMST 607	Seminar in Organizational Communication	
CMST 608	Seminar in Communication and Learning: Design, Instruction, and Training	
CMST 609	Seminar in Health Communication	
CMST 611	Seminar in Intercultural Communication	
CMST 612	Seminar in Rhetorical Theory	
or CMST 613	Seminar in Rhetorical Criticism	
CMST 698	Special Topics in Communication Studies	
Total Units		**27-30**

[1] Students selecting the Thesis or Project Plan take 15 units and are required to complete 3 units of CMST 699T or CMST 699P. Students

selecting the Comprehensive Plan take 18 units to ensure 30 units of coursework.

Graduate Grading Requirements

All courses in the major (with the exception of Master's Study - 699) must be taken for a letter grade, except those courses specified by the department as Credit/No Credit grading only. A maximum of three units of Credit/No Credit grades (for CMST 699T Master's Thesis or CMST 699P Master's Project) may be used on the approved program. While grading standards are determined by individual programs and instructors, it is also the policy of the University that unsatisfactory grades may be given when work fails to reflect achievement of the high standards, including high writing standards, expected of students pursuing graduate study.

Students must maintain a minimum 3.0 grade point average in each of the following three categories: all coursework taken at any accredited institution subsequent to admission to the master's program; all coursework taken at Chico State subsequent to admission to the program; and all courses on the approved master's degree program. Failure to maintain a 3.0 average in any category will result in academic notice in the master's program. Failure to remedy the deficiency within one semester with appropriate courses approved by the program coordinator may result in disqualification from the master's program. See Graduate Education Policies (https://catalog.csuchico.edu/graduate-requirements/graduate-education-policies/#academicstanding) for more information.

Continuous enrollment is required. At the discretion of the academic program, a maximum of 30 percent of the units counted toward the degree requirements may be special session credit earned in non-matriculated status combined with all transfer coursework. This applies to special session credit earned through Open University, or in courses offered for academic credit through Professional & Continuing Education. Correspondence courses and UC Extension coursework are not acceptable for transfer.

Graduate Time Limit

All requirements for the degree are to be completed within five years of the end of the semester of enrollment in the oldest course applied toward the degree. See Master's Degree Requirements (https://catalog.csuchico.edu/graduate-requirements/masters-degree-requirements/) for complete details on general degree requirements.

Students are expected to make reasonable progress by completing all courses on schedule. Students not adhering to declared schedules will be referred to the Graduate Coordinator for program review and recommendations which may include program modification or dismissal from the program.

Graduate Requirement in Writing Proficiency

All students must demonstrate competency in writing skills as a requirement for graduation. Communication Studies students will demonstrate their writing competence both by articles or papers submitted as a requirement for admission to classified status and by their successful completion of the core courses for the degree (CMST 601, CMST 602, CMST 603, and CMST 612 or CMST 613), each of which requires a research paper.

Admissions to the Master of Arts in Communication Studies is currently suspended. Please contact the Communication Arts and Sciences Department to learn the current status of the program.

Prerequisites for Admission to Conditionally Classified Status

1. Satisfactory grade point average as specified in Graduate and Postbaccalaureate Admission Requirements (https://catalog.csuchico.edu/graduate-requirements/graduate-postbaccalaureate-admission-requirements/).
2. Approval by the department and Graduate Studies.
3. An acceptable baccalaureate in communication studies from an accredited institution or an equivalent approved by Graduate Studies.

An applicant who does not meet all of the prerequisites for admission to classified status (see below) may be admitted on a provisional basis as a conditionally classified student. This admission provides the student a trial period to demonstrate ability. Students are expected to carry at least nine units of coursework at the 400/500/600 level, make no grade lower than B, and finish all coursework (no "incomplete" or "satisfactory progress"). Normally a decision to advance a student to classified status or terminate the student from the program will be made at the conclusion of the student's first semester in the program.

Prerequisites for Admission to Classified Status

In addition to any requirements listed above:

1. An undergraduate major in related disciplines, e.g. mass communication, journalism, public relations, English, political science, psychology, or sociology. In the absence of an undergraduate major in one of the above, and based on the individual student's background, the Graduate Coordinator may make recommendations for courses to be taken as prerequisites for classified status. Such prerequisite coursework will not count toward the fulfillment of master's program requirements.
2. A grade point average of at least 3.0 (B) in all undergraduate coursework.
3. A statement outlining the applicant's motivation, objectives, and expected area of emphasis in graduate studies.
4. At least three letters of recommendation from the applicant's former instructors or professional supervisors.
5. One article or paper authored by the applicant to demonstrate writing skills or one article or paper and a portfolio within the applicant's specialty to exhibit their skills, abilities, and talents in the expected area of emphasis.

Advancement to Candidacy

In addition to any requirements listed above:

1. Classified graduate standing and completion at the University of at least 15 units of the proposed program, nine of which must be in residence.
2. Formation of the Graduate Advisory Committee in consultation with the Graduate Coordinator. Normally, the committee will be formed during or immediately following successful completion of the student's second semester and will consist of at least three members. The chair of the committee and one other committee

member must be members of the department offering the student's degree.

3. Development of an approved program in consultation with the Graduate Advisory Committee and with the approval of the Graduate Coordinator.

Program Learning Outcomes (PLOs) are clear, measurable statements that describe how students demonstrate mastery of the knowledge, skills, and values of the discipline as appropriate to the degree. Graduates of this program are expected to achieve the following PLOs:

1. Articulate the discipline and related subareas. Discuss the current landscape and evolution of the discipline and/or subareas through a variety of roots, noting critical points of development and significant contributors.
2. Appropriately apply communication theory to human communication phenomena. Compare the various theoretical perspectives associated with the discipline in regard to assumptions, predominant focus, and weaknesses. Analyze current communication phenomena using communication theory.
3. Apply research methods knowledge to communication problems. Design and/or conduct a qualitative research study incorporating all the principles of good design. Design and/or conduct a quantitative research study incorporating all the principles of good design. Design and/or conduct a rhetorical research study incorporating all the principles of good rhetorical scholarship.
4. Demonstrate in-depth knowledge of a specialized area of communication studies. Present in written form a comprehensive understanding of a body of research in a specialized area. Orally present and/or defend individual understanding of a body of research in a specialized area.