



MASTER OF ARTS
**PROFESSIONAL
COMMUNICATION**

PURDUE UNIVERSITY®
FORT WAYNE

**Office of
Graduate Studies**

[PFW.EDU/GRADUATE](https://pfw.edu/graduate)

A MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR

Warm greetings on behalf of the graduate faculty in the Department of Communication at Purdue University Fort Wayne! Congratulations on taking the first steps in your journey towards graduate education. Our Master of Arts in Professional Communication will prepare you for the future you envision for yourself. Our dynamic program is centered on the research and practice of effective communication in relationships, organizations, and culture.

Our 36 credit hour program is flexible enough to accommodate students interested in advancing their current career, entering a new career field or working towards enrollment in a Ph.D. program. The program offers three emphases: interpersonal/organizational communication, media studies, and critical/cultural studies.

Our graduates work in diverse fields including the nonprofit sector, corporate training, education, consumer research, business management and beyond. We know our graduate program will be an asset to you whatever your future goals. Please do not hesitate to contact me with questions or to schedule an appointment to talk about the program!



Steven Carr, Ph.D.

Professor
Professional Communication
Graduate Program Director
carr@pfw.edu

BENEFITS

LEARN FROM DEDICATED, EXPERT FACULTY

Our expert faculty are dedicated to serving and inspiring communication studies by sharing their expertise and scholarship. Faculty in the program work to develop and deliver high quality instruction, maintain and present exceptional programs of research and creative endeavor.

Faculty areas of research include:

- Health Communication
- Interpersonal and Family Communication
- Journalism
- Media and Cultural Studies
- Media and Globalization
- Multimedia Documentary Production
- Organizational Communication
- Rhetoric
- Race, Class, and Ethnicity
- Sex, Gender, and Sexuality
- Social Media Audiences

TAILOR YOUR EDUCATION TO YOUR GOALS

Students in the professional communication program gain knowledge of the history, theories, and research practices in communication studies. This foundation enables them to design projects that seek to solve communication problems through analytical and practical application of theories and methods.

Choose from three specializations:

- Interpersonal and Organizational Communication Theory
- Media Studies
- Critical/Cultural Studies

TEACHING ASSISTANTSHIPS

Grad students get to teach classes and gain experience in higher education instruction.

A limited number of teaching assistantships (TAs) are available from the Department of Communication. These are awarded on a competitive basis, thus acceptance into the program does not guarantee receipt of a TA position. Application deadlines differ for students interested in attaining these positions.

OUR STUDENTS



"The best decision I ever made was to begin the MA Professional Communication program with an open mind. My professors and cohorts have been exceptionally supportive and instrumental in building a strong foundation for my career path and academic journey. Through their guidance, I have honed my critical thinking skills and enhanced my relational abilities. I now possess the capacity to articulate my thoughts more effectively, drawing from empirical research and factual evidence.

Serving as a Teaching Assistant, I received unwavering support from the department, which proved integral to my success. I take great pride in knowing that I've made a tangible impact on the lives of the students I had the privilege to teach during my time at Purdue Fort Wayne. These enriched research and teaching skills have not only paved the way for my PhD admission but also secured funding for my academic pursuits. No matter where life may lead me, I will always carry with me profound gratitude for the solid foundation the faculty has laid, providing me with the tools and knowledge necessary to thrive."

Lyzbeth King has secured a fully funded position in a PhD program at Ohio University - Athens.

LYZBETH KING, 2024 GRADUATE



"In the Masters of Professional Communication program, I learned how to conduct meaningful research, how to apply a critical lens to information, and how to clearly present an argument. Being able to finish my thesis in the form of an applied project, I was able to demonstrate my ability to address a significant issue, conduct meaningful research, and to use those findings to produce something practical (I created a Guidebook to Accessibility & Inclusion for Virtual events, especially practical with COVID).

I never could have imagined how well this program would prepare me for my current role as the Women's Fund Director at the Community Foundation of Greater Fort Wayne. Our work is centered on education, advocacy, and research. I'm able to use my research skills in our frequent research projects, especially when it comes to using quantitative data to shape our program initiatives."

CASSIE BEER, 2022 GRADUATE



"Because the field of communication is so varied, students are encouraged to research topics that are relevant to their interests and careers. This means a more tailored program with key communication theories and concepts customized for more relevance and higher information retention. The versatile foundation of rich research concepts has proved invaluable in my marketing career."

Ashley currently runs her own business, Pilcrow Marketing.

ASHLEY MOTIA, 2016 GRADUATE



"I had amazing professors and mentors who believed in and encouraged me, big time. I started to get a sense of who I was and what I could accomplish. I enjoyed my undergraduate studies, even with the challenges of being a "returning adult student" with a family, but graduate courses were a whole new world. I got to dive deeper into the field I really loved and was good at; I was able to study more of the areas for which I was really interested and expand upon what I previously learned. The program at Purdue Fort Wayne is like a little family - you really get to know your professors and fellow classmates and everyone was excited and encouraging about our work."

Molly is currently the Vice President and Director of Account Service at Asher Agency in Fort Wayne.

MOLLY LINK, 2011 GRADUATE

MASTER OF ARTS IN PROFESSIONAL COMMUNICATION

COURSE OF STUDY

The master's program can help you achieve your goals, whether you are looking to enhance your career in broadcasting, business, education, new media, or social services; or if you are preparing to enter a Ph.D. program. The course of study requires completion of 36 credit hours with three components:

- Core requirements
- Specialization courses
- Plan of study application through one of the following:
 - Comprehensive Exams, Thesis, or Professional/Creative Project.

The curriculum consists of 36 credits in approved courses and one of the following: a comprehensive examination, a professional project, or a thesis.

There are three specializations in the program:

- Interpersonal and organizational communication theory
- Media studies
- Critical/cultural studies

The program meets the needs of students who work full time. During fall and spring, most graduate courses are scheduled once a week in the evening. During summer, an additional course is offered. Students can take one class a semester, or go full-time and complete the program in less than two years.

COGNATE STUDIES (0-12 CREDIT HOURS)

Students are also encouraged to take 500-level courses in other graduate programs on campus (students often take classes in Organizational Leadership and/or English).

To count cognate courses toward your Plan of Study, you must gain approval. If you have not put together your Advisory Committee, you must propose cognate coursework to the Graduate Program Director. If you have put together your Advisory Committee, you must get approval from your Committee, who will make a recommendation to the Graduate Program Director.

DIRECTED STUDY OF SPECIAL PROBLEMS (COM 59000)

This course provides a valuable opportunity for students to pursue interests that lays the foundation in regularly scheduled courses. This course is not to be used as a substitute for a regularly scheduled, titled course. Students must present a plan of study approved by the COM faculty member[s] who will direct the study.

COURSES

View our [Program Requirements](#)

COMPREHENSIVE EXAMINATION (NON-THESIS) OPTION:

- 36 credits + Advisory Committee Written and Oral Exam
- This examination consists of a take-home written examination and a one-hour oral examination. The examination will test the candidate's knowledge and understanding of one area of competency/ specialization claimed by the student including (1) the theoretical foundations of the student's area of communication inquiry, (2) relevant methodological approaches, and (3) the research literature in the candidate's area of specialization.
- The Committee will determine whether some or all of the answers passed, failed, or required a revision. The student must pass all of the questions.

PROFESSIONAL/CREATIVE PROJECT

- 6 credits + Professional/Creative Project
- The purpose of a creative/ professional project is to demonstrate professional competence in an applied setting. The professional project has two parts: The analysis component and the professional skills/creative component.
- Students will conduct research, synthesize and analyze information, and present information to an audience.
- The professional project is designed for students pursuing the MA or MS as a terminal degree. Students considering doctoral work should discuss the alternative thesis plan with their advisor.

THESIS

- 6 credits + Master's Thesis Research Project
- Complete a research project that applies the theories and methods of a given approach to communication research.
- Students will conduct this research under the supervision of their advisor and their work will ultimately need the approval of their advisory committee. This project allows students to leave the program with a proven track record in research.

STUDENT THESIS EXAMPLES

- Who Am I: An Autoethnography on Mixed Ethno-Racial Identity and the Impact of Validation Within In-Groups and Out-Groups
 - Rachel P Mitchell
- The Pressures Working Moms Face Performing in their Careers and their Homes: Creating and Fostering Resiliency in a Social Media Saturated Society
 - Lindsay M Butcher
- Historical, Social, and Personal Narratives on Mental Health: How the Perception of Stigma Affects the Likelihood to Seek Help
 - Olivia Joy Schumacher
- Practicing Culturally Sensitive Care: What Can Health Care Providers Do?
 - Tao Jin
- Social Media in Politics: Exploring Trump's Rhetorical Strategy During the 2016 U.S. Presidential Campaign Within Twitter's Discursive Space
 - Christa L Jennings
- How Students' Gender and Sex Affects Comfort with Instructor Immediacy Behaviors
 - Anthony T Machette

APPLICATION DEADLINES

FEB
15

Recommended for all fall applicants for best selection of classes and assistantships

APR
1

International:
regular fall admission

APR
15

U.S. Citizen:
conditional fall admission

AUG
15

U.S. Citizen:
regular fall admission

SEP
15

Recommended for all spring applicants for best selection of classes and assistantships

NOV
1

International:
regular spring admission

NOV
15

U.S. Citizen:
conditional spring admission

JAN
2

U.S. Citizen:
regular spring admission

STEPS TO APPLY

Application: To begin your application create an account through the portal at pfw.edu/grad-apply. Applicants can make and save changes before submitting by logging in with the username and password used to create the account.

Application Fee: The Graduate School application fee is \$60 (U.S. dollars) for domestic applicants and \$75 (U.S. dollars) for international applicants. Your application will not be processed until your nonrefundable application fee has been paid.

Transcripts: Through the application portal, you must upload transcript(s) and/or academic document(s) for every institution of higher education you attended regardless of whether or not a degree was received. If a degree was received then it must be printed on the transcripts. If no degree conferral is printed on the transcripts then a copy of the original diploma (degree certificate) is needed. If the documents are not in English, you must upload an English translation certified by the college or university that issued it. For those who have completed degrees in the People's Republic of China, you will also be required to submit the Graduation Certificate.

Statement of Purpose (Essay): The statement of purpose should be no more than two pages concerning your purpose for undertaking or continuing graduate study, your reasons for wanting to study at Purdue Fort Wayne, and your research interests, professional plans, and career goals. You also may explain any special circumstances applicable to your background and elaborate on your scholarly publications, awards, achievements, abilities, and/or professional history.

Recommendations: Submit names of three individuals who are qualified to evaluate your academic or on-the-job performance who can attest to your ability to pursue a graduate degree. In the online application to the Purdue Graduate School, once you click "Send to Recommender," each individual will receive an email with instructions for submitting their recommendation online. Once submitted, the graduate program to which you applied will have access to view your recommendation(s).

[APPLY HERE](#)

INTERNATIONAL APPLICANTS

All international applicants must also submit the following items to be considered for admission:

- **English Proficiency Scores:**

TOEFL iBT Overall Score: 80 with the following minimum section requirements:

Reading: 19

Listening: 14

Speaking: 18

Writing: 18

IELTS Overall Score: 6.5 with the following minimum section requirements:

Reading: 6.5

Listening: 6.0

Speaking: 6.0

Writing: 5.5

TOEFL Essentials Overall Score: 8 with the following minimum section requirements:

Reading: 8

Listening: 8

Speaking: 8

Writing: 8

Duolingo English Test Overall Score: 115 with the following minimum section requirements:

Literacy: 115

Comprehension: 115

Conversation: 115

Production: 115

ELS- Certificate Level 112

Waiver of English Proficiency Scores

Routine waivers of an English Proficiency exam are granted for applicants that meet an alternate criterion:

- Earned a Baccalaureate, graduate, or professional degree within the last 36 months prior to the time of recommendation for admission - from a school where English is the primary language of instruction, in a country where English is the native language.
- Citizen of official English-speaking country

Note: Some graduate programs may still require a test of English proficiency, please confirm the acceptance of the waiver with your department.

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