Communication Studies

Faculty Office Bldg. (47), Room 33
805 756-2553

Department Chair, Terrence C. Winebrenner
James R. Conway          Lorraine D. Jackson
Bernard K. Duffy          Steven T. McDermott
Michael L. Fahs           Raymond F. Zeuschner

ACADEMIC PROGRAMS
Communication Studies – BA, Minor

Understanding the process of communication is no less important in today's Information Age than it was during the Golden Age of Athens, when skill in oral communication determined one's success in life. The study of the human capacity for speech as a means of influence, entertainment, and information was at the foundation of Western Civilization. A course of study in communication, always one that required knowledge of many cognate fields like psychology and logic, is still interdisciplinary in nature. Faculty in communication studies teach aesthetic, historical, critical and empirical methods for understanding communication.

The aims of the discipline are both conceptual and practical. The study of communication embodies the concerns of rhetoric, one of the three original liberal arts. In broad terms, students who enroll in a liberal arts curriculum do so to develop the ability to analyze and reason critically, write and speak effectively, and appreciate the influences of culture upon their lives. The first goal of the department is to advance these objectives.

Courses in the modern discipline of communication studies focus on the history and theory of communication. The field embraces communication in all contexts: political, organizational, debate, small group, intercultural, instructional, mass media, and performance of literature. The emphasis on developing theoretical insights unites these various fields.

The department offers fully articulated major and minor programs. Through the use of advisor approved electives, the major can be shaped to assist students in preparing for their educational and career objectives. Students use a communication studies major to prepare for careers in business, advertising and public relations, theatre, law, education, the mass media, and the clergy. In addition to providing students with an option to select from a broad range of internships and the opportunity to participate in the Teaching Credential Program, the department houses an extensive program in competitive debate. It also offers individual and sequenced courses to develop practical skills in oral composition, critical thinking, and effective human communication.