

# COMMUNICATION

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## Departmental Guidelines

The Communication Department offers a rigorous and robust curriculum that addresses three overarching areas of study: Relational Communication, Rhetoric, and Media Studies. In the tradition of the liberal arts, we encourage students to take courses from all three areas of study to appreciate the complexity of communication. It is our commitment to educate autonomous thinkers who use moral discernment when addressing the issues of our time through a curriculum that engages students in intersecting media, texts, and interactions when analyzing meaning-making in any given context.

Our curriculum emphasizes cognitive complexity in processes of inquiry, analysis, reflection, writing, and speaking.

- At the 100-level, courses introduce topics relevant to the study of communication and ways of thinking about communication in the world;
- 200-level courses introduce theoretical perspectives, assisting students in formulating and investigating questions appropriate to the discipline as taught at Denison;
- 300-level courses explore theory and research that helps students utilize the power of communication perspectives and methodologies on topics important to them and to society;
- 400-level courses engage students in developing proficiency in the study of communication and producing new knowledge that is socially significant, ethically informed, and fundamental to cultivating one's self as a life-long learner.

Throughout the curriculum we generate opportunities in many ways for students to practice what they are learning. Students practice the discipline through structured opportunities that promote original research in senior seminars, conference presentations, journal publications, and summer research. In terms of less traditional modes of practice students have multiple opportunities to address publics through speaking and writing, ethically engaging with other students from a variety of backgrounds and perspectives, using technology as agents rather than consumers, and interrogating and rethinking the performance of the self. Insofar as "practicing" the discipline involves mindful awareness and reflection on the processes of communication that continually surround students, the department does this as a matter of course.

## Mission Statement

A sympathetic affinity between the study of communication and the community, which keeps theory symmetrically aligned with praxis, is essential to the vitality of the discipline and thus to those who seek a degree within it. Therefore, the department sees its mission as educating students about communication within a framework that emphasizes social justice, ethical interaction, community involvement, and an understanding of the workings of power and privilege.

### Among our goals—faculty and Communication students alike—are:

- To understand the role communication plays in the construction of knowledge;
- To critically analyze and evaluate communicative processes and actions;
- To study communication in order to make us more humane and create a community of understanding;

- To develop imagination and creativity in our approach to the study of communication;

We provide a range of resources and programs for students including academically rigorous classes, opportunities to work closely with professors on research, creative teaching that often includes service learning, regular research colloquia and guest speakers, a national honorary society, and more.