

The University of Massachusetts Amherst
Communication Major

NEW PERSPECTIVES, EXCITING OPPORTUNITIES



UMass**Amherst**



Integrative Learning Center

THEMED SUBJECT AREAS HELP YOU FOCUS IN AN EXPANSIVE FIELD

Because communication is so broad a field, undergraduate courses are organized by subject areas:

- Film Studies
- Interpersonal Communication and Culture
- Media and Popular Culture Studies
- Media, Technology, and Society
- Rhetoric and Performance Studies

We also offer classes focused on communication skills, including public speaking, writing and screenwriting,

research methods, leadership and service learning, and video production.

LEARN IN STATE-OF-THE-ART FACILITIES

The Department of Communication is housed in the new Integrative Learning Center, where the instructional spaces include state-of-the-art television studios and field-production equipment, digital post-production rooms and editing suites, a computer classroom, a screening room, and small seminar rooms.

AS A COMMUNICATION MAJOR

at UMass Amherst you'll learn in the liberal arts tradition, which emphasizes critical thinking, systematic analysis, writing, and speaking—skills essential for success in today's careers and for informed and engaged citizenship. The Department of Communication emphasizes theory and methods of inquiry across the curriculum, and students may supplement the main curriculum with hands-on courses in communication skills. Our approach allows for rich personal growth and a deep understanding of the cultural and social environments in which we live and work.



RIGHT
Professor Sut Jhally
(second from left) with
students at the 2013
Welcome Party.

BELOW
Department Chair and
Professor Erica Scharrer
(back row, far right)
with students at the
Communication
Student Showcase.



WORK WITH AWARD-WINNING FACULTY

At a research university like UMass Amherst you will take Communication courses with faculty who write books and academic articles and produce other cutting-edge scholarship in the discipline. Our faculty members are recognized internationally for their original research and their contributions to community and policy development. Several Department of Communication faculty members have received college and university awards for teaching. You'll study with permanent faculty members at all levels of the curriculum, from introductory classes to small senior-level seminars.

REWARDING WORK IN COMMUNICATION

As a liberal arts degree, the B.A. in Communication prepares you for any career calling for higher literacy skills, analytical reasoning, and critical thinking. The Communication major helps prepare students for work as communication specialists in industry, media organizations, educational institutions, and research or political organizations. The alumni featured throughout this brochure have gone on to exciting careers in the media, business, nonprofits, education, and government. They provide just a few examples of the opportunities open to our graduates.



Integrative Learning Center

...AND BEYOND

Many of our graduates also go on to graduate degrees in fields such as education, health and human services, law, public relations, and integrated marketing communications, in addition to higher degrees in Communication.



RACHEL LEVINE '13

Communication Specialist

Office of Counterterrorism and Emerging Threats, Food and Drug Administration, Washington, D.C.

Yoga Teacher in Training

Down Dog Yoga

“Not only did my experience as a Communication major teach me the oral and written communication skills necessary for success in our world, but it also gave me knowledge which has allowed me to question my work and the purpose I am serving in my environment. By participating in Peer Advising and through courses in interpersonal and intercultural communication, I learned how to work with all kinds of people. The awareness I cultivated in courses about media enables me to evaluate the messages I produce in my work today.”



WHITNEY KMETZ '08

Marketing Development Specialist

Dessange Group North America, Boston

“My Communication coursework stressed the importance of thinking critically from varied viewpoints. As a marketer I put this skill to work every day. Whether I am defining the characteristics of a brand or communicating with customers, critical thinking and the strategies behind interpersonal communication are foundational skills for my work. Furthermore, the frequent written assignments and group presentations in my coursework prepared me to effectively present my ideas and business analysis to colleagues and superiors, a priceless asset in my line of work.”



STEPHEN LADDIN '09

Film and Television Writer/Producer

Los Angeles

“My degree in Communication has provided me with the skillset and the mindset to think critically, not only about media but about life itself. Time and time again I reference the basic critical-thinking skills I honed within the walls of my UMass Communication classes.”



MARY ANN PETTI '09

User Experience Specialist

Communicate Health Inc., Northampton, Mass.

“Communication courses like ‘Media Policy’ and ‘New Media for Social Change’ led to my interest in understanding the media and the power of social networks. I combined my Communication degree with a master’s in Public Health and now work in the field of health communication and user experience—understanding how people interact with technology. I work with web designers and developers to make online tools like websites and apps more user-friendly. I couldn’t have done that without UMass.”

COMMUNITY SERVICE LEARNING

The Department of Communication is a campus leader in offering Community Service Learning (CSL) courses, in which students apply theories and research they learn in the classroom to a volunteer project in the community. CSL opportunities for our majors provide real-world experiences and skill-building activities and promote a strong sense of community and citizenship.

Recent CSL opportunities have included:

- offering a media literacy program for sixth graders in the Deerfield public schools
- facilitating the See-Hear-Feel-Film program for third graders at Amherst Cinema
- working with Free Press, a Northampton nonprofit, on issues of media reform
- research with community groups focused on sustainability and food access, such as Rachel's Table, which works to alleviate hunger and reduce food waste.



NATASHA LABBÉ '10

Sixth-Grade English Language Arts Teacher

People For People Charter School, Philadelphia

Alumna

Teach for America 2010, Greater Philadelphia

"The knowledge and skills I acquired as a Communication major prepared me to be a teacher. I distinctly remember the semester I carpoled to Holyoke twice a week to facilitate a media literacy workshop at a neighborhood school as my community service learning component. It was the first time I managed students in a classroom, and I loved it. The energy the students brought and the rewarding feeling of working with my students really resonated with me. As a result of this experience, I chose to join Teach for America."



A GREAT IDEA: EXPERIENCE A COMMUNICATION- RELATED INTERNSHIP

We strongly encourage you to do an internship for elective credit as part of your undergraduate experience. Internships allow you to try out a new field, gain valuable skills, network with professionals, and apply what you learn in the classroom to real-life settings. Sixty-seven percent of our recent graduating seniors completed an internship in fields such as media programming, public interest research, television news, advertising, public relations, education, corporate management, sales, government, and film production.



Integrative Learning Center



AMIR MOINI '11

Foundations Relations Coordinator

Los Angeles LGBT Center

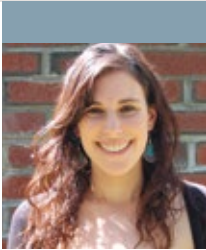
Planning Committee Member

GLAAD Los Angeles

"Being a Communication major was transformative in my path to where I am today. My classes with Sut Jhally taught me to analyze the world and media with a critical lens and work in a humane and moral way. Lynn Phillips was a mentor and inspiration to me, and because of her I am the leader I am today. And my work at the UMass Amherst Annual Fund laid the foundation for my experience in and passion for fundraising. Finally, during my internship at the Media Education Foundation I learned to hone my social-media marketing skills and help a cause I was passionate about."

ANOTHER GREAT IDEA: STUDY ABROAD OR GO ON DOMESTIC EXCHANGE

Communication majors study all over the United States and the world, bringing back new personal and academic insights and the broadened cultural awareness that comes from living in another place. Each year, approximately 60 Communication students study abroad in Australia, Brazil, the Czech Republic, England, France, Germany, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Japan, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Peru, South Africa, Spain, and elsewhere. Every year Communication students also go on domestic exchange to locations such as California, Hawaii, and Nevada.



ANNA NILLNI '07

Consultant

Client and Consumer Services,
Communispace Corporation,
Boston

“My experience in the Communication Department was invaluable. I had an amazing mentor, Mari Castañeda, who served as my thesis advisor and taught me that hard work and passion truly do pay off. During my junior year I studied abroad for 13 months in Buenos Aires, where my parents and family are from. It was undoubtedly one of the most incredible experiences of my life.”



Admission to the Major

You can either enter UMass Amherst as a Communication major or apply to the major after you arrive on campus.

Learn More

For more information about the Communication major, including admission and major requirements and discipline-related opportunities, please visit umass.edu/communication or call 413-545-1311.

DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNICATION

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