

Applied Communication Studies

Degrees Available at SIUE

- Master of Arts in Applied Communication Studies

Areas of Emphasis

- Corporate and Organizational Communication
- Health Communication
- Interpersonal Communication
- Public Relations

Applied Communication Studies at SIUE

The graduate program in applied communication studies provides students with a broad curriculum, designed to deepen their understanding of communication theory and their ability to analyze, generate and apply communication research, as well as to enhance their knowledge and skills necessary for their development as leaders across an array of communication professions.

Career Opportunities

Graduates with a master's degree in applied communication studies are qualified for careers in business, industry, nonprofit and governmental settings, as well as in higher education (at the community college level). Mastery of communication theory, research methods and application strategies is particularly relevant for students seeking careers in fields such as management, training and development, sales, advertising, public relations, community relations, intra- and inter-organizational communication, consulting, fundraising, event organizing, community health relations, communication training in health organizations, and human resources. Recent graduates of our program have successfully secured positions at St. Louis Community College, John A. Logan College, various public relations and communication management agencies in Illinois and the greater St. Louis area, Paraquad, Challenge Unlimited and Purina.

For students wishing to pursue a PhD, the emphasis of the program on theory and research, as well as the opportunity to teach independently, makes them strong candidates for doctoral programs. Recent graduates have been admitted to PhD programs at top institutions such as the University of Kentucky, University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign and Michigan State University.

Hands-on Learning

Students at SIUE are encouraged to engage in experiential learning opportunities through internships, independent studies and other application-based projects. Recently, our graduate students have participated in internships in public relations, social media strategies, corporate consulting, community-health outreach and personnel development. Study abroad opportunities are also available to graduate students.

Admission Requirements

1. Graduate School application and \$40 fee
2. Submission of all postsecondary academic transcripts
3. Successful completion of a bachelor's degree prior to enrollment
4. Minimum undergraduate GPA of 2.75
5. International Applicants: Proof of English Proficiency, minimum requirements are TOEFL (79), IELTS (6.5) or equivalent
6. Statement of Purpose: Submit a typed statement (of at least 500 words) about the academic and professional goals the applicant plans to attain through their work in the graduate program
7. Submit two letters of recommendation that discuss the applicant's potential for graduate-level academic work, leadership and interpersonal skills. (If the student is a current student in, or recent graduate of SIUE's Department of Applied Communication Studies, two Reference Forms for Use by Current SIUE Students may be submitted in lieu of the letters of recommendation.)



Graduate Faculty
Graduate Program Director
Sarah H. VanSlette, PhD
2006, Purdue University
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Alicia L. Alexander, PhD
2004, The University of Texas at Austin

Jocelyn M. DeGroot, PhD
2009, Ohio University

Wai Hsien Cheah, PhD
2004, University of Kentucky

Min Liu, PhD
2006, North Dakota State University

Sorin Nastasia, PhD
2010, University of North Dakota

Zachary A. Schaefer, PhD
2010, Texas A&M University

Deborah Sellnow-Richmond, PhD
2016, Wayne State University

E. Duff Wrobbel, PhD
1994, The University of Texas at Austin

Admission Requirements cont.

Program application materials may be uploaded during the application process, but official transcripts must be sent directly from the school attended and test scores must be verifiable with the appropriate testing service. Please contact the Graduate Admissions Office with questions regarding the application submission process at graduateadmissions@siue.edu.

Applicants who do not have an undergraduate degree in applied communication studies or a related field will be required, if admitted to the program, to demonstrate a knowledge of basic communication theory before enrolling in any 500-level classes. This demonstration of proficiency may be accomplished by completing, with a grade of B or better, either ACS 330 Theories of Communication, or proficiency examinations based upon the content of this course. Please contact the Department of Applied Communication Studies for information about the proficiency examination procedures.

Graduation Requirements

The comprehensive examination is administered during each student's final term of coursework. For students following the thesis plan, the examination is oral and focuses primarily on a defense of the thesis or applied project, but may also cover the planned program.

For a student electing the non-thesis plan, the examination, which comprises both written and oral elements, covers content from both the required core courses and the individually planned program. The written examination is composed of two sections. One section focuses on communication theory and research methodology, and the student must successfully answer one item on theory and one on research. The other section of the written examination focuses on the individual program of study. The student must respond successfully to two items from this section, in which a choice is offered among items prepared by the individual's advisory committee. The oral component then provides a supplemental assessment of the student's performance on the written portion of the examination.

Curriculum

Students must complete at least 33 semester hours for this degree. A foreign language is not required. With approval of the student's advisory committee, up to three hours of graduate-level coursework from outside the applied communication studies curriculum, up to three hours of independent study credits, and up to three hours of 400-level courses, may be applied toward the minimum of 33 hours.

All students admitted to the program are required to enroll in the program core, which consists of two courses (six hours total):

- ACS 500 Seminar in Communication Theory
- ACS 501 Communication Research Methods and Tools

The core courses must be completed with a minimum grade of B the first time they are offered after the student is admitted. Students who fail to meet this stipulation will be restricted from enrolling in any other 500-level courses until the program core requirement is met. Students are also required to declare an area of specialization and complete three required courses in their respective specialization.

Responsibility for the development of the remainder of the student's program of study rests with the student and student's advisory committee. The Department of Applied Communication Studies offers a variety of courses designed to complement the student's academic and professional interests.

Students may choose either a thesis or a non-thesis plan of study. Students who select the thesis plan (thesis or applied project) must declare their intentions by the time they have completed 18 semester hours of graduate work. They will complete a minimum total of 27 hours of coursework. They will confirm their ability to conduct research in applied communication studies by submitting a thesis or applied project for six semester hours of credit in ACS 598 or ACS 599. The oral defense then provides a supplemental assessment of the student's performance on the written portion of the thesis, or the final product of the project.

Students who select the non-thesis plan will complete a minimum total of 33 hours of coursework. Students will confirm their ability to conduct research in applied communication studies through the research projects and papers they complete during their coursework.

Contact Information

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