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Communication

Saint Mary's College of California

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COMMUNICATION

Recognizing that the mission of Saint Mary's College is to instill a liberal arts, Catholic and Lasallian character into all areas of the College community, the goal of the Department of Communication is to incorporate these traditions into a curriculum that identifies the process of communication as a primary means by which we construct social reality, recognize and analyze social processes, and affect social change. We see the content of the field as complex and interdisciplinary, and thus seek to pursue the continuing goals of improving the effectiveness of our communication, enhancing creativity and productivity in ourselves and others, promoting a sense of social reality that is fair and just for all members of society, and ensuring the continuation of critical contemplation as a means of strengthening and enriching the social good. We therefore encourage ethical and systematic inquiry into a broad range of areas, including mass and alternative media, rhetoric, interpersonal communication, new media and digital culture, organizational communication, visual studies, ethics, intercultural communication and cultural studies.

Communication as an academic field draws upon the humanities, the social and natural sciences, and the professions. The communication faculty have interdisciplinary backgrounds that enrich the academic and cultural environment of the department. The curriculum is both conceptual and applied with core courses preparing the student for an in-depth exploration of one or more areas of inquiry.

FACULTY

Aaron Dickinson Sachs, Ph.D., *Associate Professor,
Chair*

Shawny Anderson, Ph.D., *Associate Professor*

David Benin, Ph.D., *Adjunct Assistant Professor*

Mark Generous, Ph.D., *Assistant Professor*

Makiko Imamura, Ph.D., *Associate Professor*

Samantha Joyce, Ph.D., *Assistant Professor*

Dan Leopard, M.F.A., Ph.D., *Associate Professor*

Ellen Rigsby, Ph.D., *Associate Professor*

Scott Schönfeldt-Aultman, Ph.D., *Professor*

Edward E. Tywoniak, M.F.A., Ed.D., *Professor*

Matthew Swanson, MA, *Adjunct Professor,
Debate Coach*

LEARNING OUTCOMES

By the time they graduate, students should be able to:

- **DEVELOP** a comprehensive understanding of key terms in the field.
- **ANALYZE** texts, practices and ideas in their social and cultural contexts using standard communication models.
- **DEVELOP** basic understanding and literacy of media and communication technologies.
- **UNDERSTAND** and apply communication theories.
- **UNDERSTAND** and apply appropriate research methods to communication research questions.
- **DEVELOP** a capstone project that synthesizes all of the above.

MAJOR REQUIREMENTS

Students who major in communication take a total of 11 courses, seven of which are required plus four electives. Of the four electives, two must be upper-division application courses denoted by the word "Application" after the title.

CORE COURSES

Lower division **Communication 2, 3, 10.**

Upper division **Communication 100, 110, 111 and 196.**

Plus, four upper-division electives (two of which are application courses)

MINOR REQUIREMENTS

Students who minor in communication take a total of six courses, three of which are required plus three electives. Of the three electives, one must be an upper-division application course denoted by the word "Application" after the title.

CORE COURSES

Lower division **Communication 2 and 3.**

Upper division **Communication 100.**

Plus, three upper-division electives (one of which is an application course).

PREREQUISITE GRADE

Any course listed in this department with a prerequisite assumes a grade of C- or better in the prerequisite course.

C O U R S E S
LOWER DIVISION**2 Communication and Social Understanding**

This course intends to acquaint students with ways of critically assessing the everyday communication practices and texts (spoken, visual and mediated) which construct and transmit social knowledge. Introduces students to issues such as language, meaning, rhetoric, persuasion, definition, mediation, representation, visual culture, social knowledge, understanding the “self,” the relationship between culture and communication, the social construction of reality, and the assessment of the influence of mass communication. Students will participate in in-depth discussions based in primary texts of communication theory and produce critical essays and creative projects that demonstrate their grasp of course content. *This course satisfies both Artistic Understanding (Analysis and Creative Practice) requirements of the Core Curriculum.*

3 Communication Inquiry

This intensive discussion course utilizes important communication texts as the basis for learning many of the questions and terms that define the discipline of communication. Readings will concentrate in the areas of interpretation, identity, rhetoric and culture to better understand how we construct culture, society and the self through the various forms of communication, and how we analyze those constructions. Emphasis will be on developing the ability to use the readings to build theoretical literacy, to interpret written and visual texts with that theory, and to use the theory to analyze notions of identity. *This course satisfies the American Diversity requirement of the Core Curriculum.*

10 Argument and Advocacy

Communication scholar, Rod Hart, writes that advocacy “is the human creature’s most natural way of changing the world. It is also the most civilized way of doing so. Bombs, torture and mayhem change the world too, but those are primitive modalities and they lead to unstable outcomes. Symbolic influence is better. It lasts longer and it’s less noisy.” In this spirit, this course examines general principles of argument and advocacy as they relate to rhetorically creating change in different spheres of social life. Students will explore how the conventions of argument change—and how advocacy functions—in law, science, religion and politics. Students will develop an understanding of argument and evaluation theories, while also embodying those theories by developing practical advocacy and critical appraisal strategies.

UPPER DIVISION REQUIREMENTS

Students must have sophomore standing to enroll.

100 Communication Theory

This course provides students with a review of major theories applicable to communication among individuals, within organizations, in politics and in the media. Through readings and discussion of seminal core texts, students are encouraged to judge for themselves the strong and weak portions of alternative concepts, models and theoretical concepts, as well as to evaluate the empirical methods from which these theories are derived. *This course satisfies the Writing in the Disciplines requirement of the Core Curriculum.*

104 Understanding Digital Culture

Students will explore key concepts and theories through a close reading of fundamental texts, study of representative examples of digital work (e.g. websites, gaming, networked and immersive environments, media art), and will engage in basic digital design and production assignments.

110 Quantitative Methods

An introduction to communication research approaches that allow us to generalize our understanding to specific instances. For example, we might wish to investigate the influence of mediated political message characteristics on voting behavior or how nonverbal cues influence the formation of romantic relationships. The course provides an overview of research design, data collection and data analysis for the empirical construction of these knowledge bases. *Prerequisites: Communication 2, Communication 3, or permission of the chair.*

111 Qualitative Methods

This course introduces students to qualitative methodology and offers students an opportunity to design and practice qualitative methods. Topics addressed will include origins of qualitative methodology, ethnography, participant observation, interviewing, formulating research questions, collection and analysis of data, and writing the literature review. *Prerequisites: Communication 2, Communication 3, or permission of the chair.*

196 Senior Capstone

Senior standing required. Students must submit a formal capstone proposal to the department in the semester prior to enrolling in the course. In this course, students conceptualize and conduct research using one or two approaches (including performative, narrative or multimedia). Their research must address a socially significant communication issue, under the approval and supervision of an instructor. Students are encouraged to explore a question/issue that will represent the culmination of their undergraduate experience and reflect their finest work as a college student. At the conclusion of the term, students will present their work to interested members of the College community. *Prerequisites: Communication 100, Communication 110, and Communication 111 or permission of the chair.*

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UPPER DIVISION ELECTIVES

105 International Communication

A review of our “global village,” which is dangerously divided not only by power struggles and interest conflicts, but by message flows that create confusion and justified or unjustified suspicion. Special attention is given to the role of the United Nations (and its specialized agencies dealing with communication) as a vital mode of cross-cultural communication among the leaders of nations, and to the role of the media in defining global policy issues.

106 Intercultural Communication

An exploration of intercultural communication within various national contexts, though primarily U.S.-based. The courses will include an examination of the roles of identity, history, power, language, cultural values, nonverbal communication, migration, cultural space, popular cultural communication and relationships. Students will also become familiar with intercultural communication theories and with approaches to studying intercultural communication. Seeks to provide a basis for comprehending the relationship between culture and communication and for understanding cultural practices, differences and similarities. *This course satisfies the American Diversity and the Social, Historical, and Cultural requirements of the Core Curriculum.*

107 Political Communication

The interplay of the press, politics and public policy is a key feature in understanding our democracy today. This course examines the role of communication, information and media technologies in the electoral and legislative processes. Special attention is given to how the Internet and other media have altered the political landscape.

109 Visual Communication [Application]

In this course, students study visual culture, learn to do visual analysis and explore key ideas in visual communication including visual methodologies, such as compositional interpretation, semiotics, discourse analysis and psychoanalytic analysis. Possible topics include exploration of the visual components of advertising, video games, technology, photography, film, television, news, the body, comics, theme parks and museums. *This course satisfies both Artistic Understanding (Analysis and Creative Practice) requirements of the Core Curriculum.*

112 Interpersonal Communication

Upper-level course treating major theories and concepts in interpersonal communication. Lecture, discussion, readings and activities integrating concepts such as nonverbal communication, listening, intimate relationships, family relationships, interracial relationships, conflict management, forgiveness, negotiation, gender, perception and self-concept, technology's role in communication, as well as relationship development, maintenance, struggles and termination. *This course satisfies the Social, Historical, and Cultural Understanding requirement of the Core Curriculum.*

113 Rhetorical Criticism [Application]

This course will provide students the opportunity to learn and practice rhetorical criticism. Students will analyze artifacts (textual, visual, online) by employing methods such as Neo-Aristotelian criticism, cluster criticism, fantasy-theme criticism, feminist criticism, generic criticism, ideological criticism, metaphor criticism, narrative criticism, pentadic criticism, generative criticism and queer criticism..

116 Advertising and Civic Engagement [Application]

This course is designed to give students an understanding of both the theory and practice of advertising through the medium of civic engagement projects. The first half of the course will allow you to study the underlying theories of the practice of advertising; in the second half, students will have the opportunity to apply these theories in the form of advertising campaigns for on-campus clients.

117 Public Relations [Application]

This course provides an in-depth understanding of the theories of public relations and the ways in which they are practiced throughout our society, both in the marketplace and in the political realm. Emphasis is on application of these theories in student-authored projects that focus on civic engagement in the community. This course affords students the opportunity to research, plan, execute and evaluate a public relations campaign.

118 Media Law

This course examines the function of the laws regulating media and communication and explores how legal, political, social, administrative, economic and technological factors contribute to determining public policy on media issues. Of primary concern is the First Amendment's relationship to intellectual property, torts and telecommunication law. *This course satisfies the Common Good requirement of the Core Curriculum.*

122 American Journalism [Application]

An introduction to the craft of news writing and reporting in print and electronic news media. Historical development of newspapers, journals, blogs and magazines—in print, on television/radio, and online; emphasis on journalism as a profession and ethical conduct.

123 Sports Journalism [Application]

American culture, its contests and celebrations have moved from the sports page to the front page. This course explores the history, literature and practice of sports journalism in print, TV/radio and new media. Students will examine issues of gender and ethics, develop editorial criteria for sports coverage, and learn “best practices” in writing for print and broadcast.

125 Media, Technology and Culture [Application]

This course, an introduction to media studies, focuses on the critical concepts and technical skills necessary for understanding communication practices in the 21st century. While acknowledging that the media have become digital, this course places communication and media technologies within a broader historical and cultural context. Students will be required to produce media criticism and creative media projects, as well as learn key theories about media and communication in the global, networked digital age. *This course satisfies both of the Artistic Understanding (Analysis and Creative Practice) requirements of the Core Curriculum.*

132 Audio Production [Application]

Recognizing the importance of the sonic arts in contemporary forms of media, this course introduces students to: (1) basic acoustical theory, (2) musical concepts as related to media production, (3) aesthetic and technical elements of sound design, (4) audio field recording, and (5) non-linear audio editing and post-production techniques.

133 Video Production [Application]

This course introduces students to the basics of digital video production. Topics covered include: (1) introduction to film language and sound design, (2) video camera basics and video-production workflow, (3) cinematography and lighting, (4) non-linear video editing, and (5) post-production techniques. *This course satisfies both Artistic Understanding (Analysis and Creative Practice) requirements of the Core Curriculum.*

143 Advanced Media Production I [Application]

This is an upper-division course that delves into areas of specialization and advanced applications in media production. Possible topics may include web design, digital photography, motion graphics, video game design, animation, DVD authoring and advanced audio engineering.

144 Advanced Media Production II [Application]

This course is a continuation of media skills and concepts developed in **Communication 143**. These are upper-division media courses that delve into areas of specialization and advanced applications in media production. Possible topics include web design, digital photography, motion graphics, video game design, animation, DVD authoring and advanced audio engineering.
Prerequisite: Communication 143.

147 Persuasion

This course examines the theory and practice of persuasive communication in a variety of forms ranging from public relations campaigns to visual media, political debate, religion and music. Course emphasizes the utility of classical and modern rhetorical frameworks for understanding contemporary persuasive efforts in a broad range of contexts, as well as other persuasive theories, including Robert Cialdini's influential theory, Sherif's social judgment theory and Miller's information processing theory.

158 Film [Application]

This course examines film history and film theory through the lens of communication. As a dominant mode of communication and as a major art form, the study of film itself ranges from theatrically-based Hollywood films to digital cinema. This course emphasizes the centrality of film to the visual imagination and the development of visual culture. Students will produce critical writing about film and a final creative media project. *This course satisfies both Artistic Understanding (Analysis and Creative Practice) requirements of the Core Curriculum.*

161 Communication and Social Justice [Application]

This course engages the power of communication as a transformative act. In the pursuit of social justice, communication can be a tool, a weapon and a witness on behalf of community service, social change and political struggle. The role of communication in relation to social justice is not just studied abstractly, but passionately practiced and embodied through real-world projects and first-hand experiences. This course involves a service-learning component. Recent topics include food justice, hip hop, consumerism and drag culture. *This course satisfies both the Common Good and the Community Engagement requirements of the Core Curriculum.*

163 Seminar in Special Topics

These are topical, special-interest courses exploring an area of study or particular problem in the field of communication. Topics cover the range of communication theory, rhetoric and persuasion, law and public policy and visual media.

170 Communication Management [Application]

The development of techniques and strategies for formal rhetorical argument as applied to informal and formal group processes in contemporary businesses. Includes communication management within multicultural settings, discussion and analysis of organizational needs assessment, communication auditing and decision-making.

190 Communication Practicum (.25)

The department offers a wide variety of one-quarter academic credit courses which may be applied to student participation in radio, video, visual, film, journalism, digital media, public relations, advertising or independent study. Macken Collegiate Forensics Program may be taken for full or fractional credit.

195 Internship

Work in an appropriate internship position in the field of communication, under the supervision of a faculty member. Normally open only to communication majors in the senior year, with approval of the department chair and supervising instructor. Majors may qualify with a B average or better. Internships may be taken for a full-unit, half-unit or one-quarter-unit credit.

197 Special Study

An independent study or research course for upper-division majors with a B average or better in communication courses. *Permission of the instructor and department chair required.*

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MINOR IN CINEMATIC ARTS

The Cinematic Arts Minor combines the critical analysis and creative production of the moving image art form, ranging from time-based film and video to new media art. The courses emphasize technical fundamentals and conceptualization, creative experimentation and critical thinking, and personal expression and social responsibility. A hybrid instructional approach for several of the courses integrates critical analysis and creative production in order to encourage students to analyze as well as to produce the moving image art form as an engaged critical practice.

Students minoring in Cinematic Arts take six courses from the disciplines of Art, Communication, English, Anthropology, and World Languages and Cultures. Beyond the coursework, an internship elective (**ART 193**) provides a hands-on experience that can include assisting with a film exhibition, working as an assistant with a faculty filmmaker or researcher, and other options. (This program is coordinated with the Art and Art History Department and is cross-listed with their section of the course catalog).

LEARNING OUTCOMES

Students completing the Minor in Cinematic Arts will be able to:

- Plan, shoot, edit a finished film or video art project.
- Contextualize moving image artworks within a broader cultural, historical, and political framework.
- Utilize critical-theoretical concepts as a springboard to develop a film or video art project.
- Write a concept statement articulating the aims, influences, and process associated with their own production work.
- Write an extended critical essay integrating research, analysis, and interpretation of cinematic works of art.

MATRICULATION PATTERN

Total Requirement (six courses)

Required Core (four courses)

LOWER DIVISION

ART 55 Digital Foundations 1: Photo, Video, Sound

UPPER DIVISION

ART 155 Experimental Film/Video Production
COMM 125 Intro to Media, Technology, and Culture
COMM 158 Film

ELECTIVES (Choose two)

ANTH 120 Visual Anthropology

ART 193 Internship

ATC 80 Art Theory

ATC 111 Philosophy of New Media Art

COMM 133 Video Production

ENGLISH 125 (or 126) Film

ML 126 Film*

*Before enrolling in **ML 126**, students should contact the instructor regarding a possible foreign language requirement. This requirement varies depending on the section being offered in a given semester.