

COMMUNICATIONS

Degree Requirements

Master of Arts (M.A.)

Requirements listed here are in addition to Graduate Council policies listed under GCAC-600 Research Degree Policies. (<https://gradschool.psu.edu/graduate-education-policies/>)

Students admitted to the Master of Arts in Communications Program at Penn State Harrisburg must complete 36 credits, 21 of which must be at the 500 level in order to be granted the degree. Each student must complete and submit either a master's project or thesis. The master's project option (COMMS 580) consists of a creative production with an accompanying scholarly essay. The thesis option (COMMS 600 or COMMS 610) consists of an original research paper that follows the guidelines established by the Graduate School's Office of Theses and Dissertations (<http://gradschool.psu.edu/current-students/etd/>). The subject of the master's project or thesis must be defined in conjunction with a faculty member, and evaluated by a committee of at least two faculty members, supplemented by outside consultants where appropriate. To register for the master's thesis or project, a student must have completed COMMS 500 and COMMS 503 and must have earned at least 27 credits towards the Master of Arts in Communications.

The 36-credit program is distributed over two groups of courses:

Code	Title	Credits
Required Courses		
Take a minimum 9-12 credits of the following:		9-12
COMMS 500	Communications and Cultural Theory ¹	
COMMS 503	Research Methods in Communications ¹	
COMMS 580	Communications Master's Project ²	
COMMS 600	Thesis Research ²	
	or COMMS 610 Thesis Research	
Choose 6 credits from ONE of the following:		6
COMMS 525	Advanced Writer's Seminar	
	or COMMS 550 Media Production Workshop	
Choose 6 credits of the following:		6
COMMS 519	Communication Technology and Culture in History	
COMMS 555	Media Discourse Analysis	
COMMS 560	Seminar on Global Culture and Communication	
Electives		
Take 15 credits in additional courses at the 400- and 500-levels, from a list of approved courses maintained by the graduate program office. Elective courses can come from either Communications or other fields, including: American Studies, Business Administration, Community Psychology and Social Change, Criminal Justice, Education, Health Administration, Health Education, Humanities, Information Systems, Management, Marketing, Public Administration, Training and Development. ³		15
Total Credits		36-39

³ The following 400-level Communications courses may not be taken to fulfill the requirements of this degree:

- COMM 495
- COMM 495A
- COMM 496
- COMM 497

Grade-Point Average and Time Limit

A 3.00 grade-point average will be required for successful completion of the degree.

A full-time student can expect to complete the program in four semesters, a part-time student in six or more semesters. All requirements for a master's degree for the Master of Arts in Communications (including acceptance of the master's thesis or project) must be met within eight years of admission to degree status. Extensions may be granted by the Graduate School in appropriate circumstances.

Transfer of Credits

Transfer credits are limited to 9 equivalent graduate Communications credits with a grade of B or better taken within the last 5 years from an accredited institution, subject to restrictions outlined in GCAC-309 Transfer Credit (<http://gradschool.psu.edu/graduate-education-policies/gcac/gcac-300/transfer-credit>). It must be the opinion of the reviewing faculty that these courses are equivalent in quality to those offered at Penn State Harrisburg. Credit will not be given for any course used to complete a previous degree.

¹ COMMS 500 and COMMS 503 to be taken within the first 12 credits after enrollment in the program.

² Students elect EITHER COMMS 580 or COMMS 600/COMMS 610. If a student chooses to write a thesis, at least 6 credits in thesis research (COMMS 600 or COMMS 610) must be included in the program.