

COMMUNICATION, MA

The program provides a learner-centered, flexible, and dynamic environment designed to help students pursue their career goals—whether that’s obtaining professional employment, preparing for a career in higher education, or for upskilling within their current profession.

We aspire to offer an empowering educational experience through exceptional faculty who are committed to cultivating students’ breadth and depth of knowledge about communication. We strive to foster a spirit of inquiry, meet individual student goals, and prepare students for professional and personal success.

Program Related Information

Program Contact

Sharon Storch, PhD, Graduate Program Chair (GPC)
sstorch@unomaha.edu

Program Website (<https://www.unomaha.edu/college-of-communication-fine-arts-and-media/communication/>)

Fast Track

The School of Communication has developed a Fast Track program for highly qualified and motivated students providing the opportunity to complete a bachelor’s degree and a master’s degree in an accelerated time frame. With Fast Track, students may count up to nine (9) graduate hours toward the completion of their undergraduate program as well as the graduate degree program.

Program Specifics:

- This program is available for undergraduate students pursuing BA/BS in communication studies or a BA/BS in journalism and media communication
- Students must have completed no less than 75 undergraduate hours.
- Students must have a minimum undergraduate GPA of 3.0 and a major GPA of 3.75.
- Students must complete the Fast Track Approval form and obtain all signatures and submit to the Office of Graduate Studies prior to first enrollment in a graduate course.
- Students will work with their undergraduate advisor to register for the graduate courses.
- A minimum cumulative GPA of 3.0 is required for graduate coursework to remain in good standing.
- Students remain undergraduates until they meet all the requirements for the undergraduate degree and are eligible for all rights and privileges granted undergraduate status including financial aid.
- Near the end of the undergraduate program, formal application to the graduate program is required. The application fee will be waived, the applicant will need to contact the Office of Graduate Studies for a fee waiver code.
- Admission to Fast Track does NOT guarantee admission to the graduate program.
- The admit term must be after the completion term of the undergraduate degree.

The following courses may be taken under the Fast-Track program:

COMM 8000, Foundations of Communication

COMM 8010, Quantitative Methods

COMM 8020, Qualitative Methods

COMM 8040, Rhetorical Methods

Admissions

General Application Requirements and Admission Criteria (<http://catalog.unomaha.edu/graduate/admission/>)

Application Deadlines

- Spring 2026: December 1
- Fall 2026: August 1

If you are applying for a **graduate assistantship**, both admissions and assistantship application materials must be completed by **March 1** (for Fall Semester) and **October 1** (for Spring Semester) for priority consideration.

Other Requirements

- **English Language Proficiency:** Applicants are required to have a command of oral and written English. Those who do not hold a baccalaureate or other advanced degree from the United States, **OR** a baccalaureate or other advanced degree from a predetermined country on the waiver list (<https://www.unomaha.edu/office-of-graduate-studies/admissions/entrance-exams.php>), must meet the minimum language proficiency score requirement in order to be considered for admission.
 - Internet-based TOEFL: 80, IELTS: 6.5, PTE: 53, Duolingo: 110
- **Statement of Purpose:** The statement should be 500 words in length and should answer the following questions:
 - Why have you chosen the UNO School of Communication master’s degree program?
 - What are your areas of scholarly interest and research?
 - What are your personal or professional plans after you complete the master’s degree? How will this degree support your plans?
- **Writing Sample:** An academic or otherwise-demonstrative writing sample (e.g., term paper, senior thesis, or research paper) that demonstrates the applicant’s strengths as a writer and researcher.
- **Resume or CV:** Identify major and minor field(s) of study, overall GPA, and GPA within major, as well as all relevant experience.
- **Letters of Recommendation** - Two letters are required. A minimum of one letter from a faculty member of the applicant’s undergraduate program should be included if at all possible. The other letter should address an applicant’s ability to do advanced-level academic work. References from family members, friends, or other non-professional sources will not be considered.

Admission Status

- **Unconditional Admission** may be granted to a student whose record includes at least the following:
 - Certification of a bachelor’s degree from a regionally accredited institution
 - Documentation through official transcripts using a 4.0 grade point scale of having earned at least:
 - A 3.25 in communication or undergraduate major work.
 - Either a 3.0 overall undergraduate average GPA or a 3.25 average GPA in the last half of undergraduate credit hours, and
 - Inclusion of nine (9) to 15 undergraduate (junior or senior level) theory and/or research courses in communication (e.g., communication studies, speech communication, broadcasting, journalism, mass communication, media communication or studies, rhetoric) or a related field as approved by the graduate program chair (GPC) and/or the graduate admissions committee.
- **Provisional Admission** may be granted for reasons of experience, maturity or other circumstances to a student who does not meet the

unconditional admission standards. A student will not be admitted who does not meet UNO Graduate College provisional admission standards (a 2.75 GPA for both undergraduate major and minor).

- The school's graduate admission committee may require any one or any combination of the following in deciding whether or not to recommend provisional admission:
 - Completion of prescribed course(s) (not for graduate credit) with a grade of "B" (3.0/4.0) or better, with course(s) approved in advance by the GPC and/or the graduate admission committee.
 - Completion of the first 12 graduate hours of coursework with a grade of "B" (3.0/4.0) or better as a non-declared student.
- Provisionally admitted graduate students cannot serve as graduate teaching assistants until they have met the requirements of the provisional admission.

Degree Requirements Required/Core Courses

Students will take a total of 12 credit hours of core classes. These classes expose students to mass and speech communication theories as well as research methodologies in the communication discipline. The core courses must be completed within the first 18-21 credit hours of a student's program. (This requirement may be waived for students entering the communication graduate program with approved graduate credits to be used in the plan of study). If a student fails to achieve an average grade of "B" (3.0/4.0) in the overall core, the student may retake each core course with a grade below "B" once, and must obtain an average grade of "B" or higher to remain in the program.

Thesis Option

Code	Title	Credits
Required Core Courses		
The 12 hours of required courses listed below must be completed with an average grade of "B" or better:		
COMM 8000	FOUNDATIONS OF COMMUNICATION	3
COMM 8010	COMMUNICATION RESEARCH METHODS SEMINAR: QUANTITATIVE	3
COMM 8020	COMMUNICATION RESEARCH METHODS SEMINAR: QUALITATIVE	3
COMM 8040	SEMINAR IN RHETORICAL CRITICISM	3
Electives		
Select 15 elective hours in consultation with the graduate program chair. These will be denoted as either COMM, CMST, or JMC. Three to six elective hours from outside the school may be counted toward degree requirements with permission of the graduate program chair. Electives must be completed with an average grade of "B" or better to maintain GPA requirements for program and university.		15
COMM 8990	THESIS	6
Total Credits		33

All candidates should carefully review the Graduate College requirements for forming the thesis supervisory committee, for submitting the Thesis Supervisory Committee form, the Thesis/Thesis Equivalent Proposal Approval form, and the Report on Completion of Degree form as well as for the final approval and submission of the thesis.

Project Option

Code	Title	Credits
Required Core Courses		
The 12 hours of required courses listed below must be completed with an average grade of "B" or better:		
COMM 8000	FOUNDATIONS OF COMMUNICATION	3

COMM 8010	COMMUNICATION RESEARCH METHODS SEMINAR: QUANTITATIVE	3
COMM 8020	COMMUNICATION RESEARCH METHODS SEMINAR: QUALITATIVE	3
COMM 8040	SEMINAR IN RHETORICAL CRITICISM	3
Electives		
Select 18 elective hours in consultation with the graduate program chair. These will be denoted as either COMM, CMST, or JMC. Three to six elective hours from outside the school may be counted toward degree requirements with permission of the graduate program chair. Electives must be completed with an average grade of "B" or better to maintain GPA requirements for program and university.		18
COMM 8970	GRADUATE PROJECT	3
Total Credits		33

The project, in lieu of a thesis, is based on a proposal approved by the student's committee. The student must complete a project which is defended orally before their project committee.

Exit Requirements

Students will take either six (6) thesis credit hours or three (3) project hours during the final semester(s) of their program. These credit hours must be 1) taken either concurrently or after the student's final semester of coursework and 2) must be taken and completed in order to successfully complete the program. It is strongly encouraged that coursework is completed prior to the thesis or project. Students will meet with the GPC to discuss which option to consider.

Thesis Option

All candidates should carefully review the Graduate College requirements for forming a supervisory committee, for submitting the Thesis Supervisory Committee form, the Thesis/Thesis Equivalent Proposal Approval form, and the Report on Completion of Degree form as well as for the final approval and submission of the thesis. These are defended orally before the student's thesis committee.

Project Option

The project, in lieu of a thesis, is based on a proposal approved by the student's committee. Projects are defended orally before the student's project committee.