Faculty

Web Drake (2008). Professor of Communication Arts, Department Chair, and Director of Debate. B.A., Mississippi College; M.A., University of North Texas; Ph.D., Louisiana State University; Additional study, Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary.

Steve Beverly (1993). Associate Professor of Communication Arts. B.A., University of Georgia; M.A., Auburn University.

Ashley Blair (1999). Associate Professor of Communication Arts. B.A., Union University; M.A., University of Memphis.


David Burke (1986). Professor of Theatre and Director of the Theatre. B.S.A., Houston Baptist College; M.F.A., University of Houston.

Aaron Hardin (2016). Assistant Professor of Communication Arts. B.A., Union University; M.F.A., University of Hartford.

John Klonowski (2013). Assistant Professor of Theatre. B.A., Lewis University; M.F.A., University of California Davis.


Instructional Staff


Staff


Mission Statement

The Communication Arts Department provides a practical and theoretical education in written, oral, and visual communication with a Christian worldview that prepares students to be culture-makers across a broad spectrum of contexts.

Curriculum

The Department offers a wide range of courses designed to meet the complex and significant theoretical and communication skill requirements in its respective professional fields.

The Department is affiliated with several organizations and programs that enhance student learning:
• the Los Angeles Film Studies Center
• American Studies Program
• Washington Journalism Center
• the Southwestern Photojournalism Conference
• the Southeastern Photojournalism Conference
• the International Public Debate Association
• the Public Relations Student Society of America
• the Radio-Television News Directors Association
• the International Digital Media and Arts Association
• the Tennessee Theatre Arts Conference
• the Southeastern Theatre Conference

Faculty encourage participation in regional and national conferences.

Communication Arts majors are not allowed to double major or double minor within the department. Non-Communication Arts majors may double minor in the department except in the areas of Journalism, Public Relations, and Broadcast Journalism.

I. Major in Journalism—48 hours
A. Major Requirements: COM 112, 121, 220, 236, 242, 352, 361, 430 – 24 hours
B. Professional Electives – Select 12 hours from:
   COM 320, 323, 326, 327, 329, 336, 347, 356, 360, 399, 407, 486, 487
C. Multimedia Track Option – 12 hours
   COM 210 (x2), 322, 415
   Broadcast Track Option – 12 hours
   COM 230, 245, 328, 406

II. Major in Communication Studies—45 hours
A. Major Requirements: COM 112, 121, 242, 430—12 hours
B. Professional Electives—33 hours
   1. Select one upper level course from each of the following areas: journalism, media, public relations, speech and theater—15 hours
   2. Select 18 hours of COM courses

III. Digital Media Communications Major—49 hours
A. Major Requirements: COM 121, 220, 236, 365, 430; CSC 360 – 19 hours
B. Professional Electives: 30 hours
   1. Select 9 hours from: COM 327, 337, 427; CSC 361
   2. Select one course from each group – 6 hours:
      a. COM 320, 325, 356
      b. COM 323, 329, MKT 328
   3. Select 9 hours from: COM 230, 245, 326, 336, 346, 360, 410, 426
   4. Select 6 hours from: COM 399, COM 483
IV. Major in Film Studies—45 hours
A. Major Requirements – 15 hours
   COM 123, 328, 306, 421, 430
B. Production Electives – 9 hours
   Select 3 courses from: COM 220, 221, 230, 317, 410, 412
C. Performance Electives – 6 hours
   Select 2 courses from: COM 211, 240, 245, 345
D. History Electives – 3 hours
   Select one of: COM 338 or 309
E. Theory Electives – 6 hours
   Select 2 courses from: COM 301, 302, 438; CHR 348;
   PHL 448; ENG 311; PSC 300
F. Select 6 hours from: COM 399 (repeatable 3 times),
   COM 484 (repeatable 2 times)

V. Major in Public Relations—48 hours
A. Major Requirements – 33 hours
   COM 121, 242, 220 OR 236, 323, 343, 320, 360, 356,
   416, 423, 430
B. Professional Electives – 15 hours
   Select 6 hours from: COM 325, 329, 361, 415
   Select 9 hours from: COM 399(x2), COM 210(x2),
   COM 488

VI. Major in Rhetoric—33 hours
A. COM 112, 211, 235, 311, 416, 417—21 hours
B. Select 12 hours from the following:
   COM 170(x2), 240, 245, 270(x2), 299(x3), 312, 325,
   370(x2), 399 (1 hr. x 3), 470(x2), BLAW 421, CHR
   363, PHL 345

VII. Major in Theatre—42 hours
A. COM 123, 240, 221, 330, 341, 342, 350, 399(x3), 412
B. Select 15 hours from: COM 211, 301, 302, 311, 312,
   317, 345, 399(x3), 494, EDU 426

VIII. Major in Theatre and Speech with Teacher Licensure
   (Grades K-12)
A. Major requirements—79 hours
   1. COM 112, 123, 211, 218, 221, 235, 240—21 hours
   2. COM 311, 312, 330, 341, 342, 412—18 hours
   B. Required Minor in Professional Education—40 hours
   1. Prior to Internship – EDU 150, EDU 305, EDU
   358, PSY 213, PSY/SE 230.
   2. Fall of Internship Year – EDU 306, 340, 426, 440
   3. Spring of Internship Year – EDU 441 and 451
   4. CSC 105 is required in the BA core

IX. Minor in Broadcast Journalism—21 hours
A. Requirements: COM 120, 121, 220, 236, 352—15 hours
B. Select 6 hours (to include 3 upper level) from: COM
   230, 245, 347, 406, 415, 451

X. Minor in Communication Studies—21 hours
A. Select 12 hours of COM courses (any level)
B. Select 9 hours of upper level COM courses

XI. Minor in Digital Media Studies—21 hours
A. Choose at least two courses from each list:
   1. ART 120, 221, 345, 346, 347, 348
   2. COM 220, 236, 320, 327, 356, 365
   3. CSC 200, 265, 335, 360, 361

XII. Minor in Film Studies—18 or 22 hours
A. Required for both Tracks: COM 328 – 3 hours
B. Track One – 15 hours
   1. Required: COM 338, CHR 348
   2. Select 3 courses from: COM 301, 302, 309, 438;
   ENG 311; PHL 448; PSC 300
C. Track Two – 19 hours
   1. Select 3 courses from: COM 301, 302, 309, 338, 438;
   CHR 348; ENG 311; PHL 448; PSC 300
   2. Admission to Los Angeles Film Studies Center:
   Check with the Communication Arts Department,
   the Institute for International and Intercultural
   Studies for details or
   lafsc.bestsemester.com.

XIII. Minor in Journalism—21 hours
Select 21 hours from: COM 120, 121, 210 (x2), 230,
236, 322, 351, 407, 451

XIV. Minor in Photojournalism—18 hours
A. Required courses: COM 121*, 236* , 326, 336, 346, 426
*Students whose major requires COM 121, 236* may substitute
   with courses from: ART 232; COM 360, 327, 481.

XV. Minor in Public Relations—21 hours
A. COM 242, 323, 343, 423
B. Select 9 hours from: COM 121, 220, 236, 320, 329,
   351, 360, 356, 415, 416

XVI. Minor in Rhetoric—18 hours
Select 18 hours (9 must be 300 level or above) from:
   COM 170(x2), 112, 211, 218, 235, 270(x2), 299(x3),
   311, 325, 370(x2), 399(1 hr. x 3), 416, 417, 470(x2);
   BLAW 421

XVII. Minor in Theatre—21 hours
A. COM 123, 211, 240, 412; COM 112 or 235—15 hours
B. Select 2 from: COM 301, 311, 317, 330, 341, 342,
   345, 350—6 hours

Student Organizations

Beta Mu is the Union chapter of Alpha Psi Omega, the
national honorary dramatic fraternity. Membership is based
on attainment in theatre. The chapter sponsors Campus
Day activities, coffee house presentations, and a variety of
other events.

The Bulldog Communication Group, a student-run public
relations agency, provides students with portfolio building
opportunities by offering communication services to clients
on campus and in the community. Positions in the firm are
awarded via an application process.

Alpha Epsilon Rho is the Union chapter of the
National Broadcasting Society. AERho encourages and
rewards scholarship and accomplishment among students
of broadcasting, establishing meaningful communication
between student and professional broadcasters, and fostering
integrity in the use of the powerful instruments of radio,
television, film, cable and its many associated business
industries.

The Public Relations Student Society of America
(PRSSA) is open to all students interested in the public
relations profession and society activities. PRSSA is student-
led and relates to the practice of public relations, planning a
PR career, and acquiring the skills needed in public relations.
The Union Broadcasting System (UBS) exists for students interested in broadcasting. UBS is a student chapter of the Radio-Television News Directors Association. UBS produces news programming and documentaries for public TV, the live daily news program Jackson 24/7, and Union’s basketball games. UBS also provides opportunities for students to strengthen contacts with professionals in the industry.

The Union Debate Team is open to all students and competes four or five times a semester in the International Public Debate Association. Membership is based on an interview with the team’s director.

The Union Film Society seeks to increase interest in and understanding of the art and process of filmmaking through a variety of experiences, including film screenings, filmmaking seminars, and film projects.

The Cardinal & Cream is the student news publication. The newspaper is online and updated daily during the Fall and Spring semesters. A full-color news magazine, C&C, is published each semester. Staff positions are open to all classes and majors.

Course Offerings in Communication Arts (COM)

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240. Acting Theory and Technique (3) F—Even Years
Various acting theories and practices with emphasis on exercises in physical training, vocal reproduction, character projection, and the aesthetics of acting.

242. Communication Theory and Research (3) F
Focuses on practical research associated with the pursuit of a degree in communication. Emphasis is on developing a research attitude, research skills, and a research vocabulary. Deals with surveys, validity, and the interpretation of data.

245. Broadcast Performance (3) S
Development of professional vocal, visual, personality, and performance skills by use of simulated newscasts, interviews, and script narrations.

276. DMC Sophomore Seminar (1) F
Introduces the student to the basic methodologies, technologies, and expectations of the Digital Media Communications major, utilizing case studies, guest speakers, and field trips.

299. Practicum (1) F, W, S, Su
Practical hands-on experience in journalism, public relations, advertising, speech, or theatre. Students work with a faculty member on specific projects that will enhance their knowledge and expertise in their concentration. May be taken three times.

301. Symbolism in Theatre and Film (3) F—Odd Years
This course explores the subtle uses of symbolism in presenting subtextual messages. Students view and analyze a variety of films and taped theatre productions.

302. The Films of Peter Weir (3)
This class will strive to examine the overall perspective, position, and point of view of the content and images as well as the vision and values within Peter Weir's body of work.

305. Drama (3) F
Prerequisite: ENG 201 and 202. Reciprocal credit: ENG 305. See ENG 305 for description.

306. Entertainment Industry (3) S
A survey of current industry practices and careers in the entertainment industry. Students will learn about the professional guilds; the core business configuration of the film/television industry; and professional expectations in the entertainment industry.

309. History of Animation (3) S
A historical survey of animated motion pictures from the medium's pre-history through the modern era in America and abroad. Emphasis will be placed on the major movements, genres, and themes in narrative film from the silent era, early talking pictures, the studio system, and post-classical cinema. Lectures and class discussions are accompanied by screenings of appropriate films.

311. Oral Interpretation of Literature (3) F—Even Years
Analysis, adoption, and staging of various literary genres for solo and ensemble performance including techniques for Reader's Theatre staging and performances before an audience.

312. Creative Writing (3) F, S
Prerequisites: ENG 201 and 202. Reciprocal credit: ENG 312. See ENG 312 for description.

317. Technical Theatre (3) S—Even Years
Design, installation and use of stage lighting, sound, and other technical elements of theatre productions.

318. Advanced Composition (3) S; W—As Needed
Prerequisite: ENG 201 and 202. Reciprocal credit: ENG 318. See ENG 318 for description.

320. Organizational Communication (3) S
Organizational structure, communication networks, and employer-employee relationships. Emphasis: conducting interviews and performance appraisals, decision-making strategies, ethics, team-building, and the communication audit.

322. Copy Editing and Publication Layout (3)
Principles of editing copy for newspapers and magazines, writing headlines, and using type, photography, and graphics in layout and design for print news media.

323. Principles of Public Relations (3) F
Introduction to principles, practices, context, and structure of public relations examining both the process and its implementation in business, industry, and institutions.

325. Communication Training and Development (3)
An interactive experience emphasizing the process by which organizations help managers and employees improve performance and increase job satisfaction.

326. Social Documentary S—Even Years
Prerequisite: COM 336
Social documentary photojournalism is an attempt to bear witness, to bring attention, and to advocate. At its best, it tries also to communicate something a concerned and informed photographer felt when he/she released the camera's shutter. Social documentary photojournalism communicates through a complex distillation of visual truth and interpretation. This course will take a close look at work that has made an impact on its audiences and at the photographers who produced it. Technical proficiency and visual awareness will continue to broaden.

327. Interactive Media I (3) F
Prerequisite: COM 220
Introduction to principles, practices, context, and structure of public relations examining both the process and its implementation in business, industry, and institutions.
328. Film Theory and Criticism (3) F
An introduction to the scholarly aesthetic analysis and study of cinema teaching students the critical skills involved in the interpretation of film. Includes a foundational study of the forms, functions, and history of film arts to develop appreciation and skill in analysis.

329. Principles of Advertising (3) F
An overview of the field of advertising, including its history in the United States, advertising as a business, current career opportunities in the field, and past and current trends in both traditional and new media.

330. Theatre Production (3) S—Odd Years
Fundamentals of successful stage production and technique: directing, acting, and rehearsing; organization; play choice and casting; and scenery, costuming, makeup, and lighting.

336. Advanced Digital Photography (3) S
Prerequisite: COM 236.
Course will broaden proficiency and visual awareness in the articulation of ideas through learning how to "see" light, capturing the moment, documentary photography, portraiture, fashion, food, architecture, advertising, and sports. It will also stress exploring a fresh view of the commonplace, maintaining high standards of visual communication and understanding the relationship between words, photographs, and design.

337. Interactive Design (3) S
Pre/Co-requisite: COM 327
Using hands-on experiences to edit, layout and develop interactive projects, to provide a practical understanding of navigation and user interface design principles, with emphasis placed on multi-platform template design, usability, information visualization and collaborative communication.

338. Development of Cinema (3) S—Odd Years
Historical survey of motion pictures with emphasis on major movements, genres, and themes in narrative film from the early silent era, early talking pictures, the studio system, and post-classical cinema.

341. Theatre History I (3) F—Odd Years and
342. Theatre History II (3) S—Even Years
A survey of the historical development of the Theatre from its beginnings through the Elizabethans with emphasis on selected plays. The sequel considers from the French Neoclassical period to present day.

343. Public Relations Writing (3) F
Prerequisite: COM 121; Corequisite: COM 323.
Practical application of public relations writing process for various media with focus on targeting publics using research, audience analysis, message design, and selection of communication channels.

344. Advanced Acting/Improvisation (3) S—Odd Years
Advanced acting characterization, historical styles, and improvisational techniques.

345. Advanced Acting/Improvisation (3) S—Odd Years
Advanced acting characterization, historical styles, and improvisational techniques.

346. Photo Editing (3) F—Even Years
Prerequisite: COM 336
An exploration of the technical aesthetic qualities of photographs and how these factors affect editorial decisions concerning their use in publications. Students will acquire skills in visual editing and participate in discussions of ethical and legal issues. Understanding subject emphasis, application of framing techniques, characteristics of good photographs, universal themes, photograph evaluation, recognizing impact value, and ethics will be stressed.

347. Broadcast News Producing and Management (3) F
Management and producing theories and techniques for the newsroom learned from studying day-to-day decision making, personnel management, regulation, story decision, and ethical dilemmas faced by news directors and senior producers.

350. Christian Drama (3) S—Odd Years
Exploration of the meaning of and possible uses for theatre from a Christian perspective.

352. Reporting for Broadcast Media (3) F
Prerequisite: COM 121.
This course is designed to improve and expand the news gathering and writing skills of the media student, further developing understanding of broadcast news writing, news judgment and construction of broadcast news stories, as well as social responsibility and an ethical framework for broadcast journalists.

356. Social Media Theory and Strategies (3)
An exploration of the theoretical foundations of social media and the relevant strategies necessary to understand, critically evaluate, and create in this emerging digital space. The course will be split between thinking critically about the ramifications of social media on personal and professional communication, and gaining fluency in the tools necessary to create a strategic digital identity.

360. Publication Design (3) F
Prerequisite: COM 362
Using hands-on experiences to edit, design, layout, and develop camera-ready documents to provide practical knowledge of state-of-the-art publishing technology.

361. Reporting for Print and Online Media (3) S
Prerequisite: COM 121 and 220.
This course is designed to improve and expand the news gathering and writing skills of the media student, further developing understanding of print news writing, news judgment and construction of print news stories, as well as social responsibility and an ethical framework for print journalists.

365. New Media Theory and Trends (3) F
An introduction to the critical study of new media, with a focus on the history of contemporary digital media, the theories developed to make sense of contemporary digital media, and the social and political impact of digital technologies. This course will also consider coming and future trends in media technologies in light of the history and theory of new media.
399. Advanced Communications Practicum (1-3) F, S
Pre-requisite: Instructor Consent
Practical hands-on experience in communications. Students work with a faculty member on specific projects related to one of the various media productions to enhance their knowledge and expertise in their major. May be repeated for a maximum of 9 semester hours.

406. Documentary Reporting (3) S
Prerequisite: COM 230 and 352.
Combines advanced skills in broadcast production with writing, producing, and reporting for a regular news magazine for cable television.

407. Special Topics in Journalism (3)
Prerequisite: COM 121.
This course will vary depending on the semester to include a broad range of special topics related to the journalism field.

410. Digital Filmmaking (3) F—Even Years
Prerequisite: COM 220.
Focused on the narrative style of storytelling, this course will expand students' understanding of the technical, theoretical and aesthetic issues inherent to time-based media, with specific focus on the role of Christians in media.

412. Fundamentals of Directing (3) S—Even Years
The art of the director, culminating in production of a one-act play by each student.

415. Magazine and Feature Writing (3) S
Prerequisite: COM 351 and Senior standing.
Practical experience in mastering the craft of writing the special feature; each student is encouraged to prepare an article for publication.

416. Persuasion (3) S—Odd Years
A study of theories, strategies, and applications relating to persuasion. Students examine rhetorical address, advertising, public relations, interpersonal communication, and political communication. Topics include language, ethics, audience-analysis, imagery, culture, reasoning, credibility, and motivation.

417. Advanced Public Speaking (3) S—Even Years
Prerequisite: COM 112 or 235.
An oral communication skills course that teaches advanced public speaking skills including impromptu and manuscript speeches, speaking while using technology, speech writing, and special occasion speeches. Rhetorical criticism, critical thinking, and verbal fluidity are also covered.

421. Introduction to Screenwriting (3)
Prerequisite: COM/ENG 312
Reciprocal Credit: ENG 421
The key to every great film is a great script. Screenwriters need to be adept at not only conceptualizing a film, but also conveying that idea to the industry, and, most importantly, putting pen to paper and writing a script that rings true with layered characters, meaningful conflict, and authentic dialogue. This course will allow students to consume important and transcendent screenplays and explore the journey from idea to finished script.

423. Public Relations Campaigns (3) S
Prerequisite: COM 242, 323, 343.
Examines preparation of comprehensive public relations campaigns with emphasis on critical thinking and problem solving through use of case studies.

426. Photojournalism Professional Portfolio (3) F
Prerequisite: COM 336
This course will explore the many variations of portfolio presentation in today's marketplace and the photographs needed to present a well-rounded collection. Preparation of a portfolio based upon research in the student's areas of interest will be a primary target of the class. Looking closely at potential clients, target audiences, various ways of delivery, and the images needed for a portfolio will be addressed.

427. Interactive Media II (3) S
Prerequisite: COM 327
Project-based approach toward developing skills in the creation of interactive media using industry standard software, interactive design theories, needs assessment, and project management procedures.

430. Communications Law (3) S
Prerequisite: Senior standing
The legal controls and government regulations on mass media. Students will study case precedents involving the freedom and rights of the press and broadcasters.

438. Censorship and Propaganda in Film (3) As Needed
The practice and patterns of censorship in cinema. Issues include local and state censorship boards, legal challenges, organized public pressure, and self-regulatory efforts by the industry. The use of film as propaganda, including Soviet cinema theory, Nazi film propaganda, and American use of film in supporting war efforts will be considered.

481. Internship in Photojournalism (3) F, W, S, Su
Prerequisite: Three courses required in the Photojournalism minor.
Selected students work as interns in supervised photojournalism work.
482. Internship in Advertising (3) F, W, S, Su
Prerequisites: COM 314, COM 329, plus 3 additional courses in the Advertising major.
Students work as interns (primarily unpaid) to obtain supervised practical experience in advertising at an agency or another type of business. Requires a minimum of 150 hours during one semester.

483. Internship in Digital Media (3) F, W, S, Su
Prerequisite: ART 221, CSC 360, COM 220 and two required courses from the DM-Communication Arts Emphasis.
Selected students are assigned as interns to obtain supervised practical real-life work experiences. It is not a job per se; it is a learning opportunity having direct relationship to the student’s program of study and career interests. Course may be repeated for credit.

484. Internship in Film and Television (3)
Selected students are assigned as interns to obtain supervised, practical real-life work experiences. It is not a job per se; it is a learning opportunity having direct relationship to the student’s program of study and career interests. Course may be repeated twice, up to 6 hours.

485. Internship in Radio Broadcasting (3) F, W, S, Su
Prerequisite: COM 220; 2 required courses in the major; Permission of Chair.
Selected students are assigned as interns to obtain supervised practical work at a local radio station professionally concerned with broadcasting.

486. Internship in Television Broadcasting (3) F, W, S, Su
Prerequisite: COM 230; 2 required courses in the major; Permission of Chair.
Students are assigned as interns to obtain supervised practical work at a local television station professionally concerned with broadcasting.

487. Internship in Journalism (3) F, W, S, Su
Prerequisite: 2 required courses in the major; Permission of Chair.
Selected students are assigned to obtain supervised practical work at a local newspaper professionally concerned with the print media.

488. Internship in Public Relations (3) F, W, S, Su
Prerequisite: COM 323; 3 required courses in the major; Permission of Chair.
Students are assigned as interns to obtain supervised practical work at a local business in public relations.

489. Internship in Theatre (3)
Pre-requisites: COM 123; COM 221 or COM 240
The main purpose of an internship in Theatre is to provide the Theatre major or minor with an opportunity to practice and enhance their skills and knowledge in a real world environment. The experience is more than a job in the sense that it continues their education at a higher level of engagement. It is also an opportunity for the student to connect what they are learning in the classroom to an authentic experience in their discipline.

494. Special Studies in Theatre (1–4) F

Available in multiple departmental prefix:

170-270-370-470. Debate Practicum (1 each) F,S
Co-requisite: Participation in the Union Debate Team.
Practical experience in the field of academic debate, public speaking and critical thinking. A maximum of 8 hours may apply toward graduation.

179-279-379-479. External Domestic Study Programs (1-3) As Needed
All courses and their applications must be defined and approved prior to registering.

179PF-279PF-379PF-479PF. External Domestic Study Programs (Pass/Fail) As Needed
All courses and their applications must be defined and approved prior to registering.

180-280-380-480. Study Abroad Programs (1-4)
All courses and their applications must be defined and approved prior to travel.

180PF-280PF-380PF-480PF. Study Abroad Programs (Pass/Fail) As Needed
All courses and their applications must be defined and approved prior to travel.

195-6-7. Special Studies (1-4)
295-6-7. Special Studies (1-4)
Lower-level group studies which do not appear in the regular departmental offerings.

395-6-7. Special Studies (1-4)
Upper-level group studies which do not appear in the regular departmental offerings.

495-6. Independent Study (1-4)
Individual research under the guidance of a faculty member(s).

497-8-9. Seminar (1-3)
To be used at the discretion of the department.