Speech Communication

(Administered by the Department of English)

The Speech Communication major provides students opportunities to develop their understanding and appreciation of the human communication process and to enhance their oral and written communication practice. Speech communication students develop an awareness of the importance of oral communication and listening for success in their personal, civic, and professional lives; become familiar with behavioral research in persuasion; understand how language is used to create social change; develop competent delivery skills; assess the quality of arguments; evaluate information found in research and public discourse; and cultivate rhetorical sensitivity in order to better connect with individuals and audiences. In this way, the program contributes to the humanistic, aesthetic, and critical development of liberally educated students in order to prepare them for full and effective participation in society.

Undergraduate Study

The cross-disciplinary program in speech communication offers courses designed for all students as part of their general education and as a complement to their professional training. It also offers a major or minor in speech communication as well as an additional endorsement for secondary teachers who already have an endorsement in another content area.

Students who major or minor in speech communication will prepare themselves for a wide variety of employment opportunities in business, industry and government, as well as in non-profit and educational organizations. With their effective oral communication, listening, teamwork, problem-solving and leadership skills, speech communication students find positions in general business management: human resources, benefits, financial services, retail, sales and marketing and serve various organizations as recruiters, trainers, promotions managers, communication specialists, community outreach personnel and event planners. The program also prepares students for the study of law, theology, and for graduate level work in speech communication and related disciplines.

The program participates in the following interdisciplinary undergraduate minor programs: the interdisciplinary program in linguistics and the interdisciplinary program in technology and social change. Speech Communication also offers a core course and several optional courses in the Undergraduate Certificate Program in Community Leadership and Public Service.

Speech Communication Major

A student electing to major in speech communication must earn at least 120 credits with 45 credits at the 300/400 level. A minimum of 33 of those credits must be earned in Speech Communication courses where the student earns a grade of C or better. Our flexible curriculum with few prerequisites can help you meet the 33 hour requirement in a timely way.

Core Requirements (18 credits)

- SP CM 110 Listening 3
- SP CM 212 Fundamentals of Public Speaking 3
- SP CM 327 Persuasion 3
- SP CM 412 Rhetorical Criticism 3
- SP CM 416 History of American Public Address 3
- SP CM 497 Capstone Seminar 3

Additional Coursework (Choose at least 5 of the following for 15 credits)

- SP CM 275 Analysis of Popular Culture Texts 3
- SP CM 305 Language, Thought and Action 3
- SP CM 312 Business and Professional Speaking 3
- SP CM 313 Communication in Classrooms and Workshops 3
- SP CM 322 Argumentation, Debate, and Critical Thinking 3
- SP CM 323 Gender and Communication 3
- SP CM 324 Legal Communication 3
- SP CM 350 Rhetorical Traditions 3
- SP CM 404 Seminar 3
- SP CM 417 Campaign Rhetoric 3

See also the 4-year plan of study grid showing suggested courses by semester.

Credits in SP CM 290 Special Projects or SP CM 499 Communication Internship cannot be applied toward the minimum required credits for the major.

The Communication Proficiency requirement may be met by (1) completion of ENGL 150 Critical Thinking and Communication, ENGL 250 Written, Oral, Visual, and Electronic Composition (or ENGL 250H Written, Oral, Visual, and Electronic Composition: Honors), or its equivalent, with a grade in each of C or better; (2) one additional writing course beyond ENGL 250 Written, Oral, Visual, and Electronic Composition with a grade of C or better from the following approved list:

- ENGL 302 Business Communication 3
- ENGL 303 Free-Lance Writing for Popular Magazines 3
- ENGL 304 Creative Writing: Fiction 3
- ENGL 305 Creative Writing: Nonfiction 3
- ENGL 309 Report and Proposal Writing 3
- ENGL 314 Technical Communication 3
- ENGL 415 Business and Technical Editing 3
- JL MC 201 Reporting and Writing for the Mass Media 3

Speech Communication Education

Students working toward a primary teaching endorsement in another discipline may add a speech communication endorsement as an additional area. Coursework prepares students to teach speech, dramatic arts, and media at the secondary school level. In addition, they prepare to direct co-curricular and extracurricular activities such as drama, speech and debate.

Each student seeking an additional endorsement in speech communication must meet a 29 hour requirement by taking the following courses:

- SP CM 110 Listening 3
- SP CM 212 Fundamentals of Public Speaking 3
- SP CM 313 Communication in Classrooms and Workshops 3
- SP CM 322 Argumentation, Debate, and Critical Thinking 3
- SP CM 412 Rhetorical Criticism 3
- SP CM 495A Independent Study: Directing Speech Activities 1
- SP CM 495B Independent Study: Teaching Speech 3
- THTRE 358 Oral Interpretation 3
- JL MC 101 Mass Media and Society 3

One of the following 3
- THTRE 255 Introduction to Theatrical Production
- THTRE 360 Stagecraft
- THTRE 455 Directing I

Speech Communication Minor

Students from any major can complement their studies with a Speech Communication Minor (http://www.speechcomm.iastate.edu/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=34&Itemid=29) . The requirements for a minor in speech communication may be fulfilled by credit in SP CM 212 Fundamentals of Public Speaking plus at least 15 additional hours from the lists above, of which 9 credits are in courses numbered 300 or above.

Graduate Study

The program offers courses for a graduate minor in speech communication as well as supporting work for other disciplines. The requirements for a graduate minor (http://www.speechcomm.iastate.edu) in Speech Communication include:

- SP CM 582 Advanced Rhetorical Analysis 3
- SP CM 513 Proseminar: Teaching Fundamentals of Public Speaking
- SP CM 547 The History of Rhetorical Theory I: From Plato to Bacon
- SP CM 548 The History of Rhetorical Theory II: From Bacon to the Present
- SP CM 590 Special Topics
- SP CM 592 Core Studies in Rhetoric and Professional Communication

The Program of Speech Communication also participates in the interdepartmental program leading to a master’s degree in Interdisciplinary Graduate Studies.