



SCHOOL OF COMMUNICATION

Illinois State University

COMMUNICATION ADVISING POLICY MANUAL

Fell Hall, 4TH Floor

SCHOOL OF COMMUNICATION
ILLINOIS STATE UNIVERSITY
Updated 7/12/21

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University-Wide Policies

FERPA Policy

Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) is a federal law that protects the privacy of college students. All personal information is kept confidential. Students are instructed to communicate with their parents about grades and academic progress. Without a student's written consent, the University cannot share information with anyone, including parents and legal guardians. Students must complete a FERPA waiver form at the [Office of the University Registrar](#) to waive their rights.

FERPA defines two types of personal information:

- **Directory Information** can be released to the public. A student's name, address, full- or part-time status, honors and awards, and other basic information is included in this category.
- **Confidential Information** includes a student's grades, course schedule, academic standing, transcripts, course rank, and anything not considered to be directory information. This information will not be shared with anyone unless the student signs a permission form with the Office of the University Registrar.

University-Wide & CAS Graduation Requirements

All Communication students must fulfill the following requirements for graduation. Please consult the [University Catalog](#) for additional details about these requirements:

- 120 Total Hours
- 42 Senior Level (200/300 Level) Hours
- 30 Residency Hours (30 of last 60 hours must be completed at ISU)
- General Education or Illinois Articulation Initiative program
- Major Requirements
- Minor Requirements (if applicable)
- Global Studies/AMALI
- Degree Designation: Bachelor of Arts (BA) or Bachelor of Science (BS)
 - Students in the College of Arts & Sciences (CAS) can choose to graduate with either a BA or a BS degree. BS degrees require an additional science, math, or technology course above and beyond what has been completed for General Education or Illinois Articulation Initiative. BA degrees require a college-level foreign language course at the 115-level.
- CAS Foreign Language requirement
 - Students in CAS must complete a foreign language requirement. This is equivalent to year one, part two of a college-level foreign language course (112-level).
 - Students are exempt from this requirement if they have completed three or more years of the same foreign language in high school.

- Students who have completed 1-2 years of a foreign language in high school can generally begin at the 112-level. The university offers [free online readiness tests](#) to assist students in selecting their foreign language course.

Advising Policies

Advisors & Advising Caseload Policy

Communication advisors advise students who are declared COM majors/minors and have completed at least 25 credit hours. Any student who is undeclared or has completed 24 or fewer credit hours will be advised by [University College](#). Advisor assignments are determined by using the existing credit hours completed as identified in the student information system. If the student is currently enrolled in courses at another institution, the student's transcripts must be on file and the credit hours listed as "in progress" in the system for those hours to count toward their total credit hours completed. In these instances, the student's verbal confirmation of in progress hours is not enough to verify these credits; the credit hours must be represented in the system as "in progress" hours to be taken into account. This policy is in place to eliminate the student being bounced back and forth between advisors, to avoid confusion among students, and to stress to students the importance of sending in all transcripts.

If a student is "Undeclared" in the advising system, the student must meet with a University College advisor (regardless of credit hours completed). If the student is declared as a Communication major, that student will meet with their assigned Communication advisor. Students are assigned an advisor based on their major/minor. Visit the [Communication Undergraduate Advising website](#) for up-to-date advisor contact information, appointment links, and drop-in hour advising information.

Advising Appointments: Types & Protocols

Advising Appointments

Students are encouraged to meet with their advisor at least once a semester to ensure that they are on track to complete graduation requirements in a timely manner. Students will have the option to schedule one-on-one appointments with their advisor in an in-person or virtual format. One-on-one appointments are designed for students who have complex questions that require more thorough discussion and planning. [Click here](#) for a list of sample questions that are appropriate for one-on-one appointments.

In-Person Advising Appointments

Students can schedule one-on-one appointments to meet in-person with their advisor. To schedule an appointment, select the "in-person appointment" option when scheduling. Be sure to schedule your appointment with the correct advisor for your major. Prior to your appointment, your advisor will send you an email confirmation with notes for your appointment, as well as a reminder of the protocols. You will have the option to change your meeting preference as needed.

In-Person Advising Appointments Protocols

For all in-person advising appointments, the following protocols will be in place:

- **Illness & Symptoms:** *If you are sick or displaying any symptoms (such as fever, cough, sore throat, etc.), you should not come to your advisor's office.* It is imperative that you contain your germs and do not share them with your peers, your instructors, or your advisors.
 - In the case of illness, your advisor will still be happy to meet with you virtually. Simply email your advisor and we will send you a Zoom link to connect on the same day/time as your scheduled appointment. (Please see below for information regarding virtual advising appointments.) You may also reschedule for an in-person appointment if you prefer.
 - **If you arrive to your appointment and are displaying symptoms, your advisor reserves the right to cancel.**
- **Face Coverings:** Advisors plan to continue wearing face coverings while meeting with students as needed.
 - *If you are unvaccinated, face coverings are still required per the CDC and Illinois State University guidelines and must be worn during your in-person advising appointment.*
 - If you are fully vaccinated, face coverings are no longer required per the CDC. However, you may choose to wear a face covering if you are comfortable doing so.
- **Distancing:** Advisors will practice physical distancing to the extent possible in their office spaces during in-person appointments. Advisors may also choose to conduct in-person appointments in larger meeting spaces or outdoors as needed.
- **Mobile Check-in:** When you arrive for your appointment, please check-in using the link provided in your confirmation email or by scanning the QR code outside the Communication main office on the 4th floor of Fell Hall. After checking-in, please have a seat in the hallway outside the Communication main office and your advisor will come greet you for your appointment.
- **Electronic Advising Forms:** Advisors will continue to use electronic advising forms to facilitate appointments and planning. You will receive a copy of your electronic advising form prior to your appointment. Advisors would encourage you bring a copy to your appointment or view it on your personal device during the meeting. An updated copy of the notes from your appointment will be uploaded to your Advising Notes in your student portal.
- **FERPA:** A reminder that, due to Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), the university *cannot* share your information with anyone, including parents and legal guardians. Students must complete a FERPA waiver form at the [Office of the University Registrar](#) to waive their rights. Unless this waiver is on file, parents and legal guardians are not able to join an advising appointment, whether in-person or virtual.

Virtual Advising Appointments

Students can schedule one-on-one appointments to meet with their advisor virtually via Zoom. To schedule an appointment, select the “virtual appointment” option when scheduling. Be sure to schedule your appointment with the correct advisor for your major.

Prior to your scheduled appointment, your advisor will send you an email with a link to their Zoom virtual meeting space, as well as notes for your appointment. You can “check-in” for your virtual appointment by clicking on the Zoom link from your advisor and entering the waiting room. Your advisor will bring you into the Zoom meeting space at the time of your appointment.

Your advisor will use screen sharing to allow you to view your electronic advising form during the appointment and facilitate discussion. An updated copy of the notes from your appointment will be uploaded to your Advising Notes in your student portal.

Virtual Advising Appointments Protocols

For all virtual advising appointments, students must follow the protocols below for appropriate Zoom etiquette. An advisor reserves the right to end a virtual session at any time if proper Zoom protocols are violated.

- Be on time. Test your technology in advance to make sure everything is working.
- Proper attire must always be worn.
- Be aware of your surroundings and background. Consider using a virtual background if needed.
- Stay attentive. Don't multitask on your phone or other devices.
- Designate a quiet, private space for your appointments. Use headphones if needed for privacy.
- Others should not be present during your appointment without a signed [FERPA waiver](#) on file with the Registrar's Office (this includes your parents/guardians).
- Maintain a respectful and professional demeanor.

Drop-In Hours (Virtual)

Communication advisors will be available at various times throughout the week for *virtual drop-in hours* (please see schedule and Zoom links for each advisor below). Drop-in hours are designed for students who have questions that can be answered relatively quickly. [Click here](#) for a list of questions that are appropriate for drop-in hours. At any time during drop-in hours, an advisor may ask you to schedule a one-on-one follow up appointment to address more complex questions.

Drop-in hours will be facilitated virtually via Zoom; no in-person drop-in hours will be offered. Offering drop-in hours virtually allows greater accessibility for students to pop into drop-in hours from wherever they are (on- or off-campus) on any device. Students will meet with an advisor on a first come, first served basis. Upon joining the Zoom meeting, students will enter the waiting room and will be admitted when the advisor is available. You must remain in the waiting room to keep your spot. Please be attentive and remain by your device. The Zoom meeting will end at the posted time. If you were unable to meet with a Communication advisor during their designated drop-in hours, you are encouraged to participate in their next available drop-in session. The virtual advising protocols apply to drop-in hours as well.

Drop-in hours follow the academic calendar. Advisors will hold drop-in hours starting the first week of classes through the last week of classes. ***Please note: Drop-in hours will not be held during finals week, on holidays or University closures, or during summer months.***

Sick Policy

If you are sick or displaying any symptoms (such as fever, cough, sore throat, etc.), you should not come to your in-person advising appointment with your Communication advisor. It is imperative that you contain your germs and do not share them with your peers, your instructors, or your advisor.

If you have an in-person advising appointment scheduled but are sick or are displaying any symptoms, your advisor will still be happy to meet with you virtually. Simply email your advisor and they will send you a Zoom link to connect on the same day/time as your scheduled appointment. You may also reschedule for another in-person appointment if you prefer.

If you arrive to your in-person appointment and are displaying symptoms, your advisor reserves the right to cancel the appointment.

If your advisor feels ill or is displaying any symptoms on the day of your scheduled in-person appointment, they will notify you in a timely manner and will plan to meet with you virtually.

Appointment No Show Policy

Communication advisors work hard to accommodate a large caseload of students each semester. Therefore, it is extremely important that students make and keep all appointments made with their advisor. During peak registration periods (October and March), many students book appointments several weeks in advance to see their advisor. Sometimes this scheduling in advance results in students forgetting and/or not showing for their scheduled appointments.

Advisors abide by a policy concerning students who do not show for their scheduled advising appointments. This policy is in place to limit no show advising appointments, preserving the advisor's time, as well as allowing the greatest and most equal access for students to schedule an appointment with their assigned advisor.

Advisors average 100 no show appointments each semester. When students do not show for their scheduled appointments, other students and the student's advisor are impacted. By not showing for a scheduled appointment, this takes away an opportunity from another student who is seeking advising assistance. In addition, this also takes time away from the advisor, who could have utilized that time assisting another student or performing work related to their other roles for the School or University, such as teaching courses, participating in recruitment events, performing tasks related to course scheduling, etc.

This policy limits students to 2 no show appointments each semester. **These no shows do not need to be consecutive.** Any student who no shows for 2 advising appointments will be prevented from scheduling another advising appointment until the end of the semester. Appointments will be set aside during the final week of advanced (online) registration to assist these students, which will still allow them to make changes to their schedules for the upcoming semester.

No Show Appointment Policy FAQ

What is the no show appointment policy?

The no show appointment policy is in place to reduce the number of no show appointments Communication advisors experience each semester. Under this policy, students will be limited to 2 non-consecutive no show appointments throughout the semester. If a student no shows twice, they will be prevented from scheduling an advising appointment until the last week of advanced registration.

Why is this policy in place?

The policy is in place to reduce the number of no show appointments Communication advisors experience each semester. When a student is a no show for their scheduled advising appointment, they are taking away an opportunity from another student, thereby limiting the advisor's ability to assist the greatest number of students possible. In addition, being a no show for a scheduled advising appointment takes away time from an advisor that they could have otherwise devoted to the other roles they perform for the University – such as teaching, participating in recruitment efforts, scheduling-related tasks, etc.

Will I still be able to register for courses?

Yes, this policy only prevents students from scheduling an advising appointment. Students are encouraged to continue to register for courses using the online resources provided to help them make educated decisions regarding their schedules. Students who violate the no show policy will be allowed to schedule an advising appointment during the last week of advanced registration.

Will I be able to meet with another Communication advisor?

No, under this policy, you will be prevented from scheduling an advising appointment with any advisor on campus – this includes other major advisors, minor advisors, special populations advisors, University College advisors, etc.

If I am prevented from meeting with my advisor, what other resources are available to me?

The university provides several free resources students can access at any time to assist with course planning. These resources include the following:

1. University Catalog: The Communication section of the [University Catalog](#) contains information regarding the requirements (including specific courses) for each Communication major/sequence. You can review your Course History in your student portal to see what courses you've completed and see what courses you have remaining. The University Catalog also allows you to check prerequisite requirements for courses prior to registration.
2. Sample Plans of Study: The [ISU Majors website](#) provides sample plans of study for each major. These sample plans of study outline the requirements for your specific major/sequence and the recommended order in which courses should be completed. (The checklist on the first page is particularly helpful.) To access the sample plan of study for your major, visit the ISU Academics website, click on your specific major/sequence, and click the "Plans of Study" option to download the appropriate PDF file.
3. Previous Advising Sheets: You can refer to the advising sheet from your most recent appointment to review your remaining requirements. Advising notes & documents are uploaded to your student portal following each advising appointment. Please contact your assigned Communication advisor if you need assistance or have problems accessing these materials.
4. Progress Towards My Degree: This function on your My Illinois State student portal will also clarify your remaining requirements, and your overall progress toward graduation.
5. My Academic Requirements: This function in the registration system is another resource you can use to identify your remaining requirements.

Override Policy

The University utilizes a universal override request form. This form must be used to request an override for any course at Illinois State University and can be accessed in your [My Illinois State student portal](#). To complete an override request form, navigate to the "Academics" tab and select "Course Override Request." Please note, simply requesting an override does not guarantee you a seat in the course.

Communication advisors adhere to the following policies regarding requests for overrides:

Before Requesting an Override

Check the advising notes from your latest appointment for options. If you have university-wide or “free” electives or other requirements to complete for graduation, register for those **before** you request an override (Advising Notes & documents can be accessed via your student portal). Overrides are not guaranteed, so students are strongly encouraged to enroll in alternative courses.

Override for a Full Course

1. Complete the Override Request Form located on your My Illinois State student portal. Communication advisors will accept override requests up until finals week. *Any requests received after finals week are less likely to be granted.*
2. After finals week, advisors will prioritize the requests and determine if the needs for the course are viable and if prerequisites have been met. *Overrides for full courses will also need to be approved by the course instructor.*
3. If an override is granted, the student will be contacted and will be able to register for the course through their My Illinois State student portal.
4. Students are advised to register for an alternative course in the meantime. Patience is encouraged and appreciated.

Overrides for Department Consent Courses

Several courses have been placed on the “department consent” list. Some examples include: COM 287: Independent Study, COM 291: Undergraduate Teaching Assistantship in Communication, COM 398: Professional Practice in Communication, and COM 214/314, which are reserved for students holding leadership positions at WZND. If you need a permit to enroll in one of these courses, please contact your assigned Communication advisor for more information on how to proceed.

Overrides for Prerequisites

Communication advisors cannot override the prerequisites for a course – *only the instructor of the course can authorize a prerequisite override.* Follow the steps outlined above to request a prerequisite override.

Reinstatement Policy

Students who have been [dismissed](#) from the university are also dismissed from their Communication major. Students who are [reinstated](#) to the university can automatically be readmitted to their original Communication major after the student reaches good academic standing at the University (minimum 2.0 cumulative GPA). Students will **not** be required to go through the formal process of reapplying to the School of Communication. (Students wishing to change their major to one outside of Communication must follow the appropriate application process for their desired major).

Course Substitution Policy

Communication advisors can make appropriate course substitutions for Communication courses for unique and extenuating circumstances (often these require approval from the appropriate Program Coordinator or faculty member). Please contact your assigned advisor to discuss whether a course substitution is appropriate.

Advising Expectations

Communication students are expected to abide by the following expectations:

Graduation Requirements

- I am responsible for my graduation requirements, including my major and my minor. I must work in collaboration with my academic advisor to monitor my progress.
- While my advisor is here to assist me, I understand that I am responsible for my academic success.
- I am responsible for checking My Illinois State's, "Progress Towards My Degree" and "My Academic Requirements" in the registration system on a regular basis and identifying and researching any issues that may arise. I will also reference my [University Catalog](#).
- Overrides are not given for courses that are full without the consent of the instructor. It is my responsibility to contact the instructor to request an override for a course in a timely manner.
- I understand that if I fail a course, it may delay my anticipated graduation date.
- I understand that if I fail the prerequisites for a required course, it may delay my anticipated graduation date.
- I understand that it is my responsibility to register on my assigned date and time. By not doing so, I am limiting my course options and possibly delaying my anticipated graduation date.
- My advisor will assist me in determining appropriate course options, but it is my responsibility to register for courses on my own.
- I am responsible for my own academic success. I must take responsibility for the decisions and actions I take that impact my academic achievements.
- If I anticipate a problem or am having difficulty with my academics, it is my responsibility to seek the advice of my advisor.

Appointment Etiquette: In-Person and Virtual

- I must attend and be punctual for all appointments with my academic advisor. If I am more than 10 minutes late to my appointment, I will be considered a no show and will have to reschedule.
- If I am a no show for 2 appointments (do not need to be consecutive) during peak registration time without giving ample notice to the advisor, I understand I will not be able to make another appointment until the end of the semester.
- I understand that my advisor's time is valuable and by not showing up for my appointment (or failing to cancel the appointment 24 hours in advance), I am taking away an available appointment from one of my peers.
- I understand that my advisor is an academic professional and should be treated with respect. I will conduct myself in a professional manner when working with my advisor (in-person, virtually, via phone and email).
- I will keep an open mind when my advisor gives me options and consider all options carefully.
- I understand that my advisor is here to help me achieve academic success and provide resources that will enable me to be successful, but it is my responsibility to use what resources are given to me to make my own academic decisions.
- For virtual appointments, I will make sure my first and last name is affiliated with my Zoom account.
- I will stay attentive and will not multitask on my phone or other devices.
- Others will not be present during my appointment without a signed [FERPA waiver](#) on file with the Office of the University Registrar (this includes my parents or legal guardians).

- I will maintain a respectful and professional demeanor.

Major & Minor Policies

Double Major/Minor Policy

The School of Communication does not allow students to double major or major/minor within Communication. This policy is in place to protect the faculty and classrooms resources the School of Communication has available, which allows us to offer the courses necessary for students to matriculate through their majors in a timely manner. In addition, there are a large amount of elective and required courses that overlap between all majors and minors, which allows students to explore many different areas of Communication. If students wish to declare a double major or minor, they will need to explore options outside of Communication and follow the application processes put in place by that School/Department.

Dropping Minor Policy

Communication advisors are able to drop minors (Communication or otherwise) from student plans if students choose (unless a minor is required as part of their major requirements). Advisors need a verbal or written verification from the student to proceed with this step. All verification should be noted in the student file appropriately (either on an advising sheet or via email) and documented in Advising Notes. Students wishing to declare a minor (Communication or otherwise) must follow the application process for their desired minor program.

Major Block Policy

Certain courses are major blocked for declared Communication majors and are not available to non-majors. This allows declared Communication majors to matriculate throughout their major coursework in a timely manner.

The following courses are always available to non-majors:

- COM 128: Gender in the Humanities
- COM 160: Introduction to Mass Media
- COM 178: Introduction to Public Relations
- COM 183: Rhetoric as Civic Literacy
- COM 223: Small Group Processes

The School of Communication may release major blocks for additional Communication courses near the end of the registration period during the fall and spring semesters. This information will be shared with all advisors on campus.

In addition, not all Communication courses are available to all declared Communication majors. Each major program has specific required and elective courses that may be restricted to students within a particular program. This allows students in each specific Communication major to matriculate through their programs in a

timely manner. Please contact your assigned advisor to learn more about the Communication courses that are available for your major.

COM 111 Enrollment Policy

COM 111: Introduction to Communication Theory is a prerequisite for many courses within Communication and provides essential, fundamental knowledge to all students wishing to advance their understanding of the communication discipline. Because COM 111 is a foundational course, many students desire to enroll prior to becoming declared Communication majors. In order to prioritize enrollment for declared Communication majors, COM 111 will always be major blocked for declared Communication majors at the beginning of registration each semester but will be opened to all students at Illinois State on a predetermined date towards the end of the advanced registration period. This will allow declared Communication majors the first chance for enrolling in the course, while still allowing other Illinois State students an opportunity to enroll after the predetermined date has passed. This date will vary from one semester to the next based on the registration breakdown provided by the Office of the University Registrar. This date will be set by the Communication advisors prior to the start of registration each semester and communicated to the campus advising community via email. This policy will stand each semester (fall, spring, and summer).

Communication Application & Admission Policies

Applying to the School of Communication: Policy for Undeclared and Non-Majors

Student **who are not currently** declared as a Communication major and wish to formally apply to a Communication major or minor will follow the process outlined on the [School of Communication Undergraduate Advising website](#). Applications are accepted during the fall and spring semesters only.

Drop-In Hours (Virtual): Prospective Students

Communication advisors will offer drop-in hours virtually (Zoom) approximately (1) hour each week, for **prospective students and/or students wishing to change their major** during that semester's application cycle. Drop-in hours will begin the first week of the semester and will conclude with the end of the application period. The link to virtual drop-in hours for prospective students can be found on the [School of Communication Undergraduate Advising website](#). Students will be encouraged to participate in drop-in hours if they have questions about any of our major or minor programs, if they wish to discuss their major choice to determine proper fit and connection to future career, or if they have questions about the application process itself.

During fall/spring semesters, Communication advisors will meet only with declared majors for course planning appointments. Prospective students and/or non-Communication majors are encouraged to meet with their current assigned advisor for assistance. This allows advisors the greatest opportunity to assist declared Communication majors during peak registration periods.

Internal Communication Major Transfer Policy

Students **who are currently** declared as a Communication major and wish to change to a different Communication major (i.e., Communication Studies, Journalism, Mass Media, or Public Relations) must complete the "[Internal Major Transfer](#)" form. This form requires students to include a 250- to 300-word justification for being admitted to the new major. In this essay students must address why the change is desired, what career they hope to pursue with their new major, and what they will bring to the major as a student.

The Communication Advising Team will review applications on a weekly basis and will make the appropriate decisions based on the student's application and justification. A decision will be communicated to the student via their ISU email address. The student will then be able to meet with their new Communication advisor.

Miscellaneous

Study Abroad

Study Abroad Opportunities

Students who want to study abroad can take advantage of [summer programs](#) that are sponsored through Communication. Communication offers programs in Paris, The Netherlands, Panama, and Brazil. Programs are offered during the summer months, on a rotating basis.

The Office of International Studies & Programs sponsors programs to a variety of additional countries as well, and for different durations (semester long, fall/spring break, academic year)

- **Office of International Studies & Programs:** All students who want to study abroad must go to the [Office of International Studies & Programs website](#) and create an account/profile. They must also set up an appointment and meet with a Study Abroad advisor, even if they want to do a Communication study abroad program.

Course Approvals & Articulations

Communication advisors will need to meet with each student to help with the articulation of specific courses and how they fit into the student's overall degree plan and fill out and sign off on the academic planning sheet. To view the articulation sheet, go to the [Office of International Studies & Programs website](#), click on the continent, then country and find the program the student is interested in and there will be a link for the articulation sheet. If there is a course that is not listed on the sheet and the student wants to see if it can fulfill a Communication major course, the student will need to get a syllabus for the course and the advisor can submit it to the specific department chair for approval.

Communication advisors can only approve articulations for COM courses. All study abroad courses for General Education and University requirements must be approved by a study abroad advisor. Additionally, courses for a student's minor must be approved by the student's minor advisor.

Independent Studies (COM 287)

Communication students who are interested in researching a specific topic, and/or taking a deeper dive into a specific subject area of Communication are encouraged to consider [COM 287: Independent Study](#), which can count as a COM 200-level elective in a plan of study. Independent Studies involve intensive work in a special area of the student's interest and will culminate in a comprehensive written report, examination, or creative work. Students complete this work in coordination with a Communication faculty member of their choice. Students who are considering an Independent Study are encouraged to contact their assigned academic advisor. Your advisor can provide further guidance on the eligibility requirements and the enrollment process.

Undergraduate Teaching Assistantships (COM 291)

Students who are interested in teaching or training & development, are encouraged to consider COM 291: Undergraduate Teaching Assistantship (UTA), which can count as a COM 200-level elective in a major plan of study. Our UTAs provide meaningful educational experiences for students enrolled in our introductory-level Communication courses and conclude their opportunity by developing a portfolio of their work. Students who are interested in a UTA are encouraged to contact their assigned academic advisor. Your advisor can provide further guidance on the eligibility requirements and the enrollment process. **See Appendix for UTA application form & additional information.**

Internships (COM 398)

Communication students are highly encouraged to participate in COM 398: Professional Practice/Internship. Internships have a variety of benefits, including trying out a specific field or role, building a portfolio, developing a professional network, gaining confidence, earning college credit, and more. Many internships can be taken for course credit and will count as a COM 200/300 level elective in a major plan of study. Internships can be taken during fall, spring, or summer terms, and can be completed locally, regionally, nationally, or even internationally.

Students who are interested in completing an internship are encouraged to contact the School of Communication internship coordinator, Mr. Tom Lamonica, talamon@ilstu.edu. Mr. Lamonica can provide further guidance on the eligibility requirements and enrollment process. In order to earn credit for an internship opportunity, students will also be required to complete the [internship form](#).

Please consult your assigned advisor to discuss how an internship will fit into a plan of study.

Appendix

Undergraduate Teaching Assistantship (COM 291)

COM291 Undergraduate Teaching Assistantship

Associate Director of School of Communication: Professor Pete Smudde, Ph.D., APR,
Office: Fell 449
Email: psmudde@ilstu.edu
Phone: (309) 438-7339

This University Teaching Assistantship (UTA) is available on an application basis to School of Communication majors and minors who are interested in some type of instructional communication. The opportunity is an internship in teaching, and the primary objective is to help students learn and apply principles and practices of effective instructional communication that align with their career goals. Students enrolled in this course will have the opportunity to work as a teaching assistant in a particular communication class, under the direction of that class' instructor of record. In this way that instructor shall develop the UTA's familiarity with effective teaching and learning in the context of the class in which the UTA is serving. This course is designed to support students with formal and informal ways of exploring what a UTA is in theory and practice and how being a UTA benefitted the student.

Eligibility & Application Process

To be eligible, students must meet the following criteria:

- Achieved junior standing at the university (60 credit hours)
- Maintained a minimum overall 2.5 GPA
- Demonstrated interest in instructional communication (this can include teaching, employee development, training, or similar field)
- Completed the course for which they wish to be a UTA

The process for applying to become a UTA is as follows:

1. Determine a class and faculty member you wish to be a UTA for, and ask the faculty member for permission to be a UTA in that class.
2. Discuss specific objectives and responsibilities that you will need to accomplish to earn credit.
3. Complete the Undergraduate Teaching Assistantship Application form on page 4 with the faculty member. (See details below for completing the form.)
4. All applications must be turned in and approved before the student can attend the class. Per ISU policy, students are not allowed to attend a class for which they are not registered. Applications received after the first two weeks of classes will not be accepted.

For the application form (see page 4), the following categories of information are essential to explain. Insufficient or unclear explanations in any category will require the student to work with the class instructor to revise and resubmit the application:

- **Career Goal** — Your career goal should clearly indicate your interest in instructional communication. This section should explain how being a UTA will help you meet those career goals. Some jobs consistent with this include teaching and training and development. Vague career goals that do not align with a career the candidate is interested in are not acceptable.
- **Objectives** — Objectives should clearly list new skills, content, theory, or professional practice that the UTA will gain from this experience. Objectives should relate to instructional communication and should be something that is not easily taught in a course. Further, objectives should align with the career goal identified.
- **Duties and Responsibilities** — This section should detail the specific duties the UTA will complete. It should be consistent with guidelines for UTAs listed in this document. Duties and responsibilities should be consistent with the career goals identified.
- **Scholarly Outcome** — This section should clearly detail the scholarly outcome of this experience. As stated above, students are required to complete a course portfolio. This section should highlight how the items in the portfolio will benefit the UTA. This section should also explain what the UTA hopes to learn from this experience.

NOTE: Completion of the application does not guarantee a position as a UTA.

Guidelines for Students and Faculty

Acceptable tasks for UTAs:

- Instruct up to three portions of the class and/or conduct instructional activities
- Mentor students in the class
- Develop course materials (e.g., presentation materials, assignment sheets)
- Assist in designing and coordinating course projects
- Hold office hours
- Recommend innovations in teaching and technology
- Develop extra-credit assignments
- Conduct study sessions
- Work as a lab assistant (one-on-one coaching)

UTAs may not:

- Grade, evaluate, or critique student work, unless under the direct supervision of faculty for the purposes of increasing a UTA's knowledge of assessment
- Have access to students' grades, final evaluations, or other personal information
- Help prepare or deliver exams
- Complete any work unrelated to the course for which they are a UTA

Both UTAs and faculty members are responsible for ensuring these guidelines are adhered to. If UTAs or faculty members are dissatisfied with their experience at any time, they should consult the Associate Director of the School of Communication to discuss concerns as soon as possible.

Requirements

While a UTA's learning and experience is primarily grounded in the instructor's class in which they serve, to obtain credit for COM 291, UTAs are required to:

- Work 3 hours each week per hour of credit gained. (For example, if the UTA is enrolled for 3 credit hours, he or she must work on course-related tasks for 9 hours per week. This work includes going to class and having office hours.)
- Teach or instruct one or more lessons or instructional activities.
- Interact with students in the course to help them in their learning of course material.

- Given the “Guidelines” above, regularly work with the instructor about class content, especially concerning the purpose, preparation, and final products of instructional material for the class. Along the way, a UTA should discuss matters of teaching and learning with the instructor. The instructor will, in turn, lead the student in learning and applying principles and practices for effective teaching and learning in the context of the class.
- Communicate frequently and meet monthly with the Associate Director of the School about progress in and matters relevant to the UTA experience and work required for COM 291.
- Complete required two assignments (presented below) that challenge UTAs to explore selected scholarship about teaching assistants and reflect on their own experiences as a UTA.

The first assignment is to choose *one article per month* (four total) from a small collection of articles (provided separately), write a brief reaction essay about key “take-aways” and questions that bear on your UTA experience, and discuss it on the days all UTAs this semester meet with the Associate Director (**dates to be determined; possibly held over Zoom**). Your work will be due that day and be evaluated holistically based on the accuracy of your use of any article, clarity of your writing and oral discussion, and depth of your thinking.

The second assignment is to produce a portfolio about your *whole experience* as a UTA—to give a complete representation of your experience. The portfolio must be organized and professional. It can include any resources from the UTA experience, and it must include the following material presented in individual sections, each with a section divider with the title of the section on it:

- A reflection paper (three to five pages) comparing their UTA experience to established theory and/or educational concepts they have learned in classes. This paper must include two or more scholarly sources that pertain to your objectives as a UTA and teaching, especially in colleges/universities. The collection of articles may be used, and you are encouraged to find others that fit your interests.
- Another reflection paper (two to three pages) about your performance as a UTA—how you met the objectives in the UTA application and how the experience will help you meet your career goals. This paper must conclude with a rationale for the final grade you believe you earned.
- All monthly reaction essays about the articles you chose to review and discuss.
- Cumulative/All work completed as a UTA (e.g., lesson plans, presentations, assignments, student feedback examples, etc.; also see the “Acceptable tasks for UTAs” in the Guidelines section).
- Résumé or curriculum vita.
- Final evaluation of the UTA experience (see page 5 of this document).

For the portfolio, you are highly encouraged to discuss it with the Associate Director of the School, especially to show work in progress. Plus, because each UTA is working under the direction of the instructor of record for a specific class, you need to check with the instructor with whom you are working to make sure the portfolio is a reasonably complete representation of their experience. Ultimately, the portfolio must be *submitted by email as an electronic file* to the Associate Director during the final week of classes, but it may be submitted not more than one week earlier. There are three options for an electronic portfolio:

- I recommend a single PDF file with all contents organized according to the syllabus/agreement, showing when a new section begins with a single page that has the title for the section on it, then have the required content for that section follow that page.
- You may use another program to produce your portfolio, if you wish, as long as I have the software to open it and read it. Check with me first in this case.
- One other approach is either a compressed file that has all your files individually with obvious names for what they contain *and* put into folders named according to the required sections. Also check with me about whether I have the software to open and read any files.

Final Grade

At the culmination of the experience, the instructor of the class for which a UTA worked will, based on the UTA’s performance in the role, recommend a final grade for the UTA to the Associate Director of the School of Communication.

The Associate Director of the School of Communication will **(a)** review the student's performance on monthly assignments and attendance at monthly meetings, **(b)** evaluate the course portfolio based on its completeness (i.e., presenting all required material in the forms/format specified), thoroughness (i.e., covering all relevant facets of the experience of being a UTA for the assigned class), and language use (i.e., proper American-English grammar, style, organization, spelling, visual presentation, etc.), and **(c)** use the student's performance in (a) and (b) plus the instructor's grade recommendation to determine the final course grade.

Undergraduate Teaching Assistantship (UTA) Application

Term (Semester and Year):

UTA Applicant's Information

Student Name:

UID:

Phone:

Email:

Course Information

Class:

Section:

Instructor's Name:

Instructor's Email:

Number of hours working each week (minimum of 3 per week per hour of credit):

Desired number of credit hours to be earned (usually 1-3):

Career Goal

[Explain how being a UTA will help you meet your career objectives; see helpful considerations on next page.]

Objectives

[What are the new skills, content, theory, or professional practice that the UTA will gain from this experience? Use bullet points and provide specific goals; see helpful considerations on next page.]

Duties and Responsibilities

[Identify the specific duties that the UTA will complete during this experience see helpful considerations on next page.]

Scholarly Outcome

[Identify the scholarly/academic product that will be submitted at the culmination of this experience. This must include the portfolio discussed above see helpful considerations on next page.]

Contract Agreement

Submission of this form indicates that the student and faculty member have read, understood and agree to the requirements in the UTA contract.

Date filed:

Student (signature):

Faculty (signature):

Advisor (signature):

Associate Director of the School of Communication (signature):

