Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

1. **What is Communication Studies at Michigan?**
The major in Communication Studies focuses on the history, content and impact of mass media and new, emerging media. We emphasize four crucial reasons for studying mass media:
   - Their enormous influence on our culture and those around the world
   - Their role in shaping our individual and collective identities (including our attitudes toward others)
   - Their centrality to everyday life, politics, the economy, and public policy
   - Their impact on democratic institutions

2. **How many students major in Communication Studies at Michigan?**
   At present there are approximately 500 Communication Studies majors at the University of Michigan.

3. **What kind of job can I find with a Communication Studies degree?**
   Many Communication Studies majors pursue careers in corporate communications, new and social media, public relations, consumer communications, advertising, marketing, market research, print media, radio/television, multimedia, publishing, literary agent, public affairs and journalism (print/broadcast). The curriculum is also excellent preparation for students who plan to continue their education in graduate or professional school programs.

4. **How do I become a Communication Studies major?**
   To declare a Communication Studies major you must complete the prerequisite courses (COMM 101 and 102) with a grade of C or above in each course. Students must declare no later than second semester junior year.

5. **When should I begin taking prerequisite courses?**
   You should begin taking prerequisite courses no later than the second semester of sophomore year.

6. **How do I declare the major?**
   After completion of the prerequisite classes with at least a C or above in each course, an in-person declaration briefing is required to declare the Communication Studies major.

7. **Can I declare before finishing the required prerequisite courses?**
   No, you must complete all required prerequisite courses (Comm 101 and 102) with a C or above in each course to be eligible to declare.

8. **When should I schedule an advising appointment?**
   You may meet with a Communication Studies department advisor as early as freshman year. Appointments are made by clicking on the calendar icon on the department's website: [www.lsa.umich.edu/comm/undergraduates](http://www.lsa.umich.edu/comm/undergraduates).

9. **I need to see an advisor about my courses, the major, internships, etc.**
   All undergraduate students need to go online to [www.lsa.umich.edu/comm/undergraduates](http://www.lsa.umich.edu/comm/undergraduates), then click on the calendar icon to make an appointment. Prospective U-M students may make an appointment by contacting the Undergraduate Program Coordinator at: [LSA-comm-studies-undergrad-services@umich.edu](mailto:LSA-comm-studies-undergrad-services@umich.edu) at least 2 weeks prior to the planned visit to the University of Michigan.

10. **Who do I make an appointment with for:**
    - Pre-major Advising: Cheryl Erdmann or Faith Sparr
    - Senior Audits (Major Release Forms): Cheryl Erdmann
    - Study Abroad courses: Faith Sparr
    - Domestic Transfer Credit: Faith Sparr
    - Internship (Comm 321): Faith Sparr
11. I’m having a problem making an appointment on-line.
   Contact the department by phone (734.764.0420) or by email: LSA-comm-studies-undergrad-services@umich.edu

12. What are the Communication Studies major requirements?
   After completion of the prerequisite courses (Comm 101 and 102) and declaration of the major, students must complete the following requirements:
   • One (1), 300-level Comm ULWR course from courses numbered Comm 350-399.
   • One (1) Comm capstone seminar from courses numbered Comm 450-499.
   • 22 additional elective credits from courses numbered Comm 200-449 (not included in the ULWR and capstone requirements above). No more than 8 credits may come from 200-level courses.
   *Including the prerequisite courses, the major requires 37 total credits.

13. Can the curriculum be completed in 4 years?
   The major may typically be finished within 4 years if all prerequisites are completed by the first semester junior year. Transfer students may have a difficult time completing the prerequisites in enough time to finish all requirements within two years. Generally a minimum of 5 terms is needed to complete the major.

14. Can the credits of a repeated COMM course with a different topic titles count towards major requirements?
   Yes. Several “topics” courses are offered in the department. These courses may be repeated for credit: Comm 305 may be repeated for up to 8 total credits under different topic titles. Comm 404, 405, 408, 409, 419 and 439 are repeatable for up to 6 credits under different topic titles.

15. What courses comprise my major GPA?
   COMM 101, 102, Comm ULWR, Comm capstone, and 22 additional elective credits.

16. Does a Pass/Fail course satisfy the major requirements?
   No, LSA does not allow Pass/Fail elections to be used to meet requirements for the major.

17. What is a “cross-listed” course?
   Cross-listed courses are courses shared between two or more departments. You must verify with both major advisors whether you may use a cross-listed course to fulfill major requirements.

18. What about Transfer and Study Abroad Credit?
   Declared Communication Studies majors have the opportunity to earn up to 6 upper-level elective credits of faculty-approved coursework completed at another institution, either inside or outside the United States, to count toward the major requirements. **No transfer credit is allowed for any prerequisite course!** For more information go to our website at: www.lsa.umich.edu/comm/undergraduate/generalinformation/transfercredit.

19. Can I double major?
   Many students choose to combine their major in Communication Studies with a major in another department. Double majors with Communication Studies commonly include:
   • Political Science for students interested in law and government service
   • Psychology for students interested in advertising or public relations
   • English for those interested in print or broadcast journalism
   • International Studies for those interested in international media.
   • Screen Arts and Cultures for students interested in the entertainment industry.

20. Is there a minor in Communication Studies?
   The department does not offer a minor in Communication Studies and does not have any plans to offer a minor. Many Communication Studies majors combine the major with minors in Political Science, International Studies, Global Media Studies (through Screen Arts & Cultures), Writing (through Sweetland), Digital Studies (through American Culture), and Entrepreneurship (through Innovate Blue).
21. **What classes are being offered next semester?**
   The prerequisite courses (Comm 101 and 102) are offered every Fall and Winter term. In addition, the department attempts to offer Comm 101 and/or 102 during the Spring and/or Summer half-terms. A variety of 300-level ULWR, 400-level capstone seminars and 200, 300 and 400-level elective courses are offered each Fall and Winter term. During the Spring and Summer half-terms, the department offers two or three 300 and 400-level courses.

22. **I'm waitlisted for a course. How do I get in?**
   **DO NOT** E-MAIL THE INSTRUCTOR. You must attend the first two lectures and, if applicable, the first discussion/lab section meeting. Instructors may drop enrolled and waitlisted students who do not attend the first week of classes. Instructors will issue permissions according to the department policies after the first week of class. If you receive a permission you will need to register for the class. Waitlist and permission policies are found at [www.lsa.umich.edu/comm/undergraduate/majorpolicies](http://www.lsa.umich.edu/comm/undergraduate/majorpolicies).

23. **I'm having difficulty registering for a class.**
   Check the notes in Wolverine Access to see if the class is closed or reserved. Student Help pages in Wolverine Access contain information about registration. If you still experience difficulty contact Student Services at the Registrar's Office at 764-6280.

24. **I need a permission.**
   You must be on the Wolverine Access electronic waitlist. Permissions are only given by the instructor of the course after the term starts. You must attend class and talk to the instructor. Our waitlist and permission policies can be found at [www.lsa.umich.edu/comm/undergraduate/majorpolicies](http://www.lsa.umich.edu/comm/undergraduate/majorpolicies).

25. **I need a Senior Audit.**
   Go to [www.lsa.umich.edu/comm/undergraduates](http://www.lsa.umich.edu/comm/undergraduates) to set up an appointment on-line with the Undergraduate Program Coordinator. Click on "Make an Advising Appointment," then choose "Major Release Form" as the type of appointment. Every student must have a Major Release Form appointment to begin the senior audit process. You should schedule this appointment the semester BEFORE you plan to graduate.

26. **What is a Major Release Form?**
   The purpose of the Major Release Form is to inform you and notify the academic auditor which courses are still required for successful completion of the major. You must also apply for graduation online through Wolverine Access. The LSA Auditors will conduct an academic audit and e-mail a copy to you.

27. **Does the department offer undergraduate awards?**
   Award information and applications can be found on the Communication Studies undergraduate CTools site and in the department offices. Only declared Communication Studies majors are eligible to apply for departmental awards.

28. **Does the Department offer courses in public relations, marketing, journalism and advertising?**
   The curriculum does **not** include courses that teach vocational skills or offer pre-professional training. The curriculum involves the study of topics such as basic information and persuasion processes (in advertising and public relations contexts), journalistic performance, media economics, new and digital media and a host of other topics that are clearly germane to work in media-related professions. The curriculum continues to value and involve writing, critical thinking, information analysis and problem solving skills.

29. **How do I find an internship?**
   Internships can be an ideal way to gain valuable hands-on skills and define an area of interest within the field of communication. The department encourages and supports majors in internships that supplement academic training however the department does not place students in internships. You must research and find your own internships. Information can be found through department e-mails to declared majors, on-line resources, LSA Opportunity Hub Internship Program, U of M’s Career Center and the undergraduate student group, MACS.

30. **Is financial assistance available for summer internships?**
   Each year the department offers a limited number of summer internship stipends and awards to declared Communication Studies majors participating in unpaid, summer internships. You may find more information
31. **What about the senior year honors program?**
Honors students design and conduct an individual research project and write an honors thesis during their senior year. Students admitted into the honors program take a year-long seminar during their senior year (Communication Studies 491 and 492) while they are conducting their research and writing their theses. To be eligible you must have an overall grade point of ≥ 3.40 and a grade point in Communication Studies of ≥ 3.50. Additional information and application can be found on the Communication Studies undergraduate C-Tools site, and on our website [www.lsa.umich.edu/comm/undergraduate/honorsprogram](http://www.lsa.umich.edu/comm/undergraduate/honorsprogram).

32. **Will the Communication Studies program prepare me for graduate school?**
The Communication Studies degree is designed to provide preliminary training for those interested in pursuing graduate study in such areas as the social sciences or the humanities or professional degrees in law, business, or journalism.

33. **What should I do if I want more information or need help with academic planning?**
For information regarding the Communication Studies major schedule an appointment online by clicking on the calendar icon on the department’s website: [www.lsa.umich.edu/comm/undergraduate](http://www.lsa.umich.edu/comm/undergraduate).