Skills and Competencies

Like many liberal arts degrees, a Communication Studies major provides students with a strong background in a variety of skills and competencies. As you can see from the sample list of potential careers, the skills you may learn as a student are transferable to a great many fields. Communication—written, oral, and interpersonal—is an essential skill, and one that employers desire. Your ability to research and analyze information will also be developed through your studies, as will your problem solving and organizational skills. Your creativity—the ability to design projects, develop programs, and generate ideas—will also be challenged as a Communication Studies major. There is not one "typical" career path for Communication Studies majors, so you may find yourself in a career field that is dictated by your experiences as a student.

Career Development

Many opportunities are available to you as you try to employ the skills you learn in the classroom—it is up to you to decide what it is you will pursue. Practical work experience can sometimes help you decide what is right for you. Internships (locally and nationwide) are available to qualified Northern students, and provide excellent experience. Your professors may be able to help you identify career options, as can various NMU offices. The Academic and Career Advisement Center can provide you with career planning help, while Career Services will help you fine-tune your resume.

Additional Resources and Info

For Career Planning and Opportunities:

Academic & Career Advisement Center
3302 C.B. Hedgcock
906-227-2971
www.nmu.edu/acac

Communication and Performance Studies
203 Thomas Fine Arts
906-227-2045
www.nmu.edu/caps

For Job Search, Resume and Career Information:

Career Services
3502 C.B. Hedgcock
906-227-2800
www.nmu.edu/careers

For Information about NMU Student Organizations Associated with this Major Contact:

Center for Student Enrichment
1206 University Center
906-227-2439
www.nmu.edu/cse

Internet Resource Links:

www.careers.org
www.careerresource.net
www.bls.gov/oco Occupational Outlook Handbook

For Career Information with National Organizations:

www.natcom.org National Communication Association

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Provided by:

The Academic & Career Advisement Center

What To Do With A Major In....

Communication Studies

Northern Michigan University

Communication Studies

A Communication Studies degree provides students with a strong background in verbal and nonverbal communication, and is flexible enough so students can pursue graduate education or enter the work force in a variety of fields.

Graduates of Northern Michigan University's Communication Studies program are employed in a variety of fields. Some find themselves employed in business-related positions such as sales representatives, department store managers, loan officers, realtors, insurance adjustors, and pension fund administrators. Others have pursued university-level teaching, and still others have become admissions counselors, residence hall directors, and assistant alumni directors. Obviously, your options as a Communication Studies major are many, and only depend upon your willingness to acquire the necessary skills and competencies for a certain career field.

Some introductory courses available to help you decide if Communication Studies is the right major for you include: SP 100 Public Address, SP 110 Interpersonal Communication, and SP 120 Small Group Process.

Potential Careers

NMU's Communication Studies Program prepares students for employment in the following careers:

Occupations

- Campaign Director
- Consultant
- Copywriter
- Editor
- Executive Manager
- Graduate School Business Administration
- Graduate School Education
- Graduate School Journalism
- Graduate School Law
- Human Resources Manager
- Industrial/Labor Relations Representative
- Legislative Aide
- Lobbyist
- Market Research Analyst
- News Anchor
- Personnel Manager
- Politician
- Press Secretary
- Public Affairs Officer
- Publisher
- Reporter
- Research Assistant
- Sales Representative
- Speech Communication
- Speech Writer
- University Professor

Additional Considerations

Strong written, oral, and interpersonal communication skills are essential if pursuing work in these areas. You can gain excellent experience in the government field by finding an internship related to your interests

A business minor or second major may be helpful, and relevant experience beneficial, when looking for positions in the business/industry field.

Practical experience in a media-related field will significantly improve your chances of finding employment. A minor in Electronic Journalism, Media Production and New Technology or Media Studies may be beneficial.

Remember to take any necessary exams early, it can take six weeks for results to be sent to the schools to which you applied.

Job Outlook

Starting salaries are contingent upon geographic location and the individual applicant's work experience and initiative, and usually range from $30,000 to $55,000. The career field should expand at an average rate of 11% in the coming years.