



Atlantic Cape's Communication Program

Advising Guide

2024-2025

The courses are rigorous and taught by people who have done communication for a living. Our courses are often tougher than the versions taught at four-year schools. You come out prepared and thick-skinned. Communication majors learn about professionalism and ethics from day one. We get you ready to succeed at a top four-year school when you transfer. We have high standards for writing and speaking. You get hands-on experience through internships, campus communication organizations and the Communication Awards. In addition, Atlantic Cape offers communication scholarships including: the Libby Demp Forrest Moore Memorial Writing Scholarship for Journalism, the Communication Alumni Scholarship, the Public Relations Council of Atlantic City Scholarship and the Gerri Black Scholarship for Creative Writing. Contact Keith Forrest, Professor of Communication, with any questions at (609) 343-4994 or kforrest@atlantic.edu or go to www.atlantic.edu

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Communication Courses

Course	What you should know	Who should take it? Who shouldn't?
COMM 103 (Mass Media)	The foundational course for communication majors. This is the class that sets up the foundations for everything else that happens in the program. The class has high standards and high expectations . Students will enjoy the experience, but they should expect to work hard. Like most communication classes, there is a group project. Exams are essay-based and similar to 4-year schools.	All Communication majors must take the class. It is not recommended for students who are on academic probation or have other deficiencies. Slackers will not survive in the class, unless they change their ways. The class is more challenging than the typical Atlantic Cape class.
COMM 104 (Public Relations)	The other core course for communication majors, besides Mass Media. Students should expect to work hard. Like most communication classes, there is a group project. Students will need to make sure they keep up with the work. Similar to classes at a 4-year school.	All Communication majors must take this class. Could also be a worthwhile class for marketing, business and similar majors, who need to learn how to promote products and services. The class is more challenging than the typical Atlantic Cape class.
COMM 205 (TV History) <u>Pre-requisites</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ENGL 101 • COMM 103 • Permission of Instructor 	Structured like Mass Media, but more in-depth . The class is designed for communication majors. The material is very detailed and students will need to work hard. It's a serious and rigorous class. In fact, it may be harder than the version at 4-year schools.	Communication majors. For majors in other fields, Mass Media might be a better choice. The course is open to any major, but they must know they will work hard and be judged by a high standard.
COMM 208 (Film History) <u>Pre-requisites</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ENGL 101 • COMM 103 • Permission of Instructor 	Also a spinoff of Mass Media, but more in-depth . The class is designed primarily for communication majors. The material is very detailed and students will need to work hard. It's a serious and rigorous class. It is a class about the history of the film industry. It is not a film screening or viewing class.	Communication majors. It is a required course for students in the Radio/Television/Film Track. For majors in other fields, Mass Media might be a better choice. The course is open to any major, but they must know they will work hard and be judged by a high standard.

Course	What you should know	Who should take it? Who shouldn't?
COMM 207 (Popular Music & Radio History) <u>Pre-requisites</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ENGL 101 • COMM 103 • Permission of Instructor 	Also a spinoff of Mass Media, but more in-depth . The class is designed primarily for communication majors. It is a course about the history of the music and radio industries. Students find links between the past, present and future to understand the contemporary music and radio industries. This is not a “listening” class or a course about the aesthetics of music.	Communication majors. It is a required course for students in the new Radio/Television/Film Track. For majors in other fields, Mass Media might be a better choice. The course is open to any major, but they must know they will work hard and be judged by a high standard.
COMM 120 (Public Speaking)	Teaches students how to deliver presentations in front of an audience in a variety of communication environments. Students speak extemporaneously: meaning they speak conversationally using an outline. It is recommended that communication majors take Professor Forrest, Professor DeLuca, Professor Russ, Professor Thomas or Professor Russell for this class.	Should be a requirement for all students. Without strong oral communication skills, it's difficult to succeed in life.

Course	What you should know	Who should take it? Who shouldn't?
COMM 209/ENGL (Journalism I) <u>Pre-requisites</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ENGL 101 • Permission of Instructor 	Teaches students how to become reporters for real. It is one of the hardest classes offered at Atlantic Cape and primarily designed for hardcore journalism and public relations majors. Students are held to a professional standard and the class is actually much harder than the version offered at most 4-year schools.	It is required for Journalism and Public Relations majors. Students from other majors are discouraged from taking it. This is a class that should not be taken by Freshmen. It is recommended that anyone that takes this class should have Professor Forrest for another course first.
COMM/EMGL 211 (Journalism II) <u>Pre-requisite</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • COMM/ENGL 209 • Permission of Instructor 	Teaches students how to write effective opinion pieces. It is “the” elite class for communication majors, designed for the best and brightest. The course is based on the work of Professor Forrest. As of the spring of 2017, more than 50 students have been professionally published with work produced in this class. It is one of the only courses in the nation that focuses on publishing opinion pieces in professional newspapers.	It is required for Journalism and Public Relations majors.
COMM/ENGL 220 (Creative Writing I)	Gives students exposure to four writing genres: fiction, poetry, drama and creative non-fiction. The class is rigorous. Students should understand there is a lot of work involved. There are several excellent professors that teach this including Professors Crawford and Rich Russell.	Required for Creative Writing majors. Can also be beneficial to communication majors in the 3 other tracks, especially if they are interested in fields such as film and television. Can be beneficial to any major if they are willing to work.

Course	What you should know	Who should take it? Who shouldn't?
COMM/ENGL 221 (Creative Writing II)	Students go in depth and develop sophisticated writing skills, building on the work from Creative Writing I. The class is rigorous with high expectations. Students should understand there is a lot of work involved. There are several excellent professors that teach this course including Professors Rich Russell.	Required for Creative Writing majors. Can also be beneficial to communication majors in the 3 other tracks, especially if they are interested in fields such as film and television. Can be beneficial to any major if they are willing to work.
COMM 295 (Communication Field Work)	You can't take COMM 295 until you have completed either COMM 103 (Mass Media) and/or COMM 104 (Public Relations). In addition, students must have permission to take the course from Professor Forrest. Students must find their own internship, but Professors Forrest and DeLuca can give advice. This is a 3-credit course so there is academic work that needs to be completed plus at least 135 hours of work at the internship site. Must sign up for the class during the regular registration period.	This class is only for Communication Majors. Internships are essential because they provide students with the two credentials they need most: experience and contacts. But students should understand that the class will not transfer to a 4-year school. Nor would an internship done at a 4-year school transfer here.

Choosing a track in communication

For students to choose a track within communication, they really need advice from a subject-area expert, preferably someone who has worked in the field. If the student is unsure, they should be directed to Professor Forrest. The nuances of how to make these choices take many years of experience. There are three tracks: Creative Writing (novelists, screenwriters), Journalism/Public Relations (reporters or representing organizations and helping them to promote their people and products) and Radio/Television/Film (careers in radio, television and film). The most rigorous track is public relations/journalism.

Regardless of track, all communication majors take:

PROGRAM COURSES	
COMM103-Introduction to Mass Media	3
COMM104-Introduction to Public Relations	3

Each track then has its own required courses:



CREATIVE WRITING TRACK (9 credits)
COMM220-Creative Writing I
COMM221-Creative Writing II
Choose: COMM105-Television History, COMM107-Popular Music & Radio History, or COMM126-Film History

JOURNALISM/PUBLIC RELATIONS TRACK (9 credits)
COMM209-Journalism I
COMM211-Journalism II
Choose: COMM105-Television History, COMM107-Popular Music & Radio History, or COMM126-Film History

RADIO/TELEVISION/FILM TRACK (9 credits)
COMM105-Television History
COMM126-Film History
COMM107-Popular Music & Radio History

First-Semester Freshmen	What courses to take
An incoming Freshman should only take one communication course: Introduction to Mass Media. These students will get socialized into the major through this course and learn the foundations of the field.	COMM 103 Introduction to Mass Media ENGL 101 Composition I Other courses should be general education.
After the First Semester	Communication majors should stagger their communication courses and try to spread them out throughout their time at the college. Generally, two communication courses in a semester is a heavy load. Certain combinations of courses can be particularly challenging when taken together. Ask Professor Forrest if you have concerns about how courses fit together.

Group Work and Testing

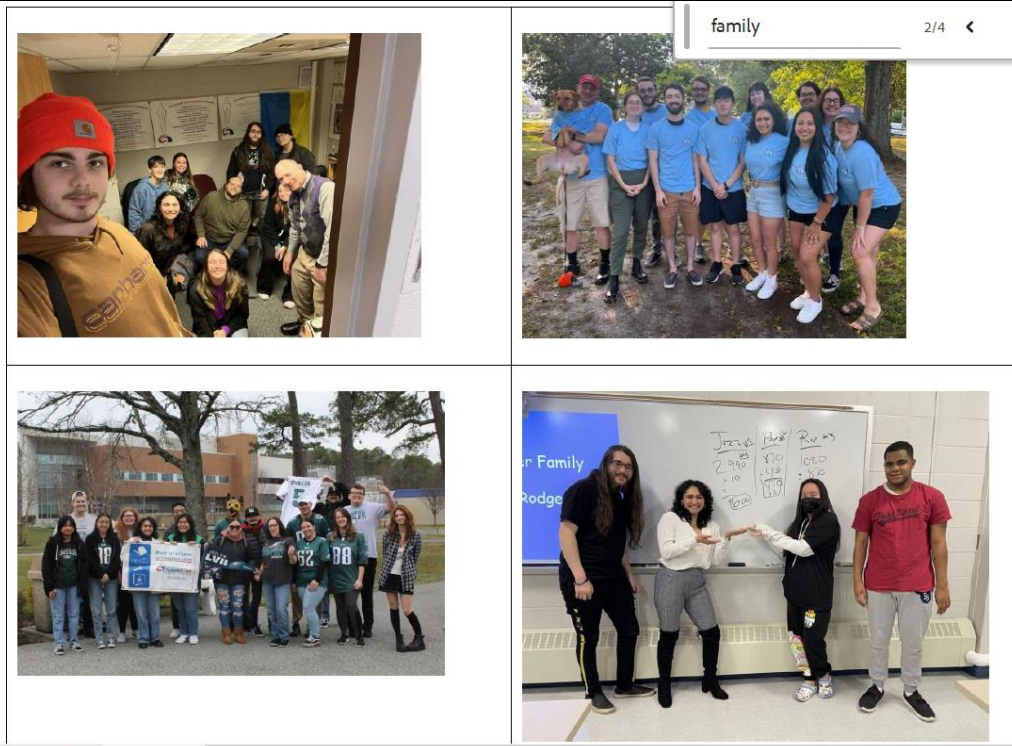
Group Work	Courses that use Collaborative and Cooperative Learning
<p>Many communication courses feature group projects. There are three major reasons for this. First, the communication field is collaborative: no one makes a movie or television show by them self. They are created by teams. Part of professionalizing communication majors is giving them experience in this process. Second, numerous studies have shown that students learn lessons from each other that sharpen their problem solving and critical thinking skills. Third, group projects give student the opportunity to develop creative work for their portfolios that can help them land jobs and internships and successfully transfer to a top four-year school.</p>	<p>COMM 103 Introduction to Mass Media COMM 104 Introduction to Public Relations COMM 205 Television History COMM 208 Film History COMM 207 Popular Music & Radio History COMM 120 Public Speaking (Professor Forrest's sections)</p>
<p>Testing</p>	
<p>Communication courses often feature sophisticated testing that is conducted at the highest levels of Bloom's Taxonomy (pyramid of learning levels).</p>	<p>Tests in many communication classes are essay-based and require students to synthesize material and apply to real situations. They have to do much more than memorize. These are similar to the tests that students will face at four-year schools.</p>
<p>Mentors</p>	
	<p>To help you succeed in communication classes, we have mentors. These are experienced students or alumni who are like teaching assistants and have already had the class. They sit in on the class and can give you advice about your papers, group projects and how to prepare effectively for quizzes and exams.</p>
<p>Communication Alumni Council</p>	
	<p>Communication has its own alumni association. It shows how strong the experience of being a communication major is here at Atlantic Cape. Alumni return and get involved with mentoring, fundraising, recruiting and networking. The Communication Alumni Council is the only major-specific alumni association at a community college in New Jersey. You can get involved when you graduate by running for an officer position or joining a committee. You can also reach out the alumni association now to get advice about transferring, jobs or getting help with your classes.</p>

Extra-Curricular Organizations

Importance of Extra-Curricular Involvement	Extra-Curricular Organizations
<p>To make it in the communication field, you much more than just class work. You need practical experience. One way to get it is involvement in communication-related organizations. Often the lessons that students learn in student media organizations are every bit as important as what they learn in the classroom. We strongly encouraged all communication majors to join a communication organization.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Atlantic Cape Review (student newspaper) • Communication Awards Club (contact Professor Forrest): the club puts together annual “Oscar night” for Communication • Rewrites (literary magazine) • Performing Arts Club (PAC) • Media Production Club • WRML Radio

Family Atmosphere

Students feel valued in the program and feel part of a team. This tight family-like atmosphere has been articulated by learners on numerous occasions. They revel in communication program traditions such as playing Jeopardy as a review for midterms and finals in groups; 15 students cramming into Professor Forrest’s office during his office hours; or hanging an A paper on the refrigerator. Quoting Professor Mark Berkey-Gerard from Rowan University, “I was impressed by the sense of community and camaraderie. I know that in many cases, alumni feel more connected to Atlantic Cape than they do to Rowan...”




Transferring

Where to go	What You Can Expect
<p>Top Schools: Rowan University & Temple University</p>	<p>These two schools have been doing communication longer than any others in the Philadelphia area. Rowan has a separate College of Communication within its university. Temple has a School of Media and Communication. This tells you that communication is a top priority. At both Rowan and TU, the faculty have worked in the field. This means they can give real world advice. It also means they have contacts that can lead to internships and jobs. Both schools have strong reputations so if you went to Rowan or TU, your resume is going in the priority pile. Chances are the person who is doing the hiring is an alumni of one of the two schools. Rowan & TU have state-of-the-art facilities for television, film, radio, new media and other communication courses. Both schools have multiple choices for your major within communication including: television, film, radio, journalism, public relations, advertising and writing arts. Rowan and Temple students win national awards regularly. For example, the Rowan chapter of the Public Relations Student Society of America (PRSSA) has won national chapter of the year 6 times.</p>
Other Choices	What You Can Expect
<p>Montclair and Ramapo</p>	<p>If you want to stay in the area, you might consider Ramapo or Montclair, especially if you want to be near NYC. Both schools have solid programs. You can also think beyond the Philadelphia New York region. There are many excellent communication schools across the nation, depending on what area of the country you favor.</p>
<p>TCNJ</p>	<p>Has a well-respected communication studies program. The college is known for its small size and high academic standards.</p>

Top schools outside our area	What You Can Expect
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Syracuse University (Syracuse, NY) • University of North Carolina (Chapel Hill, NC) • Emerson College (Boston) • New York University (New York City) • Elon University (Elon, NC) 	<p>There are excellent communication schools across the nation if the student is willing to move outside the area. Professor Forrest can help students choose schools in any area of the nation because they want to look for from a top communication school. Students interested in film should consider transferring to a school in Los Angeles.</p>

The Truth about Communication

Myth	Reality
<p>Communication Majors Don't Get Jobs</p>	<p>There are two kinds of communication majors. Those who are willing to sleep on a futon and those that aren't. Communication is a highly competitive field and most graduates who don't make it have unrealistic expectations. Your first job offer out of school is likely to be part-time. It might be an overnight shift. Many graduates are expecting a fulltime job with benefits and a big salary upon graduation. That is not going to happen. But the student who sees that part-time job as an opportunity to break into the business and do what she or he loves (even if they have to wait tables too), they are the ones that make it. Before long, the odds move in their favor as they develop more experience. We tell student you can be anything you want to be in communication, but it won't happen overnight. You are going to have work hard and will probably move up slowly.</p>

Myth	Reality
A Communication Degree is Enough	If a communication major wants a job when they get out, they need experience. There are two ways to get it: get involved with campus media such as the Atlantic Cape Review or do an internship. Ideally, you should do both. The graduates that have experience beyond the classroom are usually the ones that get a job.
Communication is Not a Practical Major	<p>Communication may be the most practical major of all. It develops the skills that employers seek the most. Communication majors write better cover letters and resumes and perform better in interviews. Communication is the 8th most popular major in the nation, according to the Princeton Review. Companies are desperate for people who communicate effectively. Sometimes communication majors are hired as managers or to write reports because employers can't find people with effective communication skills.</p> <p>Business recruiters say that written and oral communication skills are the most important tools for succeeding in business. Surveys of employers consistently show that communication skills are critical to effective job placement, performance, and career advancement. In making hiring decisions, organizations consistently rate communication skills as the most requested competency. Many job advertisements specifically ask for teamwork skills, critical thinking skills, and oral and written competencies. When choosing managers, recruiters report that communication skills are the single most important factor in their decisions. As Barge (1994) and Flauto (1999) stated, communication is the vehicle through which we exercise leadership; therefore, communication competency is essential both personally and professionally.</p> 

Accomplishments of Atlantic Cape Communication Majors and Faculty

Internships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MTV • Toys ‘R Us corporate headquarters • CBS show “Big Brother,” • NBC-40 • Longport Media • Equity Communications • Keystone Pictures • WXTU-FM in Philadelphia • Disneyworld
Communication Awards	<p>Recent appearances included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jeff Fager, former chair of CBS News and Executive Producer of “60 minutes” • Heather DeLuca, SOJO 105.9 • Gaten Matarazzo, “Stranger Things”
Transferred to	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rowan University • Temple University • Emerson College • Savannah College of Art & Design (SCAD) • University of Pennsylvania • Salisbury State University • Montclair University • Rutgers University • Coastal Carolina • Columbia College in Hollywood
Interviewed for projects	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jonathan Demme (Director of “Silence of the Lambs”) • Founding member of the rock band Heart • Author of “Boardwalk Empire” • Jerry Blavat (radio legend) • Mike and Diane (morning show team at WAYV-FM) • Jojo and Scotty (morning team from 103.7 WMGM-FM) • Michelle Dawn Mooney (“SNJ” Anchor) • VP at Warner Bros. in Los Angeles • Supervising Producer at E! Entertainment Television • Supervising Producer of “The Late Show with David Letterman” • George Romero “Director of “Night of the Living Dead”)
Professor Thomas	Professor Forrest
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public Relations for Boardwalk Hall, the Atlantic City Convention Center and elected officials • Masters degree from Rowan University • Ph.D. from Walden University 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Producer for E! Entertainment Television • Commentary Writer for The Philadelphia Inquirer • Producer for NBC affiliates WPXI-TV and WICU-TV • Three Master’s degrees from Umass and Temple University • B.A. from Rowan University • Five-Time Faculty of the Year