

DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNICATION

Major Declaration Guidelines

Before declaring the Comm major, you must register as a Comm pre-major. Ask for a pre-major card in CF 203 (or CF 295.) If this will be a second major, check the appropriate box on the card.

Before you apply to be a Communication major you must complete 12-15 credits at WWU, and two of the following requirements, with a B-minus or better:

- ▶ Either COMM 101 or COMM 235
- ▶ COMM 220

Read these Guidelines carefully. Non-compliance with these requirements can result in the return of your portfolio and a recommendation that you resubmit your corrected portfolio the following quarter.

While you are completing the prerequisite courses, begin to assemble your application portfolio. See http://www.wvu.edu/depts/communication/peer_advising.shtml

- ▶ Declaration Portfolios must be submitted to department (CF 295) **no later than 5:00 pm on the third Monday after the beginning of the quarter, fall, winter and spring.**
- ▶ Although there is no GPA requirement for admission into the department, the average grade point for those accepted into the program is usually above 3.0. The number of applicants and the quality of content in the portfolios will be considered when admission decisions are made.
- ▶ Peer Advisors are available in CF 203. In addition to answering general questions about the department, Peer Advisors assist pre-majors with application procedures
- ▶ Examples of acceptable portfolios can be found in the peer advising office located in CF 203.

The portfolio must be presented in a simple report binder with a transparent cover.

Do not include a title (cover) page or table of contents.

Do not commercially bind.

Do not use plastic protectors, dividers or other extraneous pages.

Do not use a 3-ring binder or any type of binder that requires holes.



The portfolio consists of **seven** items. They must be placed in your portfolio ***in the order indicated:***

- Admission Application** (*Should be able to see this through cover*)
- Official Transcript(s)** (*removed from their envelopes*)
- Letter of Intent**
- Résumé**
- Academic Work Samples** (*two*)
- Letters of Recommendation** (*three*)
- Proposed Program of Study** (the 'grid')

Admission Application

- ▶ A copy of this form can be found at <http://www.wvu.edu/depts/communication/declaration.shtml>
- ▶ Either print form then type with typewriter, OR, fill out the form on the computer then print.

Official Transcripts

- ▶ Your **Western Washington University transcript** may be requested in CF 295. (Please do not go to the Registrar---their version of the transcript will cost you time and money!)
- ▶ **You must obtain official transcripts from all other college-level institutions** that you have attended in addition to WWU (any institution from which you have received credits appearing on your WWU transcript----this may include College in the High School or Running Start). Obtain official paper transcripts; no photocopies or electronic transcripts will be accepted. ***Please remove them from their envelopes. Allow plenty of time to obtain these documents as it will likely take several weeks. Do not attempt to obtain these 'previous college' transcripts from the WWU Registrar's admissions archives.***

Letter of Intent

This portion of the portfolio is very important. It gives you an opportunity to express your individuality and any special circumstances. The *Letter of Intent* should also provide insight into what you hope to gain and how you will utilize this major. Some things to think about:

- ▶ Why do you want to become a Communication major?
- ▶ What specific educational and vocational experiences have prepared you for this major?
- ▶ How will a degree in Communication help you attain your future objectives?

It should be professional in appearance, single-spaced, and use the salutation, 'Dear Review Committee'. Be sure to sign the letter in ink.

Résumé

- ▶ The résumé should contain information about your education, work experience, recreational activities, internships, awards and honors, and public service activities.
- ▶ A one-page résumé is preferred.
- ▶ The résumé should highlight your qualifications and areas in which you excel.
- ▶ For help with writing an acceptable résumé, visit the **Career Center in OM 280**.

Two Academic Work Samples

- ▶ You need to submit at least **two** samples of original written work, authored by you alone.
- ▶ Choose the samples which you believe to be your best work and which will most accurately represent your writing ability.
- ▶ It is recommended that at least one of these be a research paper that includes a works cited page or references.
- ▶ It is acceptable, even preferable, to have your evaluator's original remarks on your papers.
- ▶ If you are including a paper written by multiple authors, (i.e., the product of group work) please note that this will not satisfy the requirement of two samples, but may be submitted as an additional writing sample. ***Please highlight the content which you authored.***
- ▶ Full-sentence speech outlines do NOT count as writing samples.

Three Letters of Recommendation

- ▶ These letters must be from a professional environment, such as professors, teachers, supervisors or former employers, and addressed to “To whom it may concern,” or “Portfolio Review Committee.” Letters on letterhead are preferred, or a business card stapled to letter.
- ▶ **Do not include** letters from parents, friends, relatives, or peers at work.
- ▶ If your writer prefers, he or she may send letter directly to the Comm department at *Department of Communication Review committee, WWU Mail Stop 9162, Bellingham WA 98225-9162*
- ▶ WWU Communication Faculty cannot write recommendation letters for applicants.
- ▶ **Ask for your letters of recommendation well in advance.** You must have three (no exceptions) and they tend to constitute the ‘wild card’ in pulling together the items for your portfolio---do this early! (You may want to get more than 3, so you can choose from the best.)
- ▶ It is recommended that these letters be written for the express purposes of this application.
- ▶ Letters must be signed by the writer, in ink. E-mailed letters will not be accepted. (*Another good reason to ask for the letters early!*) The writer must include his or her contact information within the letter, and letters written on letterhead are preferred.

Proposed Program of Study, or “The Grid”

(See <http://www.wvu.edu/depts/communication/courses.shtml>)

- ▶ You must construct your own course list using the grid form found on the web at <http://www.wvu.edu/depts/communication/declaration.shtml> . *Fill out in ink, don't type.*
If you have trouble downloading this form, obtain one in CF203 or CF 295.
- ▶ Record which courses you **have already taken** and the grade you received.
- ▶ Indicate on the grid the courses you **plan to take**, and in which quarters you plan to take them. (You may not have access to course schedule more than a few quarters ahead, so indicate the quarters in which you would prefer to take your courses.)
- ▶ 12 of your 30 core credits must be upper division courses.
- ▶ Be sure to consider the university requirement for WP courses. In Communication, that will be a total of 3 “WP1” courses. (A WP course in another department may count for all WP points.)
- ▶ You must have an **official minor** comprised of at least 24 credits as part of your Comm major. Contact the minor department for specific minor requirements. Your grid will show the title of the official minor, but you are not required to list the required courses.



Your portfolio will be evaluated primarily on quality of content, but neatness counts, and completeness is absolutely essential.

After the department has reviewed all portfolios, the applicants will be contacted by e-mail, usually before the end of the sixth week in the quarter. Portfolios will be available for pick-up approximately one week after the announcement has been posted.

You have only two opportunities to submit a Comm portfolio---make the first one a good one!