Master of Professional Communication (MPC)

Admission Requirements

Applicants for admission into the WSU Master of Professional Communication program must possess a bachelor’s degree from an accredited institution or be in the final stage of completing the degree.

Applicants will submit:

• Completed application with personal essay

• Current resume

• Official transcripts from every institution of higher education attended

• Three letters of academic and/or professional recommendation

• Scores from the GRE taken within the last five years

~~Prerequisite Courses~~

~~Students are required to take the following courses within five years prior to admission:~~

~~• COMM 3150 Research Methods or equivalent.~~

~~• One theory-based course in communication. Choose from the following: COMM 3000 Communication Theory, COMM 3550/5550 Organizational Communication, COMM 3820/5820 Persuasive Communication or COMM 3050 Interpersonal Communication and Conflict Resolution.~~

~~This requirement will be waived for students who have a bachelor’s degree in communication from an accredited college or university. Students can be admitted to the program before taking~~

~~prerequisites courses, but will be required to complete the prerequisites within their first two semesters in the program. Courses taken as prerequisites cannot count towards electives~~

~~within the program.~~

Additional Admission Requirements for International Students

All international students and any applicants educated outside the United States must demonstrate proficiency in English. Those whose native language is not English must submit an official score from the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) of 550 (paper-based) or 213 (computer-

based). The score may not be more than two years old. Equivalent IELTS score is also accepted in place of TOEFL. ~~Students who do not have these scores may be admitted provisionally to the program upon review. If they are able to perform satisfactorily in their first semester, their provisional status may be amended.~~

Acceptance into Program

Each applicant is accepted on an individual basis. Ideal applicants will present a strong overall previous academic record, positive letters of recommendation, professional accomplishment, and an appropriate GRE score. An ideal class will consist of working professionals with a wide variety of backgrounds in for-profit, government or non-profit organizations. Ethnic diversity is a plus. The MPC program will have limited enrollment.

Elective Courses from Other Universities

Related graduate-level courses from other universities may be accepted with permission of the MPC program director.

Transfer Credit

Transfer credit must be approved by the MPC program director and cannot exceed 9 ~~12~~ hours. Transfer classes must be at an appropriate level and fulfill the objectives of the MPC. No

courses for which credit was used to fulfill requirements of another degree may be used toward the MPC degree.

Grade Requirements

To earn the MPC degree, candidates must complete all graduate ~~MPC~~ courses with a grade of B- or higher. ~~They must receive a grade of C or better in all non-MPC graduate courses.~~

The overall program GPA must be 3.0 or higher. Failure to maintain a 3.0 grade point average, or two consecutive course sessions where a grade lower than B- ~~C-~~ has been earned, will result in academic probation in accordance with departmental policies.

Time for Degree Completion

MPC students have a maximum of six calendar years to complete their degree requirements, starting from the first semester during which the student has registered and begun taking classes. Students who exceed this requirement may submit a letter of appeal to the MPC director to request that this requirement be waived. Students who fail to enroll in MPC courses for three consecutive semesters must apply for readmission to the program. In order to ensure timely

progress through the program, students must consult with an MPC advisor every Fall Semester. Students on the thesis/project track who, for any reason, do not finish their thesis or project or program of courses within the two-year framework suggested in this program, must pay continuing enrollment and tuition the semester they defend their thesis or project. ~~every semester~~.

Graduation Requirements

~~1.~~ 33 ~~37~~ credit hours, at least 30 ~~31~~ at the 6000-level.

~~Courses taken to fulfill prerequisites cannot count towards the 33 37 credit hours~~.

~~2. Grades of B- or better in all graduate MPC courses and grades of C or better in all non-MPC courses.~~

2. Overall GPA of at least 3.0.

Course Requirements for MPC

~~Required Core Courses (22 credit hours)~~

~~• MPC 6000 - Introduction to Graduate Studies for a Master in Professional Communication Credits: (1)~~

~~• MPC 6100 - Team Building and Facilitation Credits: (3)~~

~~• MPC 6150 - Writing for Professional Communicators Credits: (3)~~

~~• MPC 6210 - Presentational Speaking in the Workplace Credits: (3)~~

~~• MPC 6300 - New Media in Professional Communication Credits: (3)~~

~~• MPC 6400 - Leadership Communication Credits: (3)~~

~~• MPC 6600 - Strategic Communication Credits: (3)~~

~~• MPC 6700 - Research Methods for Professional Communication Credits: (3)~~

Foundational Courses (12 credit hours)

MPC 6010 Introduction to Graduate Studies/Communication Theory Credits: (3)

MPC 6150 Writing for Professional Communicators Credits: (3)

MPC 6210 Presentational Speaking in the Workplace Credits: (3)

MPC 6700 Research Methods for Professional Comm Credits: (3)

Core Courses (12 credit hours)

Choose four of the six courses in consultation with the MPC program director.

MPC 6100 Team Building & Facilitation Credits: (3)

MPC 6300 New Media in Professional Communication Credits: (3)

MPC 6350 Visual Communication in the Workplace Credits: (3)

MPC 6400 Leadership Communication Credits: (3)

MPC 6450 Advanced Organizational Communication Credits: (3)

MPC 6600 Strategic Communication Credits: (3)

Electives (9 credit hours)

~~Students may choose to complete a 6 credit hour thesis or project, plus an additional 9 credit hours of elective master’s level courses. OR~~

~~Students may choose to take 15 credit hours of elective coursework in lieu of a thesis or project.~~

Students may choose EITHER the thesis/project track OR the coursework track

Thesis/Project Track (9 credit hours)

• MPC 6900 - Thesis/Project I Credits: (3)

• MPC 6950 - Thesis/Project II Credits: (3)

• 3 ~~9~~ credit hours of master’s level electives, chosen in consultation with the ~~graduate~~ MPC program director.

Coursework Track

Choose nine credit hours of electives in consultation with the MPC program director.

~~• 15 credit hours of elective master’s level courses~~

• At least 6 credit hours must come from MPC elective courses at the 6000 level.

• No more than 3 ~~6~~ credit hours of dual designated MPC courses at the 5000 level.

• ~~No more than 3 9 credit hours of graduate level courses outside the MPC program.~~

~~• Students should choose electives in consultation with the MPC graduate program director.~~

Elective Master’s-level Courses

~~Elective Variable Topic Course~~

~~• MPC 6500 - Topics in Professional Communication Credits: (3)~~

6000-level electives

MPC 6250 Interviewing

MPC 6500 Topics in Professional Communication variable titles (3)

MPC 6620 Conflict Resolution and Mediation

Note: Students may also choose 6000-level courses from the list of core required courses above to count as electives.

Elective Interdisciplinary Courses

~~With the permission of the MPC director and/or fulfillment of prerequisite courses.~~

~~Classes not listed, including those at other universities may be accepted~~. Students may select no more than two courses (six credit hours) from the following WSU master’s program courses (with the permission of the appropriate MPC graduate program advisor and/or fulfillment of prerequisite courses). Interdisciplinary electives must be approved by the MPC program director.

• MBA 6140 - Marketing Management Credits: (3)

• MBA 6170 - Corporate Communications Credits: (3)

• MBA 6530 - E-Business Credits: (3)

• MBA 6540 - Negotiations Credits: (3)

• MHA 6000 - Health Systems & the Healthcare Economy Credits: (3)

• MHA 6400 - Strategic Health Planning and Marketing Credits: (3)

• MED 6110 - Introduction to Classroom Management Credits: (3)

• MED 6120 - Advanced Classroom Management Credits: (3)

Dual-Designation or “Swing” Courses

The following dual designation courses are designed to fill gaps in the undergraduate preparation of students who wish to command the broadest understanding of professional communication.

While the courses are accessible to students who have not taken the corresponding undergraduate

courses, the graduate courses differ from undergraduate counterparts in demanding greater depth and breadth in all major aspects of each course such as reading, writing, presentation, projects, etc.

Of the 9 elective credit hours in the Master of Professional Communication degree, only 3 ~~6~~

may be 5000-level courses and must be approved by the MPC program director ~~Coordinator~~ before registration.

• MPC 5080 - Intercultural Communication Credits: (3)

• MPC 5090 - Gender and Communication Credits: (3)

• MPC 5220 - Editing Credits: (3)

• MPC 5440 - Public Relations Media and Campaigns Credits: (3)

• MPC 5500 - Topics in Communication Credits: (3)

~~[i.e. Interviewing~~ ~~(topic agreed on by master’s degree students or suitable topic as swing course~~

~~with permission of MPC program director Coordinator~~ ~~required)]~~

• MPC 5650 - Communication Law Credits: (3)

• MPC 5820 - Persuasive Communication Credits: (3)

• MPC 5850 - Advertising Credits: (3)

Course Descriptions – MPC Master of Professional Communication Program

MPC 5080 - Intercultural Communication Credits: (3)

Typically taught: Fall [Full Sem]

Explores theoretical perspectives in intercultural communication. Through analysis of various intercultural theories, students will become aware of cultural influences on communication in both international and domestic cultures. ~~This course is highly recommended as an elective for~~

~~MPC students who have not taken it in their undergraduate curriculum.~~ This course may not apply toward ~~for~~ graduate degree requirements if an undergraduate course of the same name or

content has been used for undergraduate credit.

~~Prerequisite: Permission of MPC advisor.~~

MPC 5090 - Gender and Communication Credits: (3)

Typically taught: Spring [Full Sem]

This course is designed to help students understand the influence that communication has upon the shaping of gender and the influence that gender has in shaping communication

interactions. Students become aware of, sensitive to, and more experienced in the issues, implications and skills necessary to successfully and meaningfully communicate with

males and females, and about males and females in a wide range of communication contexts. This course may not apply toward ~~for~~ graduate degree requirements if an undergraduate course of the same name or content has been used for undergraduate credit. Prerequisite: Permission of MPC program director ~~advisor~~.

MPC 5100 - Small Group Facilitation and Leadership Credits: (3)

Typically taught: Spring [Full Sem]

Theories and practical communication processes are examined and applied to develop fundamental attitudes and skills for facilitating and leading effective groups. This

course may not apply toward ~~for~~ graduate degree requirements if an undergraduate course of the same name or content has been used for undergraduate credit. Prerequisite: Permission of MPC program director ~~advisor~~.

MPC 5220 – Editing Credits: (3)

Typically taught: Fall [Online]

Develops editing knowledge and skills for print and online publications. Covers copy editing, content editing and page editing. This course may not apply toward ~~for~~ graduate degree requirements if an undergraduate course of the same name or content has been used for undergraduate credit. Prerequisite: Permission of MPC program director ~~advisor~~.

MPC 5440 - Public Relations Media and Campaigns

Credits: (3)

Typically taught: ~~Fall [Full Sem]~~ Spring [Full Sem]

Apply communication principles to internal and external publics; research, plan and evaluate social interrelationships; study of the controlled and uncontrolled media and their role

in public relations; prepare a major public relations campaign for a selected client. This course may not apply toward ~~for~~ graduate degree requirements if an undergraduate course of the same

name or content has been used for undergraduate credit.

~~Prerequisite: Permission of MPC advisor.~~

MPC 5500 - Topics in Communication Credits: (3)

variable title

The study and application of communication in contemporary society is dynamic and ever changing. This course will provide students with opportunities to explore specialized topics in contemporary journalism, electronic mediated communication, human communication studies, and public relations in a seminar format. This course may be taken twice ~~more than once~~ with different designations (topics). This course may not apply for graduate degree requirements if an

undergraduate course of the same name or content has been used for undergraduate credit. Prerequisite: Permission of MPC program director ~~advisor~~. ~~May be repeated 10 times for credit hours.~~

MPC 5550 - Organizational Communication Credits: (3)

Typically taught: Fall [Full Sem]

Study of communication in organizations from various theoretical perspectives with an emphasis on the organizational culture perspective. Includes topics such as communicating with external audiences, decision-making, conflict resolution, and power relationships. This course may not apply toward ~~for~~ graduate degree requirements if an undergraduate course of the same name or content has been used for undergraduate credit. Prerequisite: Permission of MPC program director ~~advisor~~.

MPC 5650 - Communication Law Credits: (3)

Typically taught: Fall [Full Sem] Spring [Full Sem] Summer [Full Sem]

First Amendment origins, interpretations and philosophy underlying regulation of the mass media. This course may not apply toward ~~for~~ graduate degree requirements if an undergraduate

course of the same name or content has been used for undergraduate credit. Prerequisite: Permission of MPC program director ~~advisor~~.

MPC 5820 - Persuasive Communication Credits: (3)

Typically taught: Fall [Full Sem]

Study of theories and principles of persuasion from classical to modern times. Examines persuasion as a means of influence in interpersonal communication, public speaking,

advertising, politics, and other contexts. This course may not apply toward ~~for~~ graduate degree requirements if an undergraduate course of the same name or content has been used for

undergraduate credit. Prerequisite: Permission of MPC program director ~~advisor~~.

MPC 5850 – Advertising Credits: (3)

Typically taught: Fall [Full Sem] Spring [Full Sem]

A practical and theoretical study of advertising. Course is designed for students planning careers in advertising, as well as for those who are simply lifelong consumers of advertising and want to understand its role in the economic system. This course may not apply toward ~~for~~ graduate degree requirements if an undergraduate course of the same name or content has been used for undergraduate credit. Prerequisite: Permission of MPC program director ~~advisor~~.

~~MPC 6000 - Introduction to Graduate Studies for a Master in Professional Communication Credits: (1)~~

~~Typically taught: Summer [1st Blk]~~

~~What it takes to succeed as a graduate student is similar to what it takes to succeed as a working professional. This course gets students on their way to becoming successful master’s~~

~~students. Students are oriented to the nature, expectations, resources, and challenges of graduate study. They meet fellow students with similar goals and faculty members with wide-~~

~~ranging expertise in professional communication. This course involves students early in researching the topics, trends, and theories for future graduate study. Prerequisite: Admission to~~

~~MPC Program.~~

MC 6010 Introduction to Graduate Study/Communication Theory Credits: (3)

This course provides a survey of major theoretical perspectives in the field of communication with an emphasis on how theory can be applied in interpersonal, group, organizational and mass communication contexts. Students also learn about the logic of communication inquiry and techniques for conducting literature searches and writing literature reviews.

MPC 6100 - Team Building and Facilitation Credits: (3)

~~Typically taught: Fall [Full Sem]~~

Creating, facilitating and coaching effective work groups and teams is one of the hardest soft skills for organizational professionals to master. This course examines the impact that different structures and communication processes have on group and team collaboration effectiveness, as well as the central role competent communication plays in effective group and team facilitation. It investigates structural and process issues of team building, interpersonal and group communication, and effective problem solving and decision-making skills in collaborative environments. Students should have a greater understanding of their own collaborative

teaming abilities upon completion. The purpose of this course is to teach-and have students experience-strategies and tactics for building, working effectively within, and facilitating

collaborative teams in the work place. Prerequisite: MPC 6010 ~~6000~~ or permission of MPC program director ~~advisor~~.

MPC 6150 - Writing for Professional Communicators Credits: (3)

~~Typically taught: Summer~~ ~~[Online]~~

Good writing skills are critical to achieving a professional image. Individuals and organizations are judged by the quality of written documents they produce. In this course, students learn to plan and organize, to write clearly, concisely and correctly, and to develop polished final projects. Students undergo an intensive review of basic writing and editing principles and then apply them to specific writing projects. Genres of writing may include funding proposals, yearly reports, executive plans, organizational descriptions, Web sites, social networking messages, and marketing materials.

MPC 6210 - Presentational Speaking in the Workplace

Credits: (3)

~~Typically taught: Summer [1st Blk]~~

The professional work environment benefits from the communication competency of its members. This course is designed to enhance the communication skills required by the professional communicator across a broad set of communication media: oral presentations, written texts, and digitial interactions. Primary emphasis will be placed on combining strategic thinking with powerful writing to produce a variety of effective messages aimed

at different audiences. In addition, students will develop a broad-based understanding of how each of these modes of communications function both separately and interdependently to produce a coherent organizational message. Prerequisite: MPC 6010 ~~6000~~ or permission of MPC program director ~~advisor~~.

MPC 6250 – Interviewing Credits: (3)

This course will explore various types of interviews conducted in work and personal situations: Recruiting, Performance Appraisals, Informational, Survey, Persuasion, Counseling,

and Health Care. While core communication skills are important across types of interviews, interviewing strategies can differ greatly based on different contexts, specific situations, and personalities of interviewers and interviewees.

MPC 6300 - New Media in Professional Communication

Credits: (3)

~~Typically taught: Summer [1st Blk]~~

New media allow all individuals and organizations to effectively interact with their audiences on an ongoing basis. This course addresses how new and emerging media technologies such as social networks, social media, blogs, podcasts, video sites, search engine management tools, and

even virtual worlds can be leveraged by communication professionals in order to further meaningful relationships with their internal and external audiences. This course will give students greater understanding of new media required to allow a rethinking of the overall communication process. As a result students will develop effective communication strategies specifically geared toward the needs of their organization or field of interest. Prerequisite: MPC 6010 ~~6000~~ or permission of MPC program director ~~advisor~~.

MPC 6350 Visual Communication Design Credits: (3)

Visual messages are a powerful way to inform, persuade and educate. Within the workplace, the ability to effectively communicate goals, ideas and client information through combinations of visual and textual elements is an invaluable skill. This course introduces students to philosophical and theoretical perspectives that enable effective visual presentation in the organization. It also exposes them to practical design principles, skills and tactics that generally guide effective screen and print design. Additionally, students will learn how to critically analyze visual communication materials and aids according to standards that reflect sensitivity to fairness, diversity, good ethics and effectiveness.

MPC 6400 - Leadership Communication Credits: (3)

~~Typically taught: Spring [1st Blk]~~

Communication is the core of organizational leadership. This course is designed to explore both the theoretical and practical aspects of leader- and followership embedded in complex environments with an emphasis on recognizing and managing change. Leadership in organizations will be examined from a variety of perspectives including historical, ethical and critical. Key topics include leadership traits and skills, leadership roles and behaviors, power and influence, theories of leadership, leading change, ethical leadership, and developing leadership skills. The course includes experiential activities using cases, role plays, and action learning projects to develop relevant skills. Prerequisite: MPC 6010 ~~6000~~ or permission of MPC program director ~~advisor~~.

MPC 6450 - Advanced Organizational Communication Credits: (3)

This course provides a graduate-level overview and introduction to the discipline of organizational communication in a global world. Class readings and discussions will include topics such as organizational structure/process, rationality and decision-making, (sub)

cultures and socialization, individual and collective identities, networks, leadership, teams, power/control, conflict, change, technologies, and ethics. Case studies from current events

and guest speakers will be used to apply theoretical concepts to actual organizational life.

MPC 6500 - Topics in Professional Communication

Credits: (3) variable title

~~Typically taught: Summer [2nd Blk]~~

The study and application of professional communication in contemporary society is dynamic and ever changing. This course will provide students with opportunities to explore specialized topics in a seminar format. This course may be taken twice ~~repeated once~~ as elective credit with different titles and topics. Prerequisite: MPC 6010 ~~6000~~ or permission of MPC program director ~~advisor~~.

MPC 6600 - Strategic Communication

Credits: (3)

~~Typically taught: Spring [2nd Blk]~~

Effective strategic communication and planning is essential to any organization. This course helps students to understand and develop skills to create and manage internal and external

messages for different situations, industries, and locations. Students prepare for effective strategic communication by asking and answering the right questions about the goals of the organization, its members, stakeholders and others who impact its operation, such as regulatory bodies. Effective strategic communication and its planning consist of the optimal use of people, budgets, tactical elements, and media in a chaotic, changing world. Prerequisite: MPC 6010 ~~6000~~ or permission of MPC program director ~~advisor~~.

MPC 6650 Conflict Resolution and Mediation Credits: (3)

Communication is at the center of any mediation or negotiation process. It is in and through communication that conflict resolution becomes possible. This class will explore the key interpersonal skills that are central to managing that process competently.

MPC 6700 - Research Methods for Professional Communication

Credits: (3)

~~Typically taught: Fall~~ ~~[2nd Blk]~~

Communication must be measured in order to evaluate its effectiveness, to refine and improve results, and to demonstrate value to an organization. This course reviews methods available to professional communicators to measure and evaluate research regarding the performance of a particular communication medium or an integrated communication campaign. Students receive instruction on commonly used professional research methodologies such as focus groups, surveys, usability studies and test-and-control methods to learn how to run studies on a “shoestring budget.” For projects with research budgets, students learn what to look for when hiring a research firm and how to evaluate and implement the research findings. Prerequisite: MPC 6010 ~~6000~~ or permission of MPC program director ~~advisor~~.

MPC 6900 - Thesis/Project I

Credits: (3)

Typically taught: Fall [Full Sem] ~~Spring [Full Sem]~~

In this course students will begin ~~continue~~ their theses or projects under the direction and with the support of their faculty committees. They will write, present and have their thesis

or project proposal ~~prospectus~~ approved. Prerequisite: MPC 6010 ~~6000~~ or permission of MPC program director ~~advisor~~. May be repeated 2 times for a maximum of 9 credit hours.

\*Please note that ~~in the case of~~ students who, for any reason, may not finish their thesis or project or program of courses within the two-year framework suggested in this program, must pay continuing enrollment and tuition the semester they defend their thesis or project. ~~continuing~~

~~enrollment and tuition every semester is mandatory.~~

MPC 6950 - Thesis/Project II

Credits: (3)

Typically taught: ~~Fall [Full Sem]~~ Spring [Full Sem]

This course will allow students to complete their workplace project or traditional academic thesis. Students will prepare, present and defend their projects or theses ~~to project/thesis committees~~ during this semester for review and approval. This course is repeatable for a total of two times for a total of nine credit hours of which only three will apply to degree completion. Prerequisite: MPC 6010 ~~6000~~ or permission of MPC program director ~~advisor~~. May be repeated two times for a maximum of 9 credit hours.

\*Please note that ~~in the case of~~ students who, for any reason, do ~~may~~ not finish their thesis or project ~~or program of courses~~ within the two-year framework suggested in this program, ~~continuing enrollment and tuition every semester is mandatory~~ must pay continuing enrollment and tuition the semester they defend their thesis or project.