Communication & Public Discourse
PhD

The Ph.D. program in communication and public discourse provides the opportunity to explore the range of ways human symbolic activity affects the public sphere. The intent of the Ph.D. program is to graduate students with scholarly competencies enabling them to assume roles as intellectual leaders of the field of communication as well as public intellectuals stimulating discussion of significant communication issues.

In the area of communication theory, Ph.D. graduates are expected to:
1. Understand the ontological, epistemological, and ideological principles and differences of major theoretical positions in the field.
2. Contribute to critical discussion of models and definitions of communication.
3. Demonstrate depth of knowledge about at least three significant topics or concepts relevant to communication.
4. Be familiar with major scholars and works across the spectrum of communication studies.
5. Conduct a comprehensive literature review of work relevant to a scholarly project.
6. Generate new theoretical insights from critical reading, analysis, and research.
7. Integrate theoretical insights into an in-depth analysis of an aspect of public discourse.

In the area of communication research, Ph.D. graduates are expected to:
1. Understand the basic principles of social scientific, humanistic, rhetorical, and critical communication research approaches.
2. Compare positions on the role of and relationships between theory and research.
3. Contribute to critical discussion of research issues, methods, and ethics.
4. Know the range of methodologies and their logic used in communication research.
5. Demonstrate expertise in using at least two research methodologies.
6. Design, propose, seek funding for, and carry out independent research projects.
7. Describe the use, significance, and limitations of their research results.

In the area of professional practice, Ph.D. graduates are expected to:
1. Be knowledgeable of the field of communication, its historical development, professional associations, and major debates and issues.
2. Demonstrate teaching competency.
3. Articulate a philosophy of service or engagement to guide contributions to the field, higher education or other professional setting, and the public.
4. Be familiar with processes of submission, review, presentation, and publication of scholarly work.
5. Have exemplary skills in writing and presenting scholarly work for a variety of audiences.
6. Contribute to public discussion of significant communication issues.

Admission Requirements
Admission Requirements for the Doctor of Philosophy degree in the Communication Program include:
1. Successful completion of a master’s degree.
2. Statement of interest, including personal goals and the relevance of the Ph.D. in Communication and Public Discourse to those goals.
3. Original academic paper, 10-15 pages in length, reflecting the student’s ability to articulate and synthesize ideas.
4. Three letters of recommendation from sources familiar with the applicant’s potential as a doctoral student in Communication.
5. Graduate Record Examination General Test (500 Verbal, 500 Quantitative).
6. To be considered for a teaching assistantship, the student must submit a statement of teaching philosophy and letters of recommendation must address the student’s teaching abilities.
7. Satisfy the School of Graduate Studies’ English Language Proficiency requirements as published in the graduate catalog.

Note: For both Masters and Ph.D. applicants, students whose native language is not English are not permitted to hold teaching assistantships unless they have attained a score of at least 50 on the SPEAK (Speaking Proficiency English

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Deadlines apply. See our website for more details.

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Assessment Kit) or the TSE (Test of Spoken English). The test is administered at the University, after the student arrives on campus.

Degree Requirements
Students seeking the Doctor of Philosophy degree at the University of North Dakota must satisfy all general requirements set forth by the School of Graduate Studies as well as particular requirements set forth by the Communication Program. Requirements for the Doctor of Philosophy Degree set forth by the Communication Program include:

1. Completion of 90 semester credit hours beyond the baccalaureate degree. Thirty credit hours from a Masters degree in communication or related discipline may be applied toward the 90 credit hours.
2. Core Requirements, including:
   a. Theoretical Perspectives in Communication
   b. Concepts in Quantitative Communication Research
   c. Concepts in Qualitative Communication Research
3. Theory Requirements, including:
   a. Rhetorical and Communication Theory
   b. Media & Mass Communication Theory
   c. Theory Course, selected from a menu of options
4. Scholarly Tools Requirements, including:
   a. Advanced Quantitative Research Design or Criticism and Communication, offered alternatively as media criticism or rhetorical analysis
   b. Interdisciplinary Qualitative Tools, including one course selected from a menu of options
   c. Interdisciplinary Quantitative Tools, including one course selected from a menu of options
5. Major Area Courses, including three courses, with up to one course outside Communication
6. Elective Courses, including three courses, with up to one course outside communication
7. Comprehensive Examination, taken over the student’s first 36 credit hours of coursework as a Ph.D. student.
8. Dissertation

Faculty and Areas of Expertise
- **Slavka Antonova, Ph.D.**, global internet governance, international communication, communication law and policies, social implications of communication technologies, cross-cultural communication, gender, technology, and communication
- **Richard Aregood**, journalist and Pulitzer-prize-winning editorial writer: history of mass-market, radical and labor journalism
- **Kyle Conway, Ph. D.**, media and cultural studies, media globalization and translation
- **Kimberly Cowden, Ph.D.**, advertising, public relations, risk and crisis communication with vulnerable populations, health communication
- **Richard Fiordo, Ph.D.**, semantics and communication theory, relational and organizational communication, argumentation and human influence, and health and medical communication -especially through telecommunications
- **Brett Ommen, Ph. D.**. The changing complexion of rhetorical theory in the face of advancements in media uses and technologies
- **Timothy Pasch, Ph.D.**, communication technology and community building, classroom technology, online portals for native and marginalized communities, distance learning environments, virtual worlds, security and privacy in social networks
- **Lana Rakow, Ph.D.**, gender and communication, history and philosophy of technology, and university administration and curriculum change
- **Stephen Rendahl, Ph.D.**, communication and community, communication and society, interpersonal communication and organizational communication
- **Richard Shafer, Ph.D.**, journalism, mass media, development communication for a free press

Contact Information
Dr. Slavka Antonova  Phone: (701) 777-4184
Graduate Program Coordinator  Fax: (701) 777-3090
Communication Program  http://arts-sciences.und.edu/communication
University of North Dakota  Email: slavka.antonova@und.edu
221 Centennial Drive, Stop 7169
Grand Forks, ND 58202-7169

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