

# Major Possibilities: Communication Studies



## Summary

- Southwestern's coursework in communication studies leads to a deep, theoretical understanding of communication processes. In order to acquire more of the technical skills helpful to acquiring employment, students must also take advantage of out-of-class opportunities like working for *The Megaphone*, SU PR/web/creative services departments, or off-campus employers.
- Internships (especially unpaid ones) have been around quite a while in the journalism, PR, and advertising fields. Having at least one, if not multiple, internship experience(s) under your belt is pretty much required to get a full-time job in these fields.
- A bachelor's degree in Communication Studies plus industry-specific knowledge and experience is generally enough to land an entry-level job. Master's or higher degrees are generally not required unless you want to pursue university teaching/research.

## Communication Studies major synopsis

The goal of Southwestern's Communication Studies Department focuses on critical inquiry into the function of language and media. There are two courses which introduce students to the Communication Studies major: Introduction to Communication Studies and Public Speaking. After these foundational courses, students must take one COM Core Course in each of the following areas: Rhetorical Traditions, Performing Culture, and Media & Culture. The department offers a range of courses bound together by an interest in investigating the complex relationships between communication, culture and identity. Internships are a great way to gain upper-level elective credit in the department and obtain tangible experience in one's field of interest.

## Sample occupational areas

### Advertising & Public Relations

Firms in the advertising and public relations services industry prepare advertisements and design campaigns for other companies and organizations to promote the interests and image of their clients. Copy writers prepare advertising copy for use in broadcasting or print publications and often work with the client to produce advertising themes or slogans. Public relations specialists create a positive public image for their organization by drafting press releases and contacting people in the media who might print or broadcast their material. Most employees in this field work in offices and operate in a teamwork environment; however, long hours, including evenings and weekends, are common. A college degree in a communications-related field combined with public relations experience is excellent preparation for public relations work. The glamour of the industry traditionally attracts many more jobseekers than there are job openings, so there is a lot of competition for jobs.

### Broadcasting

The general occupational categories at large broadcast stations are program production, news-related, and technical. Employees in program production occupations at television and radio stations create programs such as news, talk, and music shows and include assistant producers, video editors, producers, announcers, and editors. News-related occupations include reporters, correspondents, newswriters, broadcast news analysts, weather reporters, assistant news directors, assignment editors, and news directors. Entry-level jobs in news or program production increasingly require a college degree and some broadcast experience. Employees in technical occupations operate and maintain the electronic equipment that records and transmits radio or television programs. For technical positions, many stations look for employees with training in broadcast technology, electronics, or engineering.

### Journalism

The writing field is subdivided into two categories: those who write original material for publications, such as magazines and TV shows, and technical writers who translate technical information into everyday language. Editors review and edit the work of writers, while further responsibilities depend on their field. Current job opportunities are best for technical writers and other people with skills in specialized fields such as law, medicine, or economics.

## Sample job titles

Account Executive	Educational Consultant	Mediator	Sales Representative
Administrator	Event Coordinator	Manager	Script Writer
Advertising Executive	Financial Advisor	Marketing Executive	Sports Reporter
Book Publisher	Graphic Artist	Museum Director	Small Business Owner
Business Developer	Guidance Counselor	News Writer	Stage Manager
Case Manager	Human Resources Manager	Outreach Assistant	Teacher
Campaign Manager	Illustrator	Production Assistant	Technical Writer
Communications Lawyer	Journalist	Proposal Writer	Telemarketer
Critic	Layout Designer	Public Administrator	Website Designer
Database Administrator	Loan Officer	Public Relations	University Staff
Editor	Media Specialist	Recruiter	

## Sample internship employers of SU students

Austin Children's Museum  
Austin Convention Center  
Bobby Bones Show – Austin TX  
Capitol Metro – Austin, TX  
Celebration Church – Georgetown, TX  
Central Texas Marketing – Georgetown, TX  
Christian Life Commission – Austin, TX  
Ciao! Talent Agency – Georgetown, TX  
Cloth Court Communications – London, UK  
*Cosmogirl* Magazine – New York, NY  
C3 Concerts – Austin, TX  
Davis and Fox Law, PLLC – Round Rock, TX  
David Heavener Entertainment – Georgetown, TX  
Delaware County Historical Society – Media, PA  
Dr Pepper Ballpark (Frisco Rough Riders) – Frisco, TX  
Emmis Austin Radio – Austin, TX  
Fueled Films, Inc. – Austin, TX  
Gerson Lehrman Group – Austin, TX  
Georgetown Chamber of Commerce – Georgetown, TX  
GX Creative Communications – Georgetown, TX

Hispanic Scholarship Fund – Austin, TX  
Jarrell ISD – Jarrell, TX  
KEYE-TV – Austin, TX  
KLGQ 99.3 "The Word" – Austin, TX  
KUT News – Austin, TX  
Laity Lodge Youth Camp – Leakey, TX  
LeBaron Productions – Austin, TX  
NBC/SNL – New York, NY  
Congressman Charles Gonzales – Washington, DC  
Parks and Recreation Department – Round Rock, TX  
Peer Group Consulting – Round Rock, TX  
Positive Image Photography – Georgetown, TX  
Ride on Center for Kids – Austin, TX  
SOS Children's Village – Washington, DC  
South By Southwest – Austin, TX  
Steve Bowers Attorney's Office – Austin, TX  
SU Office of Communications – Georgetown, TX  
Texas Book Festival – Austin, TX  
Texas Film Commission – Austin, TX  
Williamson County Public Information Office – Georgetown, TX

## Sample full-time employers of SU grads

Account Executive (SHI International Corp.)  
Admissions Counselor (Texas Women's University)  
Advertising Executive (The Richards Group, Inc.)  
Brand Manager (The Richards Group)  
Campaign Consultant (Tyson Organization)  
Case Manager (Caritas of Austin)  
Client Development Associate (Business Talent Group)  
Director of Recruiting and Public Relations (Acton MBA)  
Digital Marketing and Creative Content Coordinator  
(Consumer Media)  
Event Coordinator (Destinations by Kennedy)  
Flight Attendant (Southwest Airlines)  
Inside Sales Representative (Berridge Manufacturing)  
Internal Communications Coordinator (National Instruments)  
Legal Assistant (Ripp, Henderson & Taylor)  
Marketing Executive (iMedia Corporation)  
Multimedia Coordinator (National Instruments)

Music News Reporter (KUT)  
Owner (Shelly Elena Photography)  
Platinum Conference Crews Volunteer Coordinator (SXSXW)  
President (Lookout Event Management LLC)  
Program Assistant (ESPN Radio 1530/1260AM)  
Proposal Writer (Brown and Gay)  
Publicist (Phenix & Phenix Literary Publicists)  
Research Assistant (University Medical Center at Brackenridge)  
Sales Account Manager (Dell, Inc)  
Screenplay Competition Director (Austin Film Festival)  
Social Media Communications Assistant (Team Roping World Series)  
Staff Photographer (*Waco Tribune-Herald*)  
Teacher (Teach for America)  
Video Production Editor (Iniosante Studios LLC)  
Volunteer (Peace Corps)  
Youth Outreach Coordinator (AmeriCorps)

## Professional associations and other web resources

American Advertising Federation: [www.aaf.org](http://www.aaf.org)  
American Marketing Association: [www.ama.org](http://www.ama.org)  
American Press Institute: [www.americanpressinstitute.org](http://www.americanpressinstitute.org)  
Association for Business Communication: [www.businesscommunication.org/](http://www.businesscommunication.org/)  
Association for Women in Communications: [www.womcom.org](http://www.womcom.org)  
Berkeley University: <https://career.berkeley.edu/communications/Communications.stm>  
Center for Communication: [www.cencom.org](http://www.cencom.org)  
Education Portal: <http://education-portal.com/articles/What Can You Do With a Communications Major.html>  
International Association of Business Communicators: [www.iabc.com](http://www.iabc.com)  
International Communication Association: [www.icahdq.org](http://www.icahdq.org)  
Media and Communication Occupations: [www.bls.gov/ooh/media-and-communication/home.htm](http://www.bls.gov/ooh/media-and-communication/home.htm)  
National Communication Association: [www.natcom.org](http://www.natcom.org)  
National Council for Marketing and Public Relations: [www.ncmpr.org/](http://www.ncmpr.org/)  
Newspaper Association of America: [www.naa.org](http://www.naa.org)  
Public Affairs Council: [www.pac.org](http://www.pac.org)  
Public Relations Society of America: [www.prsa.org](http://www.prsa.org)  
Society of Professional Journalists: <http://spj.org/>

## Career Services' print resources

A Career Handbook for TV, Radio, Film, Video & Interactive Media  
Career Opportunities in the Internet, Video Games & Multimedia  
Career Opportunities in the Publishing Industry  
Career Opportunities in Writing  
Careers in Communications  
Careers in Media and Film: The Essential Guide  
Explore the World of Professional & Scholarly Publishing  
Freelance Success Book  
Great Jobs for Communication Majors

How to Become a Social Media Manager  
How to Get a Job in Publishing  
Opportunities in Technical Writing  
Opportunities in Event Planning Careers  
Speak for a Living  
The Business of Writing for Children  
Vault Career Guide to Journalism and Information Media  
Vault Career Guide to Media and Entertainment  
What to do With Your English or Communications Degree