

Majoring in

Mass Communications

Description of Mass Communications

What is mass communications?

Mass communications is the field of study concerned with the transmission of information by various means, such as print or broadcasting.

What do majors study?

Students in this major must select a concentration from one of the following areas: advertising - business or creative; journalism - broadcast or print; and public relations. This program will focus on the analysis and criticism of media institutions and media texts, how people experience and understand media contact, and the roles of media in producing and transforming culture.

What skills are important for a mass comm major?

Mass communications majors are thinkers and trained to immediately question who, what, when, why, where, and how. Students must be able to:

- Project and communicate in a friendly and tactful attitude;
- “Think quick on their feet” and be inquisitive;
- Be accessible to others; and
- Be creative; and meet deadlines.

Majors are expert writers and many also obtain training in graphic design, public speaking, videography, or reporting.

What else do mass comm majors study?

Mass communications provides a background through a combination of liberal arts and professionally-oriented courses. Students in this major take a variety of courses to develop knowledge and skills that can be applied in both personal and professional settings.

Course Requirements

General education: About 60 credit hours of general education courses are required, including courses in science, foreign language, history, economics, political science, writing, arts, literature, math, and urban environment.

Major courses: A minimum of 36 credit hours of mass communication courses are required. Majors are required to take the following courses:

- Introduction to Mass Media
- Writing for Mass Media
- Media Ethics

Concentration: About 21-27 credit hours of courses in one of the following concentration areas are required:

- Advertising with either a strategic or creative concentration;
- Journalism with either a broadcast or print concentration; and
- Public relations.

Courses included in the various concentrations include:

- Assignment Reporting
- Campaigns
- Communication Law
- Copywriting
- Electronic Media Writing I
- Introduction to Advertising
- Journalism Seminar
- Media Graphics
- Radio Production
- Television Production
- Public Relations
- Writing Production Law

Careers in Mass Communications

Majors obtain a good background for entry to any number of occupations that include governmental agencies, corporate industry, or non-profit organizations. There are many entry-level areas of employment entered by mass communications majors with appropriate experience and education that include:

Advertising

Advertising agencies
Hospitality and tourism industry
Non-profit or Public interest organizations
Public service organizations
Public opinion organization or research firms
Market Research
Sports and entertainment organizations

Journalism

Editor
Law or legislative assistance
Journalist/Reporter
Non-profit or Public interest organizations
Print and electronic media
Public service organizations
Public opinion organizations or research firms
Radio and television
Sports and entertainment organizations
Teaching
Technical Writer/Writer/Author

Public Relations

Campaigner or Lobbyist

Conflict negotiation or mediation
Event programming
Fund Raising
Law or legislative assistance
Non-profit or Public interest organizations
Public relations specialist
Student support services

Next Steps

If you are interested in learning more about becoming a mass communications major at VCU, consider doing each of the following things. Check them off as you complete each step.

- Check out the Mass Communications website
www.has.vcu.edu/mac/
- Take an introductory course – Introduction to
Mass Media, Media Ethics, or Communication
Technology and the Global Society
- Read about the major in the *Undergraduate
Bulletin*.
- Review graduation worksheet with an academic
advisor
- Talk to one or more peer advisors in
Mass Communications, Temple 2219,
804-828-2660, mascadvisor@vcu.edu
- Discuss the major with one or more
mass communications professors
- Go to the Career Center to read about

careers in mass communications

- Go to the VCU bookstore and browse in the mass communications textbook section
- Explore internship possibilities through the Career Center and the School of Mass Communications
- Visit www.has.vcu.edu/mac/students/ for more information about careers in mass comm

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**College of
Humanities & Sciences**

**School of
Mass Communications**

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