

# 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/](http://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](mailto: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/](http://www.has.vcu.edu/mac/students/) for more information about careers in mass comm

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**School of  
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