

Senate Reference No. 25-29

MEMORANDUM

TO: 2025-2026 Senate Executive Committee
FROM: Alan Legg
Chair, Curriculum Subcommittee
DATE: 03/23/2026
SUBJECT: Concentration in Communication Studies for B.A. in Communication

The Curriculum Subcommittee reviewed a proposal from COLA for a new concentration in Communication Studies for the B.A. in Communication. We voted to approve the proposal and find it requires no Senate review.

Thank you for the opportunity to review this proposal.

Approve	Oppose	Abstain	Absent	Present Non-Voting
Alan Legg			Nurgul Aitalieva	Lucas Mollema
Tara Lewis			Abe Schwab	Sabene Rizvi
Terri Swim			Carl Drummond	
Cigdem Gurgur			Lacy Watson	
Yanfei Liu			Tiffany Taylor-Smith	
Steve Carr				

Degree/Certificate/Major/Minor/Concentration Cover Sheet

Date:

Institution: Purdue

Campus: Fort Wayne

School or College:

Department:

Location: 80% or more online: Yes No

County:

Type:

Program name:

Graduate/Undergraduate:

Degree Code:

Brief Description:

Rationale for new or terminated program:

CIP Code:

Name of Person who Submitted Proposal:

Contact Information (phone or email):



Undergraduate Academic Program Memo

Date: 3/3/26
From: Michelle L. Kelsey, Chair, Department of Communication
To: Janet Badia, Dean, College of Liberal Arts
Re: New Concentratio Request--Communication Studies

Brief description of the program:

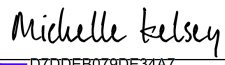
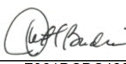
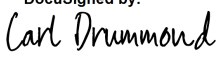
The new concentration in Communication Studies will be a restricted concentration to students seeking a second major in Communication or a first major in Communication and second in another discipline. Students will complete the Communication B.A. core courses, one class in each primary concentration, then will choose amongst our 300-400 level courses to complete their concenteration. The concentration has only 30 credit hours.

Brief rationale for program request:

In revision of our three primary concentrations, we added additional credit hours to each one. In this way, the ability of students to seek a second major has been somewhat restricted. This concentration represents a new pathway for students who want to earn two majors. With the reduced credit hour load, students will be able to combine this concentration with other majors in and outsid of the College of Liberal arts. We hope this will not just accomodate second majors, but also encourage more students to add the major.

CIP Code: 09.0100

For completion by Office of Academic Affairs

Signed by:  <small>D7DDEB079DE34A7...</small>	3/3/2026
<i>Department Chair Signature</i>	<i>Date</i>
Signed by:  <small>F061DCDC482C4E6...</small>	3/3/2026
<i>School Dean Signature</i>	<i>Date</i>
DocuSigned by:  <small>27109142004745C...</small>	3/3/2026
<i>Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs Signature</i>	<i>Date</i>

PLEASE NOTE: The Office of Academic Affairs will collect electronic signatures from the Chair, Dean, and Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs after the form has been filled out and submitted to the Associate Vice Chancellor for Academic Programs with the rest of the program proposal.

Request for a New Concentration

Campus: PFW

School or College: College of Liberal Arts

Department: Communication

Degree and Major: B.A. Communication

Title of Concentration: Communication Studies

CIP Code:

Effective Date (Session and Academic Year): Fall 2026

Mode of Delivery: **Campus**/Online/Distance/Hybrid

80% or more online:

Yes
 No

If Hybrid, explain:

Who will administer the online aspect of this program (vendor, program)?

Brief Description of Concentration: *This may be published in the Catalog. A brief explanation of what the student will experience and/or learn; no more than 2-3 sentences.*

This concentration is for students seeking a second major in Communication or another discipline. Students will complete the core courses in the Communication B.A. program, take a class of their choice in the department's three primary concentrations areas, and then complete electives to focus on specific skills, topics, or areas offered amongst our 300 and 400 level courses.

Justification

This section provides statements regarding the mission of the proposed concentration.

Need for the concentration: Through our recent revision of the B.A. program, we have increased the number of credit hours required in the concentrations. We want to accommodate and encourage second majors both inside and outside the college, this concentration offers students who want to earn a second major the flexibility to do so with reduced credit hours to earn the B.A.

Target audience, including the expected number of students and benefits to them: The target audience is any student on campus who is interested in adding Communication as a second major to their degree program. We know in Communication we are teaching skills most corporations are desperate for. The World Economic Forum reported in January that while a host of new jobs in the next 5 years will be heavily influenced by technological developments, cybersecurity, AI, and other drivers, the skills that businesses are hiring around are those skills learned in programs like Communication Studies—leadership, social influence, critical and

analytical thinking, agility in problem solving, emotional intelligence, ethical decision making, resilience, and curiosity. While businesses continue to spend millions on upskilling their employees, the concentration in Communication Studies offers the opportunity for our students to arrive fully prepared for all aspects of their new career—across disciplines and job sectors. Amongst top jobs in Indiana (with a rating of 4 stars or better) that students who pursue this concentration could land include: Public Relations Specialist, Fundraiser, Sales Representative, Sales Manager, Marketing Researcher, Project Manager, Human Resources, Operations Manger, Operations Research Analyst, Social and Community Service Managers, Digital Media/Content production. Depending on the combined degree program, a host of other jobs may become more relevant including subject specific specialized journalism—climate, sports, tech, etc. Medical and Technical writing are also direct career pathways depending on the dual major selection.

Focus of Research or career relevance: Communication is a universally essential degree in the job market—particularly if paired with a second major. Students with degrees in communication are equipped with the skills to get jobs in journalism, broadcasting, non-profit management, private sector management jobs, consulting, political positions (speech writing, running for office, managing campaigns, etc). Through close consultation with department and college advisors, students will be able to adapt the program through strategic course selection to emphasize essential skills they want to acquire to enhance or supplement their other major, making their resume and skill sets more attractive to employers.

Description of how the concentration fits into and supports the existing degree program(s) and major(s).

This concentration enhances the opportunity for students continue to earn second majors while in the department. Our most recent program revision increases the number of courses required in the Communication major. In the past, students have appreciated the credit hour flexibility in our major to be able to add a second major. This concentration serves the interest of those students who would like to double major but might be prevented from doing so with the revised requirements of the other concentrations in the program. This allows us to approach the other concentrations with more depth, while allowing flexibility for double majors.

Description of the relationship to other concentrations in the degree program: The Communication Studies concentration is comprised of classes that span the other concentrations in the department. Students then fill elective slots with 300 and 400 level courses already offered through the degree program. This facilitates better enrollments in upper division courses and does not create any scheduling complications or strain in the department.

If a student wanted to follow the trajectory of a single concentration, they could still do so for the most part. Students will take a class from each of our established concentrations and then fill the rest of their program with courses they select. For example, if a student was a dual major in Biology in their Ecology and Evolutionary Biology concentration and Communication with the goal of doing environmental reporting, that student would still be able to access all of the Journalism and Media Production classes to acquire all of the necessary journalistic skills without being enrolled in that concentration if the credit hour load would be prohibitive.

Participating faculty, including name, academic rank, and departmental affiliation:

Heloisa Sturm Wilkerson, Associate Professor, Department of Communication

Mary Kiura, Assistant Professor, Department of Communication

Assem Nasr, Associate Professor, Department of Communication

Wei Luo, Professor, Department of Communication

Sarah LeBlanc, Associate Professor, Department of Communication
Christa Jennings, Lecturer, Department of Communication
Steve Carr, Professor, Department of Communication
Art Herbig, Professor, Department of Communication

Prospective Curriculum – *Please create a plan of study for the degree. If new courses are being created, all course proposals must be completed in order to add to this block. (note any that are variable title; **min of 9 hours of unique courses for a GRAD concentration**):*

Communication Core 12 CH

COM 11000: Introduction to Communication Concepts and Theories (3 CH)
COM 10400: Introduction to the Communication Major (1 CH)
COM 36400: Solving Communication Problems (3 CH)
COM 31800: Principles of Persuasion (3 CH)
COM 49000: Internship in Communication <u>OR</u> COM 47300: Practicum in Communication (1-3 CH)
COM 49900: Capstone Seminar in Communication (1 CH)

Concentration Requirements 18 CH

Media and Rhetoric (3 CH): Choose 1 course from the following list

COM 248 Introduction to Media Criticism and Analysis

COM 312 Rhetoric of the Western world

COM 316 Controversy in America

COM 329 History of Mass Media

Journalism and Media Production (3 CH): Choose 1 course from the following list:

COM 140 Introduction to Media Production

COM 317 Digital Storytelling

COM 44101 Social Media: Theory and Practice

COM 4xxxx: Media Ethics

Strategic Communication (3 CH): Choose 1 course from the following list:

COM 212 Approaches to the Study of Interpersonal Communication

COM 253 Introduction to Public Relation

COM 320 Small Group Communication

COM 41001 Gender Roles in Communication

Supporting Courses (9 CH): Choose from any 300-400 level COM courses not taken to complete the core or concentration level requirements.

4 year plan attached

Learning outcomes (e.g., unique knowledge or abilities, capacity to identify and conduct original research, ability to communicate to peer audiences, critical thinking and problem-solving skills, etc.):

Communication B.A. Student Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of this degree, students will:

- Demonstrate the ability to be a critically engaged citizen
- Articulate the historical traditions of the discipline
- Demonstrate an awareness and skillful use of new technologies relevant to their major
- Evaluate and apply communication concepts and theories relevant to the major
- Evaluate and apply the processes involved in productive conflict in the contexts (interpersonal, organizational, professional, small group, mediated, public) relevant to their major
- Demonstrate awareness of diverse perspectives

Communication Studies Learning Outcomes

- Demonstrate the ability to think critically, creatively, and independently
- Evaluate Interpersonal, group, and organizational interactions
- Identify and analyze relationships between media, rhetoric, and culture
- Demonstrate how communication shapes social, political, and economic issues
- Develop an understanding of how to incorporate communication best practices into student career path and other major
-

Will new courses be created for this concentration?

Yes
 No

If yes, list new courses and if proposals have been submitted:

Name of Person who Submitted Proposal: Michelle Kelsey

Contact Information (phone and email): 309.530.1517; mlkelsey@pfw.edu

COMMUNICATION, B. A.
COMMUNICATION STUDIES (COMS)
(Fall 2026-Summer 2027)

Term:				Year: 20				Term:				Year: 20			
Course No.	Course Title	Pre-Reqs	Crs.	Course No.	Course Title	Pre-Reqs	Crs.	Course No.	Course Title	Pre-Reqs	Crs.	Course No.	Course Title	Pre-Reqs	Crs.
COM 10400	Intro to Comm Concepts and Theories		3**	COM 31800	Principles of Persuasion	COM 114 or Permission of Instructor	3								
2nd Major Course	2nd Major Course		3**	2nd Major Course	2nd Major Course		3								
COM 1XXXX	Intro to Communication Major		1*	COLA	COLA Thematic A		3								
COLA PART A	IDIS 10605 Introduction to the Liberal Arts		3	GB4	Gen Ed Scientific Ways of Knowing		3								
GA 3	Quantitative Reasoning (MA 140 or MA153 or STAT 125)	Placement or MA 12401 for MA 140/STAT 125; MA 11100 for MA 153	3	GA1	Gen Ed Written Communication		3								
GA2	Fundamentals of Public Speaking		3	2nd Major Course	2nd Major Course										
Total Semester Credit Hours							16	Total Semester Credit Hours							18

Term:				Year: 20				Term:				Year: 20			
Course No.	Course Title	Pre-Reqs	Crs.	Course No.	Course Title	Pre-Reqs	Crs.	Course No.	Course Title	Pre-Reqs	Crs.	Course No.	Course Title	Pre-Reqs	Crs.
Media and Rhetoric Course	Media and Rhetoric Course		3	Journalism and Media Production Course	Journalism and Media Production Course		3								
2nd Major Course	2nd Major Course		3	2nd Major Course	2nd Major Course		3								
COLA PART B	ENG W23301 Intermed Expos Writing	ENG W131 (C- or above)	3	FL 2 nd semester	Foreign Language 2	FL 1/placement	3*								
FL 1 st semester	Foreign Language 1		3	GB6	Gen Ed Humanistic Ways of Knowing		3								
2nd Major Course	2nd Major Course		3	COM 36400	Solving Communication Problems	COM 10400	3*								
Total Semester Credit Hours							15	Total Semester Credit Hours							15

Term:				Year: 20				Term:				Year: 20			
Course No.	Course Title	Pre-Reqs	Crs.	Course No.	Course Title	Pre-Reqs	Crs.	Course No.	Course Title	Pre-Reqs	Crs.	Course No.	Course Title	Pre-Reqs	Crs.
GB7	Gen Ed Artistic Ways of Knowing		3**	COLA	Thematic B Requirement		3								
GB 5	Social and Behavioral Ways of Knowing		3	2nd Major Course	2nd Major Course		3								
FL 3 rd semester	Foreign Language 3	FL 2/placement	3	COM 49000 OR COM 47300	Intern in Communication OR Practicum in Communication	Permission of Internship Director	1-3								
2nd Major Course	2nd Major Course		3	FL 4 th semester	Foreign Language 4	FL 3/placement	3								
CS Supporting Class	CS Supporting class 300 or 400 level COM class		3	2nd Major Course	2nd Major Course		3								
2nd Major Course	2nd Major Course		3	2nd Major Course	2nd Major Course		3								
Total Semester Credit Hours							18	Total Semester Credit Hours							16-18

COMMUNICATION, B. A.
COMMUNICATION STUDIES (COMS)
(Fall 2026-Summer 20227)

Term:				Year: 20				Term:				Year: 20			
Course No.	Course Title	Pre-Reqs	Crs.	Course No.	Course Title	Pre-Req s	Crs.	Course No.	Course Title	Pre-Req s	Crs.	Course No.	Course Title	Pre-Req s	Crs.
2nd Major Course	2nd Major Course		3	COM 49900	Capstone course for Communication majors		1*								
COLA	Thematic Requirement C		3	COLA	Thematic Requirement E		3								
COLA	Thematic Requirement D		3	CS Supporting Class	CS Supporting class 300 or 400 level COM class		3								
CS Supporting Class	CS Supporting class 300 or 400 level COM class		3	2nd Major Course	2nd Major Course		3								
2nd Major course	2nd Major Course		3	Gen Ed A/B	Gen Ed A or B course (if needed or elective)		3								
Gen Ed A/B	Gen Ed A or B course		3	2nd Major Course	2nd Major Course		3								
			Total Semester Credit Hours	18				Total Semester Credit Hours	16						

√ = See PFW Bulletin or myBLUEprint for additional course prerequisites * = usually only offered spring ** = usually only offered fall

Liaison Librarian Memo

Date: March 4, 2026

From: Luna Maldonado-Velez

To: Terri Swim

Re: Communication Studies Concentration

Describe availability of library resources to support proposed new concentration:

Helmke Library subscribes to over 400 databases and online resources in all subject areas, including those appropriate to this program, such as Communication & Mass Media Complete, JSTOR, ProjectMUSE, etc. Through these resources, students can access journals, magazines, newspapers, and various electronic materials covering topics such as the evolution of social media, artificial intelligence, and other important conversations within the field. The library continuously updates its physical resources of books and media to maintain a current and useful collection. Materials not available within the library can be requested through Document Delivery and interlibrary loan.

Comments:

Since this program will use only existing courses and faculty, I anticipate that the current resources provided by the library will be sufficient to support this degree. I will evaluate the need to add more to our physical collection as the program evolves. In addition to physical material acquisition, library subscription costs continue to rise. If the library's budget does not increase to match those costs, some resources, including those relevant to this program, may need to be cut in the future. Any materials, print or subscription, that the library would be unable to provide through its resources would increase document delivery and interlibrary loan use and associated costs. A possibly higher rate of Document Delivery Service usage has been noted yet I do not see this becoming an issue.

Luna Maldonado-Velez

3/4/2026

Liaison Librarian Signature

Date

Please email academic_program@pfw.edu with questions about this form.
Send signed original to Associate Vice-Chancellor for Academic Programs
Kettler Hall, Room 174