

**A MESSAGE FROM THE DEPARTMENT HEAD OF ***“Preparing students for life, work, and citizenship”*

Dear Students:

As Department Head of Communication at Missouri State University, it is truly my pleasure to welcome you to our family. Whether you are pursuing a major or a minor in Communication, you have made an excellent choice because there has never been a better time to earn a degree in Communication. So, congratulations on your decision!

Allow me to briefly tell you why a degree in Communication is so valuable today, as well as what that degree can do for you.

As I’m sure you recognize, our world looks very different than it did even a year ago. Never before have people been asked to demonstrate such high levels of communication competence, cultural literacy, critical thinking, organizational flexibility, creative collaboration, and network savvy. These skills lie at the heart of Communication, which is why Communication is both one of the fastest-growing fields and most sought after degrees in the world.

According to *The Princeton Review*, which recently ranked all university majors based on the criteria of “job prospects, alumni salaries, and popularity,” Communication ranks as the second best major on college campuses (<http://www.princetonreview.com/college-advice/top-ten-college-majors>). Second only to Computer Science, Communication ranked ahead of majors such as Business, Psychology, Economics, and even Engineering.

**Why is Communication such a sought after degree today?***A uniquely flexible degree*

Research shows that today’s college graduates will hold 5-7 *careers* (not “jobs”) over the course of their lifetimes. Consequently, a traditional educational model, one which focuses on preparing students to work in a single career field, is both outdated and obsolete. It is absolutely critical that today’s graduates possess a diverse and highly transferrable skill set. In Communication, you will learn effective oral and written communication skills, critical thinking and problem-solving skills, leadership and management skills, intercultural and interpersonal skills, and negotiation and conflict-management skills. These are the skills that employers want, and they are the skills that will guide you to success in your professional lives. This means that you can work in virtually any industry and, indeed, our graduates work in a remarkably diverse array of fields, including business and finance, media and entertainment, health care and social work, science and technology, art and education, and government and politics among others.

*A degree that builds life skills*

Communication is concerned not just with your career success (though it is committed to that as well), but with success in all aspects of your life: personal, professional, and public. At the personal level, Communication seeks to improve your personal relationships through classes in interpersonal, family, relational, and nonverbal communication. At the professional level, Communication enhances your effectiveness in the workplace through classes in organizational, small group, conflict-resolution, and intercultural communication. And, at the public level, Communication promotes strong civic engagement through classes in rhetoric, public speaking, and argumentation and debate. We are training you to be a leader both in your workplace and in your community.

We recognize that “work” is only one aspect of your life, and we are dedicated to producing well-rounded, well-adjusted citizens who are happy and healthy in all spheres of life. In short, we’re preparing you not just for a career, but for the world. And the world is more challenging today than perhaps ever before. In an era defined by endless change and by the continuous creation, transmission, and circulation of information, there truly has never been a better time to earn a degree in Communication. Thank you for recognizing that!

Welcome to a future of possibility and prosperity. Welcome to Communication!

Sincerely,



Brian L. Ott, Ph.D.  
Department Head / Professor  
Department of Communication  
374 Craig Hall  
Missouri State University  
901 S. National Ave.  
Springfield, MO 65897

office: (417) 836-6525

email: [BrianOtt@MissouriState.edu](mailto:BrianOtt@MissouriState.edu)

web: <https://missouristate.academia.edu/BrianOtt>