LIFE SCIENCES COMMUNICATION, B.S.

The Department of Life Sciences Communication (LSC) prepares students for careers as professional communicators in scientific and technical fields or for graduate school. Scientific areas of expertise include the environment and natural resources, health and nutrition, agriculture, new technologies such as biotechnology, and social sciences. In 1908, LSC became the first department of what was then termed Agricultural Journalism in the world and has retained its leadership position in science communication ever since.

Graduates of the program are highly sought after by employers across scientific and communication industries. Key to the education that LSC students receive is a combination of theoretical grounding and state-of-the-art practical applications. Our instructors are a mix of world-class researchers and real-world practitioners of regional or national profiles.

Students receive instruction across multimedia platforms such as print, audio, video and web. They are taught how to target and create communications for both news and marketing. Most important, they learn how to plan strategically and implement the most effective communications for diverse audiences.

Students complete an undergraduate major in life sciences communication under the Bachelor of Science degree program. Students in this program have the flexibility to explore science, environmental and health communication; agricultural business; industry; social marketing; or the international context.

College regulations permit a student to major simultaneously in life sciences communication while pursuing another major in a different department. This provides a student with strong communication skills and solid grounding in another subject matter area. Nonmajors will also benefit from taking communication skills courses.

HOW TO GET IN

To declare this major, students must be admitted to UW–Madison and the College of Agricultural and Life Sciences (CALS). For information about becoming a CALS first-year or transfer student, see Entering the College (http://guide.wisc.edu/undergraduate/agricultural-life-sciences/#enteringthecollegetext).

Students who attend Student Orientation, Advising, and Registration (SOAR) with the College of Agricultural and Life Sciences have the option to declare this major at SOAR. Students may otherwise declare after they have begun their undergraduate studies. For more information, contact the advisor listed under the Advising and Careers tab.

REQUIREMENTS

UNIVERSITY GENERAL EDUCATION REQUIREMENTS

All undergraduate students at the University of Wisconsin–Madison are required to fulfill a minimum set of common university general education requirements to ensure that every graduate acquires the essential core of an undergraduate education. This core establishes a foundation for living a productive life, being a citizen of the world, appreciating aesthetic values, and engaging in lifelong learning in a continually changing world. Various schools and colleges will have requirements in addition to the requirements listed below. Consult your advisor for assistance, as needed. For additional information, see the university Undergraduate General Education Requirements (http://guide.wisc.edu/undergraduate/#requirementsforundergraduatetext) section of the Guide.

- General Education
  - Breadth—Humanities/Literature/Arts: 6 credits
  - Breadth—Natural Science: 4 to 6 credits, consisting of one 4- or 5-credit course with a laboratory component; or two courses providing a total of 6 credits
  - Breadth—Social Studies: 3 credits
  - Communication Part A & Part B *
  - Ethnic Studies *
  - Quantitative Reasoning Part A & Part B *

  * The mortarboard symbol appears before the title of any course that fulfills one of the Communication Part A or Part B, Ethnic Studies, or Quantitative Reasoning Part A or Part B requirements.

COLLEGE OF AGRICULTURAL AND LIFE SCIENCES REQUIREMENTS

In addition to the University General Education Requirements, all undergraduate students in CALS must satisfy a set of college and major requirements. Specific requirements for all majors in the college and other information on academic matters can be obtained from the Office of Academic Affairs (http://www.cals.wisc.edu/academics), College of Agricultural and Life Sciences, 116 Agricultural Hall, 1450 Linden Drive, Madison, WI 53706; 608-262-3003. Academic departments and advisors also have information on requirements. Courses may not double count within university requirements (General Education and Breadth) or within college requirements (First-Year Seminar, International Studies and Science), but courses counted toward university requirements may also be used to satisfy a college and/or a major requirement; similarly, courses counted toward college requirements may also be used to satisfy a university and/or a major requirement.

COLLEGE REQUIREMENTS FOR ALL CALS B.S. DEGREE PROGRAMS

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Credits</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Quality of Work: Students must maintain a minimum cumulative grade point average of 2.000 to remain in good standing and be eligible for graduation.</td>
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<td>Residency: Students must complete 30 degree credits in residence at UW–Madison after earning 86 credits toward their undergraduate degree.</td>
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<td>First Year Seminar (<a href="http://guide.wisc.edu/undergraduate/agricultural-life-sciences/#requirementstext">http://guide.wisc.edu/undergraduate/agricultural-life-sciences/#requirementstext</a>)</td>
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<td>International Studies (<a href="http://guide.wisc.edu/undergraduate/agricultural-life-sciences/#requirementstext">http://guide.wisc.edu/undergraduate/agricultural-life-sciences/#requirementstext</a>)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Physical Science Fundamentals</td>
<td>4-5</td>
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<td>CHEM 103 or CHEM 108</td>
<td>General Chemistry I or Chemistry in Our World</td>
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<td>CHEM 109</td>
<td>Advanced General Chemistry</td>
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MAJOR REQUIREMENTS

Courses may not double count within the major (unless specifically noted otherwise), but courses counted toward the major requirements may also be used to satisfy a university requirement and/or a college requirement. Students must have a minimum of 15 credits within the LSC major that do not double count with CALS or university "general education" requirements.

**Code** | **Title** | **Credits**
---|---|---

**Mathematics and Statistics**

Select one of the following (or placement exam recommended to fulfill the CALS Quantitative Reasoning Part A requirement):

- MATH 112 Algebra
- or MATH 114 Algebra and Trigonometry

Select one of the following (recommended to fulfill the CALS Quantitative Reasoning Part B requirement):

- STAT 301 Introduction to Statistical Methods
- STAT 371 Introductory Applied Statistics for the Life Sciences
- C&E SOC/ SOC 360 Statistics for Sociologists I

**Foundation Course**

LSC 111 Science and Technology Newswriting

or LSC 212 Introduction to Scientific Communication

**Core**

LSC 250 Research Methods in the Communication Industry

LSC 251 Science, Media and Society

Select two of the following:

- LSC 270 Communication in Life Science Industries
- LSC 314 Introduction to Digital Video Production
- LSC 320 Feature Writing
- LSC 332 Print and Electronic Media Design
- LSC 350 Visualizing Science and Technology
- LSC 360 Information Radio

**Concentration within the Major**

Select 6 credits from one of the following concentrations:

- Communication Strategy
- Communication Skills and Technologies

**Capstone**

LSC 515 Public Information Campaigns and Programs

or LSC 640 Case Studies in the Communication of Science and Technology

**CONCENTRATIONS WITHIN THE MAJOR COMMUNICATION STRATEGY**

Communication Strategy Concentration: focuses on the skills and theory necessary to effectively communicate with audiences in the life sciences context, while satisfying the long terms strategic goals of an organization; it includes courses in advertising, social marketing, and risk communication.

**Code** | **Title** | **Credits**
---|---|---

Select two of the following:

- LSC 431 Advertising in the Life Sciences
- LSC 432 Social Media for the Life Sciences
- LSC 435 Theory and Practice of Integrated Marketing Communication
- LSC 440 Contemporary Communication Technologies and Their Social Effects
- LSC/ AMER IND 444 Native American Environmental Issues and the Media
- LSC/COM ARTS/ JOURN 617 Health Communication in the Information Age
- LSC 625 Risk Communication
- LSC 660 Data Analysis in Communications Research

**COMMUNICATION SKILLS AND TECHNOLOGIES**

Communication Skills and Technology Concentration: focuses on the skills required to translate organized information into informative and persuasive messages for a variety of media, such as newswriting, documentary photography, publications editing, web design and video production.

**Code** | **Title** | **Credits**
---|---|---

Select two of the following:

- LSC 430 Communicating Science with Narrative
- LSC 432 Social Media for the Life Sciences
- LSC 450 Documentary Photography for the Sciences
- LSC 532 Web Design for the Sciences
- LSC 614 Advanced Video Production

**UNIVERSITY DEGREE REQUIREMENTS**

To receive a bachelor's degree from UW–Madison, students must earn a minimum of 120 degree credits. The requirements for some programs may exceed 120 degree credits. Students should consult with their college or department advisor for information on specific credit requirements.
Residency: Degree candidates are required to earn a minimum of 30 credits in residence at UW–Madison. "In residence" means on the UW–Madison campus with an undergraduate degree classification. "In residence" credit also includes UW–Madison courses offered in distance or online formats and credits earned in UW–Madison Study Abroad/Study Away programs.

Quality of Work: Undergraduate students must maintain the minimum grade point average specified by the school, college, or academic program to remain in good academic standing. Students whose academic performance drops below these minimum thresholds will be placed on academic probation.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

1. Specialized knowledge in theoretical and applied communication of science and technology, along with an education broad enough to meet the challenges of changing careers and opportunities.

2. The ability to think critically and creatively: to synthesize, analyze, and integrate ideas for decision making and problem solving.

3. The ability to communicate effectively across media and a broad range of audiences.

4. A global perspective; an appreciation for the interdependencies among individuals and their workplaces, communities, environments, and world; and an understanding of the interrelationships between science and society.

5. The ability to work with others in small or large groups, to recognize civic and social responsibilities, and to appreciate the uses of public policy in a democracy.

6. A respect for truth, a tolerance for diverse views, and a strong sense of personal and professional ethics.

FOUR-YEAR PLAN

FOUR-YEAR PLAN
SAMPLE LIFE SCIENCES COMMUNICATION FOUR-YEAR PLAN

Freshman

Fall: Credits Spring Credits
MATH 112 1 3 LSC 111 or 212 3
COMM A Course 3 Chemistry 4-5
Humanities Elective 3 Humanities Elective 3
Electives 6 Social Sciences Elective 3
First-Year Seminar 1
15 14-15

Sophomore

Fall: Credits Spring Credits
LSC 250 3 LSC 251 3
LSC Elective 3 LSC Elective 3
Math or Statistics 3-5 Ethnic Studies 3
Electives 6 Science Elective 3

Senior

Fall: Credits Spring Credits
International Studies 3 Concentration Course 3
Electives 9 Electives 12
Select one capstone course:
LSC 515
LSC 640
15 15

Total Credits 118-122

1 Or consider:
COMM A, 3 cr
Algebra and Trigonometry (MATH 114, 5 cr)
HUMANITIES ELECTIVE, 3 cr
ELECTIVES, 3 cr
FIRST-YEAR SEMINAR, 1
For a total of 15 cr

ADVISING AND CAREERS

Current or prospective students should contact the advisor, Tera Holtz (tholtz@wisc.edu), with questions. Declared majors are required to meet with the advisor at least once per semester prior to registration.

Our graduates get jobs as reporters, editors, advertising and marketing professionals, technical writers, broadcast producers, and public information staff at universities, and in many other science- and agriculture-related industries. Some work for specialized publications. Others work for print, online or broadcast media reporting on science, health, agriculture, or the environment. Many have careers with advertising agencies and public relations firms handling accounts for food, biotechnology, or related industries. Still others work with companies, cooperatives, government agencies, and universities.

PEOPLE

PROFESSORS
Brossard (chair), Reaves, Scheufele, Shepard

ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR
Shaw

ASSISTANT PROFESSOR
Stenhouse
FACULTY ASSOCIATES
Botham, Stanley

LECTURERS
Flaherty, Meyer, Nelson, Seely, Smith, Still

WISCONSIN EXPERIENCE

STUDYING ABROAD
LSC majors can find study abroad and internship abroad opportunities at International Academic Programs (https://www.studyabroad.wisc.edu) and the International Internship Program (http://internships.international.wisc.edu) websites. Travel opportunities range from one to two weeks to an entire academic year, and many students pursue volunteer, research or internship opportunities while abroad.

INTERNSHIPS
LSC notifies majors of abundant opportunities to apply for summer and academic year internships related to science communication. Students intern with marketing agencies, environmental and sustainability organizations, and healthcare and agricultural agencies. The Wisconsin Technology Council and Farm Journal, Inc. actively offer internship opportunities to LSC seniors.

LSC CAPSTONES ARE SERVICE-LEARNING COURSES
All LSC seniors can select their final capstone course from either LSC 515 or LSC 640. LSC 515 Public Information Campaigns and Programs partners with a real-life client to create a strategic marketing campaign for issues of social significance, such as environmental conservation. Students in LSC 640 Case Studies in the Communication of Science and Technology participate in internships throughout the semester that put their communication skillset into practice for science and technology organizations.