

RU Interested in . . .

# COMMUNICATION

## AT A GLANCE . . .

|                          |   |
|--------------------------|---|
| <b>Department at RU:</b> | Communication   |
| <b>Office Location:</b>  | 200 Jefferson St.   |
| <b>Telephone</b>         | (540) 831-5282  |
| <b>Faculty Liaison:</b>  | Dr. Kristin Froemling, Interim Chair                        |
| <b>College at RU:</b>    | College of Arts and Sciences                                |
| <b>Degree Type:</b>      | Bachelor of Arts, Bachelor of Science,<br>Master of Science |

## AREA OF STUDY

The Department of Communication prepares undergraduate students for the future in two ways. First, many students prepare themselves to become professional communicators. The professional communicator role involves, but is not limited to, public relations, training, investor relations, human relations, human resources, community relations, crisis management, and governmental or legislative relations. Second, students may also prepare themselves to make contributions to various organizations and contexts from a communication perspective. Students have the opportunity to develop special knowledge and skills with regard to conflict, groups, leadership, relationships, intercultural communication, listening, political campaigns, etc.

Whichever path students choose they can be assured that communication knowledge and skills are highly valued. For example, the extent to which communication knowledge, skill, and motivation have become of central concern for employers is clearly reflected in a variety of surveys like the one conducted by the National Association of Colleges and Employers (1999). That survey asked employers to list the top ten personal characteristics they seek in job candidates. That list is instructive.

- Communication skills
- Work experience
- Motivation/initiative
- Teamwork skills
- Leadership abilities
- GPA/academic credentials
- Technical skills
- Interpersonal skills
- Analytic skills
- Ethics

The curriculum in the Department of Communication directly addresses these issues, preparing students for professional and personal success in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

With the Summer 2006 semester, the Department will sponsor two study abroad programs, one in Austria and one in Southeast Asia. Both programs are designed for

communication majors and focus on such topics as International Communication, Intercultural Communication, Industrial Public Relations, Change, and Development.

## CAREER PATHS

Graduates in the Department of Communication have gone on to productive careers in a variety of areas. Some of those are listed below.

- Director of Public Relations, The Virginia Aeronautical Association.
- Account Assistant, Edelman Public Relations
- Account Executive, Media Map
- Director of Public Relations, The American Society for Travel Agents

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

- **What courses of study are available in the Department?**

Growing recognition of the central role human interaction plays in the effectiveness and efficiency of organizations of all kinds has created an expanding job market for communication trained professionals. The Department of Communication at RU has positioned itself to be responsive to this demand by offering three options within the major: **Public Relations** and **Communication Studies**.

The **Public Relations** concentration prepares students for positions as professional communicators in business, government, associations, health care, public relations firms, educational, and cultural organizations. Professional communicators scan the organizational environment, identify problems, identify solutions to problems, analyze audiences, design and execute message campaigns, and counsel other members of management concerning strategic communication. The curriculum is designed to provide students with a balance of technical communication skills and theoretic knowledge necessary to make them competitive for entry-level positions and to prepare students for a career as a professional communicator. The Public Relations concentration is certified by the Public Relations Society of American. Our program is one of only 14 programs certified in the United States.

In the **Communication Studies** track, students prepare themselves for a variety of careers including, but not limited, to personnel management, human resource development, sales, and management. Students develop special knowledge and skills with regard to research methods, communication theory, interpersonal communication, intercultural and international communication, conflict, gendered communication, listening, information processing, teamwork, and leadership.

- **What is the placement rate for Communication Graduates?**

Over the past five years, studies conducted by the RU Office of Institutional Research indicate that Communication graduates have had a placement rate in excess of 90% within three months of graduation. Most are working in communication related areas and in jobs with career potential. A number of graduates also attend graduate school or seek postgraduate professional training.

- **Are internships and other experiential learning opportunities available?**

The Department offers a variety of internship experiences ranging from work with on-campus offices to experience with national and international organizations. The internship is typically done either in the last semester before graduation or during the summer after spring commencement. The internship is important for two reasons. First, the internship offers an important opportunity to apply classroom skills and knowledge to practical situations. Second, the internship experience provides important networking opportunities that ease the transition between university life and the world of work. Students can complete more than one internship, and can earn a maximum of 12 hours of university credit for internships.

The department works to find locations and internship employers that fit career plans. Listed below is a sample of internship employers and locations.

**Locations:**

|                    |                  |
|--------------------|------------------|
| Austria            | Arizona          |
| North Carolina     | South Carolina   |
| Hampton Roads      | Washington, DC   |
| Belgium            | New York         |
| California         | Texas            |
| Maryland           | Georgia          |
| Northern Virginia  | Virginia Beach   |
| Roanoke            | New River Valley |
| Radford University | China            |

**Employers:**

|  |                           |
|--|---------------------------|
| Southwest Airlines                               | Opel Austria              |
| Estech Corporation                               | American Electric Power   |
| Virginia Tourism                                 | Columbia Healthcare       |
| Edelman Public Relations                         | EPSN                      |
| Stackig Public Relations                         | Radford University        |
| The Kamber Group                                 | Capital Children's Museum |
| American Red Cross                               | United Way                |
| County of Roanoke                                |                           |
| Montgomery County Economic Development Authority |                           |
| Freddie Mac Mortgage & Loan Corporation          |                           |
| Virginia Department of Motor Vehicles            |                           |
| American Society for Travel Agents               |                           |
| Special Olympics of Virginia                     |                           |
| Carillion Healthcare Systems                     |                           |
| Virginia Beach Public Schools                    |                           |

- **What minors or concentrations would enhance my education as a Communication Major?**

Although an outside concentration or minor is not required, a wide variety of minors or concentrations can be useful, depending on the student's career goals. Common areas for a minor or an outside concentration would include Psychology, Management, Marketing, Business Administration, English, Sociology, and Media Studies. Students who are interested in international issues may seek a concentration in a foreign language or a minor through the International Studies program.

**For an application to Radford University  
contact the RU Admissions Office**

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Radford University Office of Admissions  
Martin Hall  
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Radford University  
Radford, VA 24142

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