



VirginiaTech

College of Liberal Arts
and Human Sciences

Department of Communication

121 Shanks Hall (0311)
181 Turner Street, NW
Blacksburg, Virginia 24061
540/231-7136 Fax: 540/231-9817
Liberalarts.vt.edu/communication

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TO: Undergraduate Curriculum Committee
FROM: Douglas Cannon, Assistant Department Head
SUBJECT: Sports Media Analytics Major

The evolution of Sports Media Analytics from a concentration within the Multimedia Journalism major to a standalone major will not generate the need for any additional department, college, or university resources. Courses for the new major and faculty members to teach them are already in place.

Invent the Future

Justification for Changes in the Sports Media and Analytics Curriculum

Need for the program

The Sports Media and Analytics Concentration in the Multimedia Journalism Major needs to evolve into a standalone major so that students in it can get a more well-rounded college education. The current concentration requires students to complete 63 credit hours in Communication courses (the 48-hour Multimedia Journalism Major curriculum and the 15-hour SMA concentration). As a result, SMA students often cannot minor or double major in an area outside Communication. These students complete 52.5% of their college coursework in one discipline.

That intense focus on Communication coursework is at odds with Accrediting Council for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication standards. The council calls for students to combine a broad liberal arts education with professional studies in journalism and mass communication. The council specifies that graduates of accredited programs must complete 72 hours of a 120-hour bachelor's degree program in disciplines other than Communication.

The Department of Communication is working toward council accreditation of its journalism and public relations curricula. A 63-hour program in the multimedia journalism curriculum is an issue in that accreditation process.

Whom the program will serve

The Sports Media and Analytics program, established in 2017, has been popular with students. It had 35 declared majors in January 2018 and 62 in January 2019. The program should have more than 100 majors by the Fall Semester 2021 effective date of this revision proposal. Many incoming freshmen were interested in the SMA Concentration during Summer 2018 orientation.

SMA students find internships with ESPN, Fox Sports, various sports teams, and local television stations. Students do on-campus sports reporting for the *Collegiate Times* and VTTV. They do production and play-by-play work for the Virginia Tech Athletics Department and are expected to be involved with local productions for the new ACC Network.

The first graduates from the SMA Concentration are scheduled for May 2019. They are looking for jobs in sports reporting (print, broadcast and online), sports information/public relations, management for sports organizations (teams, athletic conferences, bowl games, professional sports leagues), and sports marketing.

Resources needed

The proposed SMA Major will draw from faculty resources and facilities already in place for the SMA Concentration. No additional resources will be needed to accomplish the change from concentration to standalone major. Faculty members teaching SMA courses include two professors of practice with experience in sports broadcasting, a tenure-track faculty member with experience in sports public relations, two tenure-track faculty members with backgrounds in analytics, and an adjunct instructor who works in sports information and broadcasting.

Many courses for the SMA Major will use the department's digital broadcast production facilities already in place in the Moss Arts Center.

Administration

No administrative changes within the department are needed to accomplish this evolution of SMA from concentration to standalone major. All courses on the proposed 2021 SMA Major checklist are already being taught as part of the current MJ major and SMA Concentration.

Changes from the 2020 MJ(SMA) checksheet to the proposed 2021 SMA Major checksheet include:

+ Reducing required credit hours from 63 for the SMA Concentration to 46 required for the SMA Major.

+ Establishing 21 credit hours of specific SMA Major requirements. These courses draw from both the old MJ Major requirements and the SMA Concentration requirements.

- COMM 1015 Communication Skills I (3)*
- COMM 1016 Communication Skills II (3)*
- COMM 2074 Introduction to Sports Media
- COMM 3154 Multimedia Reporting (3) Pre: 2024, 2034
- COMM 3304 Topics in Sports Communication (3) Pre: Junior standing
- COMM 3314 Sports Journalism (3) Pre: Junior standing, 2024, 2034
- COMM 4064 Social Media Analytics (3) Pre: 2124

+ Allowing 3 credit hours of major-specific electives from the courses listed below. These courses include former SMA Concentration requirements, former MJ electives, and the addition of one new offering (Public Relations and Sports).

- COMM 3114 Video Production: Studio (3) Pre: 2034
- COMM 3174 Advanced Multimedia Reporting (3) Pre: 3154
- COMM 3344 Public Relations and Sports (3)
- COMM 4094 Broadcast Management (3) Pre: Senior standing, 3154
- COMM 4264 Social Media Theory and Practice (3) Pre: 2034
- COMM 4274 Broadcasting Performance (3) Pre: 3154
- COMM 4334 Communication Ethics (3) Pre: Junior standing
- COMM 4974 Independent Study (Internship) (3)

+ Requiring that SMA majors have a minor or second major and that SMA majors complete 72 credit hours in courses from disciplines other than Communication.

SMA majors will complete the same 22 credit hour in core degree requirements that other students earning a BA in Communication take.

Transition/teach-out plan

The last of the current 62 MJ majors with the SMA Concentration should graduate by May 2021. Students can begin majoring in SMA during Fall Semester 2019 for graduation in 2021. Students graduating in December 2021 can choose to fulfill either the concentration or major requirements for their degrees. The SMA Concentration will be discontinued after December 2021. Students who begin the SMA Concentration during the 2019-20 or 2020-2021 academic years, interrupt their studies, and return to the university after Fall Semester 2021 will become SMA majors. All their concentration coursework should fulfill requirements on subsequent SMA Major checksheets.

Information about changes to the SMA program will be communicated to SMA and MJ majors during individual academic advising sessions and through notices on a Canvas site for majors in the Department of Communication.

COLLEGE OF LIBERAL ARTS AND HUMAN SCIENCES
BACHELOR OF ARTS IN COMMUNICATION
SPORTS MEDIA AND ANALYTICS MAJOR (SMA)

CHECKSHEET FOR STUDENTS GRADUATING IN CALENDAR YEAR 2021
DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNICATION

The Sports Media and Analytics Major requires 120 credit hours for graduation. The curriculum includes the following elements: Core Degree Requirements, Major Requirements, Major-Specific Electives, Curriculum for Liberal Education, Minor and Electives.

MAJOR REQUIREMENTS (I-II)

Sports Media and Analytics majors take 22 credit hours in Core Degree Requirements, 24 hours in courses specific to the major. See reverse for other requirements and “progress to degree” criteria. Only Communication (COMM) courses can meet degree and major requirements.

I. CORE DEGREE REQUIREMENTS (22 HOURS)—Required courses across all majors in Communication:

- ☐ COMM 1004 First Semester Experience in Communication (1)
- ☐ COMM 1014 Introduction to Communication (3)
- ☐ COMM 2024 Media Writing (3) Sophomore standing. Pre: 1016 or ENGL 1106 or ENGL 1204H
- ☐ COMM 2034 Visual Media (3) Sophomore standing. Pre: 1016 or ENGL 1106 or ENGL 1204H
- ☐ COMM 2084 Media and Society (3)
- ☐ COMM 2094 Communication and Issues of Diversity (3). Pre: 1016 or ENGL 1106
- ☐ COMM 2124 Introduction to Communication Research (3) Sophomore standing. Pre: 1016 or ENGL 1106 or ENGL 1204H
- ☐ COMM 4024 Communication Law (3) Pre: Senior standing

II. MAJOR-SPECIFIC COURSES (21 HOURS)—7 required courses for SMA majors:

- ☐ COMM 1015 Communication Skills I (3)*
- ☐ COMM 1016 Communication Skills II (3)*
- ☐ COMM 2074 Introduction to Sports Media (3)
- ☐ COMM 3154 Multimedia Reporting (3) Pre: 2024, 2034
- ☐ COMM 3304 Topics in Sports Communication (3) Pre: Junior standing
- ☐ COMM 3314 Sports Journalism (3) Pre: Junior standing, 2024, 2034
- ☐ COMM 4064 Social Media Analytics (3) Pre: 2124

***Note: Alternative to 1015-16 for transfer students entering the major after freshman year: COMM 2004 Public Speaking (3) Pre: Sophomore standing and an additional COMM elective (3) from III below.**

III. MAJOR-SPECIFIC ELECTIVES (3 HOURS)—Select 1 course:

- ☐ COMM 3114 Video Production: Studio (3) Pre: 2034
- ☐ COMM 3174 Advanced Multimedia Reporting (3) Pre: 3154
- ☐ COMM 3344 Public Relations and Sports (3)
- ☐ COMM 4094 Broadcast Management (3) Pre: Senior standing, 3154
- ☐ COMM 4264 Social Media Theory and Practice (3) Pre: 2034
- ☐ COMM 4274 Broadcasting Performance (3) Pre: 3154
- ☐ COMM 4334 Communication Ethics (3) Pre: Junior standing
- ☐ COMM 4974 Independent Study (Internship) (3)

Total COMM hours: 46

Prerequisites: Some courses listed on this checksheet have prerequisites. Be sure to consult the University Catalog and/or check with your adviser.

IV. UNIVERSITY CURRICULUM FOR LIBERAL EDUCATION (CLE)

Sports Media and Analytics Majors are encouraged to broaden their education by sampling courses from many disciplines. Courses taken to meet Core Degree Requirements (see reverse) cannot double-count in the CLE.

Area 1	Writing and Discourse	(6 hours)	(3)_____	(3)_____
	Select 2 courses from CLE			
Area 2	Ideas, Cultural Traditions, and Values	(6 hours)	(3)_____	(3)_____
	Select 2 courses from CLE			
Area 3	Society and Human Behavior	(6 hours)	(3)_____	(3)_____
	Select 2 courses from CLE			
Area 4	Scientific Reasoning and Discovery	(6 hours)	(3)_____	(3)_____
	Select 2 courses from CLE			
Area 5	Quantitative and Symbolic Reasoning	(6 hours)	(3)_____	(3)_____
	Select 2 courses from CLE			
Area 6	Creativity and Aesthetic Experience	(3 hours)	(3)_____	
	Select 1 3-credit course from CLE			
Area 7	Critical issues in a Global Context	(3 hours)	(3)_____	
	Select 1 course from CLE			

CLE hours: 36

V. MINOR + ELECTIVES

In addition to Major and CLE requirements, students must complete the following to reach 120 hours for graduation:

1. **Minor, cognate or double major**—Beyond studies in Communication, students must build content knowledge in another area of focus by completing a minor or cognate (minimum 18 credit hours) or double major (hours varies by major). Students **should NOT** take COMM courses as part of this requirement.
2. **Electives**—Once students complete a minor or cognate, they still need 20 credit hours for graduation. Students might consider education abroad, an internship, a field study, undergraduate research, independent study, or other non-required CLE or foreign language courses. Students **should NOT** include COMM courses among these electives.

Minor and elective hours: 38

GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

1. Minimum of 120 credit hours from the following categories: Core Degree Requirements, Major Requirements, Major Electives, Curriculum for Liberal Education, Minor and Electives

Total hours for graduation: 120

2. Minimum of 46 credit hours in COMM.

Note: Accreditation standards require SMA Majors to complete **72 credit hours outside COMM**.

3. Overall GPA of 2.0; COMM GPA 2.0, based on all COMM courses the student has completed.
4. Courses taken in major to fulfill graduation requirements must be graded A-F (not pass/fail).
5. COMM courses taken for a minor may NOT be counted toward major requirements.
6. Foreign Language—Requirement can be met in one of three ways:
 - 3 years of single foreign language in high school OR
 - 2 years of a single language in high school plus 1106 or equivalent in college OR
 - 1105-1106 or equivalent in college (This credit must be in addition to the 120 hours required for graduation.)

PROGRESS TOWARD DEGREE

A student will be certified as making satisfactory progress toward a degree by meeting these requirements:

- Completion of COMM 1004 within the first 3 classes (9 hours) in the major.
- Completion of COMM 1014 within the first 6 classes (18 credit hours) in the major. Minimum grade of C- required.
- Completion of COMM 2124 within the first 8 classes (24 credit hours) in the major.
- Overall GPA—Students who fall below 2.0 will follow university policies for probation and subsequent suspension if the GPA is not raised during the probation period.
- COMM GPA—Students who fall below 2.0 in COMM will have one semester to regain the required GPA standards. All COMM courses are included in this calculation. A student who fails to make satisfactory progress toward degree after that semester will be blocked from continuing in SMA or another COMM major.