Below is the Fall 2022 course information for the COMM department’s variable topic courses: COMM 315, COMM 336, and COMM 410. Use this list to decide which course options best fit your interests, skills, and aspirations. If you have questions about a course, reach out to its professor. For questions about degree progress and requirements, reach out to your COMM advisor.

**COMM 315: Ethical Communication**

Section 01 (16130): Ethical Communication Abroad
- Professor: Dr. Celeste Lacroix
- Meeting: Abroad
- This course is reserved for students studying abroad in Florence, Italy

Section 02 (13805): Freedom of Speech
- Professor: Dr. Kirk Stone
- Meeting: TR 9:25-10:40 AM. In Person
- This course will use case studies, role playing and spirited student discussions to illuminate important ethical and legal concerns that apply to freedom of speech and freedom of the press. By carefully analyzing complicated situations from the perspectives of both ethics and law, students will better understand that what is legal may not be what is ethical, or as one Supreme Court justice phrased it, “There is a big difference between what we have a right to do and what is right to do.”

Section 03 (13806): Freedom of Speech
- Professor: Dr. Kirk Stone
- Meeting: TR 10:50 AM-12:05 PM. In Person
- This course will use case studies, role playing and spirited student discussions to illuminate important ethical and legal concerns that apply to freedom of speech and freedom of the press. By carefully analyzing complicated situations from the perspectives of both ethics and law, students will better understand that what is legal may not be what is ethical, or as one Supreme Court justice phrased it, “There is a big difference between what we have a right to do and what is right to do.”

Section 04 (14771): Ethics in Strategic Communication
- Professor: Dr. Feifei Chen
- Meeting: MWF 2:00-2:50 PM. Online
- Now more than ever, doing the right thing matters for organizations of all sizes. This course examines the ethical considerations of “doing the right things” that guide and inform organizational decisions and strategies in the context of corporate social responsibility (CSR). We will explore the meanings of CSR, the triple bottom line philosophy, sustainable business, corporate social advocacy, and related theories and concepts. This course will increase students’ awareness of corporations and other organizations’ social responsibilities, enable them to evaluate and develop responsible business models, and foster a sense of professional responsibility as communicators.

**COMM 336: Addressing Problems in Context**

Section 01 (13991): Environmental Communication
- Professor: Dr. Kathy DeHaan
- Meeting: TR 9:25-10:40 AM. In Person
- This course introduces students to the interdisciplinary and timely field of environmental communication, including historical events, key concepts, legal landmarks, technological developments, and public controversies at the intersection of the environment, economics, and social justice. We will focus on persuasive communication in the public sphere from the past and present, as well as the constitutive power of communication to name and redefine what has been and might become possible in our environmental imaginations.
Section 02 (14529): Problems in Context Abroad
• Professor: Dr. Merissa Ferrara
• Meeting: Abroad
• This course is reserved for students studying abroad in Florence, Italy

Section 03 (14464): The Martin Scholars
• Professor: Tom Martin
• Meeting: M 10:00 AM-12:30 PM. In Person
• This course is reserved for students selected for the Martin Scholars program

Section 04 (14016): Persuasion and Social Influence in the Digital Age
• Professor: Dr. Elena Strauman
• Meeting: TR 10:50 AM-12:05 PM. Online
• Have you considered how it is that persuasion impacts you? This course explores the concepts and theories of persuasion and social influence and explores how our contemporary media landscape changes the study and outcomes of persuasion in the digital age.

Section 05 (14199): Persuasion and Social Influence in the Digital Age
• Professor: Dr. Elena Strauman
• Meeting: TR 12:15-1:30 PM. Online
• Have you considered how it is that persuasion impacts you? This course explores the concepts and theories of persuasion and social influence and explores how our contemporary media landscape changes the study and outcomes of persuasion in the digital age.

Section 06 (16634): Environmental Communication
• Professor: Dr. Kathy DeHaan
• Meeting: TR 1:40-2:55 PM. In Person
• This course introduces students to the interdisciplinary and timely field of environmental communication, including historical events, key concepts, legal landmarks, technological developments, and public controversies at the intersection of the environment, economics, and social justice. We will focus on persuasive communication in the public sphere from the past and present, as well as the constitutive power of communication to name and redefine what has been and might become possible in our environmental imaginations.

COMM 410: Analysis of Communication Practice

Section 01 (16131): Media Criticism—Italy in Film
• Professor: Dr. Celeste Lacroix
• Meeting: Abroad
• This course is reserved for students studying abroad in Florence, Italy

Section 02 (14271): The Rhetoric of the 1960s—A Decade of Dissent
• Professor: Dr. Kelly Jakes
• Meeting: TR 12:15-1:30 PM. In Person
• This course asks how women and men used rhetoric to challenge the status quo and protest laws and social norms they considered to be unjust. We will critically examine the discourse of three American social movements—the Civil Rights Movement, opposition to the Vietnam War, and the Women's Movement—in order to see how the discourses that these protestors employed enabled and constrained their activism and ultimately transformed American society. While this course will focus on social movements, our study will bring us into contact with other persuasive discourses such as political campaign speeches, advertisements, and popular songs, as these rhetorics are vital to our ability to reconstruct and understand the historical context within which the activism took place. We will also read some rhetoric from those who opposed these movements, as this discourse is vital to our understanding of the discursive landscape activists argued within.
Section 03 (14544): Digital Media and Dystopia in Science Fiction Film and Television
- Professor: Dr. David Parisi
- Meeting: TR 1:40-2:55 PM. In Person
- This course uses science fiction film and television to examine social and cultural attitudes toward technology, with an emphasis on dystopian (or negative) portrayals of digital media. Embracing the perspective that science fiction does not make offer about the future, but rather, provides a running commentary on the present, we will use sci fi to engage with issues such as media surveillance, virtual and augmented reality, algorithmic recommendation systems in social media and streaming platforms, the technological enhancement of humans through implantable and wearable technologies, and technology’s role in constructing ideas of race, class, gender, and sexuality. We will analyze a range of films and shows that includes Black Mirror, Network, Blade Runner, The Matrix, Black Panther, Ex Machina, and Her.

Section 06 (13892): Examining Hollywood Film
- Professor: Dr. Caroline Guthrie
- Meeting: MWF 12:00-12:50 PM; M 1:00-1:50 PM. In Person
- This is an advanced writing course designed to provide students with a thorough understanding of film as an art form, “Hollywood” as a cultural institution and commercial enterprise, and of the ideological frameworks within and around cinema. Students will examine a variety of theoretical frameworks of film criticism and be exposed to films from throughout the 20th century. In addition to broader questions of film as a form, the course will equip students to analyze films in terms of gender, race/ethnicity, and genre.

Section 07 (13929): Cinema of Transgression—Camp, Kitsch, and Cult
- Professor: Dr. Caroline Guthrie
- Meeting: MWF 2:00-2:50 PM; W: 3:00-3:50 PM. In Person
- This course will explore the art, analysis, and legacy of transgressive cinema by focusing on three closely related but distinct categories: camp, kitsch, and cult films. In examining these films, as well as scholarly analysis of their role in criticizing mainstream culture, students will develop skills of observation, inquiry, and analysis that will deepen their understanding of the arts and empower them to engage challenging texts on a higher level. We will also be addressing larger issues including gender and sexuality, violence, genre and fan cultures.