

COMMUNICATION, PHD

Annenberg is interdisciplinary by design. Members of the faculty and students come from a wide range of backgrounds, including Communication, Psychology, Political Science, Sociology, Anthropology, History, and Law. Students are also encouraged to supplement their Communication courses with those offered through one of Penn's 11 other distinguished schools. The result is a vibrant intellectual experience that trains students to apply and adapt diverse theories and methods to the cutting-edge communication issues of the twenty-first century.

All doctoral students are fully funded for up to five years, including tuition and fees, health care, teaching and research fellowships, and dissertation research fellowships. All students also receive yearly research and travel funds, allowing them to develop their research and present it at major national and international conferences. In addition to formal classes, students are able to work with faculty on grant- and center-supported projects, attend and participate in frequent colloquia and workshops, and engage in research and learning opportunities around the globe — all designed to enhance their intellectual growth and professional training.

Annenberg alumni go on to productive and fulfilling careers in academia as well as in research-oriented private and public-sector institutions.

The Annenberg Ph.D. program represents a five-year commitment. In addition to satisfactory completion of the core courses, all students are required to take a noncredit proseminar as well as introductory classes in research methods and statistics. In order to progress to dissertation stage, candidates must complete the following milestones: Qualifications Evaluation, Comprehensive Exams, and Dissertation Proposal and Oral Defense.

For more information: <https://www.asc.upenn.edu/academics/graduate-program> (<https://www.asc.upenn.edu/academics/graduate-program/>)

View the University's Academic Rules for PhD Programs (<http://catalog.upenn.edu/pennbook/academic-rules-phd/>).

Required Courses

Code	Title	Course Units
Core Requirements		
COMM 5000	Proseminar	0
COMM 5220	Introduction to Communication Research	1
COMM 5230	Qualitative Ways of Knowing	1
Approved statistics course		1
Open Electives		
Select six course units		6
Distribution Requirements		
Students must complete five classes with five different Annenberg Professors ¹		5
COMM Electives		
Select six course units		6
Total Course Units		20

1

All Ph.D. students must take at least one separate class with each of at least five different members of the ASC standing faculty. The intent of this is to foster students' knowledge of a diverse range of approaches to communication.

The degree and major requirements displayed are intended as a guide for students entering in the Fall of 2022 and later. Students should consult with their academic program regarding final certifications and requirements for graduation.

Sample Plan of Study

A typical course plan for a student entering the program without a Master's degree includes these components:

- Seven semesters of courses, typically three courses per semester
- Three required classes:

Code	Title	Course Units
COMM 5000	Proseminar	
COMM 5220	Introduction to Communication Research	
COMM 5230	Qualitative Ways of Knowing	
Approved statistics course		

- A Qualifications Evaluation (see below) at the end of semester 4
- A dissertation proposal defense in semester 8
- Dissertation research in semesters 8 through 10
- Dissertation defense and graduation at the end of semester 10

Program Milestones

- **Qualifications Evaluation (QE)** is a review conducted to ensure doctoral students have the requisite skills, creativity, initiative, and plans to successfully complete their degree, including their dissertation. The QE must be completed at the end of the semester during which the student accumulates 12 classes (at least eight of which must be acquired at Penn) toward the degree, but no earlier than the end of the first year.
- **Comprehensive Exams:** In order to advance to candidacy, become eligible to defend the dissertation proposal and to receive a dissertation research fellowship (DRF), students must successfully pass a comprehensive examination. These exam cover theory, methods and research in the student's field of expertise.
- **Dissertation Proposal and Oral Defense:** Before becoming eligible for a dissertation research fellowship and beginning work on the dissertation, the student must submit and defend a proposal for dissertation research to his or her Dissertation Committee. The proposal is a full statement of the research problem, including its theoretical rationale and methodology.