


The Communications and Public Policy major explores the connection between communicating with citizens and creating, implementing and evaluating public policy. Students in the program will explore the influence of communications in the process of a participatory democracy, preparing them to work as communications professionals in the public, private and non-profit sectors.



Students majoring in Communications and Public Policy (COPP) are required to complete 36 credit hours of COPP courses. Students majoring in COPP will be encouraged to explore specific areas of public policy either through a double major or a minor in another discipline, or by exploring policy areas across disciplines through the breadth and depth of the Liberal Arts experience at St. Thomas. These public policy areas might include politics and governance; law and justice; Indigenous rights and policy issues; journalism; social policy and social justice; science and technology; and environmental policy issues.

In their fourth year, students will complete a mandatory rigorously supervised internship course that will require all students to gain valuable professional experience before graduation.



Y a 1

COPP 1013	Introduction to Communications
COPP 1023	Introduction to Policy Studies

Y a 2

COPP 2013	Fundamentals of Writing
COPP 2023	Policy Making in the Information Age
COPP 2033	Research Methods

Y a 3

COPP 3013	Rhetoric
COPP 3023	Ethics and Social Responsibility
COPP 3033	Public Policy and the Media
COPP 3043	Business Communications and Marketing
COPP 3053	Special Topics
COPP 3063	Special Topics

Y a 4

COPP 4006	Case Studies in Public Policy
COPP 4016	Internship

COPP-1013. Introduction to Communications

This course introduces students to the history and evolution of the communications profession, with particular emphasis on communications in the public policy sphere, from the pioneers who sold ideas on behalf of their clients, to the modern world of two-way communications with the public through the internet and social media tools. The course will explore how this evolution is changing the way governments, politicians, non-governmental organizations, citizens groups and corporations interact with the public.

COPP-1023. Introduction to Public Policy

This course introduces students to the policy making process, how policies are researched, drafted, legislated, and communicated. The course will also explore how non-governmental organizations, citizens groups and corporations influence public policy.

COPP-2013. Fundamentals of Writing

Communicating public policy requires clear and effective writing at every stage in the process. This is a foundational writing course that will help students learn to express themselves in clear, compelling language. Prerequisites: COPP 1013, COPP 1023

COPP-2023. Public Media and Internet Applications (POLS 2333)

This course will explore how social media and internet tools are transforming the world of communications and public policy. The course will explore cases around the world where social media and the access to information on the internet is influencing public policy and the political process. Prerequisite: COPP 2013

COPP-2033. Research Methods

This course will introduce students to the methods for gathering and analyzing data through interviews, surveys, focus groups, content analysis, and polls and how this information can be applied to public policy initiatives and planning an accompanying communications strategy. Prerequisite: COPP 2013

COPP-3013. Rhetoric

This course builds on the skills developed in the Fundamentals of Writing course and applies them to rhetoric, speech writing and debating. Students will read ancient and modern speeches, historical writings on rhetoric and explore the influence of persuasive writing on public affairs. Prerequisites: COPP 2013, COPP 2023, COPP 2033.

COPP-3023. Ethics in Public Relations

This course explores the ethical challenges that arise while communicating public policy issues for an organization in the public or private sector. The course will allow students to develop a code of ethics for a communications professional. Prerequisites: COPP 2013, COPP 2023, COPP 2033.

COPP-3033. Public Policy and Media (POLS 3213)

This course will explore how public policies are reported in various forms of media and how communications planning can influence the success or failure of these initiatives. The course will examine communications planning and media relations strategies such as proactive and reactive methods of representing an organization in the media. Prerequisites: COPP 2013, COPP 2023, COPP 2033.

signed UN issues and the assigned country's policy on them; preparation of working papers and motions, and strategies for effective conference participation. Fund raising for the trip required: half credit course, but meets first and second terms; limited enrolment.

