



Congrats, Communication graduates!

Zoom into COMM's celebration Dec. 11 at 2 p.m.

Congratulations to the 77 graduates in the Department of Communication with graduate, bachelor's and associate's degrees. Please join us in a celebration of your accomplishments on Friday, Dec. 11, at 2 p.m. on Zoom. We will hear from graduating students and be joined by Weber State University's president and the interim dean and incoming dean of the College of Arts & Humanities. The faculty and staff of the Department of Communication are excited to host these festivities. We hope you will join. For a Zoom invitation, please email Sare Gardner at sgardner1@weber.edu.

For Communication students who are not graduating, we remind you that registration for Fall Semester is open. We are here to help you with academic advising and registration overrides—whatever you need. Weber State University is proceeding with the assumption that face-to-face classes will not resume in Spring Semester. Check with your professors about how your classes will be specifically offered.

This is the December edition of the monthly email to majors. At least once a month during the regular school year, we will email you to let you know about meetings of student organizations, guest speakers, important deadlines, opportunities, student and faculty achievements—and more. If you have information you'd like us to distribute, please email department chair Sheree Josephson at sjosephson@weber.edu.

What's Happening

December

- **Dec. 11:** Virtual Graduation for COMM graduates, 2 p.m. (see above)

January

- **Jan. 11:** Spring Semester begins
- **Jan. 18:** Martin Luther King, Jr. Day

February

- **Feb. 15:** Presidents Day

March

- **March 8-12:** Spring Break

Student News

65 students graduating with bachelor's, associate's degrees in Communication

Congratulations to the 57 students graduating with a bachelor's degree in Communication and the eight students graduating with an associate's degree in Communication.

- **Civic Advocacy:** Clark Sterling Jensen, Steven Sanchez, Rebecca LeeAnne Brown, Benjamin Pillard, Alexa Nicole Sepulveda
- **Digital Media:** Kiara Horowitz, Fernando Huerta, Tyler Nathaniel Trautman, Nefi Alulema, Kyzer James Armendariz, Amber Camille Bischoff, Aimee Rose Hoster, Preston Joshua Merrill Jenkins, Chelsey Lynne Shuman, Alyssa Lauren Vallejos
- **Interpersonal & Family Communication:** Markel Monalisa Gutierrez, Shane Alexander Jolin, Kaylee Jones, Zoe Aiko Miyakawi, Henri Dragon Phan, Hannah Ruth Terry, Isabella Williams
- **Multimedia Journalism:** Dalton Eric Gallegos, Ryan Jay Marion, Jake Ryan Constantine, Brandon Keith May, Francisco Roberto Ruiz, Deborah Lee Wilber
- **Organizational Communication:** Rachel Sandra Creer, Weston Brian Lee, Sarah Virginia Beus, Lauren Taylor Bland, Makenna Brielle Dillingham, Jamie Christopher Lobato, Mikaylin Ashley Mecham, Courtney Richards, Stephanie Lynn Thayne, Christian N. Whitaker, Rebecca Wilde
- **Public Relations & Advertising:** Dallin Arave, Robert Dell Christiansen, Mckenzi Kay Evans, Quinton Malik Hall, Michael A. Reyes-Martinez, Nakisha Jeanice Rigley, Christopher Blake Roybal, Hollie Webster, Joshua Kyle Anderson, Jessica Lizette Avalos, Nicholas K. Cordon, Alex Eads, Rashell Irene Herbert, Brody Howell, Quincy Hyde Linsley, Tammy L. McCray, Taylor John Navidomskis, Helena Pereira Lima Khouri, Sydney Pfeaster, Mayren A. Rancifer, Madison Lara Robbins, Andrew John Sheehan, Elora Belle Witherspoon
- **Associate's:** Ryan Jay Marion, Kyzer James Armendariz, Sarah Virginia Beus, Tracy Risher Compton, Lizbeth Correa, Kiersten Nicole Cragun, Kennedie Grace Favero, Whitney Wagner

12 students graduating with Master of Professional Communication degree

Congratulations to the 12 students graduating with the graduate degree of Master of Professional Communication. The graduates are Jason Eric Bell, Julia Ann Busche, Heidi Ann Costello, Stevie Emerson, Jennifer Johnson, Nicholas Lassen, Rylie Janet Matthews, Brady C. May, Tiffany Nichole McLelland, Marisol Velasco, Zachary Adam Whitney, Ryan Wilcox.

Two students graduating with Honors in Communication

Two students are graduating with Honors in Communication. To graduate with Honors, students must earn a 3.75 GPA in the Communication major and have a 3.5 GPA overall. They must also present original research at a conference.

- Rachel Creer
- Mackenna Dillingham

WSU's Speech Team takes second in division at Mahaffey Memorial

Weber State's Speech Team took second place in Division 2 (for four-year universities that attend fewer than eight tournaments a year) at the 90th Mahaffey Memorial Tournament. Normally the tournament takes place in Oregon at Linfield College, but because of the pandemic it was held entirely online. Sophie Beck, a junior, was the runner-up for the prestigious Marshall Award by landing nearly perfect speaker points. She also placed first in the junior program of Oral Interpretation and first place in Novice Prose.

Other awards included:

- Top Novice in Women's Voices": Jazmyne Olson, freshman
- Fourth place in Women's Voices: Jazmyne Olson
- Fifth place in Junior Dramatic Interpretation: Akir Rowe, sophomore
- Fourth place in Junior DI: Kyle Housley, junior
- Second place tie in Junior DI: Rebecca Brown, junior, and Brad Baker, sophomore
- Fourth place in Novice Extemporaneous Speaking: Akir Rowe
- Second in Novice Extemp: Jazmyne Olson
- Second place in Novice Prose: Kyle Housley
- IPDA (one-on-one debate): WSU won the novice division with Brad Baker making it to octofinals, Jazmyne Olson making it to quarterfinals, and Rebecca Brown taking the overall Novice Title with first place.

WSU's Speech Team only in its second year, competed against 30 other experienced schools. Mark Galaviz, the team's faculty coach, said, "The fact that we placed in our division is a great sign for our future competitions. Weber is making waves because our students are so dedicated and hard working. Our debaters made huge strides." WSU will compete Dec. 4-6 at the at the Smelt Classic.

Utah PR Student of Year from WSU featured in university's annual report

Karen Valdez, a Public Relations & Advertising major, was featured in the 2019-2020 Weber State University annual report for taking top honors in the 2019 Utah Public Relations Student of the Year competition, hosted by the Salt Lake City chapter of the Public Relations Society of America. WSU students Kylie Harris and Conner Arvidson were selected as runners-up. Students in the competition created a yearlong strategy to raise awareness for the Major Brent Taylor Legacy Foundation, which honors North Ogden Mayor Maj. Brent Taylor, who was killed while serving in the National Guard. Finalists were selected for a live competition, where they presented their strategies, pitched news stories, wrote news releases, developed responses to a crisis and spoke to journalist in a mock news conference. Valdez received \$1,000 and was honored at the Golden Spike Awards. She later began an internship at the organization. The 2019 competition marks the seventh time since 2011 that a Weber State student has earned the top honor in the competition.

Communication is No. 7 in the Top 10-degree programs at WSU

Communication is the seventh most-popular degree at Weber State University in terms of number of degrees awarded between 2016-2020 with 630. This fact was reported in the university's annual report. Nursing is the most popular degree at WSU.

Students in 'Intersections of Art and Communication' create virtual art gallery

Students in the WSU 1450 course, "Intersections of Art and Communication," co-taught by Dr. Colleen Packer and Jeremy Stott, completed a project focused on the Engaged Learning Series theme "Connect." Here is the link to the students' virtual art gallery featuring the GIFs they created in the course and an abstract explaining how communication and art were used to create their artifacts: <https://www.weber.edu/ccel/virtual-art-gallery.html>

Announcements

Learn how to tell stories using 360-degree virtual reality technology

This spring take your digital media and storytelling skills into the virtual realm with COMM 4500 – Special Topics in 360-degree Virtual Reality Storytelling. Dr. Aaron Atkins, a specialist in creating 360-degree video content, is introducing an experimental 360VR course for Spring 2021. You'll learn the ins and outs of 360VR and explore numerous genres including documentary, social, environmental, drama, horror, comedy experiences, as well as education and training simulations. You will be introduced to 360 camera and audio technology, learn how to produce professional-quality 360 videos specific for Oculus and other top-tier head-mounted displays, then put together a production team and create your own virtual experience. At the end of the course, you will have the opportunity to submit your project to a juried VR festival. Regardless of department or major, if you have your foundational digital audio/video production, scriptwriting, and Adobe-oriented editing courses covered, sign up. Check with your academic advisor about counting this class toward the Communication major.

Podcast discusses how pandemic has changed college experience

Covid, College and Chaos is a podcast that dives into how the Covid pandemic has changed the college experience. Join as students discuss topics including involvement, careers, mental health, student resources and conquering boredom. They have guests from around campus to offer advice on a variety of topics. The last two of three episodes will be released on the mornings of Dec. 2 and Dec. 9. The podcast will be streamed on KWCR Wildcat Radio. More information is available on social media.

New associate's degrees in Digital Media Production available in Fall Semester

The Department of Communication is now offering associate's degrees in Digital Media Production. Students have the choice between an Associate of Science, an Associate of Arts or an Associate of Applied Science. Students majoring in Digital Media or Film Studies are encouraged to contact their academic advisor to enroll. The degrees stack on the bachelor's degrees in DM or Film Studies with classes double-counting for both the associate's and bachelor's degrees. This provides a way for students to add a degree to their resume before the bachelor's degree is completed. Faculty who can help students add this degree to CatTracks include Andrea Baltazar at andreabaltazar@weber.edu; Aimee Gillette at aimeegillette@weber.edu; Ash Soltani-Stone at ashsoltanistone@weber.edu or Dr. Sheree Josephson at sjosephson@weber.edu.

Students with high GPAs eligible to apply for Departmental Honors

You are eligible to apply for Departmental Honors if you have an overall 3.5 GPA and a 3.7 GPA in the major and hope to present original research or a creative project at the undergraduate symposium or any professional forum. Achieving departmental honors will result in HONORS showing on your diploma and transcript, an invitation to Honors banquet, and eligibility to apply for an Honors scholarship for your textbooks. You need to apply for Department Honors at least one semester before graduation. Apply online through the Honors Student Portal. If you have questions, contact Dr. Susan Hafen at shafen@weber.edu.

Faculty Accomplishments

Social media professor presents on influencer advocacy in climate change

Li Chen, a new assistant professor in social media and data analytics, made a presentation titled "Influencer Advocacy in Climate Change: A Social Network Analysis Perspective" on Dec. 1 to WSU's series on Climate Change and Culture Shift. Chen discussed the theoretical model she developed in her dissertation about "celebrity advocacy" to describe the role of social media influencers in the climate change discussion. She used two celebrities, Leonardo DiCaprio and Greta Thunberg, to introduce two types of celebrity influencer advocacy in climate change online, mainly on Twitter.

Communication law instructor interviewed by KUTV about protest restrictions

Ryan Cheek, an instructor of communication law, was interviewed by KUTV news about an Orem City ordinance that banned protests within 100 feet of the governor's private residence. The law was passed after protesters opposed to his state of emergency over the coronavirus gathered. Cheek said restrictions on protests are allowable as long as they don't "discriminate against one kind of viewpoint and say this kind of picketer is okay and this kind of picketer is not." He added, "The other thing that it must do is make sure there are other avenues of communication open to people who want to express their viewpoints." The link to the story is <https://kutv.com/news/local/after-protest-at-governors-house-oreem-makes-demonstrations-at-homes-illegal>.

Get Involved

- **The Signpost:** Contact Dr. Jean Norman at jeannorman@weber.edu.
- **Studio 76:** Contact Andrea Baltazar at andreabaltazar@weber.edu.
- **KWCR Wildcat Radio:** Contact Dr. Nathan Rodriguez at nathanrodriguez@weber.edu.
- **WSU Debate:** Contact Sam Allen at samallen2@weber.edu
- **WSU Speech:** Contact Mark Galaviz at markgalaviz@weber.edu.
- **Ogden Peak Communications:** Contact Dr. Nicola Corbin at nicolacorbin@weber.edu.
- **PRSSA:** Contact Leslie Howerton at lesliehowerton@weber.edu.
- **Society of Professional Journalists:** Contact Dr. Jean Norman at jeannorman@weber.edu.
- **Departmental Honors:** Contact Dr. Susan Hafen at shafen@weber.edu.
- **Lambda Pi Eta:** Contact Dr. Hailey Gillen Hoke at haileygillenhoke@weber.edu.