



IT FACULTY

Master in Communication, 120 credits

Master in Communication, 120 högskolepoäng

Programme code: N2CMN

Second cycle / Avancerad nivå

1. Confirmation

This programme syllabus was confirmed by the IT Faculty Board on 31-05-2018 (G 2017/411) and was last revised on 29-01-2024 (GU 2024/130) by the Dean of the Faculty to be valid from 29-01-2024, Autumn semester 2024.

Responsible Department/equivalent: Department of Applied Information Technology

2. Purpose

This Master's programme specializes in advanced understanding of theories, methods, and issues in communication, specifically focusing on digital communication.

In recent years, society has become increasingly digitalized, globalized and specialised. These trends pose many urgent and complex challenges, such as: listening and being heard in an arena of many competing voices; fostering inclusion, equality and diversity in rapidly evolving work environments; and assessing the credibility of information amidst a surge in user-generated content. In this Master's programme, communication is presented as a crucial perspective, enabling students to attain a comprehensive understanding of a dynamic field that addresses practical and theoretical aspects of these and other contemporary societal challenges.

The programme explores how ongoing digitalization affects communication itself, in various contexts ranging from one-to-one interpersonal interactions online to the mass distribution of, for example, news in web environments. It examines new practices like wikis, memes and large language models, which challenge established assumptions about authorship. The programme also takes an interest in the distinctive challenges organizations and professions face in adapting to digitalization and effectively communicating with diverse internal and external stakeholders. This encompasses corporate communication, public relations and organizational communication, equipping students to proficiently employ diverse communication techniques in contemporary professional settings influenced by digital advancements. Additionally, the programme addresses how digital technologies can be used to study communication, such as analyzing big textual data for sentiment in online communities.

The programme balances theoretical insights with practical applications. During the elective third semester, students can deepen their foundational and critical research skills, or develop their work life skills by undertaking a semester-long internship with an organization. Students can also choose to broaden their degree by applying for an exchange semester at a partner university, or by taking courses in other subjects. In the fourth and final semester, students are expected to conduct cutting-edge independent research in the core areas of the programme.

Conducted in English, the programme encourages applications from students worldwide, emphasizing international and global perspectives as integral to the programme experience. The curriculum is committed to larger societal goals such as sustainability, equality, and inclusion, which are recurring central themes in various classes. The programme aims to equip students with relevant and current skills for a professional career in communication, facilitated by the involvement of leading practitioners as guest lecturers and a panel of industry experts supporting continuous programme curriculum development.

3. Entry requirements

A Bachelor's degree of 180 credits or corresponding. Applicants must prove their knowledge of English: English 6/English B from Swedish Upper Secondary School or the equivalent level of an internationally recognized test, for example TOEFL, IELTS.

Specific entry requirements for admission to a course within the study programme

Within the study programme there can be specific entry requirements for admission to individual courses. These specific entry requirements are documented in each course syllabus and state which entry requirements are necessary to be registered on a course within the study programme.

Selection

Selection is according to the Higher Education Ordinance and the University of Gothenburg admission regulations for education on first and second cycle.

4. Higher education qualification and main field of study

This programme leads to a Degree of Master of Science (120 credits) with a major in Communication (Filosofie masterexamen med huvudområdet Kommunikation).

5. Outcomes

General outcomes for Degree of Master (120 credits)

Knowledge and understanding

For a Degree of Master (120 credits) the student shall

- demonstrate knowledge and understanding in the main field of study, including both broad knowledge of the field and a considerable degree of specialised knowledge in certain areas of the field as well as insight into current research and development work, and

- demonstrate specialised methodological knowledge in the main field of study.

Competence and skills

For a Degree of Master (120 credits) the student shall

- demonstrate the ability to critically and systematically integrate knowledge and analyse, assess and deal with complex phenomena, issues and situations even with limited information
- demonstrate the ability to identify and formulate issues critically, autonomously and creatively as well as to plan and, using appropriate methods, undertake advanced tasks within predetermined time frames and so contribute to the formation of knowledge as well as the ability to evaluate this work
- demonstrate the ability in speech and writing both nationally and internationally to clearly report and discuss his or her conclusions and the knowledge and arguments on which they are based in dialogue with different audiences, and
- demonstrate the skills required for participation in research and development work or autonomous employment in some other qualified capacity.

Judgement and approach

For a Degree of Master (120 credits) the student shall

- demonstrate the ability to make assessments in the main field of study informed by relevant disciplinary, social and ethical issues and also to demonstrate awareness of ethical aspects of research and development work
- demonstrate insight into the possibilities and limitations of research, its role in society and the responsibility of the individual for how it is used, and
- demonstrate the ability to identify the personal need for further knowledge and take responsibility for his or her ongoing learning.

Local outcomes

Knowledge and understanding

For a Degree of Master of Science (120 credits) with a major in Communication the student shall

- demonstrate the knowledge and understanding necessary to analyse communication phenomena and processes at large in the communications field, and particularly those relevant to digital contexts.

Competence and skills

For a Degree of Master of Science (120 credits) with a major in Communication the student shall

- demonstrate the ability to creatively investigate the opportunities for, and challenges to, communication provided by the increased role of digitalization in society, doing so in a way that is informed by an in-depth understanding of key concepts in communication research,

- demonstrate an ability to design and implement solutions to complex problems in internal and external organizational communication based on an in-depth understanding of key concepts in communication-related disciplines, and
- demonstrate the skills needed to independently design communication projects informed by advanced methodological knowledge in the discipline.

Judgement and approach

For a Degree of Master of Science (120 credits) with a major in Communication the student shall

- demonstrate critical awareness to evaluate the challenges relevant to communication consequent from the increased role of digitalization in society;
- demonstrate the ability to critically assess the role of communication in managing interactions between individuals, organizations and cultures in general, and with a specific focus on the conditions in societies increasingly affected by digitalization, globalization, and specialization,
- demonstrate the ability to identify and critically reflect on ethical challenges connected to communication research in general and in digital contexts in particular, including matters of sustainability, equality, and inclusion as related to the field of communication.

Sustainability labelling

The programme is sustainability-related, which means that at least one of the outcomes clearly shows that the programme content meets at least one of the University of Gothenburg's confirmed sustainability criteria.

6. Content and structure

The programme consists of courses of 120 credits in the field of communication. Of these 90 credits are compulsory, out of which an independent project (degree project) stands for 30 credits. 30 credits are optional course.

The academic year is divided into two semesters and four study periods. One semester covers two study periods, each of 15 credits.

The courses are arranged such that, in earlier parts of the programme, all students are provided with an understanding of core topics in communication with a specific focus on digital technologies in communication, how these shape the way we communicate, and how digital tools and methods can be used to study communication.

Four of the eight compulsory courses that run across the two years (Theories of Communication, Qualitative Research Methods in Communication, Quantitative Research Methods in Communication and Degree Project) prepare students for, and then allow them to undertake, a substantial independent research project.

In Semester 3, students are allowed to take courses in other programmes at the Department of Applied Information Technology, in other departments or at other universities. Alternatively, they will be given the choice between focusing either on a series of more theoretical courses or on a semester-long internship in an organization of their choice (a solution that is intended for students who are more focused on acquiring work- life skills. It is students' responsibility to identify a suitable organization for their internship).

Students have also the option to spend Semester 3 at an international partner university.

Compulsory courses:

First year

- Theories of Communication, 7.5 credits
- Social Media and Society, 7.5 credits
- Introduction to Organisational Communication, 7.5 credits
- Critical Topics in Digital Discourse, 7.5 credits
- Qualitative Research Methods in Communication, 7.5 credits
- Project Management for Strategic Communication, 7.5 credits
- Quantitative Research Methods in Communication, 7.5 credits
- Digital Communication and Strategy, 7.5 credits

Second year

- Degree Project, 30 credits

Language of tuition

English.

Rate of study

This programme is available as full-time study (100%).

7. Guaranteed admission

Students who follow the study programme at the prescribed pace are guaranteed admission to all compulsory and elective courses stated in the programme syllabus, provided that the student in question is eligible for the course/courses.

For elective courses outside the study programme local admission regulations are valid and there is no guaranteed admission.

8. Other information

Credit transfer of former education

In some cases, the student has the right to be given credit for former higher education according to the legislative regulations of the Higher Education Ordinance.

Evaluation

The courses of the study programme are evaluated according to each course syllabus. The result will be used for planning and implementation of upcoming courses. A summary is given to students at the start of the courses.

The study programme will be followed up and evaluated in accordance with the applicable

Policy för kvalitetssäkring och kvalitetsutveckling av utbildning vid Göteborgs universitet (Policy for the Quality assurance and Quality Development of Education at the University of Gothenburg).

Revision of the syllabus

This syllabus is a revision of the syllabus confirmed by the IT Faculty Board on 11-01-2010 (dnr G 217 264/10) and revised on 10-02-2010 (ref. no. G 217 2545/10), 15-09-2010 (ref. no. G 217 2545/10), 17-08-2011 (ref. no. G 25 50/11) och 25-06-2015 (ref. no. G 2015/349).