

**Utah System of Higher Education  
New Academic Program Proposal  
Cover/Signature Page - Abbreviated Template**

**Institution Submitting Request:** University of Utah  
**Proposed Program Title:** Communication BA/BS -- Science, Health, Environmental, and  
**Sponsoring School, College, or Division:** College of Humanities  
**Sponsoring Academic Department(s) or Unit(s):** Department of Communication  
**Classification of Instructional Program Code<sup>1</sup> :** 09.0100  
**Min/Max Credit Hours Required of Full Program:** 34 / 54  
**Proposed Beginning Term<sup>2</sup>:** Fall 2019  
**Institutional Board of Trustees' Approval Date:**

**Program Type:**

<input type="checkbox"/>	Certificate of Proficiency	<input type="checkbox"/>	Entry-level CTE CP	<input type="checkbox"/>	Mid-level CP
<input type="checkbox"/>	Certificate of Completion				
<input type="checkbox"/>	Minor				
<input type="checkbox"/>	Graduate Certificate				
<input type="checkbox"/>	K-12 Endorsement Program				
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<b>NEW Emphasis for Regent-Approved Program</b> <i>Credit Hours for NEW Emphasis Only:</i> <b>34</b> / <b>54</b> <i>Current Major CIP:</i> <b>09.0100</b> <i>Current Program Title:</i> Communication BA/BS <i>Current Program BOR Approval Date:</i>				
<input type="checkbox"/>	Out of Service Area Delivery Program				

**Chief Academic Officer (or Designee) Signature:**

I, the Chief Academic Officer or Designee, certify that all required institutional approvals have been obtained prior to submitting this request to the Office of the Commissioner.

Please type your first and last name \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

☐ I understand that checking this box constitutes my legal signature.

<sup>1</sup> For CIP code classifications, please see <http://nces.ed.gov/ipeds/cipcode/Default.aspx?y=55>.

<sup>2</sup> "Proposed Beginning Term" refers to first term after Regent approval that students may declare this program.

**Utah System of Higher Education  
Program Description - Abbreviated Template**

**Section I: The Request**

University of Utah requests approval to offer the following Emphasis: Communication BA/BS -- Science, Health, Environmental, and Risk Communication Emphasis effective Fall 2019. This program was approved by the institutional Board of Trustees on .

**Section II: Program Proposal/Needs Assessment**

**Program Description/Rationale**

*Present a brief program description. Describe the institutional procedures used to arrive at a decision to offer the program. Briefly indicate why such a program should be initiated. State how the institution and the USHE benefit by offering the proposed program. Provide evidence of student interest and demand that supports potential program enrollment.*

Communicating Science, Health, Environment, and Risk (CommSHER) involves developing expertise about the ways in which these topics are discussed and communicated. This applies to professional communication among scientists and physicians, to public communication like media coverage and social marketing campaigns, and to interpersonal communication between doctors and patients. Students consider how such topics might be communicated persuasively, as well as the ethical issues involved in the communication of science, health, the environment, and risk.

Established as a major sequence in 2015 by faculty with research expertise in Communicating Science, Health, Environment, and Risk, the decision to create an emphasis codifies this sequence as a major area of study. The Sequence Coordinator and participating faculty who teach courses in the area were first consulted before bringing this proposal to the faculty in an April, 2018 faculty meeting. Discussion among the full faculty occurred at that meeting and the proposal was refined. The formal vote on the move from sequence to emphasis was made at the August, 2018 Department of Communication Faculty Retreat after additional discussion among the full faculty. The information was then shared with the College of Humanities Curriculum Committee which supported the establishment of an emphasis. In response to feedback from the Undergraduate Council, the curriculum requirements have been revised and approved by Department of Communication faculty in the November, 2018 faculty meeting.

The creation of an emphasis will benefit the department and students in several key ways. It will result in the creation of accurate data regarding which students are enrolled in different emphases within our major. It will assist with scheduling to prevent course conflicts, as well as reveal course demand and the need to better serve student needs by offering particular courses more frequently. It will make students' Degree Audit Reports more legible and easier to process, as well as streamlining any exceptions that need to be made by advisors. Finally, it will assist advisors with the dissemination of key information to particular student groups.

Students enrolled in this proposed emphasis will be well positioned to pursue careers in, for

instance, public relations, medicine, law, environmental justice, public health, and academia. Communicating Science, Health, Environment, and Risk faculty help guide interested and qualified students toward internships, research opportunities, and experiences that will prepare them to pursue a range of professional outlets, advanced degrees, and other educational opportunities.

The University of Utah and USHE benefit from the creation of this emphasis as it not only serves as a bridge to health institutions like the Huntsman Cancer Institute where many Communication faculty have research partnerships, it also complements the Interdisciplinary Certificate in Health Communication the Department of Communication offers, and it mirrors the Communicating Science, Health, Environment, and Risk area that is part of the department's graduate program. Students in this emphasis have the opportunity to pursue --through the Department of Communication --certification in health communication and integrated marketing communication, and graduates are well-poised to take on the department's Conflict Resolution Graduate Certificate. Those interested in pursuing an M.A. or Ph.D. in Communicating Science, Health, Environment, and Risk will find that they are well on their way to situating themselves as well-trained applicants for programs at the University of Utah and other top-tier universities.

Currently, the Department of Communication has 772 declared undergraduate majors, exclusive of students with a double major which are not counted. Approximately 4% of the students identify Communicating Science, Health, Environment, and Risk as their major sequence. As the newest focus area to the Department of Communication, it has the lowest enrollment. However, the area is expected to continue to grow and would make an excellent double major for interdisciplinary programs like Medical Humanities or Environmental and Sustainability Studies. In addition, enrollment in this emphasis is expected to increase as more students seek out the Interdisciplinary Certificate in Health Communication the Department of Communication offers.

#### Communicating Science, Health, Environment, and Risk Learning Outcomes

- Basic knowledge of communication in technical-professional spheres, with mainstream publics, and interpersonally.
- Understanding of the structure and reasoning of argumentation, as well as the ability to present arguments in written and/or spoken form.
- Understanding of writing, speaking, reporting, and research skills as applied to science, health, the environment, and risk.
- Understanding of communication within and across differences in gender, race, ethnicity, nationality, sexuality, ability, and age.
- Practical or selective knowledge of theories of communication.
- Upper division knowledge of how science, health, the environment, and risk communication applies to public relations and campaigns, strategic writing, applied ethics, and issues in mediated communication.

The Learning Outcomes will be assessed in three ways.

- We will collect representative student work from the capstone course, and a

subcommittee of the faculty will evaluate it in relation to whether students have achieved the learning outcome goals. All departments in the College of Humanities are adopting such courses. Capstone Courses need to yield substantive research papers or professional projects. In the case of the emphasis in Communicating Science, Health, Environment, and Risk, students may take one of two capstone courses: 1) COMM 5370 Environmental Comm, Special Topic or 2) COMM 5815 Health Communication, Special Topic. Both courses will permit for flexibility in terms of topic and research method. Regardless of topic or methodological approach, students will be required to produce a substantive project that will demonstrate the student's ability to assimilate past coursework and apply it to real-world issues.

- We will use exit interviews/surveys to query students regarding their own perception of how well they have acquired the learning outcome objectives.
- We will track alumni employment to identify whether the skills and knowledge students acquire are helpful and satisfying to them as they build their careers.

### **Labor Market Demand**

*Provide local, state, and/or national labor market data that speak to the need for this program. Occupational demand, wage, and number of annual openings information may be found at sources such as Utah DWS Occupation Information Data Viewer ([jobs.utah.gov/jsp/wi/utalmis/gotoOccinfo.do](http://jobs.utah.gov/jsp/wi/utalmis/gotoOccinfo.do)) and the Occupation Outlook Handbook ([www.bls.gov/oco](http://www.bls.gov/oco)).*

The proposed curriculum changes will emphasize the importance of experiential education and career development. The labor market demand for Communication students is high and our department has developed relationships with hundreds of employers and internship providers.

The department's focus on providing more practical experience and building relationships with employers/alumni will further draw students into the major, thereby supporting the Governor's call for 66% of Utahans to have a post-secondary degree or certificate by 2020.

According to the first destination plan survey administered by the Career and Professional Development Center, the median annual salary students can expect to make in their first job out of graduation is \$39,520. 75% of graduating students secure full time employment and 15% secure part time or unspecified employment. 7% of graduating students continue their education and about 1% join service or military programs. 84% stay in Utah, 15% go out of state, and 1% go international. The most common job titles we see for students after graduation are:

- Marketing Coordinator
- Administrative Assistant
- Consultant
- Social Media Manager
- Account Manager
- Graphic Designer
- Copywriter

An internship is not required for the major and 57% of our students complete at least one internship before graduation. 43% of our students, who did at least one internship, either secured employment for their place of internship or indicated it was a possibility. This is according to our departmental graduation survey, required by students to complete when they are applying for graduation (usually one semester before graduation). More students get paid for their internships than unpaid, which is

helping to increase student's interest in internships. Of the students who complete internships, 19% complete two, and 9% complete three or more. The average hourly rate for paid interns is \$12.00 an hour. We expect these curriculum changes to increase the number of secured internship and employment as a result.

### **Consistency with Institutional Mission/Impact on Other USHE Institutions**

*Explain how the program is consistent with the institution's Regents-approved mission, roles, and goals. Institutional mission and roles may be found at [higheredutah.org/policies/policyr312/](http://higheredutah.org/policies/policyr312/) . Indicate if the program will be delivered outside of designated service area; provide justification. Service areas are defined in [higheredutah.org/policies/policyr315/](http://higheredutah.org/policies/policyr315/) .*

Central to the mission of the University of Utah is to provide students of diverse backgrounds with a foundation for future success, including becoming leaders and engaged citizens. The Department of Communication contributes to this mission by providing broad training to students focused on all facets of Communication which also includes being strong communicators in areas that focus on science, health, environment, and risk. This emphasis will help students in two primary ways. First, it guides students along a cohesive intellectual path toward an in-depth yet broad exposure to communication issues surrounding Communicating Science, Health, Environment, and Risk. Second, because this emphasis will be featured on students' transcript and diploma, it will help the students to convey the depth of their preparation to other educational institutions and to potential employers.

The proposed emphasis simply codifies an existing undergraduate sequence within the Department of Communication. The proposed emphasis will not alter instructional programs or articulation agreements in the department, college, university, or other USHE institutions. Nor will it place any additional burden on faculty or staff. The program will not be delivered outside of the designated service area. No other USHE institutions offer an emphasis that focuses on Communicating Science, Health, Environment, and Risk.

### **Finances**

*What costs or savings are anticipated in implementing the proposed program? If new funds are required, indicate expected sources of funds. Describe any budgetary impact on other programs or units within the institution.*

This new emphasis will have no impact on finances of the University of Utah. All courses in the emphasis are already taught. It is anticipated that there may be minimal savings for the department by reducing the amount of staff time that is currently dedicated to tracking students in the major.

### Section III: Curriculum

#### Program Curriculum

List all courses, including new courses, to be offered in the proposed program by prefix, number, title, and credit hours (or credit equivalences). Indicate new courses with an X in the appropriate columns. The total number of credit hours should reflect the number of credits required to receive the award. **For NEW Emphases, skip to emphases tables below.**

For variable credits, please enter the minimum value in the table below for credit hours. To explain variable credit in detail as well as any additional information, use the narrative box below.

Course Number	NEW Course	Course Title	Credit Hours
General Education Courses (list specific courses if recommended for this program on Degree Map)			
General Education Credit Hour Sub-Total			
Required Courses			
Add Another Required Course			
Required Course Credit Hour Sub-Total			
Elective Courses			
Add Another Elective Course			
Elective Credit Hour Sub-Total			
Core Curriculum Credit Hour Sub-Total			0

Are students required to choose an emphasis for the already-existing degree?    Yes or <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
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Course Number	NEW Course	Course Title	Credit Hours
Name of Emphasis:		Science, Health, Environment, and Risk Communication	
		Tier 1: Required Intro Course	3
COMM 3115		Communicating Science, Health, and Environment	
		Tier 2: Choose Four Courses	12
COMM 4360		Consuming the Earth	
COMM 4650		Environmental Reporting CW	
COMM 5360		Environmental Communication	
COMM 5365		Communicating Climate Change	
COMM 5115		Health Communication	
COMM 5116		Health, Communication, and Culture	
COMM 5117		Health Campaigns and Media	
COMM 5118		Health Literacy	
COMM 5140		Communication and Aging	
		Tier 3: Choose Four Courses	12
COMM 1020		Principles of Public Speaking	
COMM 3170		Intro to Organizational Communication	
COMM 3510		Intro to Web Design	
COMM 3550		Principles of Visual Communication	
COMM 3580		Strategic Communication, Special Topics	
COMM 4170		Applied Organizational Communication	
COMM 4570		Visual Editing	
COMM 5200		Persuasion and Political Communication	
COMM 5300		Mass Communication Law	
COMM 5490		Communication and Social Justice	
COMM 5590		Integrated Marketing Communication	
COMM 5640		Comm, Tech, and Culture	
COMM 5660		Media Ethics	
COMM 5950		Advanced Special Topics in Strategic Communication	
		Tier 4: Choose One Methods Course	4
COMM 3700		Intro to Qualitative Methods	
COMM 3710		Intro to Quantitative Communication Research	
COMM 5710		Quantitative Communication Research	
		Tier 5: Choose One Capstone Course	3
COMM 4999		Honors Thesis	
COMM 5370		Environmental Communication, Special Topics	
COMM 5815		Health Communication, Special Topics	
		Tier 6: Choose 3 Elective Courses	9
Add Another Emphasis Course			
Emphasis Credit Hour Sub-Total			43
Total Number of Credits to Complete Program			43

Propose a NEW Emphasis to an existing Regent approved program

### Program Curriculum Narrative

*Describe any variable credits. You may also include additional curriculum information, as needed.*

The current Communication Sequence in Science, Health, Environmental and Risk Communication requires fourteen COMM courses with ten required courses and three elective courses. This proposal does not change the existing requirements for students who are already pursuing this sequence and thus does not change the number of credit hours required for the major.

### **The Emphasis curriculum is designed in six tiers. Students are also required to take two science courses in order to declare the CommSHER emphasis.**

- Students must complete two science courses before declaring the CommSHER emphasis. Strongly recommended courses are listed below.
- Tier 1. One Foundation course: COMM 3115 Communicating Science, Health, and Environment
- Tier 2: Four courses focused on the environment and/or health
- Tier 3: Four courses focused on communication skills
- Tier 4: One methods course
- Tier 5: One capstone course
- Tier 6: Three elective courses

**Students must complete two science courses before being declared in the CommSHER emphasis. The following courses are strongly recommended:**

- ANTH1020 - Human Origins: Evolution and Diversity (3)
- ANTH1050 - The Evolution of Human Nature (3)
- ANTH4186 - Human Ecology (3)
- ANTH4234 - Genes, Health and Human History (3)
- ATMOS1010 - Severe and Unusual Weather (3)
- ATMOS1020 - Climate Change (3)
- BIOL1010 - Biology in the 21st Century (3)
- BIOL1210 - Principles of Biology (4)
- BIOL1400 - Introduction to Environmental Science (3)
- BIOL2400 - Principles of Wildlife Ecology and Conservation (3)
- BIOL2420 - Human Physiology (4)
- BIOL3460 - Global Environmental Issues (3)
- BIOL3470 - Conservation Biology (3)
- CHEM1010 - Chemistry, Humanity, and the Environment (3)
- CHEM1110 - Elementary Chemistry (4)
- CHEM1120 - Elementary Bioorganic Chemistry (4)
- CHEM1130 - Integrated Chemistry for Health Sciences (5)
- CHEM1210 - General Chemistry I (4)
- CHEM1220 - General Chemistry II (4)

- EDU5175 - Techniques in Environmental Education (3)
- ENVST2050 - Introduction to Environmental and Sustainability Science (4)
- ENVST3210 - Global Climate Change (3)
- GEO1001 - Energy Resources in a Sustainable World (3)
- GEOG1000 - Earth Environments and Global Change (3)
- GEOG3210 - Global Climate Change (3)
- GEOG3310 - Introduction to Natural Hazards (3)
- GEOG3230 - Pyrogeography: Fire, Humans, and the Environment (3)
- GEOG3330 - Urban Environmental Geography (3)
- NUIP1020 - Scientific Foundations of Human Nutrition and Health (3)
- PHIL2510 - Genetics and Society (3)
- PHYS1110 - Physics of the Human Body (3)
- PHYS2010 - General Physics I (4)
- PHYS2020 - General Physics II (4)
- PSY3711 - Brain and Behavior (4)
- SCI2010 - The Nature of Scientific Inquiry (3)
- UGS1430 - Integrated Science (3)
- UGS2008 - Drug Theory, Policy and Practice: An Interdisciplinary Analysis (3)

**Minimum and Maximum number of credit hours a student may complete.**

The minimum number of credit hours a student may complete is 36 credits and the maximum number is 56 credits:

Tier 1: 3 credits (minimum) 3 credits (maximum)

Tier 2: 12 credits (minimum) 13 credits (maximum)

Tier 3: 12 credits (minimum) 15 credits (maximum)

Tier 4: 3 credits (minimum) 4 credits (maximum)

Tier 5: 3 credits (minimum) 3 credits (maximum)

Tier 6: 3 credits (minimum) 18 credits (maximum)

**Variable Credits**

- COMM 3610 Internship, 1-6 credits (Tier 6 Elective)
- COMM 3620 Student Media, 1-4 credits (Tier 6 Elective)
- COMM 3775 Korean Media and Culture, 1-4 credits (Tier 6 Elective)
- COMM 3910 Independent Study, 1-4 credits (Tier 6 Elective)

**4 credit hour courses**

- COMM 1610 Introduction to News Writing (Tier 5 Elective)
- COMM 3560 Video Production (Tier 5 Elective)
- COMM 3640 Writing for New Media (Tier 5 Elective)
- COMM 3710 Intro. to Quantitative Communication Research (Tier 4)
- COMM 4170 Applied Organizational Communication (Tier 3)
- COMM 4570 Visual Editing (Tier 3)
- COMM 4650 Environmental Reporting (Tier 2)
- COMM 5710 Quantitative Communication Research (Tier 4)

**The following General Education/Bachelor Degree Requirements may be fulfilled by courses that count toward this emphasis:**

- QB
- HF
- BF
- QI
- DV
- IR
- CW

**Degree Map**

*Degree maps pertain to undergraduate programs ONLY. Provide a degree map for proposed program. Degree Maps were approved by the State Board of Regents on July 17, 2014 as a degree completion measure. Degree maps or graduation plans are a suggested semester-by-semester class schedule that includes prefix, number, title, and semester hours. For more details see <http://higheredutah.org/pdf/agendas/201407/TAB%20A%202014-7-18.pdf> (Item #3).*

*Please cut-and-paste the degree map or manually enter the degree map in the table below*