



News Release

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Century Offers New Certificate in Communication Studies

Century College this fall began offering a new 16-credit certificate in Communication Studies.

Students in the program say that it has helped them gain the confidence they need to advance to four-year colleges and land professional jobs.

“The skills I learned help me put my best foot forward during job interviews,” said student Brooklyn George, who plans to transfer to the University of Minnesota to complete her bachelor’s degree in Communication Studies. This spring, George is finishing both her Associate of Arts degree and Communication Certificate at Century.

George noted that having the Communication Certificate on her resume signals to employers that she has a skill set that is extremely valuable in the workplace. Employers want to hire people who can speak

easily, listen to clients and coworkers, and work in teams. “The Communication Studies Certificate from Century College will help me stand out in a job search,” she said.

To earn the Communication Studies Certificate, students must take Public Speaking, Interviewing and the Communication Certificate Capstone course. Additional requirements are that students select two courses from a cluster that includes Interpersonal Communication, Small Group Communication and Intercultural Communication. Students also must take one additional Communication Studies elective course such as Introduction to Mass Communication, Nonverbal Communication, Minnesota’s New Immigrants, Communication and Gender, or Health Communication.

The Communication Studies certificate is designed to be completed in three semesters, though students may stretch the sequence somewhat to complete other degrees or coursework at the college.

“These courses help students in both their professional and personal development,” said Prof. Robert Jersak. “We want students to be able to handle the challenges of both work and personal relationships.”

Prof. Jill Hildebrandt said courses in public speaking, for example, help students learn how to connect with others. “Students gain confidence and self-awareness,” she said. “They grow to understand that excellent communication skills are essential for success.”

Students who gave their final Capstone course presentations on Dec. 13 showed electronic portfolios of their work and reviewed the principles that they learned in all their Communication courses. Each student said studying communication has enhanced their ability to get a job and relate to other people.

“I have had some really amazing professors who have guided me to continue my communication studies at the University of Wisconsin River Falls,” said student Sarah Husnik, who is graduating with an Associate in Arts degree and a Communication Studies Certificate from Century.

Husnik said that while the work was challenging, the strategies she learned in Small Group Communication class, for example, will be helpful in the workplace. “Working in groups can be difficult when you have a lot of different personalities to deal with,” she said. “But it is important to know how to relate to a wide variety of people.”

Prof. Amy Donohue, who taught the Capstone course, said she was pleased with her students’ commitment to the program. "The COMM 2099: Communication Certificate Capstone students did an excellent job presenting their eFolios," said Donohue. “My students worked hard and met with each other online, with me online and with me in person. I coached and mentored my students along each step of the process. The eFolio presentations were organized with good solid introductions, detailed and comprehensive content, and memorable closes. My students dressed professionally and can take this professional experience and eFolio product with them in the future to the workplace or next educational setting.”

“I am proud of the hard work my students put into their eFolios and I am grateful to Randy LaFoy and Paul Coyan for helping me design this new one-credit online course. I speak on behalf of the Communication Department at Century College that we are looking forward to more students signing up for the new Communication Studies Certificate.”



Photo: Brooklyn George