Faculty

Faculty members are the heart of the doctoral program. They are active in every phase – from admission to graduation and serve as important mentors to our doctoral students.

Faculty members in the college have strong national and international reputations as researchers and teachers. Many work with doctoral students on research projects that have led to paper presentations at leading national and international conferences as well as publications in major journals. Search the college web site for more information on faculty members who can guide you in your doctoral studies.

Admissions

Admission to the Ph.D. in Communication and Information is a two-step process. Applicants submit application documents to the University of Tennessee Graduate Admissions Office and also complete materials required by the college. Instructions are on the college web site.

The application deadline is February 1. All students start in the fall semester. Applicants are evaluated on several factors:

• Statements of purpose and research interest and other information required on the college application.
• Three rating forms and/or letters of recommendation.
• Graduate Record Examination scores and GPA in master’s coursework.
• TOEFL scores for applicants who are not native speakers of English.

A college graduate admissions committee reviews applications in detail. Key criteria are the match between student interests and program offerings and the likelihood of success in the doctoral program.

Research

The College of Communication and Information offers multiple research opportunities for doctoral students. A User Experience Lab, featuring an eye-tracking device and a galvanic skin response measurement device, allows students and faculty to pursue cutting-edge research projects. The college’s Center for Information and Communication Studies assists students and faculty with grant writing and submission to private and governmental agencies.

A research symposium held at the college every spring is a venue for presenting research that is often developed in classes. Workshops and the college’s colloquium series allow students to further develop their knowledge regarding a wide variety of subject matters including grant writing and professional development. Funding is available for doctoral students to present their studies at academic conferences.

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Overview

The Ph.D. in Communication and Information at the University of Tennessee provides students with an interdisciplinary as well as an integrated discipline-focused curriculum. Doctoral students are prepared for research-oriented positions in academe and industry. They are also mentored in teaching and service/outreach activities.

The core curriculum focuses on the philosophical and theoretical approaches that have informed the areas in communication and information. Stress is placed both on quantitative as well as qualitative research methods. Individualized program plans allow students to take coursework that prepares them for research and teaching in areas of interest.

A minimum of 62 hours are required: 17 hours core, 12 hours primary concentration, 9 hours cognate, and 24 hours dissertation. Most students finish coursework in about two years and write the dissertation in a year or two.

Interdisciplinary Knowledge

In core coursework, students are taught by faculty from across the college who encourage them to think about knowledge creation from a broad perspective. Common threads are found in literature, theories, and methods that cut across communication and information disciplines.

Throughout their programs, students are encouraged to pursue coursework and research in one or more of the cross-disciplinary areas of strength in our college:

- international and intercultural communication and information
- law and policy
- information/organizational management
- science, technology, and health

Discipline Focused

In addition to the core interdisciplinary curriculum, courses are offered that allow students to focus on developing a knowledge base in one or more of the following discipline-specific concentrations:

- Advertising
- Communication Studies
- Information Sciences
- Journalism and Electronic Media
- Public Relations

Concentration and cognate coursework builds on students’ experience and prepares them for research and teaching. The cognate area often includes courses from outside the college.

Success Stories

Program graduates are teaching and researching at U.S. universities such as:

- Boston University
- Louisiana State University
- Northern Arizona University
- University of Florida
- Texas Tech University
- University of Iowa
- Murray State University
- Simmons College

They are also working at international universities. Some have gone on to research and management careers at governmental agencies or corporations such as CNN, Gannett and General Motors.

Resources

College of Communication & Information Graduate Studies
http://www.cci.utk.edu/gradstudies

University of Tennessee Graduate Admissions
http://graduateadmissions.utk.edu/

Knoxville Information Resources
http://www.sis.utk.edu/knoxvilleresources

Funding

The College of Communication and Information provides a limited number of assistantships to doctoral students. Students are expected to teach and/or assist with research projects. In return, they receive a stipend, full tuition waiver, and other benefits. Some scholarship and fellowship money is also available. For more information, see the college web site.