

Social Advocacy for Health and Communications  
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### Introduction

The title I created for my program is “Social Advocacy for Health and Communications”. My program is a combination of social work and communications classes that I've taken during my Undergraduate education. I created this program unlike other students who declare IDS as their major freshman/sophomore year. I had the amazing opportunity to study abroad in Florence Italy, my fall semester of senior year. Returning to PSU, I was not able to complete my senior practicum in the spring and was worried about graduating late. I decided to combine my Social Work major and Professional Communications minor to create this degree that has never been done before. PSU offers a major and minor that I love but IDS gives me the ability to combine them in order to express my learning abilities and strengths. This major will help me achieve my educational and professional goals through the IDS project. I believe this project will be one of the first steps into engaging myself into a hands-on experience of what my future job or career may entail.

### Course Explanations

The courses I chose to make up this major all determine my area(s) of interest. **IP 2000 Foundations of Interdisciplinary Studies:** This course is meaningful to my major of study because it helps me gather information about IDS and my custom major, especially joining the major as a senior. This class will help guide me in finding what jobs/careers I can look for after graduation and earning my degree. **IP 2500 Cluster Learning Springboard:** I am taking this class because it is required. But I believe it will allow me to collaborate with my peers and mentors in order to understand IDS and my major. This course will help me gain independence, problem-solving skills, and self-knowledge through my classwork. **IP 4500 Interdisciplinary Studies Senior Seminar:** This course I am excited for because I believe taking this class with students the same graduating year as you can be beneficial. This course will help me find a perfect project to top off my IDS custom major and degree. **IP 2300 Statistics:** This course is meaningful to my major because it allows me to have a mathematics foundation. Statistics can be related to my future work in marketing, communications or sales if this is what my future career may be. **SW 3500 Health & Society:** Health and Society is related to my custom major because it talks about the intersection of health, social structures, and effective messaging. This course has given real life scenarios that will help prepare me for real world issues. **SW 3450 Social Welfare Policy & Services:** This course was relevant to my IDS major because it has helped me understand systematic issues within social work in order to create public health initiatives. This course explored government policies, social services, and community programs that address the health disparities, poverty, and access to care. **SW 3660 Human Behavior & Social Environment:** This course was intriguing and related to my custom major based on learning the Social Determinants of Health. It provided foundational understanding of how individuals,

groups, and communities behave within social contexts. **SW 3610 Theory & Practice of Social Work Intervention:** This class was extremely important and provided relation to my major because of the roleplaying we participated in. Our coursebook allowed us to explore, understand and analyze cases while roleplaying and collaborating with our peers. **CM 3645 Communication Theory:** Communication theory is relevant to my major because it covers audience analysis, persuasion advocacy, media use and interpersonal communication. This course allowed me to learn communication theories and understand how they are relevant to future career work. **PS 2015 Introduction to General Psychology:** Psychology was a course that became relevant to my major because it fostered an understanding of human behavior. I learned psychological theories such as cognitive and behavioral, motivation, perception and behavior change. All of which created an understanding of how people interact, communicate and influence each other in building community. **CM 2006 Intercultural Communication:** This course contributes to my custom major because it introduces the proper way to communicate across diverse populations. It teaches the understanding of different cultural perspectives. This class also helps address health disparities in order to correctly advocate for health rights, policies, and education across the globe. **CM 2000 Studies in Communication & Media:** This class contributes to my custom major because it analyzes how news, advertisements, and digital campaigns influence behaviors and decisions within the media. The class offered an insight into clear, persuasive, and ethical communication. This specific media studies course taught the strategies to write compelling narratives, the use of storytelling, and when to apply rhetorical strategies. **CM 3515 Communication, Media and Wellness:** This course is integrated with the foundation of my custom major because it explores the role communication has on promoting well-being, public health, and social change. The teachings addressed the communication efforts and skills we can use in social media, journalism, and public relations to promote health advocacy campaigns. **CM 2915 Communication and Leadership:** Communication and Leadership is related to my IDS major because this course directs its focus to learning how to work with organizations, crowds, people and movements. The course held proper leadership training that executed team management and ethical decision-making. **SW 2300 Case Management and Advocacy:** This course allowed me to practice my oral advocacy and writing skills. It allows students to create mock sessions in order to assess client needs, coordinate services, and advocate for their rights. In Case Management and Advocacy, the core work is learning to improve access to healthcare, influence public policy, and raise awareness about the social determinants of health.

### **Explaining Expert Advice**

Being able to consult with faulty experts at Plymouth State was extremely helpful. The one on one time helped delve deeper into my interests, hobbies, passion and dislikes. I hope to definitely incorporate communications into my future but potentially throw myself into a marketing and sales position to start out. I hope to use the information I learned to advance my post graduate plan. My next steps are to apply for jobs and look into obtaining my Masters Degree. Their advice will be used in the near future!

I talked with experts such as Christina Bradbury, Dr. Yeo and Alison Mitchell. I've had Dr. Yeo and Alison were my professors in previous semesters so it was nice to be able to talk one on one with them about future career advice. I met Christina first. She is associated with BUS/MKT/ENT and her advice was pointing me in the direction of MAPS. It will give me the chance to collaborate with other marketing students, touch up my resume, get free headshots and learn more about certifications etc. She had a different experience giving me advice as she is more tied to Finance. Yet, looking at my degree works she was still able to give me insight into job searching on LinkedIn, Indeed and Handshake in the next coming months. Meeting with Dr. Yeo, I learned that Dr. Holba will be able to give me contacts of Plymouth Alumni who work in the communications field I am interested in. I explained to Dr. Yeo I am interested in traveling and being able to effectively use my strong communication skills and writing skills in my future career. He introduced me to Lambda Pi Eta so that I can join and attend the induction ceremony in April. This will be able to add to my resume and will give me the opportunity to meet the guest speaker and connect with communications alumni currently working in the field. Lastly, I met with Alison Mitchell who reviewed my contract form. She was able to look at my degree works and advise me to take a class or 2 out and suggest ones to add in. She also gave me contact information in order to reach out about job and MSW questions. She was extremely inviting and understanding in this situation.

## **Conclusion**

My program entails social work related classes that lean towards advocacy in health. My communications classes make up the other half of my degree that focus on the work I've done to improve my public speaking, writing and collaboration efforts with faculty and undergraduate staff. My program is interdisciplinary because it combines the theories, methods, and practices from more than one academic field. It addresses complex and important social and health issues that occur in the world. My program will prepare me for my professional & educational goals by connecting me with professionals and organizations who can guide my career and educational path. I have learned clear, persuasive, and impactful communication tactics. I have done so through writing, projects, public speaking, and digital media usage. I can use these skills to work with controversial health issues involving different groups of people. Overall, I have developed a well-rounded skill set that will prepare me to become an effective leader, communicator, and problem-solver in my chosen career path.