
Master's Studies
Department of Communication



**2016-17
Master's
Program
Handbook**

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**HANDBOOK FOR THE MASTER'S IN COMMUNICATION
DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNICATION
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DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNICATION MISSION STATEMENT

Approved by Departmental Faculty 04/23/93

Preamble

The central focus of communication study at Michigan State University is the description and scientific analysis of how human beings create, transmit, receive, and respond to messages. Unlike disciplines which only look at one part of this process, we seek to integrate our understanding of how these various elements relate to form the entire process of human communication.

The Department of Communication has for 40 years set the standard (consistently ranking in the top three departments nationally) by which departments of communication elsewhere judge their curriculum, their faculty, their students, and their scholarly productivity. It was created in the innovative context of the first major College of Communication and it has maintained its innovative stance. Our plan for the next decade is to retain the lead role in higher education in communication.

We live in an era of immense social and technological challenge. We face the information revolution which, like the industrial revolution of the past century, is fundamentally reshaping major aspects of our global society. We witness increased ethnic conflict, major corporate restructuring, and increased health problems, particularly among youth at risk. Communication is central to confronting these challenges. How can we communicate to manage conflict, improve information flow, or persuade at-risk youth to engage in healthier behaviors?

As a department, we take a leadership role in understanding how we can communicate to meet these challenges. Through multidimensional excellence, we integrate teaching, research, and outreach activities in such a way that they focus on specific societal needs. Through our interaction with practitioners, students, and citizens we apply communication principles to societal problems.

Guiding Principles

As an academic unit of an AAU, Land Grant University, the Department of Communication believes that three core principles guide our mission. First, knowledge generation is vital to solving practical problems. Academics and practitioners rely on a common body of knowledge which can be applied to pressing social concerns. Second, our research models should derive from empirically testable propositions that can be organized into theory tested through a practitioner-researcher partnership in natural settings where both parties learn from one another. Knowledge must adhere to the canons of scientific rigor, but gain added external validity by seeking confirmation in naturalistic contexts. Third, we value taking responsibility for initiating efforts to implement our research to serve society. Not only must our research products derive from practitioner input, but we must facilitate the actual implementation of knowledge, and listen to others' reactions to our efforts. We will use these principles as a foundation to integrate the three-fold traditional mission of academic units of teaching, research, and outreach.

Teaching

Our teaching efforts will focus on communication theory and research with the goal of helping students to learn knowledge and skills sufficient to empower them to confront the important communication problems inherent in key social issues. Undergraduate work in communication helps students explain communication behavior and critically evaluate message and media. In particular, the undergraduate program is intended to increase the student's

- (a) knowledge of causes and effects of communication behavior,
- (b) insights concerning ethical and aesthetic problems confronting communication practice,
- (c) ability to communicate effectively, and
- (d) skills in analyzing and diagnosing communication problems in pragmatic settings.

Our teaching is based on a behavioral, social scientific perspective. The beginning courses in our undergraduate sequence are designed to provide students with exposure to oral communication in all its infinite variety (e.g., interviewing, interpersonal relations, group decision making, and negotiation). In our upper-level courses, our emphasis is on developing critical skills, especially those evolving from extensive writing experiences. At the end of their coursework, students will be skilled evaluators of communication who can work to improve communication in mediated, interpersonal, and organizational settings. The Department offers a variety of opportunities outside of the classroom

setting that encourage students to collaborate with faculty and practitioners in intensive experiences such as research teams, internships, practicums, and governance of the Department. We provide students with the theoretical and technical expertise required of citizens in our society, as well as preparing them for various careers and post graduate education.

The Department's graduate teaching mission aims at the complementary objectives of knowledge generation and utilization, by applying research to pragmatic problems. We provide students with the theoretical, methodological, and substantive skills needed to conduct significant research about human communication processes and outcomes. The former objective is most germane to the M.A. program, while the latter captures the thrust of the Ph.D. program. Thus, the graduate program seeks to integrate applied approaches at the Master's level and research approaches at the doctoral level.

Research

Our research efforts focus on developing a rigorous, reliable body of knowledge about human communication. Faculty and students have been leaders in developing theoretical frameworks which have guided the work of numerous scholars in the discipline. These efforts, and our identity, derive primarily from the scholarly efforts of our faculty in close collaboration with students on research teams. We have always been a leader in innovative research methods, both in the field of Communication and at Michigan State University.

External reference groups value us for our scholarship and the strength of our Ph.D. recipients. The former has given us renown in the major journals, in our professional associations and at campuses across the country; the latter have diffused to other campuses and have been successful in a variety of ways. The faculty's research has been sufficiently heralded to bring recognition to the Department as an academic unit of high achievement. Several faculty--is proportionately more than most major institutions, move with renown in international circles, in their work with federal agencies as both researchers and consultants, and in the corporate world.

Outreach

In accord with its commitment to the land grant philosophy, the Department seeks to disseminate knowledge about human communication to various institutions and clienteles within the larger society, and to conduct research of social import. Taken together, this scholarly and pedagogical outreach aims at improving the quality of our society's communicative environment and at contributing to the University's goal of increased internationalization of the curriculum, cultural sensitivity and diversity. As an example of these innovative outreach activities, the department has developed a core of experts in the area of health communication, who cut across the interpersonal, organizational, and mediated communication areas within our Department. At the interpersonal level, scholars in our Department are examining doctor-patient relationships. Other faculty members are working on research at the organizational level aimed at streamlining the delivery of health care services through large institutions. In the mediated area, a faculty group is developing a variety of communication campaigns to promote less risky health behaviors. The medical community cries out for a better understanding of communication issues and enhanced communication skills. We seek to bring our knowledge to the medical community by addressing the significance of the health challenges facing our society.

Underlying Values

While we focus on teaching, research, and outreach, they are not separate activities. Rather, they reflect the department's commitment to a set of course values related to curiosity, craft, centrality, and commonweal.

Curiosity. We are obsessed with ideas, with demonstrating their worth. We have investigated many issues and used many tools, some of which we have discarded; only the most worthy have we retained. In so doing, we adhere to our commitment to attain the most perfect realization of ourselves and our ideas, realizing that only those ideas that are honed by the sharpest tools will withstand the blunting criticisms of others.

Craft. We have always had a commitment to craft in this department. By craft we mean a set of techniques that permit disciplined inquiry. Our most explicit training in craft has been in quantitative methods, but it is perhaps not accidental that some of the most respected qualitative researchers in communication have also passed through our department. Particular techniques and methods have come and gone in the department, but always there has been a devotion to the use of techniques in the pursuit of knowledge that can withstand the most intense scrutiny.

Commonweal. We have expended much effort, often unselfish, to preserve the good of the department, the university, and our discipline. Through these actions, we have demonstrated that we believe in things that are worthy of our unselfish support. We have performed, and will continue to perform, extraordinary service to our communities, our professional societies and to the shaping of Michigan State University as a unique institution in higher education.

In sum, the Department and its members are committed to continuing to integrate our teaching, research, and outreach activities in a manner that reflects our commitment to curiosity, craft, centrality, and the commonweal.

MASTER'S PROGRAM

MASTER'S IN COMMUNICATION (1376)

The Master's program in communication has two major directions. The first option is the pre-Ph.D. academic track and the second option is the more applied, career-oriented comprehensive track. Each of these options prepares the M.A. student for very different outcomes.

THE PRE-PH.D. TRACK (PLAN A – THESIS OPTION)

This is a more structured track in terms of required course work than the applied option, designed for applicants with a background in human communication. Through the required course work, students are prepared to conduct research culminating in a Master's thesis. The goal of work in this track is to prepare M.A. students for application to available Ph.D. programs in communication. Course work stresses research and theory. The pre-Ph.D. track is seen as the first step leading to a career in research in academe or the public sector.

The pre-Ph.D. track will emphasize skills of research design, problem conceptualization, quantitative and qualitative analytic methodologies, the ability to conduct subject-based research, and participation on research teams in order to prepare the M.A. student to seek placement in highly competitive Ph.D. programs in Communication.

THE CAREER-ORIENTED TRACK (PLAN B – FINAL WRITTEN EXAMINATION OPTION – NON THESIS)

The second option in the M.A. program is a more applied, career-oriented degree which culminates in a final written exam over the course work. This track is designed to blend training in communication concepts and theories with experiences in the application of the knowledge to practical work-related problems. The program is intended for persons whose original background may be unrelated to the field of communication, but who presently find themselves (or anticipate finding themselves) in situations where their knowledge of communication determines their success.

One additional example: individuals with professional backgrounds often seek enrollment in the program when they want to move to a new position, either to a higher level in their organization, or to a different organization. They pursue the degree out of a conviction that training in communication will help them achieve their career objectives. Some examples from recent graduates will illustrate this point. One man came to us with a strong academic and work-history in accounting and finance. His work required him to convince bankers to adopt some new, Federally-approved procedures. He performed in the assignment poorly because he knew little about the role of communication in change. Another student, with foresight, learned that she was in line to become an administrator in a nurse's organization. She realized that her skills in communication needed improvement, although her professional credentials were excellent, and earned an M.A. in this program. She was highly successful in her new position.

BOTH TRACKS IN THE M.A. PROGRAM are designed to assist students in improving their ability to:

- Identify the key communication variables which affect a person's performance either in an organization where they have worked or one in which they expect to work after their program is completed.
- Develop communication strategies for coping with specific communication problems which exist in the student's job.
- Identify communication variables which influence the relationship between their organization and the larger community.
- Demonstrate an ability to apply information from course work to the development of communication strategies.
- Synthesize results from research on any question.

IN SUM, the pre-Ph.D. track is designed to prepare students to compete for entry into a Ph.D. program in communication. The career-oriented M.A. track is designed to meet the needs of a person who finds that (a) their ability to communicate,

and/or (b) their ability to develop and implement appropriate communication strategies, are critical to their professional performance. Students come from middle management in diverse fields, such as secondary schools, community colleges, and various change agencies.

WHAT ARE THE DIFFERENCES BETWEEN THE MASTER'S TRACKS?

By Dr. Mary Bresnahan, 1994
Edited by Dr. Gwen Wittenbaum, 2015

ADVANTAGES OF THE PRE-PH.D. THESIS TRACK (PLAN A)

This is designed for individuals who know that they want to be a university professor in a Department of Communication conducting subject-based research. You will be equipped with behavioral and social science research skills. Because of this, you should be aware that there is a challenging component of applied mathematics in this track. Completion of the pre-Ph.D. M.A. does NOT automatically mean that you will be admitted to the Ph.D. program at MSU. It is one of the top Ph.D. programs in the country and is competitive for admission. However, with a strong track record in the pre-Ph.D. M.A. at MSU and with strong GRE scores you ought to be able to gain admission to a Communication Ph.D. program somewhere in the U.S.A. Students in the pre-Ph.D. track are strongly encouraged to join research teams and to begin to participate in publication and research projects. Such involvements will further make the MSU Master's degree very attractive to Ph.D. programs around the country.

ADVANTAGES OF THE CAREER-ORIENTED MA TRACK (PLAN B)

Half of the 30 credits must be taken in Communication, but if you are following this track only two of these courses—Com 803 and Com 820—are absolutely required. This gives you greater choice in selection of courses in the Department of Communication. For example, you might decide that you want to take Com 475 on Communication Campaigns. In addition, you end up with more credit space outside the department. If you see yourself going out and getting a job in the public sector after completing this degree rather than continuing on for a research Ph.D. in Communication, this is a superb option. Most of our graduates who have completed this career-oriented M.A. see it as an opportunity for further credentialing. Some of our M.A. students have worked for several years in a career before they come back to school. They have a very specific career goal in mind for pursuing the M.A. degree. Others know that they want to learn more about the field of communication as they refine their career interests and goals. Whether students have a specific career goal in mind or not, one thing unites our students: They have an intense desire to learn, think, and grow.

MASTER'S CURRICULUM OUTLINE

PRE-PHD THESIS TRACK (PLAN A): This option involves successful completion of the following core courses (13 credits):

- COM 803 (3 credits) – Introduction to Quantitative Research Methods
- COM 820 (3 credits) – Communication Theory and Process
- COM 830 (3 credits) – Applied Communication Research II
- COM 899 (4 credits) - Master's Thesis Research (oral defense required)

In addition, students in Plan A must complete 9-11 additional credits of course work in the Department of Communication and 6 to 8 credits outside of the Department of Communication to reach the 30 credit minimum required for the degree. The thesis will be completed according to guidelines established by The Graduate School. Such guideline information can be found in a number of places including The Graduate School website (<http://www.grad.msu.edu>) or in the following publication: **The Graduate School Guide to the Preparation of Master's Theses and Doctoral Dissertations** (available in Chittenden Hall or online at <http://www.grad.msu.edu>). Students selecting Plan A will defend their thesis during a final oral examination. This will be held in the final semester according to the University/Department deadlines. For further information please see section titled "Graduation" in this handbook.

THE CAREER-ORIENTED TRACK (PLAN B - NON THESIS) : This option involves successful completion of the following core courses:

- COM 803 (3 credits) - Introduction to Quantitative Research Methods
- COM 820 (3 credits) - Communication Theory and Process

The program requires completion of 30 credits with a minimum of 16 credits at the 800/900 level and a minimum of 6 credits completed in residence at MSU. Add an additional 9 to 17 credits in the Department of Communication plus 7 to 15 credits which must be taken outside of the Department of Communication to reach the 30-credit minimum required for the degree.

Each student will take a written comprehensive examination in her or his final semester covering course material approved by the student's guidance committee. The exam will be scheduled according to the University/Department deadlines for final oral examinations. The University calendar can be found at <http://www.reg.msu.edu/ROInfo/Calendar/academic.aspx>. The scheduling of the exam is a committee decision. The exam will involve writing answers to **three** questions – one question from each committee member. The answers to which will be due 10 calendar days from the date of administration. If the student's committee deems it necessary, a revision or an oral defense of these written responses will be scheduled after the committee has been given time to read the responses. For further information on graduation requirements please see section titled, "Graduation" in this handbook.

GENERAL PROGRAM INFORMATION

All students entering the program are assigned a faculty enrollment officer. Faculty members give the student immediate assistance in working out a program which maximizes the student's professional growth. **After 10 credit hours of course work have been completed, the student must select a permanent advisor, committee, and program of study.** This advisor may be someone different than your enrollment officer.

A graduate committee is required for both tracks. The thesis track requires three (3) committee members. This includes your advisor, who must be from the Department of Communication, one committee member from the Department of Communication, and one member from inside or outside the Department of Communication.

The Comprehensive exam option requires three committee members. It shall be made up of your advisor and two other members, all of whom must be from the Department of Communication.

For students to receive maximum benefit from the program, it is recommended to enroll in three courses per Fall and Spring semester. It is possible to complete the degree program in 1.5 years, although most students take two years. Students who consistently enroll for only one course, or who do not enroll at all for one or more terms, may be removed from the program. Five years is the maximum allowable time to complete the program.

[LINKED BA-MA DEGREE IN COMMUNICATION](#)

Bachelor of Arts Degree in Communication and Master of Arts Degree in Communication

The department welcomes applications from Michigan State University Communication majors who have completed at least 86 credits. Application for admission must be made prior to the final year as a Communication major undergraduate.

Admission to the program requires the following:

- (1) a minimum overall undergraduate GPA of 3.0 based on all courses taken at MSU
- (2) a statement of goals for the MA degree
- (3) GRE scores
- (4) at least 2 letters of recommendation from faculty in the Department of Communication
- (5) an approved program of study for the MA degree at the time of admission.

The number of Communication majors admitted into this linked degree program will be limited by availability. Admission to the Linked Bachelor's-Master's program allows the application of up to 9 credits toward the master's program for qualifying 400-level and above course work taken at Michigan State University. No 400 level courses with a grade lower than 3.0 will count toward the MA degree. Credit obtained from 400 level pass/fail courses and internships will not count toward the degree. The number of approved credits (approved by MA Coordinator), (from 7 to 9 credits not to exceed 9 credits), is applied toward the credit requirement of the master's degree. So students in this program only need to complete 21 to 23 additional graduate credits (instead of 30) to complete the MA degree. Students admitted to this program must complete a thesis or a comprehensive exam and other MA program requirements.

And as indicated in the MSU RO: Academic Handbook, <http://www.reg.msu.edu/AcademicPrograms/Print.asp?Section=328>, within the first semester of dual enrollment, the student's graduate degree program adviser must be identified and the appropriate graduate degree guidance committee established. The adviser and committee assist the student in developing a program of study for the graduate degree. Admission to graduate study must be approved before work to apply toward a graduate degree program is undertaken.

Communication majors meeting eligibility requirements should contact Dr. Gwen Wittenbaum, Coordinator of the MA program in Communication, by email (gwittenb@msu.edu) or phone (517-353-8120).

PRACTICUM

Eligibility Criteria for MA Practicum

1. A student must have completed at least 18 MA level credits.
2. A student must have filed forms with the Communication Graduate Office specifying a permanent advisor, MA Committee, and a program of study before starting the practicum. The Committee must agree to include the practicum in the program of studies.
3. The practicum can be taken for up to 3 credits of Com 893 credit.
4. The Permanent Advisor is the faculty in charge of the practicum and its outcomes.
5. Before the internship can be approved, the Communication Graduate Office must receive the application form and a copy of the letter of invitation to the MA student from the organization offering the internship. This letter must specify what the practicum experience will include and the name and contact information of the practicum sponsor. The sponsor will submit an evaluation of the intern to the Communication Graduate office at the conclusion of the practicum experience.
6. It is expected that there will be an academic outcome (paper, sample campaign developed during the practicum, etc). This must be submitted to the MSU advisor who is overseeing the practicum.
7. It is acceptable to take a paid or a non-paid practicum. However, no part of the practicum may be related to the student's current regular job.
8. Three hours per week is required for each registered credit so that an intern signing up for 3 credits must work nine hours per week in the internship.
9. Foreign practicum may require additional credits taken as independent study not to exceed 3 credits of Com 890 credit.
10. International students will have to work out the details with the MSU OISS office if they are in an internship. They will need to fill out a CPT form (Curricular Practical Training Form) <http://oiss.isp.msu.edu/documents/students/cpt.pdf> and obtain the Com Department's signature.
11. If you are an international student and wish to obtain optional practical training after you graduate from MSU, you need to go and talk to the OISS advisors very early in the semester that you plan to graduate (e.g., in September for a December graduation date and in January or early February for a May graduation date). It takes 60 to 90 days to obtain the visa permission for the OPT <http://oiss.isp.msu.edu/documents/students/opt.pdf>
12. Completed practicum application (shown on the next page).

Practicum Application: To be completed with faculty supervisor

Applicant Information

Full Name: _____ PID: _____
Last First MI

Semester/Year: _____ COM 893 section # _____ # of Credits _____

Practicum Employer Contact Information

Company Name: _____ Address: _____

Supervisor's Name _____ Supervisor's Email _____

Supervisor's Phone: _____ Supervisor's Mailing Address _____

Practicum Description

Please list include number of hours per week, description of work to be completed and other employer expectations (attach letter from employer)

MSU Practicum Work to be Completed

To be completed with Faculty Supervisor. Please include the number of hours per week, written assignments, and number of official meetings with faculty supervisor

Deadline for Submission of Work _____

Signatures

Student's _____ Date: _____

Supervising Faculty's _____ Date: _____

SELECTION OF ADVISOR AND GUIDANCE COMMITTEE

All Master's students are assigned a temporary advisor (enrollment officer) at the time of admission. An enrollment officer is a temporary advisor. This information is sent in your departmental letter of offer or you can contact the Academic Programs office at 517 355-3471 or barkman@msu.edu. The enrollment officer is to be used for only *one* semester. He/she is responsible to direct the student in his/her choice of courses the first semester and to select a permanent advisor. The student may select the enrollment officer as his/her advisor, if he/she agrees.

All students are expected to select an advisor, committee and program of study by the time they have completed 10 credits in the program. Students must select an advisor from regular faculty (tenure track) within the Communication Department and two committee members from the regular faculty (tenure track) within the Department of Communication (Students in the Pre-PhD track may opt for a third member from the regular MSU faculty outside of the Department of Communication). Please complete the "Master's Program Forms" later in this document with your selected advisor and guidance committee.

ORGANIZING YOUR MASTER'S PROGRAM OF STUDY: COURSES OUTSIDE OF THE DEPARTMENT AND OUTSIDE THE COLLEGE

Students must take 6-8 credit hours (for Plan A) or 7-15 credit hours (for Plan B) outside of the Department of Communication. What courses count as acceptable outside courses is determined by a student's academic advisor and guidance committee. Once you have selected a permanent academic advisor and a committee, it is important that you meet with your advisor to discuss what courses will be best for your academic program. Please note: Six-credit courses outside the department are generally discouraged in the Communication M.A. Program. The student must seek prior approval from the Permanent Advisor and signatures from the M.A. Committee before enrolling in such a course.

The courses that past students have taken as outside courses vary considerably. Depending on a student's interest, the advisor and guidance committee may suggest courses inside the College of Communication Arts and Sciences and/or outside of the college. Below is a list of academic departments at MSU that offer courses that our students commonly take to satisfy the outside course requirement. Of course, students are not limited to the departments listed below for outside courses. Note: If a CAS course is taught by a faculty member in the Department of Communication, it is considered an inside the department course.

College of Communication Arts and Sciences	Other MSU Colleges
Advertising and Public Relations (ADV) Communication Arts and Sciences (CAS)* Media and Information (MI) Journalism (JRN)	Human Development and Family Studies (HDFS) Labor and Industrial Relations (LIR) Management (MGT) Philosophy (PHL) Political Science (PLS) Psychology (PSY) Sociology (SOC)

* If taught by a faculty member outside of the Department of Communication.

GUIDELINES FOR THE M.A. THESIS PROPOSAL (PLAN A)

THESIS PROPOSAL (PLAN A):

Your Thesis Proposal is a formal description of your Master's research. It normally includes an introduction with hypotheses, methods, anticipated analyses, and complete references. It takes much thought and patience to create a good thesis proposal. You will work closely with your academic advisor to prepare it. Ideally, your thesis is something that interests you, builds your experience and confidence as a social scientific researcher, and eventually contributes to the field of communication in the form of a publishable article. Once the proposal is ready, you will schedule an oral defense with your guidance committee. When the committee approves the proposal, you may pursue the thesis project as proposed.

GUIDELINES FOR THE M.A. FINAL WRITTEN EXAM (PLAN B)

1. By the time you are enrolled for 10 to 12 credits (beginning of the second semester for most of you) you should have already selected a permanent academic advisor. When you entered the program, you were issued an enrollment advisor. Your academic advisor may not be the same person as the original enrollment officer. Your academic advisor should be someone in your area of research interest. There are forms included in the handbook that you and your academic advisor need to complete. This is an important step in the completion of your degree to keep you on the track.
2. During the second semester, you and your academic advisor should plan all the courses that you will take through the completion of your degree. If your advisor wants to check this out with the other members of your guidance committee, then a meeting should be scheduled.
3. You will take a written final exam during the early part of your last semester in the MA program. The exam will consist of 3 questions that will be determined by your committee. The questions deal with theory and methodology in your area(s) of interest. You will have 10 days to write your examination, and the faculty committee will have 2 weeks to grade. When the written exam is done an oral defense of your written responses will be scheduled if your committee deems necessary. The defense must occur by the university deadline (found on the www.reg.msu.edu, calendar).

COLLEGE OF COMMUNICATION ARTS AND SCIENCES
DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNICATION
MASTER'S PROGRAM

FORM II: REQUEST FOR APPOINTMENT OF EXAMINING COMMITTEE*

Note: Persons serving on the committee must be MSU regular faculty¹

For Plan A (Thesis Option), MA students are required to have two (2) committee members (one may be from outside the department), plus an advisor. **For Plan B (Final Written Examination option)**, MA students are required to have two (2) committee members plus an advisor, all of whom must be from the Department of Communication.

¹ Exceptions can be made with approval from the department, college, and The Graduate School. For more information please contact the Director of the Masters in Communication Program.

The following faculty agree to serve on my Examining Committee and I request that they be appointed.

Student's name – please print

Student's signature

Member selected – please print

Member's signature

Member selected – please print

Member's signature

Advisor's signature

date

APPROVED:

Director of Master's Studies

date

Chairperson, Dept. of Communication

date

***Note: This form should be completed no later than 10 credits into the program.**

**COLLEGE OF COMMUNICATION ARTS AND SCIENCES
DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNICATION
MASTER'S PROGRAM**

FORM V: DEFENSE OF THESIS PROPOSAL

The Guidance Committee is pleased to announce that _____
Please Print Name
successfully defended his/her thesis proposal on _____
Date of Defense

Chair of Guidance Committee date

Members of Committee Signatures

Approved:

Director of Master's Studies date

Chairperson, Dept. of Communication date

COLLEGE OF COMMUNICATION ARTS AND SCIENCES
DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNICATION
MASTER'S PROGRAM

FORM VI: ELIGIBILITY TO HOLD FINAL EXAM

I request The Office of Academic Programs for the Department of Communication to determine the eligibility of _____ to take the
Print Student's Name
Master's degree final examination on _____/_____/_____.
date time room

Student's signature & date Advisor's signature & date

The Office of Academic Programs for the Department of Communication has reviewed the record of the above named student and makes the following decision:

_____ The above mentioned student will have completed all requirements by the end of this semester and is therefore eligible to take the final oral examination. This assumes that present courses will be completed satisfactorily. Should the courses not be completed satisfactorily, this eligibility is void, and the examination must be retaken.

_____ The student has not completed all requirements. The examination shall be delayed until the following requirements are met:

APPROVED:

Director of Master's Studies date

Chairperson, Dept. of Communication date

Note: This form must be submitted no less than two weeks before the requested examination date.

Revised 8/14

GENERAL INFORMATION

ACADEMIC DISHONESTY

*The Department of Communication subscribes to the University's Policy on Academic Honesty and the following information is from the **ACADEMIC FREEDOM FOR STUDENTS AT MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY** publication, found online at <http://splife.studentlife.msu.edu/regulations/general-student-regulations>*

1.00 PROTECTION OF SCHOLARSHIP AND GRADES

The principles of truth and honesty are fundamental to the educational process and the academic integrity of the University; therefore, no student shall:

1.01 claim or submit the academic work of another as one's own.

1.02 procure, provide, accept or use any materials containing questions or answers to any examination or assignment without proper authorization.

1.03 complete or attempt to complete any assignment or examination for another individual without proper authorization.

1.04 allow any examination or assignment to be completed for oneself, in part or in total, by another without proper authorization.

1.05 alter, tamper with, appropriate, destroy or otherwise interfere with the research, resources, or other academic work of another person.

1.06 fabricate or falsify data or results.

ACADEMIC RECORDS (STUDENT FILES)

Students have access to view online their academic transcripts through STUINFO.MSU.EDU. Please use your MSU netid to login.

Your advisor will also have access to your records through the Office of Registrar's website, www.reg.msu.edu, Faculty and Staff Forms, Electronic Student Folder.

Student departmental academic files are housed in the Academic Programs Office, 466 Communication Arts Bldg. Students are allowed to view these files and to check the files out for one week intervals.

ACADEMIC STANDARDS FOR GRADUATE STUDENTS IN THE COLLEGE OF COMMUNICATION ARTS & SCIENCES

(QUOTED FROM THE UNIVERSITY ACADEMIC PROGRAMS CATALOG, PAGE 248)

When a student receives a grade below 3.0 in more than two 400-level or higher courses taken for graduate credit at Michigan State University, the student is automatically withdrawn from the program. A graduate student who has been withdrawn under this regulation is required to wait a minimum of one calendar year from the date of the withdrawal before being eligible to apply for readmission to a graduate program in the College of Communication Arts and Sciences. The student may be readmitted, contingent upon repeating one of the three courses in which a grade below a 3.0 was earned, and earning a 3.0 or better grade in the course. The course to be repeated may be specified by the department. Following readmission, any additional grade below 3.0 in any course numbered 400 or higher will result in permanent dismissal. Courses below the 400 level may also be included under this regulation at the discretion of the individual academic unit. While permission may be granted by the student's academic unit chairperson and the associate dean of the College to repeat a course in which a grade of less than 3.0 has been earned, subsequently earning a grade of 3.0 or higher does not eliminate the first earned grade in the course as one of the two allowed under this regulation. The student must also have at least a 3.00 average in all courses taken for graduate credit. Note: Please also see in the Departmental Handbook the section on "Evaluation of Performance."

ACTIVITIES

AGSCOM

The Association of Graduate Students in Communication (AGSCOM) is a group of M.A. and Ph.D. graduate students that acts as a liaison between the students and the faculty and university. AGSCOM members serve on departmental and college committee as a voice for all the graduate students in the department. In addition, AGSCOM arranges many social events, such as Halloween and end-of-the-term gatherings.

Departmental Sports Teams

The department faculty and students participate in intramural sports leagues here at MSU. Emails are sent to the students each season to announce the formation of the new leagues. Please feel free to participate.

CATALOGS

The Academic Programs Catalog is available online at: <http://www.reg.msu.edu/AcademicPrograms/>

The Description of Courses Catalog is available online at: <http://www.reg.msu.edu/Courses/search.asp>

COMPUTER ENROLLMENT, REGISTRATION, UNIVERSITY CALENDARS, PAYMENT SCHEDULES, DROP AND ADDS, EXAM SCHEDULES, ETC.

<http://www.reg.msu.edu/roinfo/enrollment.asp>

The above listed website is a great resource from the Office of the Registrar for information on computer enrollment, registration, university calendars, payment schedules, drop and adds, final exam schedules amongst many items. Please review this site now and bookmark for future reference.

CONFLICT RESOLUTION PROCEDURES

If a conflict should arise between a Master's student and her/his advisor, committee or course instructor, then the following procedure should be followed. First, the student should discuss the problem with the advisor, committee member or the faculty member. If a satisfactory solution is not reached, then the student should discuss the matter with the Director of Master's Studies. If a satisfactory solution is still not reached, then the student should present her/his case to the Chair. If the student is not satisfied at this point, then the Chair will advise the student as to further lines of appeal. For academic grievance hearings involving graduate students who allege violations of academic rights or seek to contest an allegation of academic misconduct (academic dishonesty, violations of professional standards or falsifying admission and academic records), students should refer to the "Graduate Student Academic Grievance Hearing Procedures for the Department of Communication's MA and PhD Programs."

GRADUATE STUDENT ACADEMIC GRIEVANCE HEARING PROCEDURES FOR THE DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNICATION'S MA AND PHD PROGRAMS

Each right of an individual places a reciprocal duty upon others: the duty to permit the individual to exercise the right. The student, as a member of the academic community, has both rights and duties. Within that community, the student's most essential right is the right to learn. The University has a duty to provide for the student those privileges, opportunities, and protections which best promote the learning process in all its aspects. The student also has duties to other members of the academic community, the most important of which is to refrain from interference with those rights of others which are equally essential to the purposes and processes of the University. (GSRR Article 1.2)

The *Michigan State University Student Rights and Responsibilities (SRR)* and the *Graduate Student Rights and Responsibilities (GSRR)* documents establish the rights and responsibilities of MSU students and prescribe procedures to resolve allegations of violations of those rights through formal grievance hearings. In accordance with the SRR and the GSRR, the Department of Communication's MA and PhD Programs has established the following Hearing Board procedures for adjudicating graduate student academic grievances and complaints. (See GSRR 5.4.)

I. JURISDICTION OF THE DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNICATION'S MA AND PHD PROGRAMS HEARING BOARD:

- A. The Hearing Board serves as the initial Hearing Board for academic grievance hearings involving graduate students who allege violations of academic rights or seek to contest an allegation of academic misconduct (academic dishonesty, violations of professional standards or falsifying admission and academic records). (See GSRR 2.3 and 5.1.1.)
- B. Students may not request an academic grievance hearing based on an allegation of incompetent instruction. (See GSRR 2.2.2)

II. COMPOSITION OF THE HEARING BOARD:

- A. The Program shall constitute a Hearing Board pool no later than the end of the tenth week of the spring semester according to established Program procedures. Hearing Board members serve one year terms with reappointment possible. The Hearing Board pool should include both faculty and graduate students. (See GSRR 5.1.2 and 5.1.6.)
- B. The Chair of the Hearing Board shall be the faculty member with rank who shall vote only in the event of a tie. In addition to the Chair, the Hearing Board shall include an equal number of voting graduate students and faculty. (See GSRR 5.1.2, and 5.1.5.)
- C. The Program will train hearing board members about these procedures and the applicable sections of the GSRR. (See GSRR 5.1.3.)

III. REFERRAL TO THE HEARING BOARD:

- A. After consulting with the instructor and appropriate unit administrator, graduate students who remain dissatisfied with their attempt to resolve an allegation of a violation of student academic rights or an allegation of academic misconduct (academic dishonesty, violations of professional standards or falsifying admission and academic records) may request an academic grievance hearing. When appropriate, the Department Chair, in consultation with the Dean, may waive jurisdiction and refer the request for an initial hearing to the College Hearing Board. (See GSRR 5.3.6.2.)
- B. At any time in the grievance process, either party may consult with the University Ombudsperson. (See GSRR 5.3.2.)
- C. In cases of ambiguous jurisdiction, the Dean of The Graduate School will select the appropriate Hearing Board for cases involving graduate students. (See GSRR 5.3.5.)
- D. Generally, the deadline for submitting the written request for a hearing is the middle of the next semester in which the student is enrolled (including Summer). In cases in which a student seeks to contest an allegation of academic misconduct and the student's dean has called for an academic disciplinary hearing, the student has **10** class days to request an academic grievance to contest the allegation. (See GSRR 5.3.6.1 and 5.5.2.2.)
- E. If either the student (the complainant) or the respondent (usually, the instructor or an administrator) is absent from the university during that semester, or if other appropriate reasons emerge, the Hearing Board may grant an extension of this deadline. If the university no longer employs the respondent before the grievance hearing commences, the hearing may proceed. (See GSRR 5.4.9.)
- F. A written request for an academic grievance hearing must (1) specify the specific bases for the grievance, including the alleged violation(s), (2) identify the individual against whom the grievance is filed (the respondent) and (3) state the desired redress. Anonymous grievances will not be accepted. (See GSRR 5.1 and 5.3.6.)

IV. PRE-HEARING PROCEDURES

- A. After receiving a graduate student's written request for a hearing, the Chair of the Department will promptly refer the grievance to the Chair of the Hearing Board. (See GSRR 5.3.2, 5.4.3.)
- B. Within **5** class days, the Chair of the Hearing Board will:
 - 1. forward the request for a hearing to the respondent;
 - 2. send the names of the Hearing Board members to both parties and, to avoid conflicts of interest between the two parties and the Hearing Board members, request written challenges, if any, within **3** class days of this notification;
 - 3. rule promptly on any challenges, impanel a Hearing Board and send each party the names of the Hearing Board members. If the Chair of the Hearing Board is the subject of a challenge, the challenge shall be filed with the Dean of the College, or designee. (See GSRR 5.1.7.)
 - 4. send the Hearing Board members a copy of the request for a hearing and the written response, and send all parties a copy of these procedures.
- C. Within **5** class days of being established, the Hearing Board shall review the request, and, after considering all requested and submitted information:
 - 1. accept the request, in full or in part, and promptly schedule a hearing.
 - 2. reject the request and provide a written explanation to appropriate parties; e.g., lack of jurisdiction. (The student may appeal this decision.)

3. the GSRR allows the hearing board to invite the two parties to meet with the Hearing Board in an informal session to try to resolve the matter. Such a meeting does not preclude a later hearing. However, by the time a grievance is requested all informal methods of conflict resolution should have been exhausted so this option is rarely used. (See GSRR 5.4.6.)
- D. If the Hearing Board calls for a hearing, the Chair of the Hearing Board shall promptly negotiate a hearing date, schedule an additional meeting only for the Hearing Board should additional deliberations on the findings become necessary, and request a written response to the grievance from the respondent.
- E. At least 5 class days before the scheduled hearing, the Chair of the Hearing Board shall notify the respondent and the complainant in writing of the (1) time, date, and place of the hearing; (2) the names of the parties to the grievance; (3) a copy of the hearing request and the respondent's reply; and (4) the names of the Hearing Board members after any challenges. (See GSRR 5.4.7.)
- F. At least 3 class days before the scheduled hearing, the parties must notify the Chair of the Hearing Board the names of their witnesses and advisor, if any, and request permission for the advisor to have voice at the hearing. The chair may grant or deny this request. The Chair will promptly forward the names given by the complainant to the respondent and visa versa. (See GSRR 5.4.7.1.)
- G. The Chair of the Hearing Board may accept written statements from either party's witnesses at least 3 class days before the hearing. (See GSRR 5.4.9.)
- H. In unusual circumstances and in lieu of a personal appearance, either party may request permission to submit a written statement to the Hearing Board or request permission to participate in the hearing through an electronic communication channel. Written statements must be submitted to the Hearing Board at least 3 class days before the scheduled hearing. (See GSRR 5.4.9c.)
- I. Either party to the grievance hearing may request a postponement of the hearing. The Hearing Board may either grant or deny the request. (See GSRR 5.4.8.)
- J. At its discretion, the Hearing Board may set a reasonable time limit for each party to present its case, and the Chair of the Hearing Board must inform the parties of such a time limit in the written notification of the hearing.
- K. Hearings are closed unless the student requests an open hearing, which would be open to all members of the MSU community. The Hearing Board may close an open hearing to protect the confidentiality of information or to maintain order. (See GSRR 5.4.10.4.)
- L. Members of the Hearing Board are expected to respect the confidentiality of the hearing process. (See GSRR 5.4.10.4.and 5.4.11.)

V. HEARING PROCEDURES:

- A. The Hearing will proceed as follows:
 1. Introductory remarks by the Chair of the Hearing Board: The Chair of the Hearing Board introduces hearing panel members, the complainant, the respondent and advisors, if any. The Chair reviews the hearing procedures, including announced time restraints for presentations by each party and the witnesses, and informs the parties if their advisors may have a voice in the hearings and if the proceedings are being recorded. Witnesses shall be excluded from the proceedings except when testifying. The Chair also explains:
 - In academic grievance hearings in which a graduate student alleges a violation of academic rights, the student bears the burden of proof.
 - In hearings in which a graduate students seeks to contest allegations of academic misconduct, the instructor bears the burden of proof.

- All Hearing Board decisions must be reached by a majority of the Hearing Board, based on a "clear and convincing evidence." (See GSRR 8.1.18.)

(See GSRR 5.4.10.1 and 8.1.18.) For various other definitions, see GSRR Article 8.)

2. If the complainant fails to appear in person or via an electronic channel at a scheduled hearing, the Hearing Board may either postpone the hearing or dismiss the case for demonstrated cause. (See GSRR 5.4.9a.)
3. If the respondent fails to appear in person or via an electronic channel at a scheduled hearing, the Hearing Board may postpone the hearing, hear the case in the respondent's absence, or dismiss the case. (See \ GSRR 5.4.9-b.)
4. If the respondent is absent from the University during the semester of the grievance hearing or no longer employed by the University before the grievance procedure concludes, the hearing process may still proceed. (See GSRR 5.3.6.1.)
5. To assure orderly questioning, the Chair of the Hearing Board will recognize individuals before they speak. All parties have a right to speak without interruption. Each party has a right to question the other party and to rebut any oral or written statements submitted to the Hearing Board. (See GSRR 5.4.10.2.)
6. Presentation by the Complainant: The Chair recognizes the complainant to present without interruption any statements relevant to the complainant's case, including the redress sought. The Chair then recognizes questions directed at the complainant by the Hearing Board, the respondent and the respondent's advisor, if any.
7. Presentation by the Complainant's Witnesses: The Chair recognizes the complainant's witnesses, if any, to present, without interruption, any statement directly relevant to the complainant's case. The Chair then recognizes questions directed at the witnesses by the Hearing Board, the respondent, and the respondent's advisor, if any.
8. Presentation by the Respondent: The Chair recognizes the respondent to present without interruption any statements relevant to the respondent's case. The Chair then recognizes questions directed at the respondent by the Hearing Board, the complainant, and the complainant's advisor, if any.
9. Presentation by the Respondent's Witnesses: The Chair recognizes the respondent's witnesses, if any, to present, without interruption, and statement directly relevant to the respondent's case. The Chair then recognizes questions directed at the witnesses by the Hearing Board, the complainant, and the complainant's advisor, if any.
10. Rebuttal and Closing Statement by Complainant: The complainant refutes statements by the respondent, the respondent's witnesses and advisor, if any, and presents a final summary statement.
11. Rebuttal and Closing Statement by Respondent: The respondent refutes statements by the complainant, the complainant's witnesses and advisor, if any, and presents a final summary statement.
12. Final questions by the Hearing Board: The Hearing Board asks questions of any of the participants in the hearing.

VI. POST-HEARING PROCEDURES

A. Deliberation:

After all evidence has been presented, with full opportunity for explanations, questions and rebuttal, the Chair of the Hearing Board shall excuse all parties to the grievance and convene the Hearing Board to determine its findings in executive session. When possible, deliberations should take place directly following the hearing and/or at the previously scheduled follow-up meeting. (See Section IV.D above.)

B. Decision:

1. In grievance (non-disciplinary) hearings involving graduate students in which a majority of the Hearing Board finds, based on a "clear and convincing evidence," that a violation of the student's academic rights has occurred and that redress is possible, it shall recommend an appropriate remedy to the Department Chair or School Director. Upon receiving the Hearing Board's recommendation, the Department Chair or School Director shall implement an appropriate remedy, in consultation with the Hearing Board, within 3 class days. If the Hearing Board finds that no violation of academic rights has occurred, it shall so inform the Chair or Director. The Chair of the Hearing Board shall promptly forward copies of the final decision to parties and the University Ombudsperson. (See GSRR 5.4.11.)
2. In grievance (non-disciplinary) hearings involving graduate students in which the Hearing Board serves as the initial hearing body to adjudicate an allegation of academic dishonesty and, based on a "clear and convincing evidence," the Hearing Board finds for the student, the Hearing Board shall recommend to the Department Chair or School Director that the penalty grade be removed, the Academic Dishonesty Report be removed from the student's records and a "good faith judgment" of the student's academic performance in the course take place. If the Hearing Board finds for the instructor, the penalty grade shall stand and the Academic Dishonesty Report regarding the allegation will remain on file, pending an appeal, if any to the College Hearing Board within 5 class days of the Hearing Board's decision. If an academic disciplinary hearing is pending, and the Hearing Board decides for the instructor, the graduate student's disciplinary hearing before either the College Hearing Board or the Dean of The Graduate School would promptly follow, pending an appeal, if any, within 5 class days. (See GSRR 5.5.2.2, 5.4.12.3, and 5.5.2.2)

C. Written Report:

The Chair of the Hearing Board shall prepare a written report of the Hearing Board's findings, including recommended redress or sanctions for the complainant, if applicable, and forward a copy of the decision to the appropriate unit administrator within 3 class days of the hearing. The report shall indicate the rationale for the decision and the major elements of evidence, or lack thereof, that support the Hearing Board's decision. The administrator, in consultation with the Hearing Board, shall then implement an appropriate remedy. The report also should inform the parties of the right to appeal within 5 class days following notice of the decision, or 5 class days if an academic disciplinary hearing is pending. The Chair shall forward copies of the Hearing Board's report and the administrator's redress, if applicable, to the parties involved, the responsible administrators, the University Ombudsperson and the Dean of The Graduate School. All recipients must respect the confidentiality of the report and of the hearing board's deliberations resulting in a decision. (See GSRR 5.4.12 and 5.5.2.2)

VII. APPEAL OF THE HEARING BOARD DECISION:

- A. Either party may appeal a decision by the Hearing Board to the College Hearing Board for cases involving (1) academic grievances alleging violations of student rights and (2) alleged violations of regulations involving academic misconduct (academic dishonesty, professional standards or falsification of admission and academic records.) (See GSRR 5.4.12.)
- B. All appeals must be in writing, signed and submitted to the Chair of the College Hearing Board within 5 class days following notification of the Hearing Board's decision. While under appeal, the original

decision of the Hearing Board will be held in abeyance. (See GSRR 5.4.12, 5.4.12.2 and 5.4.12.3.)

- C. A request for an appeal of a Hearing Board decision to the College Hearing Board must allege, in sufficient particularity to justify a hearing, that the initial Hearing Board failed to follow applicable procedures for adjudicating the hearing or that findings of the Hearing Board were not supported by the "clear and convincing evidence." The request also must include the redress sought. Presentation of new evidence normally will be inappropriate. (See GSRR 5.4.12.1, 5.4.12.2 and 5.4.12.4.)

VIII. RECONSIDERATION:

If new evidence should arise, either party to a hearing may request the appropriate Hearing Board to reconsider the case within **30** days upon receipt of the hearing outcome. The written request for reconsideration is to be sent to the Chair of the Hearing Board, who shall promptly convene the Hearing Board to review the new material and render a decision on a new hearing. (See GSRR 5.4.13.)

IX. FILE COPY:

The Chair of the Department shall file a copy of these procedures with the Office of the Ombudsperson and with the Dean of The Graduate School. (See GSRR 5.4.1.)

Approved by Faculty January 16, 2015

[DIRECTORY OF FACULTY AND STAFF FOR THE DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNICATION](#)

<http://comm.msu.edu>

Please select "FACULTY" from the top menu located on this link. The directory of faculty links includes telephone number, email address, office address, degrees received, as well as research interests.

[DROPS AND ADDS](#)

SCHEDULE.MSU.EDU

Information on time frame for drops and adds is now located on the Schedule of Courses. Selecting (clicking on) the section number under the Course Number a pop up box will appear with the dates.

[EMAIL - SETTING UP YOUR MSU NETID ACCOUNT](#)

<https://mail.msu.edu/imp/login.php>

The link <https://mail.msu.edu/imp/login.php> will give you information on the university email system and how to set up your account. You will need to have an email account in order to complete enrollment/registration for courses. When you set up your account please be sure to email the Departmental Academic Programs Office, Mrs. Marge Barkman, with this information. Mrs. Barkman's email address is barkman@msu.edu

This link will also give you information on how to set up your computer, contacts for computer assistance including finding your lost "Password." Please take the time now to familiarize yourself with this site and all its options.

[THE EVALUATION OF PERFORMANCE](#)

A student is expected to make timely progress toward his/her degree requirements meeting the university time limit of 5 years. The student will take the required core courses, and meet the other program course recommendations. If the student encounters a situation where he or she cannot meet a particular requirement he/she should immediately contact the academic advisor in writing. The academic advisor will work with the student to find a suitable alternative. We encourage our students both Plan A and Plan B to participate in faculty research teams, colloquia, professional conferences and other such opportunities. The student is expected to perform in a professional manner with courtesy to his/her instructors, fellow students, and staff.

Also, see section on "Academic Standards for Graduate Students in CAS" for additional pertinent information.

Each Spring the Master's students are evaluated on their academic performance by the Director of the Master's Program. Reviewed are the student's coursework as well as other aspects (if appropriate) such as research team participation and volunteer teacher aid. Future program expectations are recommended in these evaluations, such as selection of committee, program of study, or degree requirements (final oral examinations). The student receives a letter to their MSU email address shortly after the completion of Spring semester. The student's advisor or enrollment officer receives a copy of the evaluation and a copy is placed in the student's academic department file.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

What is an enrollment officer? And what do they do? An enrollment officer is a temporary advisor. Each student is assigned a faculty member to act as his/her enrollment officer for the first semester in the program. He/she is responsible to direct the student in his/her choice of courses the first semester and to select a permanent advisor. Note: The student may select the enrollment officer as his/her advisor, if he/she agrees. The enrollment officer is to be used for only *one* semester. Then the student should select a permanent advisor. The enrollment officer should not continue for multiple semesters.

I hate forms! Why do we need to complete them? The forms are your contractual agreement for fulfillment of your program requirements. If you do not complete the forms in a timely manner you might find that the following occur:

- Your committee may not agree with your program of study and you will have to take additional course work.
- You may think that you are ready to write your thesis or take the comprehensive examination and find that your committee does not agree. Thus delaying the completion of your degree until you have met your committee's expectations.

I want into a class but the computer says I don't meet the restrictions. What can I do? Make sure that you have met the prerequisites in the Description of Courses catalog, <http://www.reg.msu.edu/Courses/Search.asp>. If you feel that you have or they could be waived, contact the Department offering the course for assistance in receiving an override. Once the override is given you will be able to register for the course.

I want to take an independent study. How do I do it? In the Department of Communication you must complete an independent study contract. Forms are located online at: <https://www.reg.msu.edu/read/pdf/indestudyapp.pdf>. Complete all information on the form with the instructor and have the instructor sign the form. Take the form to your enrollment officer or advisor for his/her signature. Now take the completed form to 466 COM to have it processed. Once processed you will be able to register for your independent study computer registration.

Do I have to be registered for credits the semester I defend? You must be registered the semester you defend but it may be for ANY course for a minimum of 1 credit.

I am having legal issues (including items such as rental issues). Is there legal services available on campus? Yes, the Council of Graduate Students offers legal services, <http://asmsu.msu.edu/services/legal-services/> or contact them at 556 E. Circle Dr., Room 307, East Lansing, MI 48824, or call 517 355-8266, or email, info@asmsu.msu.edu.

I have questions about my student health benefits. Please visit the website, <http://www.hr.msu.edu/benefits/studenthealth/index.htm>. **Who do I contact?** The University Human Resources Office will be able to assist you. Their office is located in 140 Nisbet Bldg., telephone 353-4434 ext. 170 or 144.

FUNDING

We realize how difficult it is to support your education. The department's assistantship opportunities are limited. Therefore, we have strived to disseminate any opportunities we have received to you as soon as this information arrives by sending the message via your MSU email account. This happens throughout the semester and even breaks. If you do not receive regular messages from the Marge Barkman, barkman@msu.edu, via the list serve please make certain 1) that you mark her email as "safe" sender in your email accounts (may go to "junk mail" otherwise being it is a list serve) and then if you are still not receiving messages please contact Marge Barkman, barkman@msu.edu, to make certain you are on the listserve.

For other university opportunities and resource information please visit The Graduate School website at <http://grad.msu.edu/funding/>. Opportunities that you may qualify for are Travel Funding Fellowship and Emergency Fellowship Funding.

GETTING STARTED IN THE PROGRAM

The most important step at this point is to set up your University email account. This account setup is simple and can be done online at: <https://mail.msu.edu/imp/login.php>. You will need your PID (Personal Identification Number) and PAN (Personal Access Number) to create this account. These numbers will be found on your letter of acceptance from the Office of Graduate Admission. Once you have completed your account please email this address to me so we can use it for all MSU contacts. My email is barkman@msu.edu.

Second, please review the "Schedule of Courses" website to familiarize yourself with the courses that are available. The website is: <http://schedule.msu.edu/>. You must login on the right side of the page in order to see all information on this site. You will use your Email ID and Password to login.

Your MSU email account will also grant you access to online registration. Because it is your first semester you do not have to be registered prior to orientation. In future semesters you will be required to be registered by the university deadline in order to avoid late fees. If you choose to register now we recommend you contact your enrollment officer (please see your departmental acceptance letter) prior to registration. Normally, all Master's students are recommended to register for COM 820 during their first semester in the program whether you are pursuing the Thesis track (Track A) or Exam Track (Track B). The other possible selections should be made with your enrollment officers suggestions. The online registration link is found on <http://www.reg.msu.edu/ROInfo/Enrollment.aspx>.

GRADUATE LEVEL COURSES DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNICATION

Listed below are the descriptions for the courses eligible for selection for a program of study.

425 Communication in Close Relationships Fall, Spring. 4 credits. Open only to junior, senior or graduate Communication majors. Prerequisite: (COM 225 and COM 300) and completion of Tier I writing requirement. In-depth treatment of current research and of theoretical and methodological issues.

440 Organizational Communication Structure Fall. 4 credits. Open only to junior or senior or graduate students Communication majors. Prerequisite: (COM 240 and COM 300) and completion of Tier I writing requirement. Systems approaches to information processing and communication structures in organizations.

475 Communication Campaign Design and Analysis Fall. 4 credits. Open only to junior, senior or graduate student Communication majors or Health & Risk Communication major and open to students in Public Relations Specialization. Prerequisite: (COM 275 and COM 300) or (ADV 325 and completion of Tier I writing requirement). Design and analysis of campaigns presented through mediated channels including electronic and print media.

803 Introduction to Quantitative Research Methods Fall and Summer. 3 credits. Graduate students Introduction to quantitative social science research methods and applied analyses for understanding research reports and developing graduate level research projects.

815 Organizational Communication I Fall.

3 credits. Graduate students. Emphasis on dyadic and group processes and organizational intervention strategies. Topics include managing diversity, organizational structure, and communication productivity.

820 Communication Theory and Process Fall. 3 credits. Graduate students. New change effective Fall 2004. Role that theory plays in different areas of communication scholarship.

821 Mass Communication Theory and Research Fall and Spring. 3 credits. Graduate Students. Current mass communication research and theories, including exposure patterns, diffusion of news and isocial effects of mass media.

COM 822 Theories of Interpersonal Communication. Fall. 3 credits. Examination of a broad range of theories and research in interpersonal communication. Development of theoretical foundation and demonstration of the utility of interpersonal theories in a variety of contexts.

CAS 825 Mass Communication & Public Health Fall of odd-numbered years. 3 credits. Recommended: Academic or professional background in mass communication and/or health. Health communication campaigns in domestic and international context. Focus on principles of effective communication

CAS 826 Health Communication for Diverse Populations Fall of even-numbered years. 3 credits. Recommended: Academic or professional background in mass communication and/or health. Theory, research, and practice of communicating with specialized populations in clinical and public health contexts. Emphasis on interpersonal and small-group strategies.

828 Cross-Cultural Communication Spring. 3 credits. Graduate students. Problems in communication across cultural boundaries, focusing on the processes, theories, and methods in the study of intercultural communication.

830 Applied Communication Research II Spring. 3 credits. Thesis production. Reporting and evaluation the results of communication research

855 Codes and Code Systems Spring. 4 credits. Graduate Students. Structure and function of verbal and nonverbal communication. Relationship between discourse and context. Generation of meaning through interaction.

860 Persuasion Fall. 3 credits. Graduate Students. Use of messages to gain compliance and effect social change. Persuasion and attitude change from classical theories to contemporary situations.

890 Independent Study Fall, Spring, Summer. 1 to 4 credits. May re-enroll for a maximum of 9 credits. Graduate Students. Approval of department. Individualized study under faculty supervision.

CAS 892 Special Topics Fall, Spring, Summer. 1 to 6 credits. A student may earn a maximum of 16 credits in all enrollments for this course. Open only to graduate students in the College of Communication Arts and Sciences or approval of college. Varied topics pertaining to advanced study of communication processes.

893 Practicum Fall, Spring, Summer. 1 to 3 credits. May re-enroll for a maximum of 3 credits. Communication or Health & Risk Communication Graduate students. Supervised experience in an applied communication or health & risk communication setting.

899 Master's Thesis Research Fall, Spring, Summer. 1 to 6 credits. May re-enroll for a maximum of 14 credits. Communication Graduate students. Master's thesis research.

915 Organizational Com II Spring of odd-numbered years. 3 credits. Recommended: COM 815. Graduate students. Organizational communication structure and information processing. The organization's embeddedness in a larger social environment.

921 Micro and Macro Media Fall of odd-numbered years. 3 credits. Graduate students. Perspectives on media processes pertaining to individuals, groups, and large-scale systems. Topics include cognitive processing of media, public opinion and affective responses to media.

922 Interpersonal Communication Fall. 3 credits. Graduate students. Theory and research in interpersonal communication. Role of communication in processes such as interpersonal influence and relationship development.

CAS 992 Doctoral Seminar Fall, Spring, Summer. 3 credits. May re-enroll for a maximum of 15 credits. Graduate students or permission of instructor. Rotating topics on theoretical and research issues in Communication and/or Mass Media.

GRADUATION AND COMMENCEMENT

www.reg.msu.edu

Application for graduation must be completed by the start of the semester you wish to graduate. The application can be found at the Registrar's website, www.reg.msu.edu, "Graduation and Commencement" or directly online at <https://www.reg.msu.edu/StuForms/GradApp/GradApp.aspx>.

For information regarding the commencement ceremonies please visit - <http://commencement.msu.edu/>

ELECTRONIC SUBMISSION OF THESIS (PLAN A)

<http://grad.msu.edu/etd/>

The Graduate School **only accepts** electronic theses submitted via ProQuest. The instructions for electronic submissions are available from <http://grad.msu.edu/etd/>. The target date for the **FINAL APPROVAL** of an electronic Thesis to the Graduate School for graduating the semester of that submission is FIVE working days prior to the first day of classes for the next semester (see future target dates below). **Be aware that a submission via ProQuest does not mean that the document has been ACCEPTED.** The review process is interactive and final approval can take anywhere from a few hours to weeks, depending upon the extent of the necessary revisions and how diligent the author is when making the necessary revisions.

Electronic Submission's Approval Target Dates.

The deadline dates for **FINAL APPROVAL** of an electronic Thesis to the Graduate School are as follows:

- Fall 2016 -- December 14, 2016
- Spring 2017 - May 10, 2017
- Summer 2017 -- August 22, 2017
- Fall 2017 -- December 20, 2017
- Spring 2018 -- May 9, 2018
- Summer 2018 -- August 21, 2018
- Fall 2018 -- December 19, 2018
- Spring 2019 – May 8, 2019

CHECKLIST FOR MASTER'S STUDENTS WITH FINAL EXAMINATION (PLAN B)

At the beginning of the semester you wish to graduate, complete the University Application for Graduation online at <http://www.reg.msu.edu>. The degree is not conferred the semester of the final oral exam unless the course work is completed.

First, the scheduling of your final defense exam is a committee decision. You must be registered for a minimum of one credit the semester (on campus) that you take your final written examination. This can be any course or even an independent study. Second, contact your committee about getting your examination questions. Please see section in this handbook titled, "Guidelines for M.A. Final Written Exam". Third, once the comprehensive examination is arranged with your committee, please submit Form VI for MASTER'S program, "Eligibility to Hold Final Exam". This should be submitted at least two (2) weeks before the examination is scheduled to take place. Fourth, Take Form VII, "Results of Final Examination", to your advisor & committee members for their signature of approval and grade. Immediately after all signatures of your committee have been completed please deliver this form to 466 Communication Arts, for processing of your degree forms. And finally, go to <http://commencement.msu.edu/> for complete commencement information.

GUIDELINES FOR INTEGRITY IN RESEARCH AND CREATIVE ACTIVITIES

[HTTP://GRAD.MSU.EDU/RESEARCHINTEGRITY](http://grad.msu.edu/researchintegrity)

The Department of Communication wishes to stress the importance of intellectual integrity in all aspects of graduate education and directs you, as a student, to The Graduate School's research and scholarly integrity webpage, <http://grad.msu.edu/researchintegrity>. This page is your guide to resources for teaching responsible conduct of research, scholarship, and creative activities. The website offers resource links to 1) Avoiding Unintentional Plagiarism, 2) Research Integrity Council, 3) Guidelines for Integrity in Research and Creative Activities, and 4) Workshop opportunities for Responsible Conduct on Research. We ask you take the time now (early in your program) to review this information.

GUIDELINES FOR INTEGRITY OF SCHOLARSHIP AND GRADES

[HTTP://SPLIFE.STUDENTLIFE.MSU.EDU/REGULATIONS/STUDENT-GROUP-REGULATIONS-ADMINISTRATIVE-RULINGS-ALL-UNIVERSITY-POLICIES-AND-SELECTED-ORDINANCES/INTEGRITY-OF-SCHOLARSHIP-AND-GRADES](http://splife.studentlife.msu.edu/regulations/student-group-regulations-administrative-rulings-all-university-policies-and-selected-ordinances/integrity-of-scholarship-and-grades)

(QUOTED FROM SPARTAN LIFE ONLINE AUGUST 2015)

The principles of truth and honesty are recognized as fundamental to a community of scholars. The University expects both instructors and students to honor these principles and, in so doing, to protect the validity of University education and grades. Practices that maintain the integrity of scholarship and grades include providing accurate information for academic and admission records, adherence to unit-approved professional standards and honor codes, and completion of original academic work by the student to whom it is assigned, without unauthorized aid of any kind. To encourage adherence to the principles of truth and honesty, instructors should exercise care in planning and supervising academic work. (For complete document please see <http://splife.studentlife.msu.edu/regulations/student-group-regulations-administrative-rulings-all-university-policies-and-selected-ordinances/integrity-of-scholarship-and-grades>).

HUMAN RESEARCH PROTECTION PROGRAM

[HTTPS://HRPP.MSU.EDU/](https://hrpp.msu.edu/)

For Thesis track MA student you will need to complete an application for IRB review in order to collect data using human participants for your thesis. Please discuss this with your advisor/committee director before making application. The IRB application and instructions can be found online at <https://hrpp.msu.edu/>. A good place to start is the "Getting Started" section.

MINIMUM CREDIT LOADS

[HTTP://WWW.REG.MSU.EDU/ACADEMICPROGRAMS/TEXTALL.ASP?SECTION=111#348](http://www.reg.msu.edu/academicprograms/textall.asp?section=111#348)

In order to be considered full-time for academic purposes, Masters students must carry a minimum of 9 credits per semester. Federal agencies such as the Department of Education, Department of Veterans Affairs, and Department of Homeland Security may have separate and distinct full-time status requirements.

RESPONSIBLE CONDUCT OF RESEARCH AND SCHOLARSHIP (RCR)

<http://grad.msu.edu/rcr/>

Graduate Students are expected to participate in 5 hours of Responsible Conduct of Research Training (RCR) seminars during their program. Training is sponsored by the College of Communication Arts & Sciences and through The Graduate School. Notification of such training opportunities are normally advertised via an email notice but can be found online at <http://grad.msu.edu/rcr/>. Note: Graduate Students who participate in grants are required to renew their training yearly with additional 3 hours of workshops each year.

RESEARCH PARTICIPANT POOL

Graduate students in the Communication department have unlimited access to the research participant pool in order to complete master's theses, preliminary papers, and dissertations. They also have access for the completion of independent research projects for which there is a faculty sponsor. The coordinator of the pool is Dr. Brandon Van Der Heide, vdheide@msu.edu, 565 Com Arts, 517 432-1132.

RESEARCH TEAM REQUEST FORM
FOR STUDENTS

Doctoral Students are expected to participate in research activities over the course of their program but Masters students are welcome to join a research team as well. If you are interested, we assign research teams each academic year according to faculty needs and student interests. To gain knowledge of faculty members' current research activities, we recommend that you attend the research team presentations held during the Fall orientation or contact the faculty directly. When you have made your selection please complete the following form.

Please indicate your preferences (first and second) for research team assignment.

RETURN TO MARGE BARKMAN BY Friday of Orientation week or email barkman@msu.edu with your request.

Research team assignments should be distributed via email message by Friday of the first week of the semester.

Your name _____

1st preference _____

2nd preference _____

STUINFO - ACADEMIC, FINANCIAL, AND OTHER ONLINE SERVICES FOR STUDENTS

(To review of records, to view grades, and billing statements)

<https://login.msu.edu/?App=J9500>

STUINFO offers a menu of available student information regarding your records and billing here at Michigan State University. The menu offers information in three different subject areas: 1) Academic, 2) Financial, and 3) Online Services. Academic information includes such items as Enrollment Appointment, Grade Reports, and Courses by Subject to name a few. Financial information includes Financial Aid, Account Details, and "Submit Bill Stub" (even with an assistantship, you are required to return the billing stub even if it reads \$0.00.) This can be done immediately online through this site which keeps you from being dropped from your courses for "nonpayment". And the final category offers a link to the online services such as "application for graduation", "transcript ordering" or "schedule of courses".

SUPPORT FOR GRADUATE STUDENT TRAVEL

The Department of Communication has a fixed dollar amount that we use to support travel for graduate students each year. Each Fall, we contact all graduate students and invite them to request for travel support for the coming academic year. At that time we divide up the available funds based on consideration of three things: 1) the students program (MA or Ph.D.), 2) participation in the conference (presenting a paper or just attending), 3) the prominence of the conference and its centrality to the scientific study of communication, and 4) the geographic location of the conference.

It is essential that students wishing to receive travel support submit their request for all travel during the academic year at the time these requests are solicited in the Fall. Requests submitted after this date will not be considered in allocation of available funds.

Also, available through The Graduate School is a one-time travel funding opportunity. The website is <http://grad.msu.edu/funding/>, under "Overview of Financial Assistance for Graduate Students." The request for funding is limited to \$400.00. We encourage all our students to make application for this travel funding.

TEXTBOOK AVAILABILITY ONLINE

www.schedule.msu.edu

All textbook and other supplies information is now found on the schedule of courses website, www.schedule.msu.edu. "Click" on the section number of the course and a pop up text box will appear with the textbook information.

TRANSCRIPTS, ORDERING OF

<https://www.reg.msu.edu/Transcripts/Transcript.aspx>

If you are a current or recent student please review your records in STUINFO to ensure everything is complete before submitting the transcript request. All information as it is stated in [STUINFO](#) will be reflected on the transcript. All grades, regardless of level (undergraduate, graduate, etc.), will be included on the transcript. To order your transcripts online, your identity must be validated by either your MSU Net ID and password, or using your date of birth and either PID or SSN.

TRANSFER OF CREDITS & PROGRAM TIME LIMITS

As many as 9 semester credits of graduate course work (excluding research and thesis credits) may be transferred into a 30 credit master's degree program from other accredited institutions or international institutions of similar quality, if they are appropriate to a student's program and provided they were completed within the time limits approved for the earning of the degree desired at Michigan State University. The department or school chairperson or director and dean must grant approval. Only courses in which at least a 3.0 grade or its equivalent was received will be considered for transfer.

While in the MA program, the student must seek prior approval from the Permanent Advisor and the MA Committee before enrolling in a graduate course from another institution. The Permanent Advisor must determine whether the MSU Graduate School will accept this course in transfer credit.

Procedure for Processing: An online University Administrative Action form must be processed by our Academic Programs Office to post these courses to your transcript. To transfer courses taken at MSU in another graduate program or Lifelong Education status or Graduate Certificate program, bring written verification from your committee, such as a letter/email or an approved Program of Study form to the Academic Programs Office, Department of Communication, 466 Communication Arts Bldg., and an administrative action form will be processed on your behalf. For course work from another university please follow the procedure above PLUS have an official transcript from the other institution sent to the Communication Academic Program Office. Note: An official transcript is required by the University for processing of the Administrative Action Transfer request. On your Program of Study form you will need to list these transferred courses as "trf" (transferred).

The time limit for the completion of the requirements for the master's degree is five calendar years from the date of enrollment in the first course included for degree certification. Note: If credits that are transferred are before the initial semester in the Masters in Communication at MSU, the semester/year of the transfer credits will be the new start.

TUITION, FEE, TAX AND HOUSING RATES

Students are assessed tuition each semester on the basis of their level, class, residency status, number of credits carried, graduate assistantship status, and beginning year of enrollment. Tuition information can be found at <http://ctrl.msu.edu/COSTudentAccounts/>

STUDENT VETERANS INFORMATION

<http://veterans.vps.msu.edu>

Important information for student veterans can be found on this excellent website.

Revised 8/15/16