MASTERS IN HEALTH & RISK COMMUNICATION HANDBOOK

THE MASTER’S OF HEALTH & RISK COMMUNICATION
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Website: http://cas.msu.edu/programs/graduate-studies/health-and-risk-communication/overview/
# MASTER’S IN HEALTH & RISK COMMUNICATION HANDBOOK

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Our students come from eclectic backgrounds, and seek diverse careers health and risk communication. Thus, the program of study is quite flexible. A typical program of study will consist of 18-19 credits of Required Courses and 14-15 credits of Electives with a minimum of 33 total credits. Electives may be taken either in CAS or in other colleges on campus (though it is strongly recommended that at least two of the electives are taken outside CAS in courses focusing on various aspects of health and medicine). An Practicum/internship is required, 3 credits. Students must also pass a final certifying examination in written form in their last semester in the program. Also, a maximum of 3 independent study credits in addition to Practicum/internship credits will be allowed.

**CORE COURSES**

1) The following courses must be taken: **9 credits**

- CAS 825 Mass Communication and Public Health (3 crs.)
- CAS 826 Health Communication for Diverse Populations (3 crs.)
- EPI 810 Intro to Descriptive & Analytic Epidemiology (3 crs.) or approved substitution

2. One of the following three courses must be taken: **3 credits**

   [Note: It is recommended that this research methods requirement be fulfilled prior to enrollment in EPI 810.]

   - COM 803 or ADV 803, or JRN 803,
   - Or TC 803

3. One of the following two courses must be taken: **3 – 4 credits**

   - JRN 824 Health and Science Writing (3) (Note: not longer offered, please see advisor for substitution, current recommendation, JRN 873)
   - ADV 860 Media Relations (4)

4. **COM 893 - 3 credits.** (Note: Please see section in this handbook titled, “Health and Risk Communication Practicum” for guidelines and application form.)

**ELECTIVE COURSES**

A total of 14-15 elective credits must be selected for your program. Students should select electives in consultation with an advisor. Students are advised to take some of their electives inside CAS to augment their background in communication theory and skills, and at least two electives outside CAS to augment their background in various aspects of public health—economics of health, sociology of health, health policy, health organizations, etc. This is not a requirement, but a strong recommendation.

**CAS Electives**

In general, many jobs in federal and state agencies will require students to be experienced in conducting communication research and program evaluation. Thus, one recommended course of action would be to take an elective course in Evaluation Research (e.g., COM 803) and/or a course in Communication Theory (e.g., ADV 823; COM 828; COM 860; JRN 815; or COM 821) and/or an advanced course in Research Methods or Statistics (e.g., COM 830 – Applied Communication Research II).

Some jobs may also require students to have more substantial training in writing, production, and communication skills. Thus another course of action would be to take one or two elective courses in Communication Campaign Design (e.g., COM 475), News, e.g., JRN 407 or ADV 860), Communication Technologies (e.g., TC 480 or TC 488), Language Dialect Difference in Applied Contexts (CSD 433), or Fundraising (COM 399, when special topics title is "Fundraising."—requires approval of assistant dean) Again, these are only a few of the many CAS courses that may be of interest to students. Students and advisors should feel free to augment this list.
Non-CAS Electives

Outside CAS, there are many courses of potential interest to students in health & risk communication including (but again, not limited to), Please see section titled, “Potential Courses for M.A. Health and Risk Communication Students” for the listing. These courses may be critical in providing students with adequate background in public health and medicine, particularly those students who do not have previous professional experience in health settings.

SAMPLE PROGRAM

[Note] For illustrative purposes only; each student’s program will vary depending upon academic/professional background and interests

Fall Semester Year 1
CAS 825 Mass Communication and Public Health
COM 803 Introduction to Quantitative Research Methods
SOC 472 or other Environmental Toxicology and Society elective

Spring Semester Year 1
Select an Advisor, Committee, and Program of Study no later than the completion of 10 program credits. Forms located later in this handbook.
CAS 826 Health Communication for Diverse Populations
COM 475 Communication Campaign Design and Analysis
SOC 475 or other elective Sociology of Health Care Systems
ADV 860 Media Relations

Summer Semester Year 2
COM 893 Practicum

Fall Semester Year 2
EPI 810 Introduction to Descriptive and Analytic Epidemiology
Elective Credits
JRN 873 Environment, Science & Health JRN Seminar
COM 803 Introduction to Quantitative Research Methods
Certifying Final Examination – Please see your advisor early in the semester to arrange.
*Note: 33 credits minimum to fulfill program requirements but additional credits may be required by committee

FINAL CERTIFYING EXAMINATION

The final certifying examination will be held during the student’s last semester in the program, normally Fall semester of the 2nd year. The examination will consist of a three part examination, with questions based on the core courses of the program, CAS 825 and CAS 826 and your area of interest in Health Communication. The student is recommended to prepare an outline before writing the responses to the questions. Resources used must be included in the form of a bibliography. The exam is designed to be written in ten (10) days. It will be sent out via email and should be returned in email form (preferably as a Microsoft Word attachment) no later than 5pm on the tenth (10th) day. The examination is graded by the student’s faculty committee. The faculty members have two weeks to grade the examination. Results are sent to the student via email from the Academic Programs Office.
The procedures for final certifying examination are as follows:
1) Student must have completed all program required paperwork to proceed to the final certifying examination.
2) The student’s advisor gathers questions from the committee members and submits to the Academic Programs Office at least three (3) days prior to their distribution to the student.
3) Student receives the examination via email and completes them within the 10 day time frame. They should be submitted by 5pm on the 10th day.
4) The committee members will read the examination. At this time committee members can either submit a passing grade or request written clarification to questions they have. If written clarification is requested, the student will have three (3) days to respond (or deadline to be set by the advisor).
5) Committee members will read revisions within the time frame specified by the advisor, and determine a grade for the examination.
6) If the student earns less than a 3.0 on any of the examination questions, an oral examination will be scheduled.
7) The advisor will notify the Academic Programs Office of the student’s passing of the examination.

**ACADEMIC ADVISOR & COMMITTEE**

Students are assigned a “temporary advisor” or “enrollment officer” upon recommendation of admission. This faculty member will act as your advisor during your first semester in the program. After you have completed no more than 10 credits in the program you are required to select an advisor, committee, and program of study. Your advisor and committee members must be selected from the Health and Risk Communication Faculty listing (please see Health and Risk Communication Faculty Listings at the end of this document). Note: Exemptions can be made to this listing by the Director of the Master’s in Health and Risk Communication following university guidelines requiring member be a regular faculty at Michigan State University. Your committee will help in the selection and recommendation of your program of study, and the development and grading of your final certifying examination.

If at some future point there becomes need to change the advisor or a committee member(s) the student must complete the Form IV, Modification of Program (the form is located later section of this document). We request that students notify the faculty member(s) who are being removed from the committee in writing (either email or letter format) of such changes. The new faculty member(s) will be required to sign the Form IV, Modification of Program, to show their approval to join your committee.

**CREDIT TRANSFER**

With your committee’s approval, up to a combined total of 9 semester credits can be transferred from another program/status/or Graduate Level Certificate program to the Masters in Communication. 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, 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. And on your Program of Study form you will need to list these transferred courses as “trf” (transferred).

**THE EVALUATION OF MASTER’S STUDENTS**

Each Spring the Master’s students are evaluated on their academic performance by the Director the Health and Risk Communication Masters Program. Reviewed is the student’s coursework, as well as other aspects (if appropriate) such as research participation. Future program expectations are recommended in these evaluations, such as selection of committee, program of study, or degree requirements (final certifying examination) or time limit
being reached for program. The student receives an email letter 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. Students may challenge the evaluation in writing to the Director Health and Risk Communication Masters Program. A copy of this letter will be kept in the student’s academic department file, located in the Academic Programs Office, 466 Communication Arts Bldg.

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 list serve.

For other university opportunities and resource information please visit The Graduate School website at http://grad.msu.edu/funding/.

GRADUATION

Checklist for Master’s Students with Certifying Examination

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

2. The scheduling of your certifying exam is a committee decision. Please contact your committee early in the semester about getting your certifying examination questions. Please see section in this handbook titled, Final Certifying Examination.

3. You must be registered for a minimum of one credit the semester that you take your certifying examination. This can be any course or even an independent study.

4. Once the certifying examination is arranged with your committee, please have your advisor sign and you submit Form IV, “Eligibility to Hold Certifying Exam.” This should be submitted at least two (2) weeks before the examination is scheduled to take place.

5. Normally the Academic Programs Office will use the email contacts from your committee as Form V, “Results of Certifying Examination. You may wish to check with your advisor and see if they would prefer you circulating this form for their signatures. If so, please return the form to the Academic Programs Office, 466 CAS.

6. Commencement information can be found online at http://commencement.msu.edu/

GUIDELINES FOR INTEGRITY IN RESEARCH AND CREATIVE ACTIVITIES

The Health & Risk Masters Program 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.
RESPONSIBLE CONDUCT OF RESEARCH AND SCHOLARSHIP (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.

It is recommended that students track and report their training yearly during the Graduate Evaluation Reports. To track your training go to https://www.egr.msu.edu/secureresearchcourses/:

1. You enter your login information and sign in.
2. Click "Create/Edit Trainee Account" on the topbar.
3. Click "Edit Account Information."
4. Click "Run Training Courses Report" on the topbar.

This will generate the pdf with your completed training, please print and submit to Department's Academic Programs Office for placement in your academic file and to update your records in the university systems (GRADINFO).

GUIDELINES FOR INTEGRITY OF SCHOLARSHIP AND GRADES

Complete document available one line at: http://splife.studentlife.msu.edu/regulations/student-group-regulations-administrative-rulings-all-university-policies-and-selected-ordinances/integrity-of-scholarship-and-grades

The following statement of University policy addresses principles and procedures to be used in instances of academic dishonesty, violations of professional standards, and falsification of academic or admission records, herein after referred to as academic misconduct. [See General Student Regulation 1.00, Protection of Scholarship and Grades.]

1. 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.

2. If an instructor alleges a student has committed an act of academic misconduct, the instructor is responsible for taking appropriate action. Depending on the instructor's judgment of a specific instance, the instructor may give the student a penalty grade. A penalty grade may be a reduced score or grade for the assignment or a reduced grade for the course. [For a definition of “penalty grade”, see Academic Freedom Report (AFR) 11 and Graduate Students Rights and Responsibilities (GSRR) 8.1.17.]

3. When an instructor gives an undergraduate or graduate student a penalty grade for academic misconduct, the instructor must provide a written description of the details of the academic misconduct to the student and to the student's academic dean. The student's academic dean will add the written description to the student's academic record, where it will remain, unless the student successfully grieves the allegation.

4. In notifying the student's academic dean of the student's act of academic misconduct, the instructor may request the student's academic dean to initiate an academic disciplinary hearing to impose sanctions in addition to, or other than, a penalty grade.

5. When in the judgment of the student's academic dean, a sanction in addition to, or other than, a penalty grade is warranted (e.g., dismissal from a unit or program), the dean may call for an academic disciplinary hearing. In calling for an academic disciplinary hearing, the student's academic dean may act independently or in response to a request by the instructor. [See AFR 7.V, GSRR 5.5.]

6. An undergraduate student accused of academic misconduct may request an academic grievance hearing to contest a penalty grade based on a charge of academic misconduct before the University Academic Integrity Hearing Board. A graduate student accused of academic misconduct may request an academic grievance hearing to contest the allegation before the appropriate hearing board of the department, school, or college in which the alleged academic misconduct occurred. In cases involving academic misconduct, no student may be dismissed from a program of study without an academic disciplinary hearing.
7. On the first offense of academic misconduct, the student must attend an educational program on academic integrity and academic misconduct provided by the Associate Provost for Undergraduate Education and Dean of Undergraduate Studies for undergraduate students and the Dean of The Graduate School for graduate students.

8. In cases involving undergraduate students in which the student’s academic dean, or designee, calls for an academic disciplinary hearing, the student’s academic dean will refer the case to the Associate Provost for Undergraduate Education. The Associate Provost will notify the student in writing of the call for a disciplinary hearing and will invite the student to a meeting to determine the appropriate judiciary for the hearing. [See AFR 7.V.D., E.]

9. In cases involving graduate students in which the student’s academic dean, or designee, calls for an academic disciplinary hearing, the student’s academic dean will refer the case to the Dean of The Graduate School. The Dean of The Graduate School will notify the student in writing of the call for a disciplinary hearing and will invite the student to a meeting to determine the appropriate judiciary for the hearing. At this meeting, the student will be asked to select either an administrative disciplinary hearing conducted by the Dean of The Graduate School or a disciplinary hearing conducted by the college hearing board within the student’s college. In cases of ambiguous jurisdiction involving graduate students, the Dean of The Graduate School will select the appropriate judiciary. [See GSRR 5.5.2 and 5.5.4.]

10. Either party may appeal a decision of an administrative disciplinary hearing or a disciplinary hearing board to the appropriate appellate board. [See AFR 6.IV.A and 7.VII and GSRR 5.5.5.]

CONFLICT RESOLUTION & GRADUATE STUDENT ACADEMIC GRIEVANCE HEARING PROCEDURES

If a conflict should arise between a Masters 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 Masters 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 which is listed below.

The College bylaws for the department are 5.1.2 and for the College resolution,

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 student 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 respondent'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

POTENTIAL ELECTIVE COURSES FOR HRC MA STUDENTS

Consider specializing in a topic (e.g. reproductive health, environment, STDs), a population (e.g. geriatrics, adolescents, family, a minority group), or a theme (e.g. community organizations, marketing, education, international). The listing below contains examples of courses taken by our past majors. You are not limited to this listing but rather are encouraged to look through the course offerings each semester for electives to your interests. Many of these offerings have restrictions or prerequisites that will hold you from registration until you receive an override from the instructor/department. Please contact the department offering the course for instructions on how to obtain an override. Final selection of electives should be in conjunction with your advisor and committee.

ADV 420 – New Media Driver's License
Fall and Spring. 3 credits. Digital communication for advertising and public relations. Using new media, including social media, to effectively market a business or individual to a target audience.

ADV 823 Consumer Behavior Theories
Fall and Spring. 3 credits. Concepts and theories from behavioral sciences applied to consumer decision making. Application of theories to develop consumer behavior research studies, advertising and public relations programs. Interpersonal and mass communication applied to consumer decision making
ADV 830 Seminar in Social Marketing
Spring of every year. 3 credits. In-depth reading and critical thinking about theories and principles in social marketing. Application of theory and empirical research to evaluating and planning social marketing programs.

ADV 836 Media Innovations
Fall. 3 credits. Alternative methods of advertising. Effects of non-traditional advertising strategies on consumers. Theoretical and methodological approaches.

ADV 843 Media Strategy
Spring. 3 credits. Planning, execution, and control of media programs. Theory and techniques of budget allocation including marginal analysis, mathematical programming, simulation and game theory.

ADV 850 Public Relations Management
Fall of every year. 3 credits. Managing public relations campaigns and programs, including research, planning, implementation, and evaluation. Using theory and practice to design strategic public relations programs for clients or sponsoring organizations.

ADV 870 International Advertising
Spring of every year. 3 credits. Recommended: (ADV 826 or concurrently). International dimensions of advertising and other marketing communications. Comparative analysis of economic, cultural, and legal conditions that affect advertising activities. International and foreign media.

ANP 491 Topics in Anthropology
Fall of every year. Spring of every year. Summer of every year. Variable 1-4 Credits, student may reenroll for a maximum of 12 credits in all enrollments for this course. Prerequisite: (ANP 101 or ANP 201 or ANP 203). Recommended: or one 300-level anthropology course. Selected topics in sociocultural anthropology, archaeology, physical anthropology, anthropological linguistics, or medical anthropology.

ANP 834 Medical Anthropology I: Overview
Spring of every year. 3 credits. Restrictions: Approval of department. Note: assumes advanced coursework in Anthropology. Anthropological approaches to the study of sickness, disease, and healing. Medical anthropology as a sub discipline.

CAS 850 Health Informatics
Spring. 3 credits. Open to Doctoral Students in Nursing or with approval. Resources, devices, and methods required to optimize the acquisition, storage, retrieval, and use of information in health and biomedicine.

CAS 892 Special Topics (especially topics, Risk Communication or Health Communication & Technology). Fall. Spring of every year. Summer of every year. Variable 1 to 6 credits. May earn a maximum of 16 credits in all enrollments. Varied topics pertaining to advanced study of communication processes.

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

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

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

EC 498 Economics of Health Care
Fall of odd years. 3 credits. Prerequisite: EC 251H or EC 301. Economic factors in determining health care cost, utilization, quality, and efficiency. Demand and insurance. Comparative health care systems. Public policy issues.

EPI 813 Investigation of Disease Outbreaks
Spring. 3 credits. Open to graduate students in the Epidemiology major or approval of department. Principles of and practice in investigating disease outbreaks.

ESP 801 Physical, Chemical & Biological Processes of the Environment
Fall. 3 credits. Open to all graduate students will approval from instructor. Interdisciplinary concepts in the natural sciences related to environmental problems. Ecology and human health.

ESP 803 Human and Ecological Health Assessment and Management
Fall. 3 credits. Concepts and techniques used to evaluate human and ecological health impacts from anthropogenic activities. Policy formulation and management strategies to mitigate health effects.

HDFS 470 Current Issues in Family & Child Ecology
Fall and spring of every year. 3-9 credits, student may earn a maximum of 9 credits in all enrollments. Restrictions: Open only to juniors or seniors or graduate students. Legislation, current events, and issues affecting families and children. Implications for professional decisions and actions.

HDFS 813 Adulthood and Aging in the Family: Ecological Perspectives
Fall of odd years. 3 credits. Adult development and aging in the contexts of family and community. Family relationships in adulthood and aging.

HNF 840 Human Nutrition and Chronic Diseases
Fall of odd years. 3 credits. Dietary intervention and treatment of chronic diseases: obesity, cardiovascular disease, diabetes, gastrointestinal disorders and cancer.

JRN 872 – Environmental Science & Health Reporting
Fall and Spring. 3 credits. Resources and practical experience in reporting and writing about environment, science and health topics.

JRN 873 Seminar in Health, Science and Environmental Controversies
Spring of even years. 3 credits. News media coverage of health, science and environmental controversies.
JRN 892 Seminar in Journalism
Fall of every year. Spring of every year. 3 credits. A student may earn a maximum of 6 credits in all enrollments for this course. Restrictions: Open only to graduate students in Journalism. Topics vary, please see Course Schedule or contact School of Journalism for topic listings.

MKT 805 Marketing Management
Spring. 2-3 credits. Strategic and decision-making aspects of marketing functions. Analysis, coordination, execution of marketing programs. Development of strategies and tactics. Segmentation, marketing mix, market response modeling, and ethics in a global context.

NUR 891 Selected Topics
Fall of every year. Spring of every year. Credits variable from 1 to 4. A student may earn a maximum of 12 credits in all enrollments for this course. Restrictions: Open only to master’s students in the College of Nursing or approval of college. Override will be required. Selected issues, trends, programs, or theories in nursing.

SOC 424 Organizations and Society
Fall of every year. Spring of every year. 3 Credits, Formal and informal organizations and bureaucracies. Interorganizational relationships. Structural and procedural problems of organizations. Utility of analytical models of organizations.

SOC 475 Health & Society

SOC 838 Comparative Urban Theory
Fall of every year. 3 credits. Restrictions: Open only to graduate students in Sociology or Sociology-Urban Studies. Override will be required. Social theories of urban development and change in international and comparative perspective. Relationship of urban theory to urban experience, practice, and policy in different societies.

SOC 865 Environmental Sociology
Fall of odd years. 3 credits. Restrictions: Open only to graduate students in Sociology. Effects of attitudes, social structure, and policy on the causes and consequences of natural resource depletion, pollution, energy use, growth, and technological risks. Response of movements and policies to environmental problems.

SOC 873 Social Organization of Health and Medicine
Spring of every year. 3 credits. Restrictions: Open only to graduate students in Sociology or Sociology-Urban Studies. Override will be required. Organization, delivery, and financing of health care. Public health systems, professional training and associations, and technology. International comparisons.

ACADEMIC RECORDS
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 COLLEGE OF CAS
http://www.reg.msu.edu/AcademicPrograms/Text.asp?Section=118#s1158

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.

**CATALOGS**

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

The Description of Courses Catalog is available online at: http://www.reg.msu.edu/Courses/Search.aspx

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

http://www.reg.msu.edu/ROInfo/Enrollment.aspx

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.

**DROPS & ADDS**

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.

**FACULTY DIRECTORY**

You will find a complete listing of our health & risk communication faculty along with their research interests, publications, and contact information at http://hrcc.cas.msu.edu/people/

**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 take the certifying 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’ve lost my PAN number. Who can give it to me? If you would like to fax a letter today to the Office of Registrar, you can get your PAN, 517 432-3347. Include with the letter requesting PAN, a copy of your driver’s license, your signature, and request that they call you back (give phone) and they will return your call the same day with your PAN number.

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.aspx. If you feel that you have completed the prerequisites 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.

What is the minimum number of credits I must be registered for to be full time status? Without an assistantship the minimum is 9 credits for full time status. With a ¼ or ½ time assistantship the minimum is 6 credits for full time status. BUT, please confirm this directly with your loan agency to make certain you meet their requirements.

I want to take an independent study. How do I do it? You must complete an independent study contract. Form is available online http://cas.msu.edu/wp-content/uploads/2013/09/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 CAS for further information and processing. Once the form is processed you will be able to register for your independent study by computer or telephone registration. Note: A maximum of 3 credits of independent study in addition to practicum/internship credits are allowed for your program of study.

Do I have to be registered for credits the semester I take my certifying exam? You must be registered the semester you defend but it may be for ANY course.

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 at 328 Student Services or call 517 353-3716.

I have questions about my student health benefits. 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.

**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: www.mail.msu.edu/. 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 Admissions. Once you have completed your email 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/.

Next is registration, please see www.reg.msu.edu. Your MSU email account will also grant you access to registration. Because it is your first semester you do not have to be registered for all your courses prior to orientation but it is highly recommended. 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 program acceptance letter for this name) prior to registration. Normally, all Master’s
students are recommended to register for CAS 825 or CAS 826 during their first semester in the program. There are other possible selections but should be made with your enrollment officer’s suggestions.

**MINIMUM CREDIT LOADS**

**Without Assistantship:**

Minimum number of credits per semester as defined below:

- Master’s Level.................. 9 credits
- Doctoral Level.................... 6 credits

**With Assistantship:**

The academic year encompasses two appointment periods: August 15 – December 31 and January 1 – May 15. Note: Students holding assistantships can be expected to follow these dates, even though the University semester calendar dates may vary. Graduate assistants must be registered each semester in which they hold assistantships. The minimum and maximum credit loads are as follows:

- For a quarter-time graduate assistant, minimum enrollment is 6 credits (including credits in courses numbered 899 or 999); maximum enrollment is 16 credits (excluding credits in courses numbered 899 or 999).
- For a half-time assistant: minimum enrollment is 6 credits (including credits in courses numbered 899 or 999); maximum enrollment is 12 credits (excluding credits in courses numbered 899 or 999).
- For a three-quarter-time assistant: minimum enrollment is 3 credits (including credits in courses numbered 899 or 999); maximum enrollment is 8 credits (excluding credits numbered 899 or 999).

Deviation from the minimum requirements listed above is permitted only in the following cases:

- Summer session, when a 3 credit minimum registration is allowed for all types of assistants, no deviation from the minimum requirements listed above is permitted. Any deviation from the maximum credit load requirements must have the approval of the Dean of the College PRIOR TO REGISTRATION.
- The semester in which the degree is granted, when the student is required to register only for the credits required to complete the degree or for the University minimum registration if all credits for the degree have been completed.

In meeting the credit requirements, graduate assistants should be enrolled in courses that are recognized as being of graduate level unless the student’s department or school has granted written permission for course work constituting an exception to this rule. Visitor credits do not count as part of a graduate assistant’s credit load.

**SPECIALIZATION IN FOOD SAFETY**

[http://socialscience.msu.edu/academic-areas/graduate-specializations/food-safety/](http://socialscience.msu.edu/academic-areas/graduate-specializations/food-safety/)

The graduate specialization in food safety is designed for students who are interested in enhancing the focus of their study on food safety to help solve societal problems. The specialization broadens students’ understanding of: 1) multidisciplinary career possibilities in food safety, 2) new and emerging food safety issues and technologies, 3) public health, 4) the risk of
food borne diseases, 5) human dimensions of food safety, including food laws and regulations, and 6) food microbiology and food borne disease.

The College of Agriculture and Natural Resources, the College of Communication Arts and Sciences, the College of Engineering, the College of Human Ecology, the College of Human Medicine, the College of Natural Science, the College of Social Science, and the College of Veterinary Medicine participate in this graduate specialization. The College of Veterinary Medicine is the primary administrative unit. The specialization is available to students who are enrolled in a master’s degree program in the departments of Agricultural Economics, Agricultural Engineering, Animal Science, Communication, Entomology, Epidemiology, Food Science and Human Nutrition, Horticulture, Large Animal Clinical Sciences, Microbiology and Molecular Genetics, Packaging, Pathobiology and Diagnostic Investigation, Pharmacology and Toxicology, Plant Pathology, and Sociology. For more information, contact the Director of the Health & Risk Communication Program.

STUDENT RIGHTS, RESPONSIBILITIES AND REGULATIONS

http://splife.studentlife.msu.edu/

(ONLINE REFERENCE FOR STUDENT RIGHTS, RESPONSIBILITIES AND REGULATIONS)

This site contains the online catalog, Student Life. This catalog covers topics as “Rights and Responsibilities” of students, and University Regulations. Please take the time now to review for both your interests as well as your responsibilities.

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

(for review of records, financial/loans, and billing statements)

https://ntweb1.ais.msu.edu/StuInfo/

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, Courses by Subject to name just a few. Financial information includes Financial Aid, Account Details, and “Submit Bill Stub” (even with assistantship you are required to return the billing stub even if it read $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”.

TEXTBOOK AVAILABILITY ONLINE

www.schedule.msu.edu/

Through the Schedule of Courses textbook information can be obtained. Please select your course and then “click” on the section number. This will bring a popup box with textbook and supplies information.

TIME LIMIT

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 their academic advisor in writing. The academic advisor will work with the student to find a suitable alternative.

TRANSCRIPTS, ORDERING OF

MSU transcripts cost $5.00 each. Transcripts may be ordered online (secure site) at https://www.reg.msu.edu/StuForms/TranscriptRequest/Transcript.asp
Michigan State University’s health & risk communication program has one trait, of many, of which to be particularly proud: The practical experience its students earn while working toward completion of their Masters’ degree. Students studying telecommunication, advertising, journalism, marketing, and mass media can also supplement their education with an practicum/internship; perhaps one in health communication. An practicum/internship is just one way in which students learn in the “real world,” or what I call life beyond “textbook-land.”

My first practical experience came as a requirement in the class Health communication for Diverse Populations. Along with two partners, I performed formative evaluation for a diabetes prevention project in a Michigan American Indian population. This experience was very enjoyable and opened my eyes to the often difficult tasks in health & risk communication and promotion and taught me valuable lessons about working with diverse populations. Even before this project, however, I was already beginning to search for practical uses of my education. My search lasted longer than expected, but in May of my first year in the Health & risk communication program, I found myself driving fourteen hours toward Atlanta, Georgia to intern at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Years ago, this was merely a dream and now I see it as one of the best experiences of my life.

The old saying, It’s never too early to get started, is more than applicable to the practicum/internship search process. For me, November seemed an ideal time to begin looking for practicum/internships to satisfy the program requirement, but looking back, November was too late to begin. Many established programs have early application deadlines. Additionally, there are many students like you who also want an practicum/internship. A key, therefore, is to begin now preparing the details that are often forgotten or unknown until you begin compiling your applications.

Step one: Create a resume or curriculum vitae (CV). If you already have one, that’s great. Update your resume and have it reviewed by a professor, academic advisor, practicum/internship coordinator, or business professional. Since you are not trying to find a career, the resume or CV should focus on attributes that make you appealing as a potential intern. These qualities include work experience, supervisory or leadership skills, computer proficiency, public speaking experience, research experience and skills, and additional skills that others may lack. At this year’s National Communication Association Conference, various health & risk communication professionals stressed the need for candidates to have media relations coursework and skills, analytic skills, and excellent communication skills. In addition to a resume or CV, organizations may request a portfolio of work, papers, and other documentation of your abilities.

Step two: Seek references. The people whom you choose to write your letters of
recommendation should (1) be well known in the field, if possible; (2) know you both as a person and as a student or employee; and (3) be willing to share their thoughts with you. I requested recommendation letters from a current professor as well as the department chairperson at my undergraduate college. In addition, I asked my employer at the time to write a letter since work experience, work ethic, and responsibility are qualities sought by all intern employers and program directors.

*Step three:* **Research the organization.** Writing a resume, seeking references, writing a purpose statement, and interviewing are much easier when you have researched the organization to which you are applying. You should know the answers to the following three questions before applying for an practicum/internship: (1) Who is responsible for interviewing and/or hiring interns?; (2) Are any former or current MSU students employed by the organization?; and (3) What is the organization’s mission statement?

*Step four:* **Gather transcripts from all colleges and universities you have attended.**

Many practicum/internship programs request transcripts or require information about your academic career. The transcript process can take a very long time, so this request should be made early in the fall semester. Most schools will send unofficial copies to you at no charge, but many programs will request official copies for which you usually pay a small fee to the college or university registrar’s office. Recently, many colleges and universities have made this process less painful by allowing students to request transcripts on-line. This is usually done through the office of the registrar website.

*Step five:* **Prepare an essay or statement of purpose.** Most applications will come with instructions requesting a short essay or narrative about your goals and objectives, experience, reasons for wanting their particular practicum/internship, etc. Although each application will be unique, a general essay written ahead of time will save you a lot of panic around application time. A good essay can be easily altered for different applications. Make sure your essay/purpose statement is creative; remember, you must stand out over all other applicants. It is also a good idea to have one or two people review your essay and give feedback. It is clearly to your advantage to start preparing the essay early in the fall semester.

When it comes to finding work, many people hope that opportunity finds them, falling in their lap when they least expect it. This happens, but not very often. Instead of adhering to this mentality, I decided to seek my own opportunities. This included internet searches, telephone calls to health agencies, speaking with MSU professors, graduate students, former students, and people at other universities and research firms. One fundamental problem I encountered was the disjuncture between my specialization and what was available. In my case, this was the lack of health communication-specific positions advertised. Many practicum/internship programs are geared toward students in public health. While these practicum/internships may be appropriate for you, they are not often advertised to schools of health communication. If you come across a program or position labeled as Public Health, take a minute to look through the description. You may be qualified for its duties and be eligible to apply (unless if specifically states “for students enrolled in an ASPH [Association of Schools of Public Health] program”).
The first approach I took in searching for an practicum/internship was the internet. Large health agencies, both government and private, have health & risk communication departments with their own websites and often post information about practicum/internships and fellowships, or what many call “training opportunities.” Most city, county, and state health departments also have websites that may post practicum/internship opportunities, or at least the names of contact persons. I found that many local health departments did not have an established practicum/internship program, but it is possible to persuade them to create a short-term position. Another internet resource is government job sites, which may take hours to comb through, but are potentially excellent places to find practicum/internship opportunities. Finally, periodically visit all health communication, communication, and public health organization websites (i.e. ICA, NCA, the Health & risk communication Initiative, etc.).

In addition to relying on internet technology, your academic unit may have one staff person who receives notices of upcoming practicum/internships. In my department, this was Marge Barkman, who periodically receives notices of upcoming health & risk communication practicum/internships.

If you are interested in a particular area of research, you may want to think about contacting an author of an article you found interesting or a scholar from another program. If the author’s contact information is not given in the article, they can usually be found through the internet, through association membership lists, or by asking someone on our faculty.

Students who currently work full or part-time can inquire about an practicum/internship at your place of work. This will give you the opportunity to gain experience in an area unique to your current duties.

Perhaps the most beneficial approach to searching, in my case, was talking to people in MSU’s Department of Communication. We are surrounded by the field’s top scholars; they, in addition, know many other top professionals in the field. If there is a particular area of the country in which you would like to spend the summer, ask around, and someone may know of an opportunity. For example, I grew up in Colorado and have family living there, so I began asking if we had any former students or faculty who work there. A suggestion was made to contact Dave Buller, a former doctoral student, with the AMC Cancer Research Center in Denver. It just so happened that he was coming to give a colloquium at MSU the next week. I contacted him, met him after his presentation, sent him my resume, and was eventually offered an excellent opportunity to work on a web-based smoking cessation program. This is just one of the people I contacted after receiving many names from MSU faculty.

If you have taken my advice and prepared your application materials ahead of time, the application process will be much less intimidating. When you receive applications, your biggest task will be completing the information and including the materials you have already prepared. Keep in mind, many of the application instructions will state that you need to make anywhere from two to six additional copies of all materials. Many programs screen applications in stages or through many department directors. One application package I sent required five additional copies. Shipping was expensive, so be
prepared. Don't wait until the last minute to send it. Express mail and overnight shipping can put quite a dent in a graduate student budget! Above all, follow the directions that accompany application materials. Incomplete and incorrectly assembled packets are not accepted for review.

One lesson I learned from my practicum/internship search was that even though I felt unqualified for many of the positions about which I inquired, I ended up receiving offers from every program to which I had applied. Realize that being accepted into your program is your first clue that you are a highly qualified, intelligent individual. Along with your skills, MSU’s reputation is excellent in communication. Therefore, apply for all of the practicum/internships that interest you. There is no maximum to how many applications you may send.

After receiving your application, programs will notify you of their decision. If they don’t, contact them. It never hurts to ask about the status of your application. If they are interested, they may ask you to travel to their facility for an interview. Others will call you for a phone interview. Some programs may not even require an interview, but most want the chance to speak with applicants and learn more than what was in the application and essay. If you are interviewed, be sincere about what you do and don’t know. If you are unfamiliar with terminology used, ask for clarification and give responses such as, “I have not done that but look forward to learning,” or “I have always wanted to learn more about that.”

There are many considerations to make when deciding which practicum/internship position to take.

From the start, you must decide if you are willing to accept an unpaid practicum/internship. Most graduate level practicum/internships pay at least a living stipend, but some programs do not pay at all.

Location is also important, since moving can be expensive. You may want to begin looking for housing options and other visitor’s information if you intend to take a position in another state or country. By the time you receive notice, you will then have a better idea of what costs to expect should you accept the position.

In addition, you should consider the benefits of each position, both educational and practical. Ask for specific written details about the duties involved and the objectives of the program. Request names of current or past interns and contact them about their experiences. Most organizations are happy to provide this service.

Finally, ask yourself if there is the potential for a future job opportunity with the organization. If you are unsure about your future job interests, the practicum/internship is a great way to screen particular fields and meet people who can offer other opportunities or will be excellent resources in the future.

Once you decide which position to accept, be sure to write letters to decline other offers. In these letters, inform them about the position you accepted (this helps them to know more about their applicants) and why it seemed more beneficial. Also thank them for considering you, give them positive feedback about the application process/interview
A practicum/internship experience may be the most essential part of your education. Don’t approach this lightly. A valuable practicum/internship experience will have life-long benefits. I will never forget my experience at the Centers for Disease Control & Prevention, and I would be happy to speak with students who would like more information.

Health & risk communication Practicum/internships: Helpful web sites to get you started

NATIONAL CANCER INSTITUTE
http://www.cancer.gov/researchandfunding/cancertraining/atnci/programs

ASSOCIATION OF TEACHERS OF PREVENTIVE MEDICINE (EARLY DEADLINE)
http://www.atpm.org/prof_dev/fellowships.html

CENTERS FOR DISEASE CONTROL AND PREVENTION
http://www.cdc.gov/Fellowships/

WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZATION
http://www.who.int/employment/internship/en/

Presidential Management Intern Program (Deadline: Oct 31 for the following year)
http://www.pmi.opm.gov/

KANSAS HEALTH INSTITUTE
www.khi.org
ORISE (Oak Ridge Institute for Science and Education)

MICHIGAN WOMEN’S COMMISSION
http://www.michigan.gov/mdcr/1,1607,7-138-4957---,00.html

MICHIGAN DEPT OF COMMUNITY HEALTH
http://www.michigan.gov/mdch

APHA (American Public Health Association)
http://www.apha.org/
Health & Risk Communication Practicum

Master students in Health & Risk Communication must complete an practicum working in a health-related field in an organization of their choice. Although only one practicum is required for credit students are encouraged to volunteer for additional practicum experiences throughout their academic program.

Students register for the practicum/internship after they have successfully completed a minimum of 15 credits of their coursework for the program. In order to successfully complete the practicum/internship requirement, students must work in their practicum position for a minimum of 20 hours per week for at least 14 weeks in the semester of enrollment. Students are required to complete two (2) written assignments (criteria of the written assignments is arranged when completing the “independent study contract” prior to registration, please refer to section in this handbook titled, Guidelines for Integrity in Research and Creative Activities). The written assignments must be submitted to the student’s advisor by the last week of classes the practicum semester. Evaluation and grading of the practicum is based upon input from the employer to the student’s academic advisor. The academic advisor is responsible for the grading of the written assignments and ultimately the grading of the practicum.

Students are required to locate and secure their own practicum experience but may use the resources of our college practicum, 183 Com Arts Bldg. Please contact your advisor the semester prior to the desired semester of registration to arrange an appointment to discuss your interests for practicum/internship opportunities. Once you have secured a practicum/internship you will need a letter from your employer indicating your responsibilities/job description. Take this letter to your advisor to complete the practicum application form (you must be complete in order for you to enroll for practicum credits). Students will be unable to enroll for practicum/internship credits until this form has all required signatures and has been processed by the Academic Programs Office. The student will be registered in practicum credits (COM 893).
# Practicum Application: To be completed with faculty supervisor

## Applicant Information

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<tr>
<th>Semester/Year</th>
<th>COM 803 section #</th>
<th># of Credits</th>
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## Practicum Employer Contact Information

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<th>Supervisor's Name</th>
<th>Supervisor's Email</th>
<th>Supervisor's Phone</th>
<th>Supervisor's Mailing Address</th>
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## 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. Note: A minimum of 2 written assignments required.*

Deadline for Submission of Work

## Signatures

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<th>Student's</th>
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<th>Supervising Faculty's</th>
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FORM I: REQUEST FOR APPOINTMENT OF ADVISOR

Dr. ____________________________ has agreed to serve as my advisor.

________________________________          __________________________________
Student’s name — please print          Student’s signature

________________________________          __________________________________
Advisor selected — please print          Advisor’s signature          date

APPROVED:

________________________________
Director of MA in Health & Risk Communication          date

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

Revised 8/14
FORM II: REQUEST FOR APPOINTMENT OF EXAMINING COMMITTEE*

MA students are required to have two (2) committee members plus an advisor.

The following faculty agreed 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 MA in Health & Risk Communication         date

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

Revised 8/14
COLLEGE OF COMMUNICATION ARTS AND SCIENCES
MASTER’S PROGRAM IN HEALTH & RISK COMMUNICATION

MASTER’S FORM III: PROGRAM OF STUDY

The following constitutes the courses to be taken for my ____________________________
Masters in Health & Risk Communication MA program. Print name

Note: Any deviation from this program once approved requires FORM IV (Modification of Program) to be
completed. Courses taken at another institution require an MSU Credit Evaluation form (see
Academic Programs Secretary, 466 Com Arts Bldg).

All of the following Core Courses for a total of 8 credits
CAS 825 (3) Semester _____ Year _____
CAS 826 (3) Semester _____ Year _____
EPI 810 (2) Semester _____ Year _____

One of the following: COM 803 (3), or ADV 803, JRN 803 (3), or TC 803 (3):
Course selected: ____________, Credits _____, Semester _______, Year _____

One of the following: JRN 824 (3) or ADV 860 (4): Note: JRN 824 no longer offered please see
advisor for substitution)
Course selected ________, Credits ______ Semester______ Year_____

Practicum (3): COM 893 Semester _____ Year _______

Elective Credits –14 to 16 credits – Please list courses with credits for each, e.g. EPI 811 (1)
Course ________, Credits _____, Semester ________, Year ______
Course ________, Credits _____, Semester ________, Year ______
Course ________, Credits _____, Semester ________, Year ______
Course ________, Credits _____, Semester ________, Year ______
Course ________, Credits _____, Semester ________, Year ______

TOTAL: ________ Note: Minimum of 33 credits Note: a maximum of 3 credits of independent study allowed
(in additional to practicum/internship credits)

_____________________________________      ______________________________________
Student’s signature  date  Advisor’s signature                        date

_____________________________________      ______________________________________
Committee Member’s signature  Committee Member’s signature

APPROVED:

______________________________________________       _____________
Director of MA in Health & Risk Communication      date                                       Revised 8/14
FORM IV: REQUEST FOR MODIFICATION OF THE MASTER’S PROGRAM

The following modifications are recommended in the Master’s program of study for

_____________________________________            __________________
Print Student’s name    PID

___________________________________ _______ __________________________________ ____
Student’s signature    date Advisor’s signature    date

1) CHANGE IN ADVISOR OR COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP (specify change and reason; signature of new advisor/member required)

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<td>Reason:</td>
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Signature of New Member     Signature of New Member

II. CHANGE IN COURSE REQUIREMENTS (specify changes)

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APPROVED:

_________________________  ____________
Director of MA in Health & Risk Communication    date

Revised 8/14
FORM V: ELIGIBILITY TO HOLD FINAL CERTIFYING EXAM

I, ________________________, request to take the Final Certifying Examination on _______ _______.

____________________________________ date
Student’s signature                           date            Advisor’s signature                   date

The Office of Academic Programs, 466 CAS, 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 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:

____________________________________ date
Director of MA in Health & Risk Communication

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

Revised 8/14
COLLEGE OF COMMUNICATION ARTS AND SCIENCES
MASTER’S PROGRAM IN HEALTH & RISK COMMUNICATION

FORM VI: RESULTS OF FINAL CERTIFYING EXAMINATION

This is to certify that _______________________________ has

Print Student’s Name

successfully completed the certifying examination for the M.A. degree in Health & Risk Communication.

GRADE of __________ is awarded.
(Numerical)

______________________________
Advisor’s signature

______________________________
Committee member’s signature

APPROVED:

______________________________
Director of MA in Health & Risk Communication

Revised 8/14