



NORTHERN ARIZONA UNIVERSITY

HANDBOOK for GRADUATE STUDENTS

MASTER of ARTS in COMMUNICATION

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DESCRIPTION OF MASTER OF ARTS IN COMMUNICATION PROGRAM

INTRODUCTION

The Master of Arts in Communication (MACOM) is housed in the School of Communication, a unit within the College of Social and Behavioral Sciences at Northern Arizona University. The Master's program in Communications contains two emphasis areas: Communication Studies and Documentary Studies.

The Communication Studies emphasis prepares students for careers in higher education, government, business, and community service, as well as preparation for PhD programs in Communication and other advanced degrees.

The Documentary Studies emphasis prepares students for today's world of cutting-edge multimedia journalism, nonfiction storytelling, creating your own media business, as well as preparation for PhD programs in cinema and media studies.

The core courses required of both emphases insure that all graduates with an M.A. in Communication have a basic understanding of the scope, theories, and methods of the broad field of communication. The two emphases, and the elective courses available therein, allow for students to explore diverse areas and develop more specialized skills and knowledge.

This handbook is intended as a description of graduate work in the program, as well as a guide to aid you in your progress through the program once you begin. This handbook is only suggestive and is not intended to represent all policies and procedures. Be aware that policies of NAU's Graduate College, Northern Arizona University, and the Arizona Board of Regents supercede any material found herein, although every effort is made to ensure that this handbook is consistent with university and state policies.

Please refer to NAU's Graduate College Policies (<http://nau.edu/gradcol/>) and the relevant NAU Catalog (<http://catalog.nau.edu>) for governing requirements and policies.

If you need further explanation of anything here, you should contact your graduate advisor or the MACOM Graduate Coordinator (comgrad@nau.edu).

GRADUATE STUDY IN COMMUNICATION

To study communication is to study a variety of forms of human symbolic behavior that occurs in interpersonal, small group, organizational, mediated, and public situations. Communication is central to forming relationships, organizing collective behaviors, maintaining and changing cultures, making sense of our social and natural worlds, and fostering understanding among people; it is a fundamental part of our human nature. The study of human communication is based on the assumption that our ability to communicate in an effective and ethical manner is vital to productive human interaction.

Communication scholars are committed to the idea that exploration of diverse understandings of communicative behavior enriches our participation in an increasingly complex and interdependent global society.

As a student in the M.A. in Communication program, you articulate and test your ideas, develop individual abilities, and gain competence in various communicative settings. You acquire knowledge and methods that apply to nearly every aspect of your private and public lives—in the classroom as well as outside it. In consultation with your advisor, you can design a program to meet your interests and needs. Graduate work in communication is rigorous and challenging. You are required to design, carry out, and present independent research and/or creative projects. In doing so, you refine skills in writing, critical thinking and reasoning, presentation and defense of ideas, application of theory to everyday situations, research, and creative expression. An advanced degree is proof that you are capable of designing and following through on projects expected of communication experts.

Although the time involved will vary among individual students based on their existing skills, knowledge, and abilities, a typical three-credit graduate-level course offered in a standard sixteen-week format will generally require nine to twelve (9-12) hours of work each week (including in-class time or the online equivalent, reading, writing, outside research, preparation for in-class activities, et cetera). Summer courses generally involve twenty to thirty (20-30) hours of work each week depending on the length of the course. In addition, completion of a thesis should involve 270 hours (or more) of sustained work, with a project involving 135 hours (or more) of work.

Students who graduate with an M.A. in Communication from Northern Arizona University are fully prepared to enter a doctoral program (in communication or related fields) or to gain employment inside or outside higher education. Our graduate program is small enough to guarantee close contact between faculty and students and large enough to offer a wide variety of experiences for students, including the opportunity to teach, attend and present at professional conferences, and apply classroom knowledge to improve real-world situations. Graduate Teaching Assistantships enable students to gain practical experience and preparation, if so desired, for entering educational professions.

As a graduate student, it is your responsibility to consult with your advisor to develop an appropriate plan of study. You must take the initiative in making sure that your plan meets the requirements of NAU's Graduate College and the M.A. in Communication. However, this handbook should give you some direction, and remember—your advisor is available to help, as is the Graduate Coordinator for the M.A. in Communication.

DEGREE REQUIREMENTS AND PROCEDURES

GENERAL DEGREE REQUIREMENTS

A minimum of thirty-six (36) credit hours is required for graduation with an M.A. in Communication, at least fifteen (15) of which must be numbered 600 or above. All students must also complete at least twenty-four (24) credit hours of formal course work selected in consultation with their graduate advisor—that is, courses other than individualized studies as independent studies, directed readings, research, theses, and projects. All requirements for the master's degree must be completed within six years.

All students are required to complete four “core” courses comprising twelve (12) credit hours:

- COM 600 Communication Theory and Application
- COM 601 Graduate Study in Communication
- COM 603 Qualitative Methods or COM 604 Quantitative Methods
- COM 698 Seminar in Communication Theory

Students in the Documentary Studies emphasis are required to complete two additional courses comprising six credit hours:

- COM 535 (Documentary Skills and Storytelling Practicum)
- COM 550 (Documentary Research Practicum).

All students must select a thesis or project option (described later in this document). Six (6) thesis credits (COM 699) or three (3) project credits (COM 690) are required, though you may end up registering for more of these credits (as explained later in this document).

The remaining credits in both emphases are comprised of elective courses.

Students in the Communication Studies emphasis must complete 18 credits of electives under the thesis option and 21 credits of electives under the project option. The following courses are accepted for elective credit in the Communication Studies emphasis:

CST 503, CST 524, CST 560, CST 565, CST 568, CST 572, CST 575, CST 577, CST 599*, CST 623, CST 685, CST 697, COM 599*, COM 525, COM 530, COM 603, COM 604, COM 605, COM 685, COM 697, and COM 698* (*denotes variable topics courses that can be repeated for credit under a different topic)

In addition, other elective courses, including other courses in COM as well as outside of the School of Communication, can be selected with advisor approval.

Students in the Documentary Studies emphasis must complete 9 credits of electives under the thesis option and 12 credits of electives under the project option. Electives should be selected in consultation with your advisor, and can include courses in COM, CST, or outside of the School of Communication. Note that COM 550 can be repeated for up to nine (9) credits; credits in excess of three (3) can be used as electives (the first

three fulfilling the emphasis requirements).

For both emphases, if you take both COM 603 and COM 604, the first will fulfill your “core” course requirement (see above) and the second can count as an elective. If you take more than one COM 698 (with different topics), you can count up to six (6) additional credits as electives (the first 3-credit course fulfilling the “core” course requirement, see above).

For both emphases, a maximum of nine (9) credit hours outside of Communication (COM) and Communication Studies (CST) may be selected in consultation with a faculty advisor to use as electives in your degree program.

With advisor approval, you may use up to six (6) credits of 400-level courses to count toward completion of your program of study. 400-level courses are generally only allowed when a corresponding graduate-level course is not available during the course of your studies. 400-level courses taken as an undergraduate cannot count toward completion of your graduate coursework. You and your advisor must complete the “Out of Career Enrollment Authorization” section of the “Override Authorization - Audit/Class Links/Out-of-Career” form and submit it to the Registrar after you have enrolled for the class and before you complete the class. This form can be obtained from the Registrar at <https://nau.edu/registrar/forms-and-policies/>. Without completing this form, you will be allowed to enroll for the class and receive a grade, but the course will not count toward your graduate degree.

Students who have taken a specific 400-level course at NAU are generally not allowed to count that course’s 500-level counterpart as part of their graduate degree program.

Finally, all Graduate Teaching Assistants employed in the School of Communication are required to take CST 503 (Communication in Instruction) as one of their elective courses.

In Appendix A (Communication Studies) and Appendix B (Documentary Studies) of this handbook, we have provided a Graduate Program Worksheet for you to use to keep track of your progress and plan your upcoming course registration. These forms are also available in a fillable and savable format on the MACOM website.

In Appendix F of this handbook you will find descriptions of the graduate-level courses we offer. Please be aware that our graduate courses are offered under two prefixes: COM (Communication) and CST (Communication Studies).

Course Formats

The M.A. in Communication offers a combination of face-to-face, blended, and online courses. All students, including those on campus, will end up taking at least one, possibly several, online courses. Most courses specific to the Documentary Studies

emphasis are offered face-to-face; the Documentary Studies emphasis cannot be completed via distance.

Some courses, mostly face-to-face or blended and mostly in CST, are offered in a co-convened format, in which a 400-level (undergraduate) course and its 500-level (graduate) counterpart are taught together, with a separate syllabus and higher levels of work for the graduate students enrolled in the 500-level course. Graduate students in these courses may be called upon to play leadership roles in these classes, helping to facilitate the learning of the undergraduates in the 400-level course.

Part-time and Full-time Status

Students enrolled in the M.A. in Communication have the option of attending full- or part-time. Full-time students normally take three or four classes per semester (9-12 credits) for up to four semesters. Part-time students take fewer credits, usually one or two classes (3-6 credits) each semester. GTAs and others receiving certain forms of financial aid are required to maintain full-time status. Documentary Studies students are on-campus only, while Communication Studies students can complete the program on campus or via distance.

If you are only taking courses via distance (online), then in some semesters you might only be able to register on a part-time basis. The MACOM program is committed to offering a *minimum* of one fully online course each semester. While we typically offer two, three, or more online courses, we do not guarantee sufficient course offerings for distance students to complete the program on a full-time basis in two years. Utilization of electives from outside of COM and CST can assist distance students with moving through the program more quickly, but is limited by the online offerings of other programs at NAU, the availability of those courses to students outside of those programs, and the relevance of those courses to your program of study. The Department of English and the College of Education both offer online courses that are open to graduate students in Communication.

We also sometimes offer blended courses, which combine face-to-face and online learning. Sometimes these courses are offered with face-to-face meetings once each week, face-to-face meetings once each week in the evening for only half of the semester, or face-to-face meetings on a limited number of Saturdays, enabling some students within driving distance of Flagstaff to take blended courses.

We typically offer one graduate-level course each summer, usually online. However, all summer offerings are contingent upon faculty availability and student demand. We generally do not offer any courses in the winter session or the summer pre-session.

Normally, full-time students can expect to complete their graduate program in two years (four semesters), depending on the number of credits completed each semester and sufficient progress toward completion of a thesis or project. Part-time students can expect to complete their course work in six to eight semesters (approximately three to

four years) or more, again depending on the number of credits completed each semester and sufficient progress toward completion of a thesis or project.

Continuous Enrollment Policies

You are expected to pursue your graduate degree with a minimum of interruption and maintain continuous enrollment. If you do not enroll for three consecutive semesters (not including summer), you will be considered withdrawn from the university and must reapply for readmission to resume your degree program.

If you choose to take courses in some terms (semesters) but not others, you should familiarize yourself with NAU's policies regarding continuous enrollment. If you are currently enrolled at NAU or if you have previously attended and have been in attendance for one or more of the previous three fall or spring terms or any intervening summer or winter terms, NAU considers you a continuing student for course enrollment purposes. This means you need not apply for readmission to the university. As a continuing student, you may enroll during any of the published course enrollment periods. If you have not earned credits from NAU for more than three consecutive terms (excluding summer and winter terms), you must apply for readmission to NAU. If you attend NAU only during summer and/or winter terms, you are considered a continuing student if you attend at least one course in each successive (annual) summer and/or winter term from your point of admission.

Even after you have completed all formal courses required for your degree, you may need to use university facilities to carry out a required independent study, thesis research, and/or projects. For the protection of both you and the university, NAU requires that you be enrolled for credit during any term that you use university facilities or require the professional time of faculty members. This includes work on your thesis (COM 699) or project (COM 690).

Continuous Enrollment Relating to Master's Theses (COM 699). When you begin working on a master's thesis (COM 699), the Graduate College expects you to enroll each semester from the time you begin this work until completion of your degree. You must register for a minimum of one (1) credit each fall and spring semester. If you are using research or other university facilities, and/or the professional time of faculty members, you should enroll for at least one (1) credit. During the term you complete and defend your thesis (even if this will be in the summer term), you must also enroll for at least one (1) unit to reflect the increased demands on the time of both faculty and the staff of the Graduate College. You must finish with at least six (6) credits of COM 699, though you might end up with more than six (6) credits of COM 699.

If you do not maintain continuous enrollment after your work has begun on your master's thesis and you do not have an approved leave of absence on file with the Graduate College and wish to resume work, you must submit a new application for admission and register for additional credits of thesis (COM 699) in an amount equal to the number of such credits missed while not maintaining continuous enrollment.

To avoid having to sign up for additional credits after the term in which you defend, you must submit the final approved copies of your thesis to the Graduate College by their submission deadline, typically a few days before the last day of the term in which you complete your defense. If you do not meet this deadline, you must enroll for one (1) credit of thesis (COM 699) credit each term after your defense until you submit your final copies to the Graduate College. For more information, see the Thesis Requirements in the Graduate Degree Requirements section of the NAU academic catalog and the Graduate College website (<http://nau.edu/gradcol/student-resources/theses-and-dissertations/>).

Continuous Enrollment Relating to Master's Projects (COM 690). For the protection of both you and the university, NAU requires that you be enrolled for credit during any term that you use university facilities or require the professional time of faculty members. If you enroll for three (3) project credits (COM 690) in a single term but do not complete the project in that term, you will likely need to register for at least one (1) project credit (COM 690) in any subsequent term in which you are actively working on your project. Consult with your project advisor to determine if such enrollment is necessary. Therefore, while three (3) credits of COM 690 is required to complete your degree, you may end up with more than three (3) credits of COM 690.

Leave of Absence. In extenuating circumstances, you may petition for exception to the continuous enrollment policy. The petition form, which is available on the graduate college website (<http://nau.edu/gradcol/>), must be approved by your advisor and the MACOM Graduate Coordinator and sent to the Associate Dean of the Graduate College for final approval. Your request must be filed and approved before the anticipated absence.

Time Limits

You must complete all requirements for your master's degree within a six-year period. If you take courses from other institutions and transfer them to your program at NAU, they must also be taken within the six-year period. The six-year period begins at the start of the semester in which you take your first course (including transfer courses).

UNIVERSITY DEGREE REQUIREMENTS

Enrollment Status

NAU defines full-time enrollment for graduate students as nine (9) credits during fall and spring terms and the 10-week summer session. The minimum full-time course load is nine (9) credits during fall or spring term, and 16 credits is the maximum (12 credits for graduate assistants). You cannot take more than six (6) credits during any five-week summer session or more than three (3) credits during the pre-session.

You can only carry an overload (more than the maximum units as explained in the

previous paragraph) with the approval of your advisor, the Director of the School of Communication, and the Associate Dean of the Graduate College. To enroll for an overload, you must submit the appropriate approval form when you enroll. This form is available from the Graduate College (<http://nau.edu/gradcol/>).

Transfer Credit and Requirements

If you have been admitted to our graduate program and have earned resident graduate credit at another institution, you can petition the Graduate College to apply such credit toward your graduate degree. Only courses deemed by your advisor to be relevant to your program of study will be accepted.

Transferring credits to a graduate degree program is not done routinely. To be considered for transfer credit, NAU requires that your courses must:

- have been earned at a regionally accredited institution,
- have been earned with a grade of A or B (NAU will accept a pass grade if the course is graded only on a pass-fail basis),
- have been earned within the six-year period required for completing your master's degree at NAU,
- be applicable to a graduate degree at the institution where the credit was earned, and
- meet the Arizona Board of Regents' requirement for credit: A minimum of 45 hours of work is required for each unit of credit.

Finally, the number of credits you transfer from other institutions cannot exceed twenty-five percent (9 credits) of the total minimum of credits (36 credits) required for your master's degree.

Master's students must complete the Petition for Transfer Credit form (available from the Graduate College web site: <http://nau.edu/gradcol/>). Be aware that the Graduate College has the authority to grant final approval for all transfer credits; the Graduate College may deny transfer credits even if your advisor approves them.

Grade Point Average Requirements

If you are working toward a graduate degree, you must maintain a 3.0 grade point average for all courses taken and for all courses required in your plan. No more than six (6) credits of C grades can be counted in a master's degree. A grade below C does not earn graduate credit.

At the time of graduation, if you have earned a cumulative grade point average of at least 3.9 for all courses taken at NAU on your plan of study, you are recognized with the notation "with distinction" on your transcript.

Admission to a program may be denied or revoked for any graduate student who receives unsatisfactory grades. If you have more than six credits of graduate work with

a grade of C or below, or your GPA falls below 3.0, you will be placed on academic probation.

Academic Probation

Students who fail to maintain Good Academic Standing or to meet the Conditional Admission Standards will be automatically placed on academic probation by the Graduate College at the end of each regular academic term for any of the following reasons:

- grades of “D” or “F,”
- 6 or more units of “C” grades,
- GPA below 3.00, or
- failure to meet the Conditional Admission Standards

The MACOM program may also recommend academic probation for failure to meet academic requirements, including Academic Progress, by notifying the student in writing with a copy to the Graduate College of specific failures leading to the recommendation of probation.

A student who is on academic probation is required to meet with her or his advisor to discuss the steps necessary to remediate problems that led to probation and to devise a written action plan. This written action plan must be submitted to the Director of the School of Communication and the Graduate College for final approval. A copy of this plan should be submitted to the MACOM Graduate Coordinator for inclusion in the student’s file.

If a student has not met the terms of the approved action plan or fails a second time to maintain Good Academic Standing, one or both of the following actions will be taken:

- The MACOM may initiate academic dismissal by notifying the student and the Graduate College in writing of the program’s intent to recommend dismissal.
- The student will be blocked from future enrollment.

In Progress

Courses that, by their content and requirements, normally require more time than the term or session for which you have enrolled, can be marked as IP. The following courses are eligible for an IP grade: independent study (697), independent research (685), or thesis (699).

Note that IP is not available for project credits (COM 690). If you do not complete your projects in the term for which you register for them, you will be given an incomplete (I), which must be completed within one calendar year from the end of the term in which you were registered for COM 690 credits or the grade will become a permanent incomplete (I). If you do not complete your projects within this time frame, you will have to register for additional COM 690 credits.

You must be making satisfactory progress in the course to receive a grade of IP. In addition, you must complete the work for an IP grade within two calendar years from the end of the term in which you take the course. If you do not complete the work by that time, the IP grade becomes permanent and may not be changed. Note that you may complete IP grades until the time limit on your academic plan expires.

Incomplete

If you are unable to complete course work in a scheduled course within the term in which you are enrolled, you may petition your instructor to receive a grade of I. If your instructor agrees to give you an incomplete, you and the instructor must complete a written agreement, a copy of which is held in your departmental file, indicating the exact work you need to do to finish the course.

This written agreement must also indicate the date by which you must complete this work, and that date cannot be longer than one calendar year from the end of the term in which you were enrolled in that course. By the end of the time agreed to in writing, your instructor must submit a grade for the course or the grade remains a permanent incomplete. Therefore, you must submit your work in enough time in advance of the one-year time limit in order to allow the instructor to evaluate your work as well as compute and submit your final grade. It is your responsibility, not the instructor's or your advisor's, to make sure you follow through and complete the required work within the specified time frame.

Note that instructors are not required to provide you with an incomplete, and incompletes are generally only provided when (1) there are compelling circumstances that prevent you from completing the required work within the allotted time and (2) you have already completed a substantial portion of the required work for the course. In addition, instructors are not required to give you the full year to complete the work.

Additional Policies and Information

For more information on the above policies as well as other policies governing your graduate study, please refer to the Graduate College Policies on the Graduate College web site (<http://nau.edu/gradcol/>).

SELECTING AN ADVISOR AND GRADUATE COMMITTEE

Temporary Advisor

You will be assigned a temporary advisor during your first semester of enrollment. Your temporary advisor will assist you with course selection and approvals and the selection of a permanent advisor. The MACOM Graduate Coordinator can also assist you with these processes.

In Appendix A (Comm Studies) and Appendix B (Doc Studies) of this handbook we

have provided a Graduate Program Worksheet for you to use to keep track of your progress and plan your upcoming course registration. This form is available in an electronic, fillable format on our website so that you can fill it in as you register for and complete your coursework. Please keep this electronic form updated and ready to share with your advisor in order to streamline the advising process and avoid unforeseen problems.

Selecting an Advisor

While you are welcome to seek advice from any member of the Graduate Faculty in Communication, you should select a specific faculty member to be your permanent advisor—preferably by the time you complete 18 credits of course work (for full-time students, by the end of your second semester).

You will work closely with your advisor in designing and carrying out your plan of graduate study. You should meet with your advisor regularly. However, be aware that it is your responsibility to initiate contact with your advisor to address any problems, concerns, and questions, as well as to ensure you are making appropriate progress in your plan of study. Your advisor is there to assist you with course selection and approvals, choosing the thesis or project option, forming your graduate committee, developing your prospectus (thesis) or proposal (project), and completing your thesis or project. Your advisor also serves as the chair of your thesis or project committee. Your advisor must be a member of the MACOM Graduate Faculty. Identify possible advisors based on compatibility in terms of both expertise (someone whose areas of expertise in terms of subject matter and/or methodology fits with your areas of interest and particularly the anticipated focus of your thesis or project) and someone you believe you can work well with. It is not required that you have taken a course with this faculty member. In Appendix G of this handbook you will find a listing of Graduate Faculty for the M.A. in Communication, including the emphasis or emphases with which they are affiliated and their areas of expertise.

Once you have identified one or more possibilities for a permanent advisor, set up a meeting with the faculty member(s) to discuss the possibility of them being your advisor. Faculty may decline and/or recommend other possibilities. Once a faculty member has agreed to serve, remind her or him to inform the Graduate Coordinator that he or she is your new advisor.

You are not obligated to keep the same advisor for both your course work and your project/thesis. In general, however, most students try to select the same advisor for both. Advisors may be changed, at either the advisor's or the student's initiative, when necessary or appropriate (e.g., due to a change in focus of the student's thesis/project or the lack of availability of the faculty member).

In some situations it may be possible to have a faculty member who is not a member of the MACOM Graduate Faculty serve as the chair of your thesis or projects committee (see below for more about this exception). In these instances, your second committee

member (see below) should be your permanent advisor for the purpose of supervising your overall academic progress through the M.A. in Communication.

Selecting a Graduate Committee

Your master's degree project/thesis committee must be composed of three faculty members:

- your graduate advisor (who must be a member of the MACOM Graduate Faculty), who serves as the chair of the committee;
- a second member from the MACOM Graduate Faculty; and
- a third faculty member who may come from within or outside the MACOM Graduate Faculty (including faculty inside and outside of the School of Communication).
- In some circumstances, a fourth member may be appropriate. The use of non-faculty in such a role, however, should be limited to that of a non-voting member.

You should have your graduate committee in place by the time you begin working with your advisor on your thesis prospectus or project proposal (no later than the beginning of the semester in which you will graduate, but preferably much earlier).

Your second and third members should be selected based on their areas of expertise, though the match need not be as strong as with your chair/advisor. Both the second and third faculty members must be selected in consultation with your graduate advisor. Work with your advisor to identify two or more options acceptable to both of you. Set up meetings with the potential members to discuss the possibility of them being on your graduate committee. Your advisor may wish to approach potential members before you set up these meetings; clarify the exact procedure with your advisor before proceeding. Faculty may decline and/or recommend other possibilities.

Once you have finalized your graduate committee, your advisor is to notify the Director of the School of Communication of the proposed committee and receive approval. The MACOM Graduate Coordinator should be copied on this correspondence.

In some instances, an NAU faculty member who is not a member of the MACOM Graduate Faculty may be approved to serve as the chair of your thesis or project committee. Such exceptions are most appropriate when the outside faculty member possesses the expertise, experience, or research specialization to direct a particular thesis or project. If you, in consultation with a MACOM Graduate Faculty advisor, conclude that an outside faculty member is best suited to serve as the chair of your thesis or projects committee, you must obtain an exception. The outside faculty member generally must hold a terminal degree (e.g., MFA or PhD) and have a research/creative record relevant to your thesis or project. To explore pursuing such an exception, you must first consult with the MACOM Graduate Coordinator. If the Graduate Coordinator determines an exception may be possible, you will need to determine if this outside faculty member is willing to serve. To formally request an exception, provide the Graduate Coordinator with a detailed written rationale for your

preference for the outside faculty member. The Graduate Faculty will review your written request for an exception and the Graduate Coordinator will inform you of the decision. If an exception is approved, the outside faculty member will direct your thesis or project, and your second committee member will generally serve as your permanent advisor for the purpose of supervising your overall academic progress through the M.A. in Communication.

Working with Your Advisor and Committee in the Summer

Be aware that faculty members are not on contract over the summer (i.e., they are technically not employed by the university). Even if they are teaching, they are only contracted to teach one or more specific courses and are not expected to engage in other activities. It is up to individual advisors as to whether they are willing and able to work with you on your project or thesis over the summer. Additionally, it is up to individual committee members as to whether they are willing and able to read and/or attend prospectus/proposal meetings or thesis/project defense meetings over the summer. If working with your advisor on your thesis/project and/or completing your thesis/project over the summer is important to you, be sure to address these issues with your advisor and/or committee members well in advance.

DEGREE OPTIONS

Graduate students in the MACOM program may select one of two options for completing their degree: the thesis track or the project track. You can register for project (COM 690) or thesis (COM 699) credit during any fall or spring semester after receiving permission from your graduate advisor (summer enrollments may be possible—see above section regarding summer work on theses/projects). Completion of the M.A. in Communication requires a minimum of six (6) thesis credits (COM 699) for the thesis track or three (3) project credits (COM 690) for the project track.

The purpose of preparing a master's thesis or master's project is to give you experience in carrying out the kind of research and/or creative activity you can expect to do throughout your professional career. Through this process, we expect you to demonstrate your ability to work independently on a problem and to document your familiarity with the literature in your field, your command of the techniques and principles of research and/or creative production, and your ability to form products that conform to disciplinary standards.

Be aware that both the thesis and project options represent extensive work in terms of both time and skills. Since the thesis option represents a minimum of six (6) units of graduate credit, it should involve a total of at least 270 hours of work—the equivalent of the work and time involved in taking two three-credit graduate-level courses. Since the project option represents a minimum of three (3) units of graduate credit, it should involve a total of at least 135 hours of work—the equivalent of the work and time involved in taking one three-credit graduate-level course. In addition, both options are the culmination of your graduate work, and should demonstrate the skills and abilities

fostered in 30-33 credits of previous or concurrent graduate-level course work. Due to the nature of both options, however, there is often time, energy, skills, and knowledge involved in addition to your prior course work and the time estimate stated above.

Projects and theses often involve unexpected turns of events, unforeseen problems, or additional but necessary work. While working closely with your advisor can help to minimize delays or additional work, the nature of graduate-level research and creative activity is that it is somewhat unpredictable. In addition, faculty have many demands on their time, and can not always provide substantive help on short notice. No one can guarantee that you will complete a thesis or project within a fixed time frame, but we strive to help facilitate your completion of your degree in a timely fashion.

Choosing a Project or a Thesis

A thesis is an original research/creative project that both builds on and adds to the existing body of knowledge in the discipline. Projects, generally, apply existing knowledge to address a problem, situation, or need. This distinction is not mutually exclusive—a thesis can involve application and a project can make contributions to the existing body of knowledge.

The project category is broader and more flexible than the thesis option. A project could be a research project similar to but narrower in scope than a thesis. A project could be oriented toward the production of some product (e.g., a promotional campaign, communication plan, educational curriculum, workshop, web site, video, pamphlet), though you are also expected to produce a written component accompanying this product that explains and justifies the product by using existing research and/or theories.

A thesis usually involves the use of one or more specific research methods (qualitative, quantitative, or critical) involving the collection and analysis of a body of data of some kind. A thesis is grounded in existing literature (research and/or theories), but by definition goes beyond that literature in some way. Most theses could be turned into a research paper to be submitted to an academic journal; this may be the case with projects but is less likely. Documentary theses may vary in form from traditional theses; consult with your advisor about the expectations for such theses.

Once you have registered for thesis credits you must continue to register (and pay) for at least one (1) thesis credit (COM 699) in each fall and spring semester until you are finished. You also must register for at least one (1) thesis credit (COM 699) in the summer if you defend your thesis in the summer term. For the thesis track, you must register for a total of at least six (6) thesis credits (COM 699). For projects, you will likely also have to register (and pay) for at least one (1) project credit (COM 690) during each term in which you are actively working on the project (using university resources or faculty time), including the term in which you defend and complete your project. For the project track, you must register for a total of at least three (3) project credits (COM 690). For either track, you might end up registering (and paying) for more than the minimum

number of credits required.

Theses are published electronically and available in perpetuity through an online repository. This means that a thesis involves additional time, procedures (conforming to the Graduate College's requirements for theses), and expenses (relatively minor fees for the electronic publication process). Projects have a more limited distribution (the School of Communication "library") and steps involved in document preparation are generally less than with a thesis.

Finally, in deciding on the thesis versus project option, you should consider (and discuss with your advisor) your future educational and/or career plans. If you plan to pursue doctoral study in communication or another discipline (or want to keep that open as an option), it is often advisable to complete a thesis. If you have no plans or desires to pursue doctoral-level education and/or if you see yourself as more of a practitioner than scholar/researcher, the project option may be more appropriate. However, someone who completes the project option is still qualified to apply for admission into a doctoral program and some professionals/practitioners may find the thesis option more consistent with their plans or interests.

All other things being equal, the project track is less costly, more flexible, and involves fewer institutional requirements and deadlines. It also requires an additional three-credit elective course in comparison to the thesis track.

Project Option

The project option involves one three-credit project (COM 690).

You must complete a minimum of eighteen (18) graduate credits before enrolling in project credits (COM 690) and can enroll in one or more semesters. To enroll, you must have a graduate advisor, and that advisor must agree that you are ready to enroll for project credits. Work closely with your advisor to determine the appropriate number of project credits to enroll for in any given semester.

If you continue to work on your project beyond the semester in which you enroll for any or all of your three (3) credits, those COM 690 credits will carry a grade of "I" (incomplete), which must be completed within one year of the end of the semester for which you are enrolled or you will have to enroll for additional credits.

Projects must be grounded in scholarship and have a written component. Projects are research-based, but often focus on the application of existing knowledge (research, theories, techniques) to specific problems or situations more than contributing to the existing body of knowledge. Projects may include such types as the creation of a workshop, development of a campaign, design of a message source (website, brochure, et cetera), designing and implementing applied research for an organization, an extended scholarly paper that is appropriate for conference and/or journal submission, or a documentary project.

You should contact your graduate advisor and discuss possible topics for your project. When you and your advisor agree on the project's topic, focus, and purpose, work with your advisor to prepare a proposal that details the project's focus, purpose, goals, justification, use of existing theories or research, the product(s) to be produced, the process for doing so, and timelines. Prior to preparing your proposal, you and your advisor should determine an appropriate style guide to follow (e.g., MLA or APA) as well as the content, format, and length of your proposal.

See Appendix C for suggestions on preparing a project proposal. However, due the variety of types of projects appropriate for this degree, you must work closely with your advisor regarding the content, format, and length of your proposal.

At this point, if you do not already have a complete graduate committee, you and your advisor should work immediately to assemble a complete committee. While you are developing your proposal, you may also wish to consult with your other committee members or your advisor may direct you to do so. Always be sure to keep your advisor "in the loop" as you seek advice or input from your other committee members or other individuals.

The use of human subjects in your project research (interviews, questionnaires, et cetera) may require approval from the Institutional Review Board (IRB)—work closely with your advisor to determine if IRB approval is necessary, and if so prepare the necessary materials and adjust your timeline if necessary.

Once your advisor approves your proposal for your project, that draft will be distributed to the entire project committee for review and a project proposal meeting will be scheduled. Note that committee members should be given the proposal two weeks in advance of the meeting; each committee member has the right to require this two-week review period, regardless of the implications for the student (e.g., delaying graduation, requiring registration for additional credits).

Project proposal meetings are generally scheduled for two hours, though the full time may not be needed. Generally, you will be asked to give a formal presentation of your proposal, followed by questions from your committee members and a discussion between you and your committee members. Be sure to discuss the specific format of this meeting with your advisor well in advance of the meeting itself. Project proposal meetings can generally be held via a conference call if travel to Flagstaff would represent excessive hardship for the student.

Your advisor will seek feedback at this meeting from your committee and formally endorse the project proposal if acceptable to the entire committee. It is common that the outcome of this meeting includes minor or major alterations to your proposed project. If the required changes are substantial, your proposal may need to be revised and another proposal meeting may be required.

After committee approval of the project proposal, continue to work closely with your advisor throughout the development and execution of the project, as well as the production of the written component for the project.

Once the project is completed and a final draft of the project has been approved by your advisor, all committee members will be provided with this draft. With the approval of all committee members, a final project presentation and defense will be scheduled. Note that committee members should be given the approved draft of the project two weeks in advance of the meeting; each committee member has the right to require this two-week review period, regardless of the implications for the student (e.g., delaying graduation, requiring registration for additional credits). In addition, defenses are not to be held during reading week or final exam week unless there are compelling circumstances and all committee members consent.

A project must be presented in a public forum during a regular academic term (fall, spring, summer) for successful completion. The public will be invited to attend and the presentation may be recorded for future reference. Students are required to present their final projects in person on the NAU campus in Flagstaff or some other public location that is acceptable to both the student and the entire projects committee. Students may not present and defend their final projects via conference call or video conference.

Project presentation and defense meetings are generally scheduled for two hours. You will be asked to prepare an approximately thirty-minute presentation. Work closely with your advisor about the requirements for, length of, and other details regarding this presentation. In addition, be sure to discuss the specific format of this meeting with your advisor well in advance of the meeting itself, as what follows is a general description from which there may be variations.

The final project presentation and defense meeting typically begins with a private session in which the committee members consult with each other about the drafts of your project (you and the public may be asked to leave the room for this portion of the meeting). Then you will provide your formal presentation of the project. Time for questions from the public may then be available, at your advisor's discretion. After the presentation (and any questions from the public), the public will be asked to leave the room.

The acceptability of your master's project will be determined by a project defense immediately following the public presentation. The project defense is a meeting (normally attended by only the student and the committee) to discuss possible revisions, additions, and/or edits needed for the final draft. The student's graduate committee will assess the project and be asked to determine satisfactory completion or any changes required for satisfactory completion.

In the defense portion of the meeting, the committee will present questions, concerns, et cetera for the student's response. After this discussion, the student is asked to leave

the room while the committee discusses and evaluates the project and defense. Finally, the student is informed of the outcome: pass with no revisions, pass with minor or major revisions (the most common outcome), or fail. See “Levels of Evaluation” section below for more details.

After the defense, work with your advisor to make the necessary changes and submit completed, bound copies to your advisor. You are to provide, at a minimum, one bound copy of the project to be housed in the School of Communication “library” and one for your advisor; you should also ask your other two committee members if they wish to have bound copies. In addition, you are to provide an electronic copy (typically in PDF format) of each project to your advisor and to the MACOM Graduate Coordinator via email (comgrad@nau.edu). Your advisor will not give you a “P” (pass) on your project credits (COM 690) until all of these final copies are submitted in a format acceptable to your advisor, even if this delays your graduation until the subsequent semester.

The Graduate College does not provide guidelines for project papers, but in general you should follow the thesis guidelines where possible. See the Graduate College website for documents related to proper thesis format (<http://nau.edu/gradcol/>). The written component of the project should include a title page (adapted from the thesis title page format—see Appendix E in this handbook), abstract, and references/works cited section. The written component of your project is to be prepared using 12-point font in a type style such as Times New Roman or Arial. A script type style is unacceptable. Margins, pagination, and other aspects of the document format and style should be in accordance with the style guide identified by your advisor (e.g., MLA or APA). It is important that the left margin be one and one-half inches wide in order to allow for binding. Work with your advisor to determine an appropriate binding and cover for your projects. The responsibility to produce a document that conforms to your chosen style guide and proper usage (grammar, spelling, punctuation, et cetera) is ultimately yours; depending on your capacities, hiring a copy editor may be necessary. The above guidelines can be adjusted by your advisor as necessary when your project takes the form of something other than written discourse—e.g., visual, audio, or audio-visual components—but the principle of providing a complete copy of your final, approved project to the school remains.

Thesis Option

A thesis is an original research project that both builds on and adds to the existing body of knowledge in the discipline. A thesis usually involves the use of one or more specific research methods (qualitative, quantitative, or critical) involving the collection and analysis of a body of data of some kind. A thesis is grounded in existing literature, but by definition goes beyond that literature (existing research and/or theories) in some way. Documentary projects may also qualify as theses; consult with your advisor.

You must complete a minimum of twenty-four (24) graduate credits before enrolling for thesis credits (COM 699) and can do so in one or more semesters. To enroll, you must have a graduate advisor, and that advisor must agree that you are ready to enroll for

thesis credits. Work closely with your advisor to determine the appropriate number of thesis credits to enroll for in any given semester.

If you continue to work on your thesis beyond the semester in which you enroll for any of your six credits, those COM 699 credits carry a grade of “IP” (in progress). These credits will continue to carry the “IP” designation until you have successfully defended your thesis and submitted all final copies to the Graduate College in the approved format. You are required to register for at least one (1) credit of COM 699 in each fall and spring semester until you are finished, and you must enroll for at least one (1) credit of COM 699 in the semester in which you will graduate (i.e., the semester in which you will submit all final copies of your thesis to the Graduate College in the approved format), including summer.

Download the “Checklist for Master’s Students in Thesis Programs” document from the Graduate College website and use it throughout the process outlined below (<http://www2.nau.edu/gradcol/ThesesDiss/ChecklistThesisStudents.pdf>). Early in the semester in which you plan to graduate, review all Graduate College deadlines for submission of theses (<http://nau.edu/gradcol/>).

Begin by contacting your graduate advisor to discuss possible topics for your thesis. During these preliminary conferences with your graduate advisor, you should select a suitable area for research. Several factors help determine the appropriateness of a research topic, such as whether you can readily obtain essential data, whether critical library references and/or technical or specialized equipment are available, whether you can attain significant results within a reasonable time, and whether faculty members with appropriate specialties are available to provide you with proper guidance.

When you and your advisor agree on the topic and focus for your thesis, work with your advisor to prepare a prospectus (a thesis proposal) that outlines the topic, focus, purpose, justification, relevant literature (existing theories, research, methods or approaches), your proposed methodology or plan, and timelines. Prior to preparing your prospectus, you and your advisor should determine an appropriate style guide to follow (e.g., MLA or APA).

See Appendix D for suggestions on preparing a prospectus. However, due to the variety of types of research projects appropriate in the discipline, you must work closely with your advisor regarding the content, format, and length of your prospectus. A prospectus often constitutes what will become the first and second chapters of your thesis, and is therefore typically 15-30 pages in length.

At this point, if you do not already have a complete graduate committee, you and your advisor should work immediately to assemble a complete committee. While you are developing your prospectus, you may also wish to consult with your other committee members or your advisor may direct you to do so. Always be sure to keep your advisor “in the loop” as you seek advice or input from your other committee members or other individuals.

The use of human subjects in thesis research (interviews, questionnaires, et cetera) will most likely require approval from the Institutional Review Board (IRB)—work closely with your advisor to determine if IRB approval is necessary, and if so prepare the necessary materials and adjust, if necessary, your timeline.

Once a final draft of the prospectus is approved by your advisor, the draft will be distributed to the entire thesis committee for review and, with the approval of all committee members, a prospectus meeting will be scheduled. Note that committee members should be given the prospectus two weeks in advance of the meeting; each committee member has the right to require this two-week review period, regardless of the implications for the student (e.g., delaying graduation, requiring registration for additional credits). This meeting should occur no later than the first half of the penultimate semester of your intended graduation (preferably much earlier; depending on the nature of your thesis research, it may need to occur the semester before the one in which you plan to graduate).

Prospectus meetings are generally scheduled for two hours, though the full time may not be needed. Generally, you will be asked to give a formal presentation of your proposals, followed by questions from your committee members and a discussion between you and your committee members. Be sure to discuss the specific format of this meeting with your advisor well in advance of the meeting itself. Prospectus meetings can generally be held via a conference call if travel to Flagstaff would represent excessive hardship for the student.

Your advisor will seek feedback at this meeting from the committee and formally endorse the prospectus if acceptable to the entire committee. It is common that the outcome of this meeting includes minor or major alterations to your proposed research. In the required changes are substantial, your prospectus may need to be revised and another prospectus meeting may be required.

After committee approval of the prospectus, continue to work closely with your graduate advisor throughout the development and execution of the thesis.

Once the thesis is completed to the satisfaction of the student's graduate advisor, all committee members will be provided with a draft of the thesis. With the approval of all committee members, a final thesis defense will be scheduled. Note that committee members should be given the approved draft of the thesis two weeks in advance of the meeting; each committee member has the right to require this two-week review period, regardless of the implications for the student (e.g., delaying graduation, requiring registration for additional credits). In addition, defenses are not to be held during reading week or final exam week unless there are compelling circumstances and all committee members consent. Be aware that late defenses may not leave adequate time to make required revisions to your thesis in time to submit it by the Graduate College's deadline for final submission, typically a few days before the last day of the semester, thereby requiring your to register for an additional thesis credit.

At this time, you should submit the draft of your thesis in approved format to the Graduate College's ETD Coordinator for format review. See the Graduate College website for documents related to proper thesis format (<http://nau.edu/gradcol/student-resources/theses-and-dissertations/>).

The thesis presentation and defense constitutes the second required meeting concerning the thesis, although you and your advisor may schedule more meetings if necessary or appropriate. The acceptability of the thesis shall be determined in a final oral defense administered by the student's graduate committee.

Theses must be presented in a public forum during a regular academic term for successful completion. The public will be invited to attend and the presentation may be recorded for future reference. Students are required to present their theses in person on the NAU campus in Flagstaff or some other public location that is acceptable to both the student and the entire thesis committee. Students may not present and defend their theses via conference call or video conference (by Graduate College policy).

Thesis presentation and defense meetings are generally scheduled for two hours. You will be asked to prepare an approximately thirty-minute presentation. Work closely with your advisor about the requirements for, length of, and other details regarding this presentation. In addition, be sure to discuss the specific format of this meeting with your advisor well in advance of the meeting itself, as what follows is a general description from which there may be variations.

The thesis presentation and defense meeting typically begins with a private session in which the committee members consult with each other about the draft of your thesis (you and the public may be asked to leave the room for this portion of the meeting). Then you will provide your formal presentation of your thesis. Time for questions from the public may then be available, at your advisor's discretion. After the presentation (and any questions from the public), the public will be asked to leave the room.

The acceptability of your master's thesis will be determined by a thesis defense immediately following the public presentation. The thesis defense is an oral examination (normally attended by only the student and the committee) to discuss possible revisions, additions, and/or edits needed for the final draft. Your graduate committee will assess the thesis and be asked to determine satisfactory completion or any changes required for satisfactory completion.

In the defense (oral examination) portion of the meeting, the committee will present questions, concerns, et cetera for your response. After this discussion, you will be asked to leave the room while the committee discusses and evaluates the thesis and your defense thereof. Finally, you will be informed of the outcome: pass with no revisions, pass with minor or major revisions (the most common outcome), or fail. See "Levels of Evaluation" section below for more details.

At the end of the defense, your committee will sign the “Final Oral Examination: Thesis or Dissertation Defense – Part 1 (Pass/Fall Form)” and your advisor will submit it to the Graduate College within 48 hours of your defense. The form submitted must be the original, and signed in blue ink. The form is available from the Graduate College website (<http://nau.edu/gradcol/>) but is only accessible by faculty, not students. Make sure your advisor brings this form to the defense, and bring a blue pen. The form stipulates what revisions need to be completed and who will review the document to insure the revisions are made in a satisfactory manner (typically, this is your advisor, but other committee members may wish to review your revisions as well).

After the defense, work with your advisor to make the necessary changes and edits. The responsibility to produce a document that conforms to your chosen style guide and proper usage (grammar, spelling, punctuation, et cetera) is ultimately yours; depending on your capacities, hiring a copy editor may be necessary. In addition, you are to provide a single electronic file (in PDF format) of your thesis to your advisor and to the MACOM Graduate Coordinator via email (comgrad@nau.edu) before receiving approval from your advisor to submit your final version to the Graduate College.

After you successfully defend your thesis and make all the revisions required by your committee, your advisor will complete the “Verification of Final Thesis/Dissertation Document—Part 2,” verifying that all requirements specified during the oral examination have been met and that the thesis or dissertation is in its final form and ready for publishing. This verification form be submitted to the Graduate College by the Committee Chair and will not be accepted if submitted by a student. Part of completing the verification form involves you and your advisor making choices regarding open access, copyright registration, embargo, and the purchase of bound copies. If you and your advisor have questions about these choices, consult the MACOM Graduate Coordinator and/or the Graduate College website (<http://nau.edu/gradcol/student-resources/theses-and-dissertations/>).

When your advisor gives you final approval, submit the final electronic version of your thesis to the Graduate College’s ETD website (see <http://home.nau.edu/gradcol/thesis.asp> for details) for approval and acceptance by the ETD Coordinator. The Graduate College will not give you a “P” (pass) on your thesis credits (COM 699) until the final copies are submitted in an acceptable format. Only the Graduate College is authorized to assign a passing grade to your thesis credits.

Your thesis should not be submitted prior to the semester in which you plan to graduate. You will receive an email stating that your document has been approved. Retain a copy of the email as confirmation of submission. This submission must be made NO LATER than two days prior to the graduation date. If you are unable to complete your document during the semester in which you defend, you must register for at least one hour of thesis credit (699) each semester after your defense until you submit your final copy electronically to the NAU ETD website. If you do not submit your final copy within six months of the date of your defense, your defense shall be declared invalid and must be repeated.

Levels of Evaluation

There are three levels of evaluation for the defense of the thesis and project. “Pass without revisions” means that there are no final revisions needed for the thesis or project. “Pass with revisions” means that the committee expects either a significant or small amount of revisions to be made to the project or thesis. The committee will determine whether these revisions can be overseen and approved by your graduate advisor alone, or whether other committee members will also review and approve these changes. “Fail” means that the committee finds that substantial work needs to be completed in order for the thesis or project to be accepted or that the student did not follow the requirements for the assignment. If the outcome of the defense is “fail,” another defense will have to be held once the student has revised her or his project or thesis in a satisfactory manner.

APPLICATION FOR GRADUATION

Near the end of the semester before the semester or summer session in which you expect to complete work for the degree, you must file an application for graduation (deadlines are typically May 1 for Fall, December 1 for Spring). If you miss the deadline for submitting your graduation application, your name will not appear in the commencement program but you can still graduate as long as you submit the completed form by the last day of the term in which you intend to graduate.

The first step in applying for graduation is to complete the official Program of Study (POS) form for your degree, emphasis, and catalog year (available through the NAU catalog or by visiting the Graduate College’s graduation page at <http://nau.edu/GradCol/Student-Resources/Graduation/>). Work with your advisor to complete the Program of Study form. Be sure to list all courses already taken, being taken, or yet to be taken to fulfill the degree requirements, including any substitutions. If you end up changing the courses you plan to take the following semester, you will have to upload a revised and signed POS at a later date. If you end up changing your graduation term after you submit your application for graduation, you will have to re-apply and pay the graduation fee again.

Upon completion, the POS form needs to be signed by the student, their advisor, and the COM Graduate Coordinator (for the Director of the School of Communication). These signatures can be done with ink-on-paper or via an email. The signed form (and any email signatures) must then be digitized and uploaded by the student into the appropriate “milestone” in LOUIE. Shortly after the POS is uploaded, a link to the Application for Graduation will appear in the student’s LOUIE account. The student completes this application. For additional information on the process of applying for graduation, visit the Graduate College’s graduation page at <http://nau.edu/GradCol/Student-Resources/Graduation/>.

If you wish to attend commencement (the official graduation ceremony), be aware of the following:

- You may participate in commencement ceremonies for the fall or spring term if you anticipate that you will graduate in that term. If you anticipate graduating in the summer term, you are welcome to participate in the May commencement (before you will graduate) or the December commencement (after you have graduated). In addition, if you anticipate graduating in the fall or spring term and have made the necessary arrangements to participate in that commencement but then determine that you will not actually graduate until a subsequent term, you may still participate in the commencement ceremony as planned or you may delay your participation until the next commencement.
- You will need to obtain the appropriate gown, cap, tassel, and hood for the ceremony.
- As a masters' graduate, you will be "hooded" as part of the commencement ceremony. Ideally, your advisor hoods you. You should notify your advisor of your intent to participate in commencement, and determine if he or she will be able to be present. However, be aware that those in charge of commencement ceremonies, in the interests of efficiency, have often chosen to specifically prevent master's students from being hooded by their advisor, even if their advisor is present and has volunteered to hood master's students.
- Refer to the detailed information about graduation available at <http://www.nau.edu/registrar/graduation/>

APPEALS AND GRIEVANCES

The following appeal and grievance procedures are available for you if the need arises.

ACADEMIC APPEALS

You can petition to have a course grade reviewed, beginning with your instructor. Refer to the Student Handbook for complete policies and procedures for grade appeals (<https://nau.edu/student-life/student-handbook/>).

The Graduate College has a process pertaining to appeals of academic matters other than grade appeals (<https://policy.nau.edu/policy/policy.aspx?num=100103>).

APPEALS OF GRADUATE REGULATIONS

You can petition for an exception to any policy, procedure, or regulation of the Graduate College, in writing, to the Associate Dean of the Graduate College. Your petition should be endorsed by your advisor and the Director of the School of Communication.

GRIEVANCES

For other disagreements, complaints, misunderstandings and grievances at Northern Arizona University, please refer to the Student Handbook: <https://nau.edu/student-life/student-handbook/>.

SAFE WORKING AND LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

The official policy of Northern Arizona University is to prohibit discrimination, to inform individuals of their right to be free from such behaviors, and to promote the safety of all individuals at university sites and activities. For more information, please read the Safe Working and Learning Environment policy at <http://nau.edu/Diversity-NAU/Forms/Safe-Working-and-Learning-Environment-Policy/>.

STUDENT ANTI-RETALIATION POLICY

Students have the right to be free from retaliation. Threats or other forms of intimidation or retribution against a student who files a complaint or grievance, requests an administrative remedy, participates in an investigation, appears as a witness at an administrative hearing, or opposes an unlawful act, discriminatory practice, or policy are prohibited and subject to university disciplinary procedures. If you have a complaint of retaliation, you should use the procedures available under the University Code of Conduct, the Student Code of Conduct, the Student Employee Grievance Procedure, the Sexual Harassment Policy, nondiscrimination policies, or other available administrative procedures as appropriate.

For additional assistance with any appeals or grievance procedures, contact the MACOM Graduate Coordinator, the Director of the School of Communication, the Dean of the College of Social and Behavioral Sciences, the Associate Dean of the Graduate College, and/or the Dean of Students.

GRADUATE ASSISTANTSHIPS, SCHOLARSHIPS, AND TRAVEL AWARDS

Several sources of funding are available to graduate students in Communication at NAU.

Teaching Assistantships. Currently, the School of Communication has approximately nine teaching assistantships (Graduate Teaching Assistantship or GTA) it can award each semester. Each carries with it a stipend of approximately \$10,000 for a nine-month period and a waiver of tuition for the academic year. Five of the GTA positions involve teaching two sections of CST 111, Fundamentals of Public Speaking, each semester. Another involves assisting the Director and Assistant Director of Forensics with the NAU Speech & Debate team. Three others involve teaching courses in CMF (Creative Media and Film) and/or assisting with operations in the School of Communication's Student Media Center (including radio, TV, newspaper, and website). The school provides orientation and guidance for graduate teachers. Additionally, GTAs are bound to the guidelines established by the Graduate College and published in the *Graduate Assistantship Policy Handbook* (http://www2.nau.edu/gradcol/GA/GA_Handbook.pdf).

Teaching assistants are required to be enrolled in no fewer than 9 and no more than 12 credit hours per semester. While an assistantship is generally awarded for a full

academic year, occasionally one will be available at mid-year. Continuation of an assistantship from one semester to the next is contingent on satisfactory progress toward the degree, satisfactory teaching performance, and maintenance of a 3.0 GPA. *Satisfactory progress toward the degree is defined by the Graduate College as including grades of 'B' or higher in each class as well as no incompletes.* Additional information is available from the Graduate College as well as from the MACOM Graduate Coordinator.

Other Assistantships. Other types of Graduate Assistantships (GAs) may also be available in the School of Communication or elsewhere in the university. Contact the MACOM Graduate Coordinator for further information regarding Graduate Assistantships and check the Graduate College web site for available GA positions on campus (<http://nau.edu/gradcol/financing/grad-assistantships/>).

Scholarships. The University has scholarships available for graduate students. You should contact the Office of Financial Aid and the NAU Graduate College for information on such scholarships (<http://nau.edu/gradcol/financing/>).

School Scholarships. The School of Communication has a limited number of scholarships, some of which are available to graduate students (in competition with undergraduate students). Contact the Graduate Coordinator for information about these scholarships, or the Chair of the School of Communication Scholarship Committee. Applications are generally due around February 1 of each year.

Travel Awards. Some funding may be available to support your travel to professional conferences to present your research or creative productions. Links to information about these funding sources are available from the Graduate College web site (<http://nau.edu/gradcol/financing/>). You can also inquire about possible school funding with the MACOM Graduate Coordinator or the Director of the School of Communication.

APPENDIX A

Suggestions for Preparing a Project Proposal

A project proposal is a detailed description of what you will do in your project. Because of the wide range of types of projects that are appropriate for this degree, the content and structure of your proposals will vary widely. Work with your advisor to develop specific parameters for your proposal. In some cases the information in Appendix D regarding preparation of a prospectus will be relevant as well.

Detail the project's focus, purpose/goals, justification, use of existing theories or research, the product(s) to be produced, the process for doing so, and timelines.

Focus

- What is the project about? What is the case or situation to be addressed?
- What larger issues, topics, areas of study, research programs, et cetera will the project involve?

Purpose/Goals

- What is the purpose of the project? What motivates the project?
- What is the desired outcome of the project? What is the product intended to accomplish?

Justification/Significance/Value

- Why is this a valuable project to do? Who could benefit from it and how?
- Will the project demonstrate the applicability of existing practices, research and/or theories? Will the project add to the existing literature or disciplinary practices in some way?

Use of Existing Practices, Literature, Theories, or Research

- What specific concepts, theories, or research are relevant to your project?
- What existing practices (styles, techniques, processes) will you use in the project? In what way?

Process/Methodology

- Demonstrate how the project will be developed through a systematic, analytic process. What processes and methods will you use to enact your project?
- What primary research methods, if any, will you use (e.g., surveys, audits, textual analyses)?
- Will the project involved the application of existing research? If so, to what and how?

Product(s)

- Is the written component of the project the product, or is there a distinct product or products (e.g., a workshop, communication campaign, or an audio, visual, or audio-visual production) that will be accompanied by a written explanation grounded in communication literature?

APPENDIX B

Suggestions for Preparing a Prospectus

A prospectus provides a detailed outline of the topic, focus, purpose, justification, relevant literature (existing theories and research), proposed methodology (involving data collection and analysis), and timelines for your proposed thesis research. Because of the wide variety of research methods and purposes in the discipline, there is no single model for all types of research. Consult with your advisor and refer to the following two sets of guidelines.

Guide #1

Topic/Focus/Scope

- What are the general topics and specific concepts, behaviors, texts, issues, et cetera to be covered by your research?

Literature Review

- Begin your literature review with a clear preview of the bodies of literature you will review or the main topics that will structure your review.
- Include theories and concepts of relevance to your study.
- Include specific studies of relevance to your own.
- Work to identify the scope, strengths, and weaknesses of the existing research in order to identify any gaps or limitations that your research will somehow fill in or improve upon.

Research Questions or Purpose Statement

- Develop specific questions to be addressed by your research (for quantitative or qualitative research) or a clear purpose statement (for qualitative or critical research). Be as specific as possible in developing your questions or purpose statement, both for the purposes of clarity and in order to develop a manageable focus for your proposed research.
- Use existing research and theories to help guide and justify the development of your questions/purpose.
- Be sure to clearly define the key terms in your research questions (rely on existing definitions whenever possible, or explain why you are redefining key terms).
- Critical/textual studies most often utilize a purpose statement as opposed to research questions per se, as do some qualitative studies.
- Quantitative studies include hypotheses if there is sufficient existing research.

Methodology

- What type(s) of method(s) will you use (quantitative, qualitative, critical)? Why?
- What specific methodology will you use to collect your data? Will you use survey questionnaires, interviews, naturalistic observation, participant-observation, experiments, et cetera? How? Why? Give specific examples related to your chosen methodology: for example, what existing measures will you use, what kinds of questions will you use on a questionnaire or in interviews, what kind of role will you adopt as a participant-observer, what procedures will you follow, in what settings will you observe, how will you design your experiment, how will you recruit/select your sample, how will you choose the text(s) you will analyze?
- What specific methodology will you use to analyze your data? For qualitative

studies, will you use an etic or emic framework for coding qualitative data? For critical studies, what specific critical methodology (method of textual analysis) will you use for analyzing your text(s)?

- How will these methods help answer your research questions or address your purpose statement? Justify your choice of method.
- What limitations to your proposed study do you anticipate given your methods?
- If your proposed research involves human subjects, will you need to obtain explicit informed consent? Why or why not? What risks, if any, might be present for subjects as a result of their participation in your study?

Justification

- Why is the proposed research important and/or valuable?
- How will your research add to the existing body of knowledge on this topic?
- How is this research different (in focus, methodology, assumptions, et cetera) than previous research? If not, why not?

Guide #2

According to Dr. J. Jeffery Auer, Professor Emeritus of Speech Communication at Indiana University, a prospectus "is a document that answers a lot of questions about a research project. For the *researcher* it serves as a guide for future action. For *anyone else* it provides a comprehensive picture of what the research is about." He suggests some specific questions to be answered *by* and *in* the prospectus:

Topic:	What is its title—or working title? What is the problem?
Purpose:	What is the problem, and how will the research resolve it? How will you define it?
Significance:	Why bother? Who cares?
Expectations:	What is the expected end-product? Any idea of ways it may turn out?
Relationships:	With what other problem(s) is it associated? How is it distinguished from related problems? What are its parameters (which is to say, what are its boundaries that set it apart)?
Status:	Has anyone else focused on the problem? What has been found out so far? Has there been research in closely related areas that will be helpful to know about when undertaking this research? Can you summarize—or make an abstract of—each previous and related study?
Method:	What method—or general approach—seems most promising in attacking this problem? Is there an already extant methodology (perhaps from a standard collection, or as used in a previous and similar study)? Or is there at least an organizing metaphor that may help develop an approach?
Resources:	What do you need to do the research: ability to read Spanish? Use of a computer? Library resources? Money? (assuming, of course: motivation).
Design:	What is your overall, complete, sequential, plan of attack? How will you design—plan—your procedure from beginning to completed project?

APPENDIX C
Format for Project Title Page

TITLE OF PROJECT:

SUBTITLE OF PROJECT IF ANY

By Chris O. Student

A Project

Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree of

Master of Arts

in Communication

Northern Arizona University

August 2015

Project Supervisory Committee:

Richard A. Rogers, Ph.D., Chair

Laura Umphrey, Ph.D.

Janna Jones, Ph.D.

APPENDIX D

MA in Communication Graduate Course Descriptions

600-level courses are for graduate students only. Some 500-level courses are sometimes co-convened with 400-level undergraduate courses. Graduate students in co-convened courses are expected to complete work beyond what undergraduates complete, as detailed in the 500-level syllabus. Graduate students may not use the 400-level component of a co-convened course towards their program of study; they must take the 500-level component if it is available.

The courses listed below are divided into three types: regular courses, independent/directed studies, and thesis/project credits.

Regular Courses

- COM 525 *Mass Communication and Human Behavior.* 3 credits. Studies mass communication theories and effects, messages, audience behavior, and the behavioral concomitants of mass communication. Emphasizes the key research and methodologies for studying mass communication and human behavior as well as theoretical perspectives.
- COM 530 *Cultural, Psychological, and Social Aspects of Dress.* 3 credits. Emphasizes the cultural, psychological, and social aspects of dress as an important communication tool, including theoretical approaches central to appearance and dress.
- COM 535 *Documentary Skills and Storytelling Practicum.* 3 credits. In this documentary production crash course students will learn to tell stories in three different mediums: audio, photography, and digital filmmaking. They will produce three professional level documentary stories over the course of the semester, one in each format. Course fee required.
- COM 540 *Communicating Science.* 1 credit. Scientists in many disciplines are increasingly called upon to explain and interpret their work to nonspecialists ranging from journalists and policymakers to the general public. This 1-unit seminar will allow students in a variety of disciplines to experience an intensive, hands-on introduction to effective strategies for communicating science.
- COM 550 *Documentary Research Practicum.* 3 credits. Graduate students work with the course professor in researching, proposing, and creating a professional documentary project. Letter grade only. May be repeated for up to 9 units of credit. Course fee required.
- COM 599 *Contemporary Developments.* 3 credits. Variable/special topics course. Examples: An Introduction to Public Culture, Performance Studies.

- COM 600 *Communication Theory and Application*. 3 credits. Reviews the nature, history and types of communication theory with emphasis upon the use of theory in analysis and problem-solving.
- COM 601 *Graduate Study in Communication*. 3 credits. Focuses on role and development of research in communication studies, including history and status of contemporary scholarship.
- COM 603 *Qualitative Research Methods in Communication*. 3 credits. Graduate level class in qualitative research methods, focusing on contemporary problems and practices of participant observation, interviewing and ethnographic inquiry, and developing background and skills to conduct qualitative research.
- COM 604 *Quantitative Research Methods in Communication*. 3 credits. Students will learn the purpose, application and process of quantitative research methods in the field of Communication.
- COM 605 *Introduction to Documentary Issues, Theories, and Methods*. 3 credits. Graduate level class in learning how to see the world from a variety of interdisciplinary perspectives. Includes a range of documentary work by photographers, filmmakers, oral historians, folklorists, radio documentarians, and writers stressing aesthetic, scholarly, and ethical considerations involved in representing other people and cultures.
- COM 698 *Seminar in Communication Theory*. 3 credits. May be repeated with permission of instructor and graduate advisor. Reading and discussion on selected advanced topics in communication theory. Topics vary each semester. Examples: Environmental Rhetoric, Rhetorical Criticism, Representations and Appropriations of Native American Cultures, Travel and Tourism.
- CST 503 *Communication in Instruction*. 3 credits. Cognitive and experiential understanding of practices, issues, and trends related to the communication process in instructional settings. Includes strategies for managing instructional communication more effectively.
- CST 524 *Gender and Communication*. 3 credits. Surveys communication theories related to the construction of gender, the relationship between gender and contemporary social issues, and research on gender differences in various communication contexts.
- CST 560 *Rhetorical Theory*. 3 credits. Traditional and contemporary theories about public communication. Emphasizes evolution and critical analysis of theories.

- CST 565 *American Political Communication*. 3 credits. Historical and critical study of the role communication has played in American history.
- CST 568 *Communication, Technology, and Society*. 3 credits. Examination of the social implications of communication technologies historically and in the context of contemporary social issues.
- CST 572 *Organizational Communication*. 3 credits. Explores theoretical and practical foundations of organizational communication including culture, networks, ethics, and crisis communication.
- CST 575 *Health Communication*. 3 credits. Theoretical and practical study of communication strategies used to influence individuals and communities. Focuses on physician-patient communication, health campaigns, risk communication, health in media, and telemedicine.
- CST 577 *Mediation and Conflict Management*. 3 credits. Communication strategies in the theory and practice of alternative dispute resolution, including interpersonal conflict, mediation, and negotiation.
- CST 599 *Contemporary Developments*. 3 credits. Variable/special topics course. Example: Documentary Film and Social Change.
- CST 623 *Intercultural Communication Theory*. 3 credits. Provides an overview of research in intercultural communication, including quantitative and qualitative research, theories and concepts, and critical approaches. Emphasis is given to both early development of the field as well as the latest trends.

Individualized/Directed Studies

Individual/directed studies require the prior consent of a faculty member. No more than 6 credits (thesis option) or 9 credits (project option) of these courses can be applied toward the 36-credit hour requirement for the degree.

- COM 685 *Graduate Research*. 1-6 credits. Design and completion of original research under the direction of a graduate advisor.
- COM 697 *Independent Study*. 1-3 credits. Individualized directed study on selected topics.
- CST 685 *Graduate Research*. 1-6 credits. Design and completion of original research under the direction of a graduate advisor.
- CST 697 *Independent Study*. 1-3 credits. Individualized directed study on selected topics.

Thesis & Project Credits

These credits are for completion of either the thesis or project. Enrollment requires permission of your permanent advisor (graduate committee chair). Consult carefully with your advisor about how many credits to register for in any term.

- COM 690 *Communication Project.* 1-6 credits (a minimum of 3 credits must be completed for the project option). Application of research design and critical inquiry in order to solve a communication problem.
- COM 699 *Thesis.* 1-6 credits (a minimum of 6 credits must be completed for the thesis option).

APPENDIX E

MA in Communication Graduate Faculty

- | | |
|---|--|
| <i>Marie Baker-Ohler</i>
(Comm Studies) | <p>Senior Lecturer (Glendale)
 B.A., Business & Organizational Communication, The University of Akron
 M.A., Communication, The University of Akron
 Ph.D., Communication and Rhetorical Studies, Duquesne University
 Research interests include ethics, interpersonal communication, and organizational communication.</p> |
| <i>William Carter</i>
(Doc Studies) | <p>Assistant Professor of Practice
 Creative Media & Film, Journalism. Creative interests include documentary filmmaking, photography, and journalism.</p> |
| <i>Toni DeAztlan Smith</i>
(Doc Studies) | <p>Assistant Professor of Practice
 M.J., University of California, Berkeley
 Creative Media & Film, Journalism. Interests include documentary filmmaking and journalism.</p> |
| <i>Audrey Deterding</i>
(Comm Studies) | <p>Lecturer and Coordinator, Communication Studies
 B.A., Speech Communication and English, McKendree College
 M.A., Speech Communication, Southern Illinois University
 Ph.D., Communication Arts & Sciences, The Pennsylvania State University
 Research interests include interpersonal communication, using qualitative methods</p> |
| <i>Peter Friederici</i>
(Doc Studies) | <p>Associate Professor and Director, Sustainable Communities Program
 B.A., Comparative Literature, Northwestern University
 M.S., Environmental Education, focus in environmental writing, Audubon Expedition Institute/Lesley College
 Research interests include science communication, environmental communication, journalism.</p> |
| <i>Marisa C. Garcia Rodriguez</i>
(Comm Studies) | <p>Lecturer
 B.A., Technical Theatre Arts, California State University Long Beach
 M.A., Communication Studies, California State University Northridge
 Ph.D., Communication: Culture and Mass Communication, & Women Studies Graduate Certificate, University of New Mexico
 Research interests include intersections of race, gender, and media; how mediated narratives create discourses of various identities; mediated narratives on citizenship, immigration, and national identity; the</p> |

representation of Latin@s in mainstream U.S. media; and online communities negotiation of gendered online harassment. Other areas of interest include critical race theory, communication theory, feminist pedagogy and theory, intercultural communication including whiteness studies, and identity and subjectivity.

Dayle C. Hardy-Short
(Comm Studies)

Professor
B.A., University of Montana
M.A., University of New Mexico
Ph.D., Speech Communication, Indiana University
Research interests include American political communication, argumentation and debate, communication education, environmental communication, gender and feminist studies, rhetorical theory and criticism.

Janna Jones
(Comm Studies & Doc Studies)

Professor
B.A., Iowa State University
M.Ed, Ph.D., Communication, University of South Florida
Research interests include cultural and media studies, cultural and critical theory, cultural preservation and the archive, qualitative research methods.

Benjamin Krueger
(Comm Studies)

Lecturer
B.S., Speech Communication, Northern Arizona University
M.A., Ph.D., Communication, University of Maryland
Research interests include political rhetoric, discourse analysis; focused on U.S. political discourse from 1960 to the present; also interested in qualitative approaches to interpersonal communication.

Kurt Lancaster
(Comm Studies & Doc Studies)

Associate Professor
B.A., Principia College
M.A., University of Maine, Orono
Ph.D., Performance Studies, New York University
Research and creative interests include digital filmmaking (documentary and short fiction), digital storytelling, online journalism, performance studies.

Jerome Mahaffey
(Comm Studies)

Lecturer
B.S., Communication Studies, Arizona State University
M.A., Speech Communication, Syracuse University
Ph.D., Communication Arts, University of Memphis
Expertise in rhetorical theory and practice, political rhetoric, mass media. Secondary interests: organizational communication, gender, conflict and mediation.

Norman J. Medoff
(Comm Studies)

Professor and Director, School of Communication
B.S., University of Illinois
M.A., Michigan State University
Ph.D., Mass Communication, Indiana University
Research interests include mass media effects, new technologies in mass media, electronic media pedagogy.

Harun Mehmedinović
(Doc Studies)

Assistant Professor of Practice
B.A., University of California, Los Angeles
M.F.A., Film Directing, American Film Institute
Creative Media & Film, Journalism. Creative interests include filmmaking, writing, photography.

Dorothy Wu Nelson
(Comm Studies)

Lecturer
B.S., Apparel Merchandising, minor in Business Administration, East Carolina University
M.S., Textiles, North Carolina State University
Ph.D., Textile Technology Management, North Carolina State University
Strategic Communication (Merchandising). Research interests include social media and computer-related technology in relation to consumer behavior (i.e., customer loyalty, purchase intentions, word-of-mouth, decision-making), millennial consumer behavior.

Mark Neumann
(Comm Studies & Doc Studies)

Professor
B.A., Central Connecticut State University
M.A., Ph.D., Communication, University of Utah
Research interests include cultural and media studies, documentary studies, qualitative research methods, amateur film, tourism.

Richard A. Rogers
(Comm Studies)

Professor
B.A., Speech Communication, Humboldt State University
M.S., Ph.D., Communication, University of Utah
Research interests include cultural studies, critical rhetorical studies, environmental communication, gender and feminist studies, intercultural communication, media criticism, representations and appropriations of Native American cultures.

Julie Kalil Schutten
(Comm Studies)

Associate Professor
B.A., Northern Arizona University
M.A., University of Nevada, Las Vegas
Ph.D., Communication, University of Utah
Research interests include new social movements, environmental communication, gender studies/feminist theory, critical/qualitative methods.

Short, C. Brant
(Comm Studies)

Professor
B.A., M.A., Idaho State University
Ph.D., Speech Communication, Indiana University
Research interests include American political communication, conflict management and mediation, environmental communication, organizational communication, rhetorical criticism, rhetoric of history.

Swanson, Kristen
(Comm Studies)

Professor
B.S., M.S., Colorado State University
Ph.D., Texas Tech University
Strategic Communication (Merchandising). Research interests include tourism retailing and souvenirs, and merchandising promotion and retail entertainment.

Torn, Jon Leon
(Comm Studies)

Associate Professor
B.S., University of Texas at Austin
M.A., California State University
Ph.D., Rhetoric and Public Culture, Northwestern University
Research interests include media theory and practice, rhetoric and public culture.

Umpfrey, Laura
(Comm Studies)

Professor
B.A., M.A., University of Maine
Ph.D., Communication Studies, University of Arizona
Research interests include communication theory, health communication, persuasion, quantitative methods.

Additional information can be found at <http://nau.edu/sbs/communication/faculty-staff/>