

UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MILWAUKEE
DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNICATION
MASTER OF ARTS PROGRAM
HANDBOOK

2022-2023

On behalf of the graduate faculty, current students, and program alumni, we welcome you and wish you success in achieving your goals in undertaking advanced study in the Master of Arts Program in Communication. This document explains the Master of Arts (M.A.) Program in Communication at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee. The handbook contains:

- Information regarding admissions requirements and procedures;
- Explanations of specific program requirements and options for successfully completing the M.A. program of study;
- Summary of financial aid opportunities and requirements;
- Identification of program personnel and explanations of program governance;
- Forms required for managing the student's M.A. program.

This dated version of the handbook should be retained throughout your M.A. program of study. Please read all parts of the handbook thoroughly; keep it with other important university documents as it is a valuable source of information that you will need to consult while participating in the M.A. program.

In developing the M.A. program, the graduate faculty has attempted to provide a curriculum that allows for both specialized and broadly based programs of study. All students are encouraged to seek the advice of faculty advisors in developing study plans and discussing opportunities for effectively using the program's resources.

The requirements outlined in the Handbook apply to all students entering the program during the 2022-2023 academic year. Students who entered the program prior to June 1st of 2022 should consult an earlier version of the Handbook.

Table of Contents

1. Goals and Objectives	3
2. Admission	4
3. Financial Support.....	5
4. Administration	8
5. Advising	10
6. Graduate Program of Study	11
7. Thesis Option.....	17
8. Master’s Professional Portfolio (MAPP) Option	20
9. Appraisal and Continuation	25
10. Annual Departmental Awards	26
11. Applications to Graduate	28
Independent Study (199),	29
Research Practicum (588/599), Advanced Independent Reading (699), Independent Study (999) Form/Contract.....	29
Request for Appointment of Chairperson of M.A. Committee	30
Proposed Course of Study for Master’s Degree	31
M.A. Portfolio Project (MAPP) Student and Faculty Checklist	32
Thesis Defense Meeting	33
Graduate Assessment Form M.A. Thesis	34
Graduate Assessment Form M.A. MAPP.....	36

1. GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

The Department of Communication offers a Master of Arts degree designed to provide breadth and depth of study in the following area: *Communication Theory and Research with emphasis on Rhetoric and/or Social Science*.

The M.A. program provides preparation for a variety of careers including pursuit of an advanced degree, including the Ph.D. It endeavors to provide students with a framework in which to study communication as a liberal art while creating opportunities for specialization in subject matter areas of particular interest to the individual.

The curricular emphases of the program are embodied in the following program objectives:

1. Provide intensive study in theory and research methodologies appropriate for analyzing and evaluating processes of communication in human interactive settings.
2. Provide intensive study in theory, research methodologies, and practical strategies of public message preparation, analysis and management.

The program strives to integrate conceptual, methodological, and practical concerns in the study of communication so that they can be appreciated in their own right or applied to specific occupational settings. It is the individual student's responsibility to balance these concerns in a program of study designed to meet specific educational needs and objectives.

2. ADMISSION

Admission to the Graduate Program in Communication is granted after a joint consideration of the applicant by the Graduate School and the program. All prospective students must apply through the Graduate School. Consult the Graduate School Bulletin for general requirements and specific application guidelines.

To be admitted into the Graduate Program in Communication in "good standing," you must:

- Meet the general requirements of the UW-Milwaukee Graduate School based on completing the Graduate School's online application including the statement of reasons for graduate study.
- Possess the equivalent of an undergraduate major in communication, speech communication, or related areas.
- Possess an undergraduate grade point average of 3.00 in all communication courses completed or a 3.00 overall undergraduate grade point average.
- Submit three acceptable letters of recommendation from persons capable of judging your capacity for success in a graduate program of study.
- Submit an acceptable sample of written work from an academic and/or professional assignment.

The preceding list corresponds to and is an expansion of information listed on the Department of Communication Graduate Program website. Applicants lacking an appropriate undergraduate major in communication (or related major) may be admitted with deficiencies on the condition that such deficiencies are made up in an assigned program of study that does not count toward the degree.

Applicants without the requisite grade point average may be admitted on a probationary basis.

International students, in addition to satisfying The Graduate School's requirements for English language proficiency, must submit TOEFL scores prior to admission in good standing. This requirement may be waived if: the student received one or more degrees from an institution at which English was the predominant language of instruction or the student presents evidence of significant mastery of written and oral English.

3. FINANCIAL SUPPORT

Some students admitted to the program may obtain financial support through one of the following mechanisms: Graduate School Fellowships, Advanced Opportunity Fellowships, departmental Teaching Assistantships, or Research Assistantships. Students interested in financial support should so indicate on their Graduate School application forms. Requests for Teaching and Research Assistantships must be made directly to the Chairperson of the Department of Communication. All other financial aid requests should be made directly to the Graduate School. Students needing financial assistance in order to attend graduate school are strongly encouraged to acquire and submit all necessary applications materials at the time of their application for admission to graduate school.

University Fellowships

Fellowships are competitively awarded tax-free, grants-in-aid offered to a selected few entering or continuing UWM graduate students. Awards are typically made for an academic year or summer session. The qualitative standards for selection and the limited monies available restrict fellowship awards to only a top few graduate students across campus. Application materials for University Fellowships are available in the Graduate School or the program office (gradschool@uwm.edu). Deadlines for applying are generally early in January or February.

Advanced Opportunity Fellowships

The Advanced Opportunity Program Fellowships are tax free grants-in-aid offered in accordance with university guidelines for assisting minority and economically disadvantaged students on a year-to-year basis. Subject to the availability of funds, deserving students recommended by their respective programs can obtain fellowship support. Application materials for Advanced Opportunity Program Fellowships are available in the Graduate School or the program office (gradschool@uwm.edu). Deadlines for applying are generally in February.

Graduate Teaching Assistantships

The Department of Communication employs graduate students to assist in its instructional programs at the undergraduate level. Student appointments as Graduate Teaching Assistants are made on the basis of departmental need; students are selected according to their level of scholastic achievement, letters of recommendation supportive of instructional capability, and standing in comparison to others requesting assistantships. Contracts for Teaching Assistants usually extend for an academic year (nine months beginning in the Fall term and ending at the conclusion of the Spring term). A .50 Full Time Equivalent (FTE) teaching assignment is considered full-time employment; TAs are discouraged from seeking other employment while employed as TAs in the department. Contact the department chair for the current stipend amount.

Research Assistantships

A Research Assistantship employs the student to aid faculty in conducting research projects. Most Research Assistantships are supported by funds from research grants and contracts, and,

therefore, do not represent a predictable source of graduate student employment. Students will be informed about opportunities for Research Assistantships as we learn of them.

Summer and UWinteriM Teaching

Teaching assistants should understand that employment during the summer or winter session is never assured. All decisions about whether to offer summer/winter teaching opportunities will be based upon the department's determination of curricular needs.

Summer/winter teaching assignments will be made jointly following a committee meeting of the Chair, the Graduate Director, and the concerned course directors.

Criteria

Should the department be able to hire TAs for summer/winter sessions, TAs will be considered based on:

1. Qualification to teach a given course, as determined by course directors. Such decisions may be made based upon current and prior teaching experience with a course and/or format, faculty observation of the TA's performance teaching a given course, and coursework that would prepare the individual for teaching particular course.
2. Input about appropriateness of the instructional assignment, as based upon the assessment of the student's advisor. Advisors will be asked to provide input about whether teaching in summer/winter would have any adverse impact upon the student's academic progression in the program.
3. Seniority in the program. All other things being equal, 3rd year, 2nd year, and then 1st year Ph.D. students receive preference over MA students.
4. Previous selection and teaching of a summer/winter course. In cases when the first two criteria are met, students who have not taught a summer/winter course previously will be ranked higher than students of the same seniority who have previously taught a course.

Process

During the early portions of the fall semester (for winterim) and spring semester (for summer), the Graduate Director will gather input from all graduate TAs regarding their interest in teaching during summer/winter. Once the list of interested TAs is available, TAs will be considered for summer/winter teaching assignments, dependent on the Department's curricular needs.

Students who are interested in teaching during summer/winter must identify their interest in the course as well as notify their advisor to contact the Graduate Director (via email) to provide notification about whether a summer/winter instructional assignment would be consistent with the student's progression in the program.

Upon identification of interested students and compilation of advisor input, the Graduate Director will schedule a meeting with the Chair and course directors to reach decisions about summer/winter teaching assignments.

The committee will first discuss any advisor input prior to making a determination about whether a student should remain on the list of potential summer/winter teaching candidates.

Next, using the criteria identified above, course directors will provide an initial list of individuals whom they have determined are “qualified” for a given course. TAs are identified as qualified will be rank ordered according to seniority in the program. Within each seniority level, students will then be rank ordered by how recently they have taught summer/winter, with students who have taught less recently receiving priority over those with the same seniority who have taught more recently.

4. ADMINISTRATION

Graduate Affairs Committee

The administration of the Graduate Program in Communication is invested in the Graduate Affairs Committee (GAC). The GAC is composed of the: Graduate Director, a minimum of two additional graduate faculty, and one graduate student from the M.A. and Ph.D. programs, respectively, actively pursuing graduate degrees as recommended to the department chair by graduate program students. Student participation on the GAC is limited to actions regarding general policies and procedure of the graduate program; student members may not be involved in any GAC actions involving student assessment. The Graduate Director serves as the Chair of the GAC from year to year and should call the first meetings during each academic year. In the absence of a Graduate Director, the Department Chair will appoint a member of the GAC as an interim Chair until a time when a Graduate Director is selected.

The Graduate Affairs Committee (GAC) is charged with the responsibility of coordinating the Graduate Program in Communication. The GAC represents, for students and faculty, a direct link to the ongoing operation of the department's graduate degree programs. Students, for example, can request that the GAC (through its Chair) reconsider decisions about admission, program requirements attendant to a program of study, academic probation, or dismissal from the program for academic performance. The faculty can address its concerns or suggestions for the program by forwarding suggestions, recommendations or proposals for review and action to the GAC. The GAC, on an annual basis, may designate membership on subcommittees focused on program administration. As with all department matters, GAC changes to policy or procedure are subject to review and approval by the Graduate Faculty.

With regard to the doctoral program, the GAC is also charged with auditing Ph.D. students' progress in the program by attending and participating in an annual "portfolio review meeting." During the fall and early part of the spring semester, the Graduate Director will notify Ph.D. students that they must complete and submit a Doctoral Portfolio. The deadline for the portfolios to be submitted is March 15th. The Graduate Director will share portfolio documents with the committee and determine a date/time when the committee can meet for the reviews.

Graduate Director

The Graduate Director is charged with the normal responsibilities associated with administration of the program and chairing the GAC. The Graduate Director is expected to process information and direct it to the GAC when appropriate. The Chair calls committee meetings, sets meeting agendas, maintains committee records and files, and corresponds for the committee in its relationships with campus administration and faculty governance systems. The GAC can, and does, delegate certain tasks associated with the ongoing operations of the program to the Graduate Director.

Duties of Graduate Director for M.A. Program

The Graduate Director is the liaison between the M.A. program in Communication, students, and the community. In this role, they serve as the intake officer for student applications, respond to inquiries about the M.A. program, lead recruitment efforts, manage paperwork related to requests for admission, authorize student admission, and interact with the Graduate School on admissions and other related matters. In cases where the Graduate Director has questions about an applicant's suitability for the program, the Director may consult with the GAC for advice.

For the M.A. program, the Graduate Director functions as the "initial advisor" to all students entering the program and assigns new students to other faculty members who serve as "interim advisors," prior to their selection of a major professor. The Graduate Director is also the "contact person" for information regarding the program's requirements and curriculum for all program students. Student inquiries, requests for requirement waivers and other procedural matters should be directed to the Graduate Director.

5. ADVISING

Graduate program students are exposed to a three-step advising sequence involving the Director as the initial advisor, an assigned graduate faculty member as interim advisor, and a major professor ultimately selected by the student, respectively. Advisors are responsible for monitoring a student's program of study and overall progress and providing direction in regard to the student's educational objectives. Advisors and their roles are described in greater detail below.

Initial Advisor (Graduate Director)

Students entering the Graduate Program in Communication will rely on the Graduate Director as their initial advisor on program of study until an interim advisor is assigned.

Interim Advisor

Upon admission to the program, each student is assigned a graduate faculty member as an interim advisor. Assignments are made by the Director and match students with faculty members with appropriate specialties if possible. The interim advisor is responsible for counseling a student regarding the program of study until the student selects a major professor.

Major Professor

The student must have a major professor to advise and supervise the student's studies as specified in Graduate School regulations. The major professor should be designated by March 15th of the first year using the form titled, "Request for Appointment of Chairperson of M.A. Committee." The major professor directs the committee for the student's summary evaluation (either an M.A. Portfolio Project or thesis).

6. GRADUATE PROGRAM OF STUDY

All aspects of the M.A. program are planned in consultation with a faculty advisor as was explained the preceding section of this handbook. The planning, implementation and completion of the M.A. degree program is generally referred to as the Graduate Program of Study.

M.A. Degree Program Requirements

The minimum degree requirement is 30 credits, including 24 credits taken in the Department of Communication; that is, only a maximum of 6 credits taken outside the department may count toward the total credits required. Students must take 24 of the 30 required credits in courses numbered 700 or above. Other limitations are:

- A **maximum** of 6 graduate credits may be from departments other than Communication, *if* the student's major professor approves those credits as substantially contributing to the student's program *in advance* of enrollment.
- A **maximum** of 6 graduate credits may be earned in courses numbered below 700 (i.e., those designated Undergraduate/Graduate).
- A **maximum** of 6 credits *may* be earned in Communication 860.
- A **maximum** of 3 credits *may* be earned in Communication 998.
- A **maximum** of 3 credits *may* be earned in Communication 999.
- A **maximum** of 9 credits *may* be earned from the **combination** of Communication 998, Communication 999 and courses outside the department.
- If a student elects to do a thesis, 1 to 6 credits of Communication 990 may count toward the degree.

Students must complete either an M.A. Portfolio Project (MAPP) or a thesis.

M.A. Degree Program: Credits and Courses

Required and elective courses available to M.A. program students are listed below.

Required Courses

General

800 Proseminar: The Discipline of Communication, 3 cr

One of the following Methods Courses

700 Quantitative Research in Communication, 3 cr

701 Critical Analysis of Communication, 3 cr

702 Qualitative Research in Communication, 3 cr

770 Measurement and Evaluation in Speech Communication, 3 cr

Elective Courses

Subject to the credit and/or course restrictions and options listed above, students may complete their program of study with a minimum of 24 credits in elective courses selected from courses in the Department of Communication listed below:

Undergraduate/Graduate (U/G) Courses (3 cr. unless otherwise noted)

550 International and Global Communication
 627 Designing and Developing Communication Training Interventions
 640 Contemporary Issues in Freedom of Speech
 655 Communication Issues in Cultural Adjustment and Training
 665 Introduction to Mediation
 667 Great American Speakers and Issues
 672 Speech Communication and Social Order
 675 International Mediation and Peacebuilding
 681 Communication in a World of AIDS

Graduate (G) Courses (3 cr. unless otherwise noted)

700 Quantitative Research in Communication
 701 Critical Analysis of Communication
 702 Qualitative Research in Communication
 710 Managerial Communication
 715 Technology for Health Communication
 727 Seminar in Communication and E-Learning
 735 Theories of Rhetorical Communication
 750 Theory and Research in Intercultural Communication
 762 Argumentation in Theory and Practice
 768 Seminar in Theories of Speech Communication
 770 Measurement and Evaluation in Speech Communication
 772 Rhetorical Leadership and Ethics
 801 Seminar in Interpersonal Communication
 802 Marital and Family Communication
 803 Gender and Communication
 804 Seminar on Sexuality and Communication
 805 Topics in Interpersonal Communication
 806 Understudied Close Relationships
 807 Dark Side of Close Relationships
 810 Studies of Communication in Organizations
 812 Communication Policy for Organizations
 813 Seminar in Mediated Communication
 815 Communication Technologies in Organizations
 816 Media Effects
 818 Politics and the Media
 820 Communication in Customer Service Settings
 823 Seminar in Small Group Communication
 827 Seminar in Programs of Adult Communication

830 Negotiation
 835 Seminar in Contemporary Public Address
 837 Instructional Communication in the College Classroom
 850 Seminar in Intercultural Communication
 857 Application of Intercultural Communication
 862 Public Deliberation
 864 Communication and Social Influence
 865 Theory and Practice of Mediation
 872 Rhetorics of Constituting Community and Social Controversy
 873 The Digital Mirror
 874 Rhetoric of Women's Right in the U.S.
 881 Interpersonal Health Communication
 882 Rhetoric of Kenneth Burke
 893 Rhetoric of/and the Internet
 913 Advanced Topics in Group Communication
 950 Theory Building in Communication and Culture
 965 Discourses of Conflict
 971 Meta-Analysis: Practice and Application
 972 Methods in Communication Research
 973 Topics in Rhetorical Research
 981 Communication and HIV/AIDS

Variable Topics or Individualized Courses in Communication

860 Seminar: Issues in Communication (3 to 6 credits). Students may count a maximum of six credits of 860 toward the degree. Only three credits of 860 may be counted in the student's primary concentration area.

990 Research and Thesis (1 to 6 credits). Students electing to write a masters thesis may count one to six credits of 990 toward the 15 credits of elective courses.

998 Internship (1 to 3 credits). Students may count only three credits of 998 toward the degree. Internship credits earned in the Department of Communication cannot, however, be applied to satisfy minimum credit distribution requirements in required or content areas. They must be considered elective courses.

999 Independent Study (1 to 3 credits). Students may count only three credits of 999 toward the degree. Independent study credits earned in the Department of Communication cannot, however, be applied to satisfy minimum credit distribution requirements in required or content areas. They must be considered elective courses.

Policy for Independent Study (999)

Independent Study (999) offerings are designed to promote student involvement in faculty supervised research. Student work on such projects represents an opportunity to acquire additional insights and skills through direct, monitored participation. Knowledge gains can be recognized as the addition to one's substantive information about a subject area (obtained while preparing for work on a project), acquiring new skills related to methods of communication inquiry, and insights stimulated through participation in the development of scholarly products.

Participating students and faculty members must establish a plan for supervision and an agreed-upon definition of responsibilities associated with research work prior to the end of the second week of the semester of enrollment. The form must be approved by the Graduate Director as well as the Department Chair. These agreements are negotiated between faculty and students but are required to include:

5. Explanation and justification of the independent course work. The justification should clarify the nature of the research experience being sought by the student and explain how the work to be completed is either not covered by other available communication courses or that the independent study will proceed at a level of sophistication beyond that found in other courses.
6. Allocation of course hours. In accordance with university requirements, the explanation and justification should identify the approximate time requirements for completion of tasks. A one-credit course must equate with no less than 48 hours of class contact (e.g. meeting, reading, writing). A three-credit course requires no less than 144 hours.
7. Assignment of primary preparatory materials necessary for effective participation (e.g., a reading list, article reprints, training manuals, etc.);
8. Definition and assignment of tasks and/or other responsibilities;
9. Specification of performance evaluation criteria.

Every student enrolled in 999 should receive a copy of this form when it is completed. Both the supervising faculty member and the student are responsible for making sure the agreement contains the five above criteria.

The agreement should be signed by both parties (instructor and student) and submitted to the Graduate Director and the Chair of the Department of Communication. A copy of the agreement will be kept on file in the Department of Communication.

Failure to complete all forms and receive approvals by the end of the third week of the semester may result in a student being administratively dropped from the course.

Policy for Internship (998)

Students may apply one-three (1 to 3) credits of Communication 998: Internship toward their program of study. These credits cannot count as the only course in a given required or content distribution area, however. Internships are secured by the student in consultation with the Graduate Internship Director. Students enrolled in 998 will work with the Graduate Internship Director to complete the necessary internship hours and fulfill the requirements of the course. A copy of internship policies and procedures, as well as a form to be completed by the student,

advisor, and cooperating organization, is available in the Department of Communication office.

M.A. Degree Program: Summary Evaluation Option

Prior to completion of 19 credits of graduate study, in consultation with the major professor, students must select one of two options for completing the summary evaluation of work in the graduate program: (1) thesis, or (2) Master of Arts Portfolio Project (MAPP). Once chosen, a student's selection of the Summary Evaluation Option may be changed *only once* with the approval of the student's major professor and the Graduate Affairs Committee. A change of declared option from the thesis to the MAPP option also means any credits earned in COMMUN 990 (Research and Thesis) cannot be counted toward the M.A. degree. Due to the importance of research methods courses to the summary evaluation option and overall program of study, students should seek advice from the appropriate advisor before registering for the required methods course because it should be taken in the first available semester after enrollment in the program. Students must successfully complete either a MAPP or a thesis to earn the degree.

Graduate Program of Studies Form

The Graduate Program of Studies form, also referred to as the "Course of Study" form, is your official record of the coursework used in your course of study that is maintained in the office of the Graduate Program in Communication. Each student is responsible for keeping the record of their progress up to date. All entries must be typed or printed clearly. Students should download a copy of the form (see the form near the end of the handbook titled "Proposed Course of Study for Master's Degree") and, in conjunction with their advisor, record their progress. A master copy of the form is kept in the student's file in the Departmental of Communication office and should be updated each semester as coursework and other requirements is completed. To summarize, the Course of Study form is designed to create a record of the courses and completion option defining the program of study a student and their advisor(s) approve as the student's individualized course of study in the M.A. program.

Transfer of Credit

The Graduate School has set the maximum number of transfer credits from other institutions at 12 credits. It is the Graduate Affairs Committee (GAC), however, that decides which credits it will accept as part of a student's graduate program. To request a transfer of credit, complete and return a "Transfer of Credit" form, available at the Graduate School. It will be evaluated by Graduate Director and one other member of the GAC. You must present the following supplemental items to the Director to assist in reaching a decision about transfer credits: papers, syllabi and information concerning the level of the course (i.e., was it a graduate-student-only course, or were undergraduates allowed in the course as well as graduate students?). The program will not consider coursework in transfer unless it obtains sufficient materials to evaluate the nature of the course(s) in question. If credit is not granted, a student can ask for the full GAC membership to consider the request.

Time Limit

The student must complete all degree requirements within five years of initial enrollment.

7. THESIS OPTION

All students should give serious consideration to electing to write a thesis. A thesis involves original research and is a proven method for developing specialized knowledge and skills that can enhance an individual's expertise within a substantive area of study. A thesis is recommended for students who intend to continue study toward the Ph.D. degree or plan research-related employment. If the thesis option is elected, the student must write the thesis and pass an oral examination on a report of research initiated by the student under the guidance of the major professor. With the approval of the major professor, the student also may apply up to 6 credits of Communication 990 (Research and Thesis) to the program of study. A faculty committee, chaired by the major professor, will evaluate the written report and conduct an oral examination of the candidate.

Thesis Proposal

In preparing to write a thesis, the student must prepare a formal proposal in consultation with the major professor. The thesis proposal must be reviewed and approved by the thesis committee before proceeding with the research project. Depending on the nature of the project, the major professor and student may need to secure Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval before proceeding. Discuss IRB procedures with the major professor and access the IRB website for additional information. Specimen copies of proposals from previous thesis students are available on the department's shared drive.

Faculty Committee

All thesis work is evaluated by a faculty committee selected by the student in consultation with their major professor. A thesis committee must be composed of at least three faculty members. At least two members of the committee, including the major professor, must be graduate faculty members from within the department.

Thesis Format

A complete outline of the recommended format for a thesis is available from the Graduate School. Read that document thoroughly before writing the thesis.

Thesis students should consult with their major professor about the style guide to be used in preparing the proposal and thesis. The most widely used style guides are by: Chicago, Turabian, Modern Language Association, and American Psychological Association. Copies of one or more of these style guides are available at the UWM Bookstore.

Number of Copies

Prepare at least five copies of the proposal: one copy for each member of your committee, one for the program's file on thesis proposals, and one for yourself. Usually, copies can be digital copies unless otherwise requested.

Approval

By approving the thesis proposal, your committee is affirming that, in its judgment, the proposal provides evidence that: (a) you know enough about the subject to undertake the study; (b) the proposed study seems worth undertaking; and (c) the methodology outlined is appropriate for the proposed research.

Once your proposal is approved, you are expected to follow the methodology outlined in the proposal. Any major changes in the direction of your study must be approved by your entire faculty committee.

Thesis Proposal Outline

The sample outline may not be appropriate for some thesis projects. Each thesis student and major professor should decide whether to follow the sample outline below or modify it to suit the needs of a particular study. Proposals from former students are available on the department website and can be reviewed to assist in proposal development. Proposals should be well documented and include a working bibliography of materials consulted or expected to be consulted in the course of the proposed research.

- Background and rationale of the study
 - General background of the subject area
 - Specific background for the topic of investigation
 - Review of the literature
 - Definitions of all key terms
 - The hypotheses or questions to be addressed
- Methodology
 - Identify and justify the choice of general approach and specific research method
 - Subjects (if applicable; describe them and your rationale for their selection)
 - Methods
 - Limitations
- Outline of Projected Results
- Potential Conclusions and Implications
- “Working” Bibliography of Sources & Materials

Thesis Evaluation and Oral Defense

Thesis students are expected to work closely with their major professor (and committee when appropriate) during the research and writing of the thesis. When copies of the thesis are submitted to the committee for review and defense, the committee must assume that the thesis student and major professor are satisfied with its contents and the student’s ability to defend all facets of the research project. Oral defense of the thesis will focus on the student’s ability to explain and justify the rationale, methodology, findings, and interpretations and conclusions contained in the thesis.

In evaluating the thesis and its oral defense, the faculty committee can decide to:

(a) accept the thesis and its defense; (b) request corrections or revisions in a thesis that is successfully defended prior to your major professor's signature of approval; (c) request revisions and a subsequent oral defense of the revised thesis; or (d) fail the student on the oral defense and the thesis submitted.

Any student asked to revise a thesis and resubmit it for a second defense may do so only once. Any student that fails the oral defense of the thesis must leave the program. A successful defense of the thesis is determined by a unanimous vote of the committee.

Graduation and Thesis Submission

The student must file an Application for Graduation with the Graduate School early in the semester in which graduation is expected.

Once the committee has accepted the thesis and the major professor has signed the original copy, the student must submit the original typed copy to the Graduate School for a final review. At that time, the thesis must meet all of the specifications described in the Graduate School Bulletin. The thesis must be submitted to the Graduate School by the deadline posted on the Graduate School website. Theses received after this deadline will be accepted for graduation at the end of the following semester, and the student must file a new Application for Graduation that semester.

8. MASTER'S PROFESSIONAL PORTFOLIO (MAPP) OPTION

Instead of writing a thesis, a student may complete the M.A. degree by electing to engage in a capstone experience involving the construction and defense of a pre-professional *portfolio* reflecting the student's objectives and accomplishments throughout their program of study. The Master of Arts Portfolio Project (MAPP) brings together the student's coursework, ongoing interaction with their major professor, related scholastic and field experiences, and vision of how they will apply their degree after graduation. A committee chaired by the student's major professor appraises the portfolio, providing the student with a critical assessment and decision regarding graduation.

Purpose

At the Master's level, the M.A. Portfolio Project (MAPP) is designed to allow students to synthesize their accomplishments during the M.A. program and identify their strengths and needs as they pursue objectives beyond graduate school. In conjunction with the completion of 30 credit hours (per Department of Communication M.A. guidelines), students who successfully complete a MAPP will meet the requirements for the M.A. in Communication.

The M.A. Portfolio Project will provide students with an opportunity to:

- Compile documentation of academic accomplishments during the pursuit of an M.A.
- Synthesize the primary contributions of M.A. coursework
- Critically reflect upon accomplishments in written work
- Reflect upon the accomplishment of their initial goals and objectives for the M.A., and articulate future career goals and objectives that will utilize the skills/knowledge gained
- Establish a connection with a field expert (e.g., an individual who works in the student's desired employment sector or a member of a community group with whom the student hopes to work) and gain additional information about activities the student may wish to pursue after graduation
- Reflect upon one's understanding of future pursuits and draw connections between the M.A. experience and the nature of this type of work/service

Process

MAPPs are completed in five steps:

1. Identification of a committee and an initial meeting with the MAPP major professor/advisor
2. Preparation of a set of documents that will be submitted to the advisor for review and feedback
3. Completion of an information gathering interview and field interview reflection paper
4. A final meeting with the advisory committee to discuss the MAPP products, reflect upon one's work toward the M.A., and identify future plans
5. Submission of the completed MAPP to the graduate advisor for approval

Prior to the start of a student's final semester of enrollment, they and their major professor must identify at least one additional faculty member who will serve as the student's MAPP advisory committee. The major professor serves as the student's primary point of contact throughout all stages of the project. Additional committee faculty will participate in a final meeting to discuss project outcomes.

Completion of a MAPP will proceed as follows:

1. Prior to the start of a student's semester of graduation, the student and major professor identify at least one additional faculty member to serve as the MAPP advisory committee. Only students in academic "good standing" according to Graduate School guidelines may compose advisory committees. Then, at the start of the final semester, the student meets with their major professor to establish parameters for the project and establish a timeline for completion.
2. By the 8th week of the semester, the student submits the following documents to the advisor for review:
 - a) **A current professional résumé** (1-2 pages) or an **extended curriculum vitae** (2-3 pages). The format for the resume should be consistent with the audience with whom the student wishes to engage following graduation. The **vita** should include all major professional and academic accomplishments. The MAPP committee may request that a student submit both a resume and vita if that would best meet the student's career goals.
 - b) **A list of all courses completed** (categorized by semester) with a brief paragraph (3-4 sentences) explaining what was learned in a course and how the knowledge may be utilized as they pursue their objectives.
 - c) **A writing sample** that reflects the student's ability to construct an argument, think critically, and/or conduct a thoughtful analysis. A cover page should contain a paragraph or two that highlights why this piece of writing is an appropriate example.
 - d) **Goals and Objectives paper** (8-10 pages, maximum). This paper should include the following:
 - **Reflection on the student's personal statement** (from M.A. application materials) and the degree to which the student has accomplished the goals and objectives identified as they entered the program. Students should reflect on the ways that their educational experience and journey have been utilized to accomplish their initial goals and objectives for the program.
 - **Identification of future career goals and objectives.** This should include a statement regarding the student's future professional or community-based goals and objectives, including the requisite communication skills and other competencies believed to be necessary for pursuing a job in this field.
 - **Application of M.A. experience.** Students should briefly reflect on the specific aspects of their M.A. experience that will be useful toward achieving these career goals and objectives. The goal of this section is

for students to provide expectations about how the M.A. may apply to future pursuits. After a field interview (see item 3, below), students will be asked to consider their expectations relative to the input from a field expert.

- e) In addition, students should include a minimum of two of the following items/categories. Each of the items should be preceded by a brief essay explaining either how their M.A. allowed them to more effectively accomplish these tasks and/or how these tasks enhanced their M.A. experience.
- teaching evaluations
 - teaching philosophy
 - convention papers / presentations
 - examples of their community service (volunteer for Peace Learning Center, Boys and Girls Club, restorative justice)
 - listing of lecture series, colloquiums, lectures, public forums that they have attended (sample of promotional materials).
 - professional service (helping at NCA, editorial assistant, coder/transcriber)
 - awards that they have won (scholarships)
 - example of a presentation / training module that they have created
 - a summary of recent work experiences and/or internships with brief explanation of the way that content from M.A. coursework informed (or was informed by) the experience
 - other materials determined to be appropriate in consultation with the advisor

Upon receiving the items, the advisor will review the documents and provide feedback to the student. The student will then make any modifications to the documents and compile the final set of documents into a packet for dissemination. At this time, the student will discuss their potential field expert contact with the advisor (see item 3, below).

3. The student will then need to contact a field expert and set up a date and time for an information gathering interview. Upon contacting the interviewee, students should explain the purpose of the interview and establish the approximate amount of time that the interview will take (interviews should be at least 30 minutes). Prior to the interview, students should prepare a set of interview questions. These questions should focus upon elements such as:
- a) The characteristics of the tasks that individuals in this field perform
 - b) Key qualifications and skills that are needed to excel in the field
 - c) Information about the initial steps that one should take when attempting to enter and/or advance in the field (i.e., how to apply, who to contact, etc.)
 - d) Any other information the student feels is necessary to better understand the field

After completing the interview, the student should prepare a field reflection paper (3-5 pages). The goal of this paper is to reflect upon the findings from the interview and integrate

this information with one's experiences during the M.A. Specifically, the paper should address:

- a) The student's general understanding of the field before the interview (i.e., from the statements in the Goals and Objectives paper) and whether the interview yielded any new and/or different information
- b) Reflection about how to best highlight and utilize the knowledge from the M.A. in the chosen field
- c) Strategies for addressing any deficiencies that may limit the student's ability to excel in the field
- d) Plans for taking the initial steps (or continuing forward progress) toward securing the student's objectives

After completing the field reflection paper, it should be included with the complete packet of materials (prepared prior to the field interview) and submitted to the MAPP advisory committee.

4. The student will then schedule a meeting with the MAPP advisory committee. The discussion at the meeting will focus upon the student's experiences during the completion of their M.A., questions/discussion of items contained in the packet, and the student's future goals and objectives. The project will be evaluated based on the completion of the project requirements as well as the demonstration of critical thinking within the various reflective statements. The committee will provide the student with a written appraisal of the MAPP and graduation decision (including specific reasons for not graduating if that is the decision reached by the advisory committee).
5. After the final meeting, the completed project will be uploaded to the Department archive by the student, and the completed MAPP checklist form will be submitted to the Graduate Director for final approval.

Content

The final M.A. Portfolio Project must contain the set of items prepared throughout the process. These documents are:

1. Current professional resume and/or curriculum vitae
2. List and brief description of all courses completed
3. Writing sample
4. Paper reflecting on the achievement of and planning toward goals and objectives
5. Documents from a *minimum* of two of the following categories:
 - a. teaching evaluations
 - b. teaching philosophy
 - c. convention papers / presentations
 - d. examples of their community service (volunteer for Peace Learning Center, Boys and Girls Club, restorative justice)

- e. listing of lecture series, colloquiums, lectures, public forums that they have attended (sample of promotional materials).
 - f. professional service (helping at NCA, editorial assistant, coder/transcriber)
 - g. awards that they have won (scholarships)
 - h. example of a presentation / training module that they have created
 - i. a summary of recent work experiences and/or internships with brief explanation of the way that content from M.A. coursework informed (or was informed by) the experience
6. Field interview reflection paper
 7. Signed MAPP checklist form

9. APPRAISAL AND CONTINUATION

Students may assume they are maintaining adequate progress toward completion of a degree if they have:

1. A cumulative grade point average (GPA) of 3.00.
2. Accumulated sufficient credits (approximately 15 in one year for full-time students) to complete a program of study within two years, OR enough credits (approximately 6-9 within one year for part-time students) to complete a program of study in two to five years.
3. A thesis proposal approved by a faculty committee by the third consecutive semester of enrollment--for full-time students--or by the third year of enrollment for part-time students.
4. A MAPP project plan should be agreed to by a faculty committee during or before the first few weeks of the semester in which 30 credits will be completed.
5. Satisfactorily completed the requirements for graduation in the semester in which the application for graduation was submitted to the Graduate School.

A student's advisor is responsible for assessing semester-to-semester performance. The Graduate Affairs Committee reviews performance each year and may instruct the Coordinator to consult with the student's advisor or directly counsel that seems necessary.

The Graduate School will automatically place any student whose semester GPA falls below a 3.00 on academic probation. The Graduate School will automatically require any student whose cumulative GPA falls below a 3.00 to submit an Exception Form that outlines why they should be allowed to remain in the graduate program. The GAC will be responsible for determining whether the student will be allowed to remain in the program, or be asked to leave. Any student with two consecutive semesters of probationary status will be asked to leave the program.

If you hold a Teaching or Research Assistantship or Fellowship, consult your contract or award documents for additional requirements associated with continuing financial support.

Requesting an Exception from Graduate School Requirements

In order to request an exception to a Graduate School policy, a graduate student must submit documentation to the Graduate Affairs Committee for review. This documentation must include (a) a completed Graduate School Request for Exception form, (b) a justification for the exception, and (c) evidence of extenuating circumstances to support the request for exception. Upon review, the Graduate Affairs Committee will provide a letter addressing the issues raised by the student and outlining the Committee's recommendations regarding the request. If the Committee recommends moving forward with the request, a completed Graduate School Request for Exception form and the supporting documentation will be forwarded to the Graduate School for consideration.

Requests for exceptions must be submitted on a Graduate School Request for Exception Form prior to the semester in which the rule or requirement applies, if at all possible.

10. ANNUAL DEPARTMENTAL AWARDS

The GAC will select the winners for the graduate awards based on materials submitted by the students each year.

Teaching Awards

The Mel Miller award shall recognize the top Ph.D. and M.A. students for teaching excellence in the previous calendar year at UW-Milwaukee. The award will be based on quantitative teaching evaluations, peer evaluations, course director recommendations, and other information.

The Department of Communication Teaching Recognition Award will go to the next highest rated graduate student teacher. The recipient of this award will receive a one-year student membership to a professional association chosen by the department.

Other persons may be honored based on their record and receive a departmental recognition.

Graduate students can apply for a teaching award by submitting the following materials to the university's scholarship portal by January 15:

1. A cover letter that specifies:
 - a. The award for which they are applying (teaching, research, or service)
 - b. Their year in the program
 - c. Any previous department-based awards (e.g., Miller, departmental recognition, departmental scholarship or research support awards)
 - d. A summary of their qualifications for the award
2. A nomination letter from a current or previous course director
3. Their current curriculum vitae
4. Evidence of teaching excellence, including:
 - a. A statement of teaching philosophy
 - b. A summary of all previous quantitative student evaluations from classes taught in the department
 - c. Selected qualitative student evaluations from classes taught in the department
 - d. All previous course director evaluations from classes taught in the department

Research Awards

The Mel Miller award will recognize the top M.A. and Ph.D. students for research excellence in the previous calendar year. The committee will consider the quantity and quality of the work, contribution of the student to that work, and other factors to establish research excellence.

The Department of Communication Research Recognition Award will go to the next highest rated graduate student. The recipient of this award will receive a one-year student membership to a professional association chosen by the department.

Graduate students can apply for a research award by submitting the following materials to the university's scholarship portal by January 15:

1. A cover letter that specifies:
 - a. The award for which they are applying (teaching, research, or service)
 - b. Their year in the program
 - c. Any previous department-based awards (e.g., Miller, departmental recognition, departmental scholarship or research support awards)
 - d. A summary of their qualifications for the award
2. A nomination letter from their advisor or research supervisor
3. Their current curriculum vitae
4. Evidence of research excellence, including:
 - a. A statement of research agenda
 - b. A summary of research accomplishments in the last year
 - c. Any other relevant evidence of research excellence

Other persons may be honored based on their record and receive a departmental recognition.

Service Awards

The Mel Miller award will recognize the top Ph.D. and M.A. students for service contributions to the department, university, profession, and/or community. The committee will consider the quantity and quality of these contributions along with appropriate supporting documents.

The Department of Communication Service Recognition Award will go to the next highest evaluated graduate student. The recipient of this award will receive a one-year student membership to a professional association chosen by the department.

Other persons may be honored based on their record and receive a departmental recognition.

Graduate students can apply for a service award by submitting the following materials to the university's scholarship portal by January 15:

1. A cover letter that specifies:
 - a. The award for which they are applying (teaching, research, or service)
 - b. Their year in the program
 - c. Any previous department-based awards (e.g., Miller, departmental recognition, departmental scholarship or research support awards)
 - d. A summary of their qualifications for the award
2. A nomination letter from their advisor or another relevant individual
3. Their current curriculum vitae
4. Evidence of service excellence, including:
 - a. A statement of service philosophy
 - b. A summary of service activities in the last year
 - c. Any other relevant evidence of service contributions

11. APPLICATIONS TO GRADUATE

Graduation applications must be filed with the Graduate School by their deadline during the semester or summer session in which you plan to graduate. A copy of the application is then forwarded to the graduate program from the Graduate School. Should a student not graduate as planned because work is not completed or for some other reason, the graduation application will be returned to the Graduate School from the program indicating that the student is not cleared for graduation. A new application form must then be re-filed in the following semester(s) in anticipation of the expected new date of graduation. Consult the Graduate School for additional information and deadlines.

**INDEPENDENT STUDY (199), RESEARCH PRACTICUM (588/599), ADVANCED
INDEPENDENT READING (699), INDEPENDENT STUDY (999) FORM/CONTRACT**

Student Name (print): _____

Professor/Supervisor (print): _____

Course Number (e.g. 999): _____

(Continue on additional pages if necessary)

1. EXPLANATION/JUSTIFICATION AND WORK-CREDIT EQUIVALENCY:

**2. ALLOCATION OF COURSE HOURS (SPECIFY 1, 2, OR 3 CREDITS AND HOW
HOURS ARE ASSIGNED):**

3. PRIMARY PREPARATORY MATERIALS:

**4. DEFINITION AND ASSIGNMENT OF TASKS AND/OR OTHER
RESPONSIBILITIES:**

5. PERFORMANCE EVALUATION CRITERIA

Signature of Student

Date

Signature of Professor

Date

Signature of Graduate or Undergraduate Director

Date

Signature of Department Chair

Date

REQUEST FOR APPOINTMENT OF CHAIRPERSON OF M.A. COMMITTEE

I, _____ have selected Dr. _____
Please Print Name Please Print Name

to serve as the chairperson of my guidance committee.

Student's Signature Date

Accepted:

Chairperson of Committee Signature Date

Acknowledged:

Graduate Director Date

PROPOSED COURSE OF STUDY FOR MASTER'S DEGREE
Due March 15th of 1st year

Name of Student _____

Name of Advisor _____

Required Courses:

Proseminar 800 (semester completed/expected) _____

Methods Course (Please Circle One): 700 701 702 770

Semester of Completion _____

Additional Courses: List Number and Department (if not a Communication Course).

Must total at least 24 credits.

Course Title/Number	Semester Completed/Expected
----------------------------	------------------------------------

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

Certificate Completion (optional): _____

Summary Completion Option (please circle) Thesis MAPP

_____ Approved by Student/Date

_____ Approved by Advisor/Date

_____ Approved by Graduate Director/Date

M.A. PORTFOLIO PROJECT (MAPP) STUDENT AND FACULTY CHECKLIST

Prior to Graduating Semester

1. Add second faculty member to committee (Name: _____)

Start of Graduating Semester--Student

2. Meet with advising faculty member to discuss plan for MAPP

8th week of Graduating Semester—Student submits MAPP project materials to advisor

3. Current professional resume and/or curriculum vitae
4. List and brief description of all courses completed
5. Writing sample
6. Paper reflecting on the achievement of and planning toward goals and objectives
7. Documents from a *minimum* of two of the following categories:
 - a) teaching evaluations
 - b) teaching philosophy
 - c) convention papers / presentations
 - d) examples of their community service (volunteer for Peace Learning Center, Boys and Girls Club)
 - e) list of lecture series, colloquia, lectures, public forums attended (incl. sample of promotional materials)
 - f) professional service (helping at NCA, editorial assistant, coder/transcriber)
 - g) awards that they have won (scholarships)
 - h) example of a presentation / training module that they have created
 - i) a summary of recent work experiences and/or internships with brief explanation of the way that content from M.A. coursework informed (or was informed by) the experience

Field Interview Paper--Student

8. Contacts field expert to set up date/time for field interview
9. Completes field interview and reflection paper to be added to MAPP

Prior to End of Graduating Semester—Student and/or Faculty Advisor

10. Meeting of student and advisor for final draft approval of MAPP
11. Completed MAPP distributed to committee members by student
12. Student schedules defense meeting with committee
13. Successfully completed MAPP requires: Advisor uploads MAPP to Department archive; MAPP checklist form signed by Committee and submitted to Graduate Director for final approval/signature

Candidate Name (print)

Candidate Signature/Date

Advisor Signature/Date

Committee Signature/Date

Graduate Director Signature/Date

THESIS DEFENSE MEETING

Student name (please type)_____

Date_____

The student and advisor should check with the Graduate School to make sure appropriate forms are filed.

Title of thesis (please type):

	Approved	Denied	Signature
Advisor (typed)	_____	_____	_____
Member (typed)	_____	_____	_____
Member (typed)	_____	_____	_____
Member (typed)	_____	_____	_____

A majority approval is required for the thesis to be approved

Acknowledged:_____Graduate Director, date_____

GRADUATE ASSESSMENT FORM M.A. THESIS

Bring completed Student Part and blank Committee Part (next page) to the dissertation defense

STUDENT PART

A. Academic Achievement

1. Number of papers submitted to a national or local conference with pending decision: _____
2. Number of papers rejected by a national or local conference: _____
3. Number of papers presented at a national or local conference: _____
4. Number of papers submitted to an academic journal with pending decision: _____
5. Number of papers rejected by an academic journal: _____
6. Number of papers published in an academic journal: _____

B. Career Achievement

1. Number of internship offers received: _____
2. Number of job interviews invited to an academic organization: _____
3. Number of job interviews invited to a non-academic organization: _____
4. Number of job offers received from an academic organization: _____
5. Number of job offers received from a non-academic organization: _____
6. Number of acceptance letters received from a doctoral program: _____

C. Other Achievements (Please specify)

Student's Name: _____ Signature: _____
 Date: ____/____/____

COMMITTEE PART**A. Theory**

1. Familiarity with the historical development of the theories applied to the thesis

 0.0 0.5 1.0 1.5 2.0 2.5 3.0 3.5 4.0

2. Familiarity with the recent theoretical trends in the field of concentration

 0.0 0.5 1.0 1.5 2.0 2.5 3.0 3.5 4.0

3. Ability to justify the rationale leading to the research questions and predictions

 0.0 0.5 1.0 1.5 2.0 2.5 3.0 3.5 4.0

B. Method

1. Familiarity with a variety of methodological approaches relevant to the research

 0.0 0.5 1.0 1.5 2.0 2.5 3.0 3.5 4.0

2. Ability to justify that the choice of the methodology was appropriate and reasonable

 0.0 0.5 1.0 1.5 2.0 2.5 3.0 3.5 4.0

3. Depth of knowledge in the particular method(s) applied to the thesis

 0.0 0.5 1.0 1.5 2.0 2.5 3.0 3.5 4.0

4. Ability to interpret the findings to draw valid conclusions

 0.0 0.5 1.0 1.5 2.0 2.5 3.0 3.5 4.0

Committee Chair's Name: _____

Signature: _____ Date: ____ / ____ / ____

GRADUATE ASSESSMENT FORM M.A. MAPP

Bring completed Student Part and blank Committee Part (next page) to the dissertation defense

STUDENT PART

A. Academic Achievement

1. Number of papers submitted to a national or local conference with pending decision: _____
2. Number of papers rejected by a national or local conference: _____
3. Number of papers presented at a national or local conference: _____
4. Number of papers submitted to an academic journal with pending decision: _____
5. Number of papers rejected by an academic journal: _____
6. Number of papers published in an academic journal: _____

B. Career Achievement

1. Number of internship offers received: _____
2. Number of job interviews invited to an academic organization: _____
3. Number of job interviews invited to a non-academic organization: _____
4. Number of job offers received from an academic organization: _____
5. Number of job offers received from a non-academic organization: _____
6. Number of acceptance letters received from a doctoral program: _____

C. Other Achievements (Please specify)

Student's Name: _____ Signature: _____
 Date: ____/____/____

COMMITTEE PART**Teaching/Professional Activities**

1. Knowledge about the skillsets and qualities required to perform in the intended field of career

 0.0 0.5 1.0 1.5 2.0 2.5 3.0 3.5 4.0

2. Level of academic experience to achieve the stated career goals and objectives

 0.0 0.5 1.0 1.5 2.0 2.5 3.0 3.5 4.0

3. Ability to identify what specific aspects of the M.A. experience will be used toward achieving the intended objectives

 0.0 0.5 1.0 1.5 2.0 2.5 3.0 3.5 4.0

Committee Chair's Name: _____ Signature: _____
 Date: ____/____/____