

UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MILWAUKEE
DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNICATION
MASTER OF ARTS PROGRAM
HANDBOOK
2026-2027

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 (M.A.) Program in Communication. This document explains the 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 funding opportunities and requirements;
- Identification of program personnel and explanations of program governance;
- Forms required for managing the 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 2026-2027 academic year. Students who entered the program prior to June 1, 2026 should consult an earlier version of the Handbook.

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1. Goals and Objectives

The Department of Communication offers a Master of Arts (M.A.) degree designed to provide breadth and depth of study in the following areas: *Communication Theory and Research* with emphasis on the areas of *Relating and Organizing, Rhetoric and Culture, and Technology and Media*.

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.

Students graduating from the M.A. Program in Communication will be able to:

- Summarize, synthesize, and critique relevant literature to develop critical understandings of the history, theory, concepts, and debates in at least one major area of communication research.
- Develop and complete an original research project that pursues a significant research question in the field of communication.
- Justify the rationale that produced their project's research questions, methodological choices, and conclusions.
- Ethically conduct research in communication, including methods, analysis, and writing.
- Develop and use professional oral and written communication skills suitable for academic or professional discourse.
- Explain the significance of their coursework and research in communication for developing individual and social responsibility, civic knowledge and engagement (both local and global), ethical reasoning, and action.

2. Admission

Required application materials and the online application are available in the [UWM Academic Catalog](#).

3. Administration

The M.A. Program in Communication at UWM is a degree program offered by the Department of Communication. The program's structure, requirements and curricular content represent decisions by the graduate faculty concerning graduate study in communication at UWM. The program is administered by the Graduate Affairs Committee (GAC).

Graduate Affairs Committee

The GAC is composed of the Ph.D. Program Director, the M.A.'s Program Director, a minimum of one additional graduate faculty, and one graduate student each from the M.A. and Ph.D. programs, 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 Ph.D. Program Director (or, in the absence of a Ph.D. Program Director, the Department Chair) should call the first meeting during each academic year, during which a Committee Chair will be elected. 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 is charged with the responsibility of coordinating the Graduate Programs 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.

M.A. Program Director

The M.A. Program Director is the program's liaison with students and the community. The M.A. Program Director acts as the intake officer for student applications for entry into the program. The M.A. Program Director responds to inquiries about the program, manages paperwork related to requests for admission, authorizes student admissions for the program, assigns new students to Graduate Faculty members who serve as their "interim advisors," and interacts with the Graduate School on admissions and other related matters.

The M.A. Program Director is also the "contact person" for information regarding the program's requirements and curriculum for all M.A. students. Student inquiries, requests for requirement waivers and other procedural matters should be directed to the M.A. Program Director. The M.A. Program Director is also charged with the responsibility of auditing each student's progress in the program and reporting such audit results to the GAC. Likewise, the M.A. Program Director is responsible for counseling students about their progress in the program in such cases where the GAC deems it advisable.

4. Advising

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.

Interim Advisor

Upon admission to the program, each M.A. student is assigned a graduate faculty member as an interim advisor. Assignments are made by the M.A. Program 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 (also referred to as the advisor) 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. Professional Portfolio or thesis).

The major professor must be a graduate faculty member in the Department of Communication at UWM. All tenured or tenure-track graduate faculty are expected to advise M.A. students. However, no professor is required to serve as an advisor for a particular student, and conflicts of interest (e.g., familial or professional) should be avoided. Students should select an advisor with the consultation and consent of the relevant faculty member. Faculty do not have a contractual obligation to perform advising duties during summer, a leave, or a sabbatical.

The major professor should serve as an advisor and mentor to the M.A. student during the degree process, and provide guidance on several issues:

- Course of Study—the advisor should provide guidance on the selection of courses that will prepare the students for successful completion of the degree.
- M.A. Committee Guidance—the advisor should help the student identify and gain consent of additional members necessary for M.A. committee formation.
- M.A. Project—the advisor is the primary faculty member responsible for supervising the Master's of Arts Professional Portfolio (MAPP) or thesis writing and research.

5. Program of Study

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

M.A. Degree Program Requirements

To fulfill the credit requirement for the M.A. in Communication, a student must complete at least 30 credits, of which at least 24 credits must be in courses numbered 700 or above. Twenty-four (24) credits must be taken from the Department of Communication; that is, only a maximum of 6 credits taken outside the department may count toward the total credits required, *if* the student's major professor approves those credits as substantially contributing to the student's program *in advance* of enrollment.

Students must complete either an M.A. Professional Portfolio (MAPP) or a thesis. If a student elects to do a thesis, 1 to 6 credits of COMMUN 990 may count toward the degree.

M.A. Degree Program: Credits and Courses (3 credits unless otherwise noted)

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

Required Courses

General:

COMMUN 800 Proseminar: The Discipline of Communication, 3 cr

Methods: One of the following Methods Courses

COMMUN 700 Quantitative Research in Communication, 3 cr

COMMUN 701 Critical Analysis of Communication, 3 cr

COMMUN 702 Qualitative Research in 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)

COMMUN 497G Study Abroad

COMMUN 550G International and Global Communication

COMMUN 655G Communication Issues in Cultural Adjustment and Training

COMMUN 665G Introduction to Mediation

COMMUN 667G Great American Speakers and Issues

COMMUN 672G Communication and Social Order

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

COMMUN 700 Quantitative Research in Communication

COMMUN 701 Critical Analysis of Communication

COMMUN 702 Qualitative Research in Communication

COMMUN 735 Theories of Rhetorical Communication

COMMUN 750 Theory and Research in Intercultural Communication

COMMUN 762 Argumentation in Theory and Practice

COMMUN 772 Rhetorical Leadership and Ethics

COMMUN 801 Seminar in Interpersonal Communication

COMMUN 802 Marital and Family Communication

COMMUN 805 Seminar on Issues in Interpersonal Communication (3 cr.; repeatable up to 9 cr. with change in topic)

COMMUN 806 Understudied Close Relationships

COMMUN 810 Studies of Communication in Organizations

COMMUN 813 Seminar in Mediated Communication

COMMUN 814 Communication Technologies in Relationships

COMMUN 816 Media Effects

COMMUN 818 Politics and the Media

COMMUN 823 Seminar in Small Group Communication

COMMUN 825 Work/Life Intersections and Communication

COMMUN 830 Negotiation

COMMUN 835 Seminar in Contemporary Public Address

COMMUN 837 Instructional Communication in the College Classroom

COMMUN 850 Seminar in Intercultural Communication

COMMUN 852 Critical Approaches to Intercultural Communication

COMMUN 860 Seminar: Issues in Communication (3 cr.; repeatable up to 9 cr. with change in topic)

COMMUN 862 Public Deliberation

COMMUN 864 Communication and Social Influence

COMMUN 872 Rhetorics of Constituting Community and Social Controversy

COMMUN 873 The Digital Mirror

COMMUN 874 Rhetoric of Women's Right in the U.S.

COMMUN 875 Rhetoric of Space and Mobility

COMMUN 893 Rhetoric of/and the Internet

COMMUN 902 Advanced Qualitative Research in Communication - Interviewing
 COMMUN 913 Advanced Topics in Group Communication (3 cr.; repeatable up to 9 cr. with change in topic)
 COMMUN 950 Theory Building in Communication and Culture
 COMMUN 971 Meta-Analysis: Practice and Application
 COMMUN 972 Methods in Communication Research: [subtitle] (3 cr.; may be repeatable up to 9 cr. with change of topic).
 COMMUN 973 Topics in Rhetorical Research: [subtitle] (3 cr.; may be repeatable up to 9 cr. with change of topic).
 COMMUN 998 Internship (1-3 cr.; repeatable up to 3 cr.)
 COMMUN 999 Independent Study (1-3 cr.; repeatable up to 9 cr. with change in topic)

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. Graduate students enrolling in 999 can elect to complete the work during the semester of enrollment or in the term immediately prior to the semester of enrollment. For example, a graduate student may complete work for an independent study during the summer and must enroll in the 999 during the fall semester of the same year. Graduate students enrolling in 999 must submit this form during the first two weeks of independent study work. The form must be signed by both parties (instructor and student) and approved by the M.A. Program Director as well as the Department Chair. These agreements are negotiated between faculty and students but are required to include:

1. 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.
2. 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.
3. Assignment of primary preparatory materials necessary for effective participation (e.g., a reading list, article reprints, training manuals, etc.);
4. Definition and assignment of tasks and/or other responsibilities;
5. 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.

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)

The Department of Communication's graduate level internship course (COMMUN 998) is designed to be an instructional experience that provides students with the opportunity to (1) learn how to perform work related tasks while under the close supervision of an employee of the sponsoring agency or organization and (2) apply and evaluate content learned from communication courses in the workplace.

Internships are secured by the student in consultation with their major professor. The student is responsible for contacting prospective agencies or organizational internship sponsors to secure an internship. The student is also responsible for coming to an agreement with the sponsoring agency or organization as to the number of hours to be worked, working conditions, compensation, and work assignments. The student may be compensated by the agency or organization for participating as an intern. However, under no circumstances, should the internship activities be a part of a regular employment or job relationship. The student should consult with their major professor on an acceptable proposal for a paper to be completed by the end of the semester.

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, submit a completed Graduate School's Graduate Transfer Credit Evaluation Form and any other required materials to the Graduate School. After successful evaluation by the Graduate School, submit the following materials to the M.A. Program Director: 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. The courses will be evaluated by M.A. Program Director and one other member of the GAC. If credit is not granted, a student can ask for the full GAC membership to consider the request.

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) M.A. of Arts Professional Portfolio (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 Forms

The Graduate Program of Studies forms, also referred to as the “Course of Study” forms, are graduate students’ official record of the coursework used in their 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 M.A. Degree”) and, in conjunction with their advisor, record their progress and submit this form by March 15 in their *first year* of the program. A second form, the M.A. Graduate Application Course Form should be downloaded, completed, and submitted by May 15 of the *second year* in the M.A. program. The M.A. Graduate Application Course Form is used to confirm courses taken for graduation with the Graduate School. 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.

6. Appraisal and Continuation

Continuation in the Program

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.
OR

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.

4. 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 GAC reviews performance each year and may instruct the M.A. Program Director to consult with the student’s advisor or directly counsel if 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 a Request for Exception (RFE) 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. Any student with two consecutive semesters of probationary status will be dropped from the program.

Students who hold a Graduate Teaching Assistantship, Research Assistantship, or Fellowship should consult their contract or award documents for additional requirements associated with continuing financial support.

Requesting an Exception from Graduate School Requirements

To request an exception to a Graduate School policy, a graduate student must submit documentation to the GAC for review. This documentation must include (a) a completed Graduate School Request for Exception (RFE) form, (b) a justification for the exception, and (c) evidence of extenuating circumstances to support the request for exception. Upon review, the GAC 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 RFE form and the supporting documentation will be forwarded to the Graduate School for consideration.

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

7. Annual Departmental Awards

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

Teaching Awards

Teaching awards shall recognize the top Ph.D. and M.A. students for teaching excellence in the previous academic year at UWM. The award will be based on self-nominations that include a current CV, a one-page nomination statement describing their teaching activity, and a one- to two-sentence statement of support from a current or previous course director (emailed directly from the course director to the specified M.A. or Ph.D. Program Director coordinating nominations) by February 15.

Research Awards

Research awards will recognize the top Ph.D. and M.A. students for research excellence in the previous academic 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 award will be based on self-nominations that include a current CV, a one-page nomination statement describing their research activity, and a one- to two-sentence statement of support from their advisor (emailed directly from the course director to the specified Ph.D. or M.A. Program Director coordinating nominations) by February 15.

Service Awards

Service awards 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 award will be based on self-nominations that include a current CV, a one-page nomination statement describing their service activity, and a one- to two-sentence statement of support from their advisor (emailed directly from the course director to the specified Ph.D. or M.A. Program Director coordinating nominations) by February 15.

8. 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, Modern Language Association, and American Psychological Association.

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 shared drive 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 relevant 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
 - Participants (if applicable; describe participants and your rationale for their selection)
 - Methods for collecting and analyzing data
 - 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 who 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.

Upon committee approval of the thesis, the student should place a copy of the thesis in the department shared drive.

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. Semester deadlines for graduation application can be found on the Graduate School website.

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.

9. M.A. 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 professional portfolio reflecting the student's objectives and accomplishments throughout their program of study. The M.A. Professional Portfolio (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 M.A. level, the 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 MAPP 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 the student's 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 six 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 the student's work toward the M.A., and identify future plans
5. Submission of the completed MAPP to the graduate advisor for approval
6. Upon approval, the student will place a copy of the MAPP in the department shared drive

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 on 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 (e.g. volunteer for Peace Learning Center, Boys and Girls Club, restorative justice)
 - listing of lecture series, colloquiums, lectures, public forums that they have attended (e.g. sample of promotional materials).
 - professional service (e.g. helping at NCA, editorial assistant, coder/transcriber)

- awards that they have won (e.g. 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 M.A. Program Director for final approval.

10. Financial Support

Some students admitted to the program may obtain financial support through one of the following mechanisms: Graduate School Fellowships, Advanced Opportunity Fellowships, Graduate Teaching Assistantships, or Research Assistantships. Students interested in a Graduate Teaching Assistantship should so indicate on their Graduate School application forms.

Graduate School Fellowships

Fellowships are competitively awarded to a selected few entering or continuing UWM graduate students. Awards are typically made for an academic year. Application materials for Graduate School Fellowships are available online in the Graduate School.

Advanced Opportunity Fellowships

Advanced Opportunity Program Fellowships are competitively awarded to underrepresented or disadvantaged students on a year-to-year basis. Application materials for Advanced Opportunity Program Fellowships are available online in the Graduate School.

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 may be informed about opportunities for Research Assistantships as they become available.

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 (GTAs) 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 GTAs usually extend for an academic year (nine months beginning in the Fall term and ending at the conclusion of the Spring term) and are equivalent to a fifty percent teaching load per semester. This teaching assignment is considered full-time employment, and GTAs are strongly discouraged from seeking other employment while employed as GTAs in the department.

Graduate Teaching Assistantships are typically renewable for up to four total years of Ph.D. study or up to two total years of M.A. study. Failure to adequately perform assistantship duties may result in nonrenewal by the department's Executive Committee.

GTA Assignment Process

Usually, during the fall semester prior to each academic year, the department will generate a list of courses that are to be offered for enrollment. Decisions about which courses to offer can vary but have a general basis in curricular need and potential for achieving adequate enrollment.

After the list of courses has been approved by the faculty, the Ph.D. and M.A. Program Directors will send a teaching preference questionnaire to returning Ph.D. and M.A. students, respectively. Graduate students who have been employed as a GTA in the previous year and have at least one

year of funding remaining will be asked to provide a rank-ordered list of their preference for the three introductory courses (101, 103, 105) as well as any requests to teach specific courses that are included in the department's approved schedule of course offerings for the subsequent year. Returning graduate students who fail to return the questionnaire by the stated due date will be assumed as stating no preference for any specific course. The Ph.D. and M.A. Program Directors will compile students' preferences and share the information with the faculty. The department considers graduate students' teaching preferences; however, course assignments are ultimately at the discretion of the faculty based on department needs.

Faculty will meet during the spring semester to discuss teaching assignments for returning and incoming GTAs. In accordance with procedures for the discussion of personnel matters, these discussions take place during closed-session meetings of the Department of Communication Graduate Faculty and are therefore confidential.

On or before the last date of the spring semester, the faculty will approve GTA assignments. Once approved, the Ph.D. Program Director will send the list of assignments to the graduate student and faculty listservs. Because there are often changes in GTA availability (e.g., as a result of receiving a fellowship), GTA assignments are still subject to change after approval by the faculty.

M.A. students who are enrolled but have not previously been appointed as a GTA and would like to be considered for appointment during the subsequent academic year should contact the M.A. Program Director for instructions on how to apply.

GTA Evaluations

GTAs are evaluated by their course director at least once a year. Course directors should give GTAs at least 48 hours notice prior to the initial visit in a semester for the purpose of evaluation. Prior notice is not required for course director visits for any other purpose, including subsequent visits for evaluation purposes.

After the evaluation, the course director will meet with the GTA to discuss their feedback. This meeting should take place within one week of the review. The course director will also provide a copy of the GTA evaluation form, and a copy will be put in the GTA's personnel file. The GTA is free to write a response to the review. This response must be filed within two weeks of receiving a written copy of the review. A copy should be provided to the course director, and another copy placed in the GTA's personnel file.

GTAs may request additional reviews. All GTA reviews must be dated.

Summer Teaching

Employment during the summer or winter session is never assured. All decisions about whether to offer summer teaching opportunities will be based upon the department's determination of curricular needs. Graduating students are typically not eligible for summer GTA assignments.

Summer teaching assignments will be made jointly following a committee meeting of the Chair, the Ph.D. Program Director, the M.A. Program Director, and the concerned course directors. The Ph.D. and M.A. Program Directors will alternate annually serving as course director for summer teaching assistants. The summer course director will also be responsible for summer graduate directing duties for both Ph.D. and M.A. programs. This arrangement will continue as long as summer compensation is available for these roles.

Criteria:

Should the department be able to hire GTAs for summer sessions, GTAs 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 GTA's performance teaching a given course, and coursework that would prepare the GTA 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 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 Ph.D. students receive preference, followed by 2nd-year Ph.D. students, then 1st-year Ph.D. students, then M.A. students.
4. Previous selection and teaching of a summer course. In cases when the first two criteria are met, students of the same seniority will be ranked according to when they last taught a summer course, with students who taught most recently ranked lowest.

Process:

1. During the early portion of the spring semester, the Ph.D. Program Director will gather input from all Ph.D. and M.A students. GTAs regarding their interest in teaching during summer. Students who are interested in teaching during summer must identify their interest in the course as well as notify their advisor to contact the Ph.D. Program Director (via email) to provide notification about whether a summer instructional assignment would be consistent with the student's progression in the program.
2. Upon identification of interested students and compilation of advisor input, and dependent on the Department's curricular needs, the Ph.D. Program Director will schedule a meeting with the M.A. Program Director, Department Chair, and course directors to reach decisions about summer teaching assignments.
3. The committee will first discuss any advisor input prior to determining whether a student should remain on the list of potential summer teaching candidates.
4. 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. GTAs who 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, with students who have taught less recently receiving priority over those with the same seniority who have taught more recently.

Request for Appointment of Chairperson of M.A. Committee (Due March 15th of 1st Year)

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:

M.A. Program Director

Date

Proposed Course of Study for M.A. Degree (Due March 15th of the 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

Signature/Date

_____ Approved by Advisor

Signature/Date

_____ Approved by M.A. Program Director

Signature/Date

Master's Graduation Application Course Record

Please attach this form to your Graduation Application

Name:

Email:

Term Entered:

Student ID (7-digits):

Requested Graduation Term:

If there is a substitution, please include the name of the course and when the RFE was approved in the notes section below:

	CREDITS	COURSE #	COURSE NAME	TERM TAKEN	GRADE RCVD	SUBSTITUTION?
1						
2						
3						
4						
5						
6						
7						
8						
9						
10						
11						
12						
13						
14						
15						

*If you need additional rows for classes taken, please complete a second form and add it to your application.

Notes:

I certify that the above information is accurate and completed to the best of my knowledge.

Signature:

Date:

Advisor Signature:

Date:

M.A. Professional Portfolio (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. MAPP defense is held
14. Successfully completed MAPP with the MAPP checklist form signed by Committee and submitted to M.A. Program Director for final approval/signature is uploaded to the Department shared drive by the student

 Candidate Name (print)

 Candidate Signature/Date

 Advisor Signature/Date

 Committee Signature/Date

 M.A. Program 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: _____ M.A. Program Director Date _____

Graduate Assessment Form for M.A. Students

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 Ph.D. program: _____

C. Other Achievements (Please specify)

Student's Name: _____ Signature: _____

Date: ____/____/____

COMMITTEE PART

- 0 = Does not meet expectations
 1 = Approaches expectations
 2 = Minimally meets expectations
 3 = Fully meets expectations
 4 = Exceeds expectations

Learning Outcome	Rating				
	0	1	2	3	4
1. Summarize, synthesize, and critique relevant literature to develop critical understandings of the history, theory, concepts, and debates in at least one major area of communication research.	0	1	2	3	4
2. Develop and complete an original research project that pursues a significant research question in the field of communication.	0	1	2	3	4
3. Justify the rationale that produced the project's research questions, methodological choices, and conclusions.	0	1	2	3	4
4. Ethically conduct research in communication, including methods, analysis, and writing.	0	1	2	3	4
5. Develop and use professional oral and written communication skills suitable for professional academic or professional discourse.	0	1	2	3	4
6. Explain the significance of their coursework and research in communication for developing individual and social responsibility, civic knowledge and engagement (both local and global), ethical reasoning, and action.	0	1	2	3	4

Committee Chair's Name: _____

Signature: _____ Date: ____/____/____