Master of Arts

Communication Studies

California State University, San Bernardino

Department Handbook

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INTRODUCTION

Congratulations on your admission, and welcome to graduate school! You have been accepted into this program because the Graduate Committee believes you will succeed. You are joining a graduate program that has become increasingly known for the quality of its instruction and the success of its graduate alumni. This Handbook is designed to assist you in successfully navigating graduate school.

Generally, there are two sets of graduate policies that you need to observe: (a) university policies, and (b) departmental policies. All university policies about graduate studies are available at <http://gradstudies.csusb.edu/currentStudents/index.html>. This Handbook focuses on departmental policies. Generally, your Graduate Coordinator and your Committee Chair are your primary resources; please make sure to stay in touch with them often.

All students are accepted with Conditionally Classified status, meaning that certain prerequisites need to be completed. Students are informed in writing which requirements must be fulfilled in order to advance to Classified status. The prerequisites typically include: (a) completing up to 12 undergraduate units in the Communication program, for students without a background in Communication with a minimum grade of B; (b) passing the gatekeeping graduate course (COMM 600 for the Communication Studies track or COMM 605 for the IMC track) with a minimum grade of B-. There are few cases on probationary acceptance, which gives those accepted students one year to raise their GPA to a minimum of 3.0.

If you are required to take an undergraduate course that has a prerequisite assigned to it (for instance, COMM 200 is a prerequisite for COMM 306), the Graduate Coordinator can permit you to register for COMM 306 without having to take COMM 200. Regardless of the requirement(s), these prerequisites are designed to help you succeed in the program and to prepare you for graduate work. You are expected to complete all your prerequisites and other requirements during your first year in the program, so that you may advance to **Classified** status. If you do not meet the requirements, you will be disqualified from the program. However, once you meet the specified requirements as outlined in your acceptance letter, the Graduate Coordinator will advance you to **Classified** status and will so inform you.

Periodically, the Graduate Coordinator reviews student records. The Coordinator may send you an email to inform you of your status, may put you on probation, or may advance you to the next step if necessary. If you are advanced, you and others (Committee Chair, Office of the Registrar, etc.) will also be notified.

Once you achieve **Classified** status, your next milestone is to advance to **Candidacy**. This is the highest level a student can reach until she or he graduates. Candidacy is awarded by the Graduate Coordinator and designates that the student has completed a significant amount of coursework, has an officially recognized Committee, and has an approved Plan of Study.

Irrespective of the level a student may obtain, if placed on **Probation**, the student must meet the requirements of probation and then work towards Candidacy once again. Probationary status could be the result of a number of reasons; however, typically it is given for a deficient GPA or failure to complete the prerequisites within the required timeframe. If this occurs, the student has one quarter to improve the infraction and remain in the graduate program.

### COURSEWORK

As a Conditionally Classified student, the Graduate Coordinator must permit you to enroll in courses. As a Classified student, you may enroll yourself in the courses offered by our department, except for independent studies (COMM 695), internships (COMM 697), the prep class (COMM 685), and the capstones (COMM 686, COMM 699 or COMM 999), for which you need the permission of the Graduate Coordinator. You also need the permission of the Graduate Coordinator before enrolling in a course offered by a different department, as well as the permission of that department. The Graduate Coordinator will assist you with this process.

Before you select a Committee, the Graduate Coordinator serves as your advisor; otherwise, your Committee Chair is your program advisor. Regardless of your status, you should carefully think about and map out your coursework. Just because you take graduate classes does not necessarily mean the classes will “count” in your program of study. It is a good idea to have an approved Committee and an approved Plan of Study before taking electives, particularly electives in a different department, as they may not count toward your degree.

During your first year of graduate school, you should focus on successfully completing the required core courses. For Communication Studies track students, these courses are: COMM 600, COMM 601, COMM 602 and COMM 603. For Integrated Marketing Communication track students, these courses are: COMM 605, COMM 601, COMM 602, COMM 603, COMM 675, and MKTG 605.

The core Communication courses are offered as follows:

COMM 600: Introduction to Graduate School (COMM track) Fall

COMM 605: Introduction to Graduate School (IMC track) Fall

COMM 602: Quantitative Research Methods Winter/Spring

COMM 603: Qualitative Research Methods Winter/Spring

COMM 675: Strategic Planning in PR Spring

For the Marketing class schedule, please consult the Marketing Department. Usually, the Graduate Coordinator has a year-long tentative schedule from the Marketing Department as well. Schedules are subject to change throughout the year, depending on faculty availability.

In the graduate program, 8 units (2 graduate courses) constitute full time status. It is generally not recommended that students register for more than 8 units at any time. In terms of taking prerequisites concurrently with graduate level courses, consult the Graduate Coordinator. Depending upon the situation, students may take 2 prerequisite undergraduate courses concurrently with 1 graduate level course.

Graduate classes are 500 and 600 level courses. While there are some 400 level elective courses for the IMC track, they may have an impact on full time status and financial aid. If you register for a 400 or 500 level course, which is available for undergraduates to enroll, you **must** complete additional work, readings, papers, etc. making the load of graduate level and quality. If the professor does not assign additional work for graduate students, it is your responsibility to ask for more. We encourage graduate students to register for 600 level classes since they are designed especially for the graduate program. Only two 500-level classes will count in a student’s Plan of Study, with very few exceptions. To understand more about which courses may count for advancement towards your MA degree, please see the *Bulletin* for the approved electives and the “Plan of Study” section in this Handbook.

### CONSTITUTING THE COMMITTEE

Once you have completed 12-16 graduate units and before you complete 20 units, you should select your Committee and put together an approved Plan of Study. To do this, the first step is to select a Chair for your Committee. This person is extremely important in assisting you through the program. The Committee Chair serves as your advisor, advocates your cause, edits your work, and wants you to succeed. This person must be a tenured or tenure-track professor in the Department of Communication Studies.

To select your Chair, you most likely have to conduct research to determine who would best fit your needs. Talk to the Graduate Coordinator and others to discuss your ideas. Read professors’ publications, research, and conference papers. Check the professors’ websites. See what kinds of classes the professors teach. Interview several professors to learn more about them and decide who would be best on your Committee. Ask yourself what your research interests are. Are you thinking of writing a thesis? Conducting a project? Or might you take comprehensive exams? What qualities are you looking for in a Chair? What are your expectations?

Once you have a person or two in mind, you should make an appointment and meet with the person you wish to become your Chair. Discuss your ideas, your interests, expectations, and timeline for completion. Ask the person to consider serving as your Chair and explain why you want that person to be your Chair. Essentially, make it clear why you selected that person and how that person can help you succeed in the program. It may be that you selected that person because you share similar research interests. It may be because that professor is well organized and knows how to help you get through the program efficiently. Whatever the reason you selected the professor to serve as your Chair, if the person says no, don’t take it personally. Move on to another potential Chair.

The second step is to assemble a Committee. Once you have a Chair, discuss who you might think would be good Committee members. Explain why you would like others to serve on your Committee and explain what role you foresee them taking. Be open-minded to consider other options that the Chair may suggest. After you and your Chair have decided on two other Committee members, repeat the process by making appointments with those professors.

Virtually, all university professors and lecturers are on a nine-month contract. This means that they are not required to be available to students in the summer. If a professor/lecturer teaches summer school, he or she is only required to be available to those students registered for that summer course. This is important if you plan on making progress during the summer or any other breaks throughout the academic year. Many professors/lecturers will be available to graduate students, but this is only if they choose to. You may want to disclose this request while selecting your Committee. Just because a professor/lecturer was available one summer or to one student, does not mean this is always the case for all students. You may also want to investigate whether a professor is planning a sabbatical, leave of absence, visiting scholar, etc., to plan your degree completion.

You may invite one Committee member from another academic department with the permission of the Graduate Coordinator, but there must be a reason you selected that person. For IMC track students, at least one Committee member should be from Marketing. If you wish to invite a faculty from outside the campus, you need the permission of the Graduate Coordinator, as well as the permission of the Dean of Graduate Studies.

You will need a minimum of three Committee members (including your Chair). Once they agree to serve on your Committee, you need to obtain their dated signatures on the Advisor and Committee Designation form (see Appendix A). This form is submitted to the Graduate Coordinator for final approval and signature. Once the Graduate Coordinator makes the Committee official, a copy of the approved form will be distributed to everyone involved.

During your term as a graduate student, your interests may change or your Committee members may not be available (on sabbatical, take a position elsewhere, etc.). Although your Committee is not set in stone, it is not advisable to change your Committee too often, if at all. By signing the Committee Designation form, your members are committing to you and you are committing to your members. However, if someone is dismissed as a Committee member, it is your responsibility to replace that person and complete a new Committee Designation form.

**PLAN OF STUDY**

Once you have advanced to Classified status, have obtained an approved Committee, and have completed no more than 20 units, you must work with your Committee Chair and design a **Plan of Study** (also known as an “Approved Study Plan”). This Plan of Study is individualized for each student. It essentially serves as a contract or agreement stating that you will take the classes as prescribed on your Plan of Study and in return, they will be applied towards your MA degree in Communication. As stated in the *Bulletin*, no more than 30% of your coursework on your Plan of Study may be transferred; however, the Graduate Coordinator and Graduate Committee must approve all transferred courses.

It is highly recommended that you obtain an approved Plan of Study prior to taking many electives. Not all courses listed in the *Bulletin* necessarily apply towards the MA degree, regardless of their graduate level status. For instance, only two 500-level courses will count (with exception permitted by the graduate coordinator and committee chair). Further, only up to 10 internship and independent study units will count. Only three units of COMM 689 (Teaching Associate Practicum) count and Communication 698 (Continuous Enrollment) does not count towards the degree.

Once you have consulted with your Committee Chair, complete the Plan of Study form. You may obtain an electronic version from the Graduate Coordinator to type the final request. In the meantime, use Appendix B as a working draft. On the Plan of Study, be sure to include your COMM 685 (preparation for the culminating experience/capstone) and one of the capstone requirements: COMM 699 (thesis), COMM 686 (project), or COMM 999 (comprehensive exam). Communication Studies track students must have a minimum of 47 graduate units to graduate and IMC track students must have a minimum of 50 graduate units to graduate. These units do not include any prerequisites or any classes that counted to a prior or concurrent degree.

After the student’s Chair and Committee Members sign the Plan of Study, it must be submitted to the Graduate Coordinator for final approval. If the Graduate Coordinator does not approve it, it will be returned to the student or the student’s Chair for corrections and resubmission. After the Graduate Coordinator approves the document, a copy is submitted to University Records, the student’s Chair, the student, and the student’s file. This document is used by the Records Office (Office of the Registrar) to complete the graduate check, permitting the student to graduate. If you did not meet the courses/units you indicated on your Plan of Study, you will not be approved to graduate.

If, for some reason, there is any deviation from the approved Plan of Study, the student must submit a revised Plan of Study and it goes through the same approval process. Please consult your Chair and the Graduate Coordinator before you submit a revised plan.

**Continuous Enrollment**

The assumption is that students will complete their thesis or project in the quarter they register for it. Often, that is not the case. Students who have completed all course work and are working on their thesis/project beyond the original quarter when they registered for the thesis/project or students who are taking the comprehensive examination at the in the Spring quarter without being registered in any class/units in winter, must remain in continuous enrollment in the university until their degree is granted. To maintain continuous enrollment, students must register each quarter, excluding summer, for COMM 698 (Extended Enrollment). Registration in COMM 698 allows students to remain in the system with an active status even when they are not enrolled in regular classes. In particular, if a student plans to use the university services such as the library, Graduate Studies office, faculty time, etc. while working on a thesis or project beyond the original registration quarter, she or he must register for COMM 698. Further, if a student is submitting the thesis or project for format review and binding in the summer, he or she must register for COMM 698 or the Graduate Studies office will not review the work.

## SECOND YEAR

In your second year, you should be well on your way to completing your degree. With a Committee and Plan of Study in place, you should be making progress in your coursework and thesis or project. Your second year should constitute elective courses, your preparation course (COMM 685), your capstone, and your oral defense. In addition, all students must meet all university requirements as stated in the *Bulletin*.

Graduate Check

One of these requirements is to file a **Graduate Check.** If two years is your projected time frame, you ought to submit a grad check by winter of your second year.The Records Office requests that grad checks are submitted one quarter/term prior to students completing their degree. Please check this website for specific deadlines <http://commencement.csusb.edu/preparingGraduate/>. If you submit it late, a late fee will be imposed. Remember, if you do not follow your approved Plan of Study, you must resubmit a revised Plan of Study and a new grad check. A grad check cannot be processed if the Records Office has not received an approved Plan of Study from the Graduate Coordinator.

If you are working on a thesis or project as your capstone, it is highly recommended that you complete your Proposal at the end of your first year, collect data throughout the summer, and work on it in the fall and winter quarters of your second year. By spring quarter, you could defend the thesis or project early, complete any required editing and re-writes, and submit it to the Graduate Studies Office for formatting. This is the best-case scenario to finish in a two-year time frame with a thesis or project capstone.

If you are planning on taking the comprehensive exam, you should plan on completing your coursework by the end of the winter quarter, and register for the exam in the spring quarter.

GRADUATE TEACHING ASSOCIATESHIPS

The teaching associateship program in the Communication Studies graduate program is an excellent opportunity for graduate students to learn how to teach the basic Oral Communication course. Graduate students who are interested in a career in teaching or plan on continuing their Ph.D. studies will find the graduate teaching assistantship program to be most beneficial in both of these areas. Graduate teaching assistants/associates (GTAs) independently teach one or two sections of Public Speaking under the supervision and training of the GTA Coordinator. The program seeks the very best students who are mature, responsible, dedicated, and intelligent to teach and work with college students. Therefore, the graduate teaching assistantship positions are competitive. Application for the teaching assistantship/associateship program is once a year and candidates are interviewed late Spring quarter. A modest stipend is included. GTAs are required to register for Communication Studies 689 (1 unit) every quarter they are teaching; however, only three units of 689 will count towards a student’s Plan of Study. Training begins in September, a few weeks prior to the beginning of the academic year. Graduate teaching assistants/associates are hired on a quarterly-basis and may teach up to six quarters, if in good standing. Extensions may be granted with the permission of the Graduate Committee to students working on theses/projects with the intention of applying to Ph.D. programs. For further information and/or if you are interested in applying for a position, please contact the Graduate Coordinator or the GTA Coordinator.

The following policy addresses the responsibilities, application procedures, and selection criteria if you are interested in this opportunity:

**Responsibilities:**

1. Attend workshop sessions during the summer, prior to the fall quarter.
2. Register for COMM 689 each quarter.
3. Receive written and oral feedback from the GTA Coordinator.
4. Attend every class session for assigned class.
5. Read all required materials.
6. Lecture, discuss, conduct pedagogical activities, etc. to teach the topics from the selected textbook.
7. Grade all speeches, exams, quizzes, homework assignments, etc.
8. Take roll every day in class.
9. Administer SOTEs following the proscribed procedure.
10. Enroll in Communication Studies graduate courses full time, or register for thesis, project, or comprehensive exams.
11. Make progress in the graduate program. Progress includes completing the degree in a timely manner such as being a full time student in the program, completing a Committee Designation Form, completing a Plan of Study form, maintaining a 3.0 or better GPA in the program, or working towards completing a thesis or project.

**Application Process:**

Every spring quarter, the Graduate or GTA Coordinator will send an email call to current graduate students and eligible graduate students who were accepted into the program but have not yet begun the program. Interested graduate students must submit an application to the Graduate or GTA Coordinator no later than the deadline posted by the Department of Communication Studies. The application includes a vita, or resume, and a statement of intent outlining qualifications (no more than one page). Returning GTAs need only submit a statement of intent (no more than one paragraph).

**Eligibility:**

To be eligible, applicants must be graduate students in the Communication Studies program, or recently accepted graduate students in the Communication Studies program. Further, students must have completed the 12 units of pre-requisite communication coursework for the graduate program, must meet the minimum GPA of 3.0 or more overall, or in the last 90 quarter units, and must meet the minimum TOEFL requirement for the program (230/575/89) if required of them. Applicants must be classified graduate students, or conditionally classified graduate students, provided they have already completed their 12 prerequisite units in Communication. Also, prior to beginning the teaching associate position, graduate students must participate in the department’s shadow program and/or a community college internship program approved by the CSUSB Department of Communication Studies’ Graduate Coordinator.

**Criteria for Selection:**

The following criteria will be considered when selecting the department teaching associates:

1. Based upon the number of applicants, the number of graduate teaching associate positions available, the budget, and the quality of the applications, a short list will be created by the department graduate Committee.

2. Short list applicants will be invited for an interview in May.

3. The interview will include the graduate Committee members and any tenure track faculty, or lecturers, in the Department of Communication Studies

4. After the interviews are completed, each faculty member will individually rank each interviewee. The Graduate or GTA Coordinator will tally the rankings and develop a list in order of preference. This list is shared with the department Chair, GTA Coordinator, and Graduate Coordinator.

5. Offers will be made by the department Chair in the order presented. GTA positions will be filled based on department needs and budget.

**Criteria for Multiple Sections:**

Based upon the budget and departmental need, graduate teaching associates may teach one additional section during any given quarter if the GTA meets the following criteria:

1. The graduate student must have completed a minimum of three quarters as a teaching associate.
2. The GTA must submit a written request for an additional course section.
3. The GTA must be in good standing in the graduate program.
4. The GTA must be making progress in the graduate program (see above).
5. The GTA must maintain stellar SOTEs.
6. The department Chair will seek a recommendation from the GTA Coordinator.
7. Final determination will be made in a consultation between the department Chair, the GTA Coordinator, and Graduate Coordinator.

**Shadowing**

The shadow program allows graduate students or graduating seniors to be introduced to what it is like to teach a college course. Shadows are assigned a faculty mentor and a class section to work with for an entire quarter.

Shadows or interns must register for COMM 697 (2 units which do not count on a Plan of Study) and are responsible for attending all class sessions, meeting with their faculty mentor outside of class time, presenting between one to three classroom lectures, and other assignments.

Mentors provide rationale for teaching techniques, guidance on grading speeches and assignments, and feedback on performance to their shadows. Shadows may separately grade student assignments as a learning exercise. Shadows' grades cannot affect the grades of the students in the class they are observing. Students typically shadow for at least one quarter before they become teaching assistants/associates, but applying for the teaching assistant program is not required. If you are interested in participating in the shadow program, contact the Graduate Coordinator or the GTA Coordinator.

CAPSTONE OPTIONS

Three capstone options are available for students seeking an M.A. in Communication. Students may complete a thesis, project, or take a comprehensive exam. While the thesis and project are closely related, the exam is quite different. Regardless of the students’ choice, one of the three options must be included in the Plan of Study.

Thesis (COMM 699, 5 units)

A thesis involves systematically, theoretically, and methodologically answering research questions in written format.

You cannot register for your thesis/projects units (COMM 699 or COMM 686) until you have an approved Thesis/Project Proposal also known as a Prospectus. The first step is to register for COMM 685. Registration in this class requires a Thesis/Project Proposal form (see Appendix C) submitted to the Graduate Coordinator. The form includes a brief statement of your topic and a one- to two-page bibliography of relevant sources. As part of this class, you will be working with your Chair and Committee to prepare a Thesis/Project Proposal. Your complete Proposal, typically no less than 20 pages, needs to include a statement of the problem and the problem’s importance/significance, your research question, a literature review, a description of your intended data, as well as the method(s) of collection and analysis. Please see the Proposal section below for more information.

The second step is to obtain Committee approval of your Proposal. At the minimum, all Committee members must read and sign off on your proposal. Some Committees may require a public defense. The final version of your Proposal with the dated signatures of all members of your Committee must be submitted to the Graduate Coordinator, before you are granted approval to register for COMM 699 or COMM 686.

Once your Proposal is approved, you may begin your thesis or project. Talk with your Chair to determine how to proceed. Typically, the Chair proofreads, edits, and comments as you complete and re-write each chapter. Some Committee Members may want to read each chapter as you complete it, while others may only want to read the final draft. Do not distribute the chapters or thesis draft to your Committee Members unless instructed to do so by your Chair. Once your Chair instructs you to do so, establish whether your Committee Members prefer a digital copy of your thesis/project, a hard copy, or both. Distribute your thesis/project to your Committee Members. Include instructions such as, “This is a completed draft. I would appreciate any comments you offer and would like to defend it this quarter.” If your Committee determines the thesis is ready for defense, you should work with your Chair to determine a time, date, and place for the oral defense. Generally, additional changes are required after the oral defense. To graduate on time, you need to meet all the deadlines for format review and defense posted by the Graduate Student Office. Please see <http://gradstudies.csusb.edu/eventsCalendar/calendar.html>

*For guidelines on writing a thesis or project, please consult the Website of the Office of Graduate Studies:* [*http://gradstudies.csusb.edu/thesisProjectDissertation/index.html*](http://gradstudies.csusb.edu/thesisProjectDissertation/index.html)*.*

Generally, a thesis in the Department of Communication Studies is a scholarly discussion of an original empirical research conducted by the student. The research process maps onto the structure of the thesis as follows:

I. Literature review: In this section, you review all facets of your proposed topic that are relevant to your thesis/hypothesis. This section presents your thesis in a scholarly context by comparing and contrasting important definitions of key terms, key concepts and key arguments about your topic that have preceded your argument.

A. The review can be organized according to the following possibilities:

1. Others’ uses of key concepts or variables, and their definitions.

2. Others’ types of samples used.

3. Others’ methods employed or similar devices, such as textual analyses, that focus the information on the proposed topic.

4. The review should end with a summary statement that includes what scholars know and don’t know about the topic.

B. The review should be as comprehensive as possible. If you are unfamiliar with keyword searches, you should ask your Committee—and reference librarians—to help you develop a long list of possible keywords, as well as possible library databases and relevant holdings in the region.

II. Collecting data

A. Forms of data: In Communication Studies and related fields, data collection can occur in either of three major categories:

1. Data that doesn’t come from people “out there.” This data source has been compiled or produced by someone else: documents, original manuscripts and letters, histories, monographs, newspaper articles, photographs, speeches, demographic or survey data, judicial cases.

2. Highly structured collection of data from living subjects. This approach can be either one-shot or two-shot in-and-out-again gathering of data. It can be collected from experimental situations. Or it can be collected from survey questionnaires. This method does not usually involve lengthy contact with subjects.

3. Research that involves long-term, continuous contact with subject groups.

This fieldwork approach can also involve participant strategies, observation strategies, or both. Ethical considerations have become increasingly stringent in recent years. Not only do you risk expulsion, but when you are in ethical violation of federal human subjects research guidelines, the university IRB can impound your data and prevent you from completing your study. It isn’t a good idea to study a group whose activities and attitudes outrage you. It also isn’t ethical to study a group from whom you conceal your real identity. It is not advised to study a group whose existence and leadership are unstable and discontinuous.

B. Amount of data: Keep in mind what purposes your data will serve. Do these bear on confirming or rejecting your hypothesis? Or do they answer your question? Do they fit into your objectives and propositions?

1. It’s better to collect too much rather than too little, however.

2. It’s not a good idea to go on a “fishing expedition” in which you find all kinds of things out that have little to do with your questions/hypotheses.

3. Usually, the data you collect will alter your hypothesis or question somewhat. Having a finely detailed picture of your subjects’ backgrounds enables you to close off other possible causes for their attitudes, activities, and decisions.

III. Quantitatively Analyzing and Interpreting Data

A. Determining statistical significance. Does your analysis show that you can support your propositions or that you can dispute your null hypothesis?

B. Descriptive vs. analytic statistics: Caution needs to be used when you generalize about the magnitude, direction and significance of your findings.

Sometimes, your data is only “near significant” or “approaching significance,” but it’s not advisable to use it as support since “statistical significance is by definition a zero-sum game,” says David Sternberg in *How to Complete and*

*Survive a Doctoral Dissertation,* NY: St. Martin’s Press, 1981.

C. What to do with disconfirming evidence. You will encounter challenges to your theoretical questions or model from within the data and from outside of the data.

1. If you do find negative external studies after you’ve begun analyzing, then

you may need to either re-examine your data or even design a new

instrument.

2. What to do with internal “data that is coming out wrong.” Pre-testing your

instrument and methodology with small groups should help you avoid this

outcome. If the pre-tests do not do this, then consider whether:

1. You can argue that a rejected hypothesis is valuable in that it closes off

dead-end research directions

1. The data may discredit your hypothesis, which means you may

have to revise it, your method, and/or your instrument

3. For studies with qualitative units of analysis, you should develop a conceptual schema that will enable you to say something interesting and structured about your topic. Remember that you want to add to the existing body of literature about your topic, rather than confirm what this literature already says. Your Committee can help you address these new contributions.

Thesis Content

The chapters can contain the following items, although not all of those listed are necessary or appropriate for all studies, and the order of these items can vary. The content varies among topics and Committee Chairs and members. Use this as a guideline; it is not set in stone and it is not necessarily in this order. Ultimately, you must rely upon your Committee Chair for direction and guidance.

* Introduction: Background of the problem (such as trends related to it, unresolved issues, social concerns)
* Statement of the problem situation (basic difficulty, area of concern, need)
* Purpose of the study
* Conceptual assumptions, also called postulates
* Theoretical framework
* Delineation of the research problem, which means you explain relationships among variances or comparisons to be considered
* Importance of the study
* Definition of terms, which in the Introduction are conceptual terms
* Outline of the remainder of your thesis

Literature Review

* Purpose to be served by review of literature
* Summary of findings of existing relevant studies, who has done what, when, and where, and what methodological approaches were used, measurements and instruments used
* Relate findings to need for your study and your study’s likelihood of finding meaningful, relevant and significant results
* Furnish a conceptual framework that affords the basis for your

hypotheses or propositions that you will investigate

Methodology or Procedure

* Description of research methodology or approach (quantitative: experimental, quasi-experimental, correlation, causal-comparative, survey; or qualitative: textual analysis, qualitative ethnography, discourse analysis, etc)
* Research design (quantitative: spell out independent, dependent and classificatory variables and, sometimes, formulate an operational statement of your research hypothesis; descriptive but also quantitative: you don’t need a research hypothesis; qualitative: spell out definitions of key terms and formulate propositions that you wish to support by your findings.)
* Pilot studies (test your methodology on a small representative sample of your final sample population or group of items to be analyzed. Your pilot study will help you discover bugs in your data collection techniques, and contradictions in your sample’s characteristics.)
* Instrumentation (quantitative: describe your tests, measures, observations, scales, questionnaires; qualitative: describe your units of analysis.)
* Procedures: Field, classroom, or laboratory procedures; instructions to subjects, strategies with textual materials.
* Data collection and recording
* Data processing and analysis (statistical or qualitative)
* Methodological assumptions
* Possible restatement of hypotheses or propositions

Theoretical Perspective

* Explain from what theoretical foundation this research is derived
* Who has used it before?
* How does it fit within the scope of your research?
* What are the assumptions?

Analysis and Evaluation of Findings

* Findings presented in tables or charts
* Findings reported as evidence for questions asked in hypothesis or in conceptual propositions posed in Problem Statement
* Factual information kept separate from interpretation, inference, and evaluation (this section relates mostly to historical, case study and anthropological investigations, in which your factual and interpretive materials for your analysis need to be interwoven in order to make your case as credible as possible. Be sure, however, to distinguish clearly between fact and interpretation.)
* Discussion or Interpretation: This is a separate section from findings and factual information, in which you tie your findings to your theory, your literature review and your overall argument.

Summary, Conclusions, Limitations, Recommendations

* Brief summary of everything covered
* Conclusions: These refer to the “so what” question or hypotheses that you stated as inferences that you wished to support with some degree of generalizability
* Limitations or weaknesses
* Recommendations/Future Research: Practical suggestions for implementing findings in other studies or to conduct your own additional research

Student’s Committee Responsibilities

*Chair:* Once he/she has agreed to work with you, you should plan to meet often to discuss ideas, progress, and problems. The Chairperson is obligated throughout the completion process to ask you questions and give you suggestions regarding the scope of your thesis/project, your specific topic’s thesis or hypothesis, your methods of data collection and analysis, and any obstacles to completion that you encounter.

*Committee:* At the time that all faculty members agree to serve on the Committee, you should guide them in the ways that you want them to help you. Remember, you have chosen people for specific purposes. They should help you with suggesting references, developing concepts and ideas, and consulting on methodology. Minimally, all Committee members must read, comment--in writing--on both your thesis/project proposal, your final draft, and attend your defense to contribute final comments and suggestions. To use your Committee members most advantageously, you should schedule meetings with them throughout your work, in order to help you on your literature review, key terms and key questions and methodology--or all three.

Project (COMM 686, 5 units)

You cannot register for your project units until you obtain approval. To do so, complete the Thesis/Project Proposal form (see Appendix C), which includes a brief statement of the topic and attach a one- to two-page bibliography of sources relevant to that topic. Have all three Committee members sign the form, and submit it to the Graduate Coordinator.

*For guidelines on writing a thesis or project, please consult the Website of the Office of Graduate Studies:* [*http://gradstudies.csusb.edu/thesisProjectDissertation/index.html*](http://gradstudies.csusb.edu/thesisProjectDissertation/index.html)*.*

A project may include a short video, documentary, journalism project, public relations project, marketing project, web design, advertising strategy, or radio project, as well as a written component containing an Introduction, Project Purpose, Scope and Limitations, Literature Review, Methodology, Results and Discussion. Typically, a project involves a creative production coupled with scholarly documentation. Some examples include:

Developing a plan to improve the communication between doctors and patients who are terminally ill at a local hospital;

Creating a training manual for an intercultural communication training course for an organization;

Developing a documentary video that addresses a marginalized perspective;

Developing a marketing strategy in a new location for a multinational corporation;

Designing an advertising strategy for a new product;

Designing an educational module for teaching community college students public speaking.

Consult the *Journal of Applied Communication Research* for additional examples.

Myths and Project Functions

Several myths exist around projects, but they are unsubstantiated. For instance, a project is not inferior to a thesis. A project requires as much research and planning as a thesis. A project requires as much, if not more, work such as a prospectus, materials, evaluation, supplementary materials, and analysis. In addition to the video, for instance, a project requires scholarly documentation as well. A project does not prevent you from entering a doctoral program. In fact, organizational management may view a project more favorably because it details your ability to solve problems and is a visually tangible example of your abilities.

The functions of a project include solving problems, engaging in applied research and create something that allows others to “see” it in new ways. Applied research seeks knowledge to solve problems and is guided by “how” questions. Knowledge gained from pure research can be used toward applied research.

Project Content

Determine what question(s) you want to answer, formulate your research questions. In doing so, ask yourself: Is it a question I really care about? Is it a question worth asking? Is it a question I have the background and competencies to address? Do I have the access and materials to complete the project?

Identify an organization to use as a “lab” or collect materials needed to complete the project. Gather data about interpretations or explanations for the problem within the organization (this may help define the problem). Gather data about optional solutions from others, what has worked, what has failed, and why. Gather data to gain input from all levels of the organization to replace resistance with support.

Literature review: identify the body of knowledge (what scholars and practitioners already know about the problem or research questions).

Needs assessment: gather relevant information to help define what the problem/project is, provide a background for alternative solutions, and create an atmosphere for implementation. Consider the following:

Timing: look for conditions that are as normal as possible

Participation: everyone should have an opportunity for input

Confidentiality: focus on the issue raised, not who raised them. If you have participants, you may need IRB approval before you begin your project.

Both the thesis and the project require a proposal/prospectus; however, they may differ among Committee Chairs and individual theses or projects. Please consult your Chair for specific details. A project prospectus may include, but is not limited to:

* Statement/identification of the problem
* Questions to be addressed
* Review of the literature
* Needs analysis
* Recommended strategies/project revisions based on needs analysis
* Methodology
* Timeline for completion
* Estimated budget

In addition to the project itself, the final product should also include a more scholarly document that explains and illustrates the project’s significance, value, objectives; a literature review, a description of the methodology, a discussion of the completed project, a conclusion, and implications of the project. Essentially, you begin with the proposal and augment it by elaborating on your completed project for the final document.

Comprehensive Examination (COMM 999, 0 units)

The following information should help you to prepare to take the comprehensive examination in the Department of Communication Studies.

### Definition: The comprehensive examination option is designed for students who prefer to demonstrate mastery of their graduate studies through an examination that broadly tests their understanding of the knowledge obtained.

“A comprehensive examination is an assessment of the student’s ability to integrate the knowledge of the area, show critical and independent thinking, and demonstrate mastery of the subject matter. The results of the examination provide evidence of independent thinking, appropriate organization, critical analysis, and accuracy of documentation.” (Title 5)

### Myths and Procedures

As with projects, myths exist with the comprehensive exam as well. For instance, the exam does not prevent you from entering a doctoral program. The exam is not the “easy way out” because it involves careful planning, self-guidance, and preparation. Like the thesis or project, students can have a second chance if she or he does not pass in the first attempt. While some students think that the exam only involves one quarter of study time, it in fact, requires studying each quarter the student is enrolled in coursework since the exam is cumulative. During the quarter the student takes the exam, intensive, self-guided studying occurs for eight consecutive weeks.

The comprehensive exam is offered every Fall and Spring term. The exam is not offered during the Summer or Winter sessions. The comprehensive examination is closed book and closed notes. Use of notes of any kind during the exam is grounds for failing the exam and dismissal from the program. The test must be completed on a computer that has no exam related material stored. The Graduate Coordinator may inspect all computer files and disks used during the exam. Printing out answers and/or emailing them to chairs and committee members may be done immediately after each allotted day of testing.

Candidates taking the comprehensive exam should generally take the exam the quarter after they have completed all course work, as the exam covers most of the course work in their Plan of Study. All incompletes must be removed before the date of the examination. In extraordinary cases, the student may complete the comprehensive exam in the last quarter of course work with the approval of the Graduate Coordinator, but may do so with the understanding that the comprehensive examination might include all course work in the Plan of Study including material covered that quarter. It is the responsibility of the student to meet with his or her Committee Members and get preparation guidance for the exam.

Questions are due from the student’s Chair to the Graduate Coordinator in week 6. The written portion of the exam is offered in the 8th week of the term. The written portion may be scheduled for one day or for two consecutive days. Other time frames require approval of the Graduate Committee. A rewrite, if required, should be completed in the 9th week. The oral defense is scheduled in the 10th week. The Graduate Coordinator works with the students to schedule the written portion and the re-write. The student and his or her Chair schedule the oral defense.

### Exam Content

The exam questions are based upon, but are not reducible to, the student’s course work. They may ask the candidate to discuss a theory or compare one theory to another. Questions may ask the candidate to apply theory to a specific “real world” situation. Questions may ask candidates to unravel a methodological problem or choosing, designing, and justifying a research methodology appropriate for a given research problem. The written portion of the comprehensive examination is divided into two parts:

PART I consists of a four-hour portion designed to test mastery of program objectives as covered in the required core courses. For Communication Studies track students, these classes are: COMM 600, COMM 602, and COMM 603 (in addition to one elective). For Integrated Marketing Communication track students, these classes are: COMM 605, COMM 602, COMM 603, COMM 675, and MKTG 605. The purpose of this testing is to assess students’ ability to:

. Demonstrate understanding of multicultural issues reflected in communication

. Employ appropriate theories in communication

. Employ appropriate methodologies in accessing, interpreting, and applying information to critical communication questions

. Integrate theory, methodology, and professional practice

. Demonstrate marketing principles (for IMC track students only)

PART II: Four hours covering 5 elective courses in the student’s Plan of Study (3 electives for IMC students).

In exceptional circumstances, the Committee may request a rewrite of all or a portion of the exam. The rewrite is to be completed in the 9th week and may only be requested if, in the judgment of the Committee, the student experienced extreme writer’s apprehension or if it appears clear that after reading the student’s answer that a question or questions were inadvertently misworded or misleading.

**Assessment Criteria**

Committee Members independently read student answers and are guided by these criteria:

1. Are the written answers complete?
2. Do they address all issues implicit in the questions?
3. Did the written answer “miss” any questions by confusing concepts and methods?
4. Are there any other major studies relevant to the questions other than those cited?

Scoring: Each component (each written portion and oral portion) will be scored on a 5-point scale as follows:

5 = exceptional

4 = A

3 = B

2 = C

1 = D

0 = F

Thus a student could receive a total of 15 on each written portion and oral portion for a total of 45 points. To pass, a student must receive a total of 27 points and an average of at least a “C” on each of the three portions of the examination.

**Remediation**

If a student does not pass, she or he is given one additional opportunity to take the exam. A remediation program will be developed for the student by the end of the quarter. Remediation may include auditing courses, assigning readings, writing extensive papers, and/or retaking the entire exam, or a portion thereof, over again. Students who do not pass the comprehensive exam are given a no credit “NC” for the COMM 999 grade and must register for the course again at the next regularly scheduled exam cycle. Thus, for instance, if a student does not pass in the Spring quarter, the next and only opportunity is Fall quarter. If a student does not pass in the Fall quarter, the next and only opportunity is Spring quarter. The student must refile a grad check in either circumstance. The quarter in which the student partakes in remediation, he or she must register again for COMM 999, with the Graduate Coordinator’s permission, as well as COMM 698 Continuous Enrollment. Once the work is completed, and if the Committee finds it acceptable, a “CR” shall be awarded. If the work is not deemed acceptable, the student will receive an “NC” and will be dismissed from the program.

**Student Responsibilities**

1. Attained advancement to candidacy and complete, or in the process of completing, the last course in their Plan of Study.
2. Register for COMM 999 (0 units) with permission of the Graduate Coordinator.
3. Within the first week or two of the quarter, make initial contact with the Committee Chair, then all members of the Committee to seek advice for studying for the exam. Understand who is responsible for each portion of the exam and request study guides.
4. Meet periodically with all members of the Committee to ask follow up questions, discuss readings, and engage in academic conversations.
5. Review class notes, books, and other course material suggested by Committee members.
6. Consult with the Graduate Coordinator for date, location, and computer requirements for exam.

**Graduate Coordinator Responsibilities**

1. Schedule COMM 999 in Fall and Spring quarters.
2. Solicit examination questions from Committee Chairs.
3. Schedule and administer tests.
4. Send answers to Committees.
5. Schedule and administer any rewrites.

**Student’s Committee Responsibilities**

1. Review the student’s Plan of Study and discuss with the Committee members who will be responsible for each portion of the written exam.
2. Meet with the student, develop a study plan and clarify expectations. Comps actual questions should not be shared with the student before the date of the written exams.
3. Write and gather examination questions. Committee members may solicit questions and answer guidelines from faculty who taught courses in student’s Plan of Study. By the 6th week of the quarter, the Committee Chair prepares a final version of the written questions and delivers the questions to the Graduate Coordinator for test administration.
4. Read written answers. Committee members may consult with faculty who taught courses in student’s program of study.
5. Make public to faculty and graduate students the date, time, and place of the oral defense at least one week in advance.
6. Assess the student’s overall mastery.
7. Notify student and Graduate Coordinator of assessment.
8. If the student passes, a “CR” (credit) is assigned for the COMM 999 grade. If the student does not pass, an “NC” (no credit) is assigned for the COMM 999 grade and prepares a recommended remediation program before the end of the quarter.

ORAL DEFENSE

Whether a student selects to write a thesis, complete a project, or take the comprehensive exam, all students must successfully complete a public oral defense. The oral defense may differ slightly among Committee Chairs or between the thesis/project or exam. It is recommended that students consult their Chair to prepare for the defense. Regardless of the capstone option, all oral defenses are no longer than 2 hours. Once the Chair schedules the time, date, and place, she/he must notify the Graduate Coordinator to provide a minimum one-week public announcement and invitation.

For the thesis/project option, generally candidates are asked to briefly summarize their thesis or project. Then, the Chair, who leads this meeting, directs questions to the student. The three-member Committee is responsible to develop and ask questions from the Communication (and Marketing) field(s) as they may pertain to the student’s work and research.

For the comprehensive exam option, candidates are provided the opportunity to add to or correct any points in their written answers. These opening comments are limited to 10 minutes. The Committee members will then ask questions and can cover the student’s answers to the written portion as well as the range of theories and methods studied throughout the graduate program. The student may also be asked questions for which there is no right or wrong answers. In these cases, the candidate is expected to communicate competently.

In either case, questions may come from guests in attendance if the Chair approves it. Once the question and answer period is over, the candidates and all guests are asked to leave the room. During this time, the Committee discusses and assesses the student’s responses and offers overall impressions. The Chair tallies the exam points or summarizes the main ideas for the thesis or project to determine if the candidate satisfactorily met the requirements of the oral defense portion. Once this is determined, the candidate and guests are invited back into the room. If the candidate did not pass, remediation will be planned by the end of the quarter (comp exam), or editions/corrections will be made (thesis/project). A new oral defense may or may not be required at a future time.

PROPOSAL

For students who select a thesis or project capstone experience, a proposal is required. The purpose of the proposal is to help your Chair and Committee to effectively support the steps you will need to take to complete your thesis or project. Generally, your Committee members will expect:

1. Clarity, comprehension and innovativeness of your thesis statement or hypothesis;

2. Logicality and conciseness of your proposal’s organizational structure;

3. Appropriateness of research method and feasibility of project.

The length of your thesis or project proposal will vary, depending on the nature of your topic and scope of your study. Minimally, a proposal contains a problem statement, research question(s), literature review, methodology, and data collection. A proposal should be no less than 20 pages in length, double-spaced; some may be as long as 60+ pages. Oftentimes, the proposal is adapted to become the first chapter or two of the completed thesis or project.

If you are using human or animal subjects (participants), you must gain written approval from the CSUSB Institutional Review Board (IRB). The Board follows Federal regulations for the protection of live research subjects. The use of human subjects is governed by Executive Memorandum 93-04 and by policies of the CSUSB IRB. For animal subjects, Federal guidelines require that you submit a Research Protocol to the Chair of the Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee under the IRB.

For a copy of the guidelines for proper procedures, deadlines, to schedule a review of the research protocol form, or obtain other information, go to <http://research.csusb.edu> or contact the Office of Academic Research at 909-537-7588. IRB approval or exemption must be granted before you begin your proposed research and the approval process can be time-consuming so plan early. If you gather any data prior to obtaining IRB approval or exemption, your data may be confiscated.

Content

The content varies among topics and Committee Chairs; however, there are some very basic portions for each proposal. Use this as a guideline, it is not set in stone and it is not necessarily in this order. Ultimately, you must rely on your Committee Chair for direction and guidance.

Introduction: This section of the proposal should set the tone for the reader by introducing the topic. Writing a thesis or project is like entering a conversation with others in the field. You need to tell your readers why the problem you chose to study is important and worth pursuing and which scholarly “conversation” you plan to join.

Literature Review: Several literature reviews may be in your proposal; however, there is usually one section designated as the literature review section. This can include a review of relevant research on your proposed topic, a review of the theory(ies) you propose to use, or the method(s) you choose to employ. If this section is a literature review of your topic, then generally the presentation of your literature review puts your problem into a scholarly context.

State clearly what theory you will rely upon to situate your thesis or project. You should explain the theory and rely on the literature for those who have used it in the past. This establishes that you know what it is and how it has been used. In addition, justify why you have chosen to use this particular theory with this particular sample or data. Explain why the theory will help you address the research questions.

The literature review should end with a *summary statement* that includes what scholars know and don’t know about the topic. The conclusion to this section is how your research will employ and extend the literature. You may be arguing that there is a gap in the literature and your research will fill that void.

Statement of the Problem/Research Questions: Stemming from the introduction and literature review, this section concisely explains the problem that exists and questions you propose to answer. You may address questions such, as why is it worthwhile to spend time on this work? What may be its theoretical and/or practical significance? What contribution might it make to the field? What practical uses might your work have?

Method(s): State clearly what method(s) of data collection and data analysis you will use to complete your thesis or project. At the very least, you should explain the method of data collection and rely on the literature for those who have used it in the past. This establishes that you know what it is and how it has been used. In addition, justify why you have chosen to use this particular method with this particular sample or data. Explain why the method will help you address the research questions.

Data: Explain your data and how you will gain access and collect it. If you have variables you are investigating, you will need to state the operational definitions. If you are doing a descriptive, interpretive or qualitative study, define your units of analysis and how you will obtain them. Justify that the data you obtain is sufficient and appropriate to address your problem.

Thesis Outline: Briefly state the chapters and components of your thesis or project. This offers your Committee an idea of how many chapters you expect to write and what they will contain.

Project Timeline: Briefly outline your proposed time frame to complete the project.

Limitations: Every thesis and project has its limitations. It is important to acknowledge and explain what yours are without belittling your work’s importance.

Essentially, the proposal/prospectus serves several purposes. It forces the student to put her or his ideas on paper in a cogent manner and allows Committee Members to read and comment on what the student wants to do. It offers the student a chance to demonstrate his or her knowledge in the field regarding the topic, method, theory, and research procedures. If the student appears knowledgeable, the scope is manageable, and is conceptually strong; the Committee will give approval for the thesis or project.

The Department of Communication Studies does not require a formal proposal defense or meeting, although some Committees may request it; however, all members are required to read, edit, and approve the proposal before the student begins any portion of the thesis or project (this includes data collection). One copy of the approved proposal with the Committee Member’s dated signatures must be turned in to the Graduate Coordinator in order to gain permission to register for thesis 699 or project 686.

### COMPLETION STEPS

#### Thesis/Project Formatting

All theses and projects are required to follow CSUSB’s Graduate Studies Office formatting. Before beginning the thesis or project, students should consult the Project/Thesis/Dissertation section of the website of the Office of Graduate Studies: <http://gradstudies.csusb.edu/thesisProjectDissertation/index.html>. It provides detailed format instructions. Further, a format workshop is usually offered every quarter by the Office of Graduate Studies; you should plan on attending one.

The Department of Communication Studies requires that theses and projects follow the most recent edition of the American Psychological Association style guide. However, when you are going through the Graduate Studies Office’s formatting requirements and they ask you to make a change that conflict with APA, follow the Graduate Studies Office’s instructions.

The Graduate Studies Office posts quarterly formatting deadlines. These deadlines are the last possible time you may submit your thesis or project in order to graduate in your projected time. Consult these deadlines often and follow them exactly. You are much better off if you submit your thesis or project prior to the deadline since they work on a first come, first served basis. If you submit your work after the deadline or they receive an unusual number of theses or projects and are unable to meet graduation dates, your graduation/degree will be bumped to a later time (a new grad check will have to be filed).

The Graduate Studies Office may require you to undergo several format and proofreading drafts. After your first format review, the Office will send you a list of items for correction. They do not read for content, this is your Committee’s responsibility. When you receive your format reviews, do not panic. Simply make the changes they require. Give yourself plenty of time to complete this process. They may find a mistake in your second format review that they didn’t notice in your first format review. Do not argue with them. Once they have signed off on your formatting, the Graduate Coordinator will be notified to change your thesis or project grade from an NC to a letter grade. This will allow you to receive your diploma.

#### Commencement/Graduation

Oftentimes, students confuse commencement with graduation. Commencement is the university ceremony that honors students who are earning their degrees. Master’s students must have submitted a grad check and may be near completion of their Graduate degrees in order to participate in commencement. The Graduate Coordinator approves participation and students may only participate one time for their MA in Communication. Students should not order invitations, invite guests to the ceremony, etc. until they receive approval from the Graduate Coordinator to make such arrangements. Further, just because a student participates in commencement does not necessarily mean that the student completed the requirements to graduate. The following is the Department of Communication Studies’ Policy for Participation in Commencement and was adopted 6 May, 2003:

“*Permission to participate in a commencement ceremony will be based upon completion or near completion of the culminating experience, the thesis, project, or comprehensive exam and the approval of the student’s Committee. Students also must have completed all course work required for the degree, including thesis or project hours, selection of a Committee, and the appropriate paperwork for completing a thesis, project, or comprehensive exams.*

*Completion of the culminating experience includes passing the oral defense of the thesis, project, or comprehensive exam AND making the Committee’s suggested changes and revisions to the thesis, project, or comprehensive exam. Completion would also include submission of all appropriate materials to the department and the graduate school.*

*Near completion of the culminating experience means that the Committee has determined that substantial progress has been made toward completion of the thesis or project. For the comprehensive exams, the student’s Committee must determine if the student is prepared for the comprehensive exams and the student must be registered to take the comprehensive exams. For the thesis or project, substantial progress is Committee approval of thesis proposal and completion of introduction chapter, literature review chapter, and method chapter or the first three chapters of thesis or project.*

*The student should also recognize that near completion and participation in commencement does not guarantee that students will actually graduate or complete all degree requirements. In other words, students who have nearly completed all degree requirements and the culminating experience must have the approval of their Committee to participate in the commencement exercises.*”

Students should take serious thought in that for a Master’s degree, they do not determine when they graduate or participate in commencement, but rather, the Committee Chair, Committee, and the Graduate Coordinator determine this. Students may progress by completing the appropriate forms in a timely manner, successfully completing coursework, and making progress in their thesis, project, or passing the exam. Nevertheless, if the thesis, project, exam, or oral defense is not up to academic standards, the student’s graduation will be delayed.

### Concluding Remarks

At this point, you may feel overwhelmed with this information, forms, and procedures, but remember, you were selected to be in this program because the faculty believe you will succeed. Rely on fellow students, faculty, alumni, family and friends. We are here to help. At the same time, help yourself by managing your time wisely, researching your possibilities, developing your interests, and learning new things. Good luck!

Appendix A

ADVISOR AND COMMITTEE DESIGNATION FORM

I request that Professor XXXXXXXX (Communication Studies) be my program advisor and Chair my graduate Committee. I also request that Professors YYYYYYYY and ZZZZZZZ be on my graduate Committee.

Signed:

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_(student’s name)

Date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*

We agree to the above named student’s request:

# Professor XXXXXXXX: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

# Professor YYYYYYYY: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Professor ZZZZZZZ: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*

Accepted for the Department of Communication Studies:

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Graduate Coordinator

Appendix B

**Communication Studies**

**Master’s Program**

# Approved Plan of Study

Student\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Student ID \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Address\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_Work phone\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Home Phone ( ) \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ e-mail addr: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_

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| **DEPT.** | **COURSE**  **NUMBER** |  | **UNITS** | **QUARTER**  **TAKEN** | **GRADE** |
| COMM | 600 | Introduction to Graduate Study | 4 |  |  |
| COMM | 602 | Quantitative Research Methods in Communication Studies | 4 |  |  |
| COMM | 603 | Qualitative Research Methods in Communication Studies | 4 |  |  |
| COMM | 685 | Thesis/Project/Comprehensive Exam Preparation | 2 |  |  |
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## Total Project/Thesis Units: \_\_\_\_\_\_ Total Degree Units: \_\_\_\_\_\_

**Total Other Independent Study Units: \_\_\_\_\_\_** (32 units must be at the 500 or 600 level.)

**Alternate Courses (in case of scheduling difficulties):**

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |

**How was/will the Graduate Entrance Writing Requirement (be) met? \_**\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**\_\_\_**

**What will be the student’s culminating experience, and how will this be evaluated?**

**The student’s three-member Committee will evaluate the completed thesis (project or comprehensive exam) and oral defense.**

**\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**Student’s Committee Chair date** **Committee member date**

**\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**Committee member date** **Dept. Graduate Coordinator date**

Communication Studies

M.A. Degree

Appendix C

PLEASE PROVIDE THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION FOR EACH INDEPENDENT STUDY, THESIS, AND/OR PROJECT COURSE PROPOSED:

Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Student ID: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Faculty Supervisor: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

To be taken: Fall Winter Spring Summer Year: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Course Number: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Number of Units: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Specific Title: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

1. Proposed program of study (Include here what you plan to do to earn the designated number of units. Attach a tentative reading list or bibliography.)
2. Final product of this course, and how it will be evaluated (to be determined by the faculty supervisor):

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Student’s signature and date Student’s program advisor’s signature and date

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Faculty supervisor’s signature and date Dept. Graduate Coordinator’s signature and date

Name \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Advisor \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Communication Studies**  **Graduate Student**  **Check List** | | √  When Completed |
| All  Graduate Students Should Complete This  Section  → | Achieved Classified Status  (Met any pre-requisite requirements) |  |
| Completed Committee Designation Form  (within 12 graduate units) |  |
| Plan of Study Form – approval of which advances student to candidacy (within 16 graduate units) |  |
| Advance to Candidacy Notification |  |
| Independent Study Form  (if applicable) |  |
| Internship Form  (if applicable) |  |
| Only Graduate Students Writing  A Thesis  Or Doing A Project Should Complete This Section  → | Form to Register for Thesis/Project |  |
| Proposal Approval |  |
| IRB Review (if applicable) |  |
| Thesis/Project Form  (for first format review, after oral defense) |  |
| All Graduate Students  **→** | File a Graduate Check  (2 quarters before expected graduation, to avoid late fee) |  |