

School of Media & Communication

2021 - 2022

Graduate Student Handbook

For Students in the Masters of Arts Program in
Media & Communication

Generalist (COMS-MA)

and

Specialization in Int'l/Intercultural Communication (INTL-MA)

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Mission

The mission of the School of Media and Communication (SMC) at Bowling Green State University is to promote and extend the study of communication processes ranging from interpersonal transactions, development and health communication, rhetoric, social movements, to mass-mediated communication, emerging media, cyber culture and computer-mediated communication. The School endeavors to create a premier learning community for master's and doctoral students by promoting graduate student participation in regional, national and international conferences, forums, and journals. The School maintains numerous partnerships to nurture collaborative teaching, innovative research, and significant public service. With a tradition of excellence in graduate study dating back to the 1950s, the faculty, staff, and students of the School of Media and Communication look forward to contributing to today's media and communication scholarship as well as its education and practice.

The graduate program of the School of Media and Communication (SMC) is known for its excellent placement records; its balance in teaching, research, and service; and the diversity of its student body. The key commitment of the SMC faculty is to motivate and educate students to be independent intellectual leaders and professionals.

The coursework and faculty research in the School of Media & Communication is organized around three areas of emphasis. These areas are the basis for coursework offered by the School, and inform the different academic options in the MA program:

Critical Media Studies & Rhetoric

This area of emphasis draws together several key and complementary dimensions of humanistic areas of inquiry, research methods, and theory. Among faculty expertise are Intercultural and International Communication, Rhetorical Theory and Criticism, Social Movements and Activism, Urban Geography, Media Ecology, Political Economy, and Rhetorics of Peace-Building. Work in these areas encompasses a wide variety of theoretical and methodological approaches, concerning issues of media/mediated communication in cultural, economic, political or social contexts, including strategic mediated communication for development, digital environments, social change and social justice. We adopt this

approach to an integrated critical engagement with social problems that include, but often extend beyond localities to international and global environments.

Interpersonal Communication

This area of emphasis examines interaction processes in a variety of social and personal relationships such as romantic relationships, family relationships and friendships in face-to-face and mediated settings. Research and coursework within the area focuses on relationship processes in contexts such as health, sexuality, identity negotiation, relationship maintenance, information management and technology. Varying theoretical (e.g., narrative, dialectical, social exchange, disclosure theories) and epistemological perspectives (post-positivist, social scientific, interpretivist, feminist, queer, critical) are explored.

Media Audiences & Processes

This area of emphasis relies on empirical observation to study audiences and the process of how media content and technology influence the public agenda and individuals' attitude, emotion, knowledge and interpretation of society. The research orientation utilizes quantitative methods (e.g., experiments, survey) and qualitative methods (e.g., interviews, focus group) to answer pertinent issues in media audiences and processes. These include Media Technology Adoption, Emotional and Cognitive Response to Advertising, Electronic Word-of-Mouth (eWOM), Narrative Persuasion and Comprehension, Media Effects, Cultivation and Perceived Media Realism, Effects and Effectiveness of Advertising, Audience Research Methods, Media Industry Analysis, Social Network Analysis, Political Communication, Alternative Journalism, Activism, and Public Opinion. This emphasis includes both administrative applied research and theoretical research on these topics.

MA Degree Options

There are several degree options available to students pursuing the Master of Arts Degree in the School of Media & Communication. Students may seek a degree that prepares them for a PhD program and a career in academia, or they may pursue a degree that allows for professional development. This handbook is designed for students interested in the first option, while students seeking professional development should look to the School of Media & Communication Graduate Student Handbook for

the Master of Arts specialization in Strategic Communication. For those students seeking an MA that will prepare them for the rigors of PhD study and academia, the School of Media & Communication offers the following degree options:

Generalist Study (COMS-MA): The generalist option allows for MA students to explore the different areas of emphasis within the School of Media & Communication, and build a knowledge base that will prepare them for further academic studies. During their time in the program, MA students have the freedom to take coursework across all three areas of emphasis. If they so desire, they may concentrate their coursework in one area, or they may take courses across multiple areas. There are advantages and disadvantages to each approach, and MA students pursuing the generalist option should consult with an advisor about how they should proceed.

Specialization in International/Intercultural Communication (INTL-MA): This specialization is closely aligned with the School emphasis in Critical Media Studies & Rhetoric. Students take coursework that provides theoretical and conceptual grounding concerning topics related to international and intercultural communication. In addition, students take methods courses that prepare them for the rigors of a thesis or research project, should they choose either of those plans to complete the degree.

Time to Complete Degree

The master's program generally takes full-time students in the non-thesis plan about three to four semesters to complete. Students on the thesis plan will need more time. MA students must complete all their degree requirements in 6 years. After the passage of that time limit, courses taken before 6 years each for MA students must be revalidated by the Graduate College.

Funding

All regular assistantships are half-time appointments, which require students to work 20 hours a week. In most cases, graduate assistants teach or assist with teaching two courses. Students may not accept other offers of employment for the time they are contractually obliged to work as graduate assistants.

Performance Evaluation of Graduate Assistants

Continued funding is dependent on a student's satisfactory progress toward degree, and his/her fulfillment of contractual duties outlined in the assistantship responsibilities. Students who do not make satisfactory academic progress or who do not fulfill their duties as stipulated below and not improve after faculty supervisor warning and documented unsatisfactory performance report was given by the faculty course supervisor to the graduate coordinator, they will be put on probation for four weeks. If the graduate assistant shows inadequate improvement during the probation, the Graduate Program Committee will determine to have their funding reduced or eliminated altogether in the next semester.

Please refer to the Graduate assistantship guidelines issued by the graduate college: <https://www.bgsu.edu/content/dam/BGSU/graduate-college/GADocs/Graduate-Assistant-Guidelines.-2021-22.pdf>

For students who are assigned to teach a class or hold recitation sessions, failure to meet the following requirements would constitute unsatisfactory work performance according to BGSU graduate college statement of understanding: <https://www.bgsu.edu/content/dam/BGSU/graduate-college/GADocs/Graduate-College-Statement-of-Understanding.-2021-22.pdf>

- a. Conduct classes or otherwise assist in instruction in accordance with directions from the faculty member (supervisor) in charge of the course. In a multi-section course, adhere to the syllabus that has been established.
- b. Meet all assigned classes at approved or scheduled times and places. Secure approval, through your supervisor, for any changes to the schedule.
- c. Inform the supervisor in advance, and the graduate coordinator, and the school director of any inability to meet a class. Emergency absences should be reported as promptly as possible.
- d. Give and grade quizzes, examinations, papers, etc. in a manner which meets with the approval of your supervisor.
- e. Report to the course supervisor, any incidents involving cheating, intimidation, or other interference with a class.

For instructors of COMM1020, failure to attend the teaching practicum without written excuses for absence or exhibition of disruptive behavior in the practicum (following definition of the BGSU Student

Code of Conduct) also are deemed unsatisfactory performance.

- For students who are assigned to assist a faculty member in teaching a course, failure to complete grading assignment within reasonable deadline set by the faculty, not following instructions of the faculty instructor of record, and absent from classes assigned as TA without prior permission from the faculty constitute unsatisfactory performance.
- For students who are assigned to assist a faculty in the studio or production labs or equipment, theft, in compliance of the production safety protocol, tardiness to work or unexcused absence constitute unsatisfactory performance.
- Course supervisors should notify the graduate coordinator in writing as soon as possible if the graduate assistant exhibits any of the above unsatisfactory performance indicators so that intervention can be done early and the graduate assistant received warning for probation.
- If the graduate student was found having misconducts such as drinking alcohol on the job, having romantic relationship with an undergraduate student in the class, vandalism, assault, and threatening or harassing behavior, the assistantship will be immediately revoked.

While on assistantship, graduate assistants are contractually obligated to maintain full-time student status (8 credit hours or more) during each fall and spring semesters. Funding offers only cover the fall and spring semester of an academic year. In rare cases, summer funding opportunities may be available and usually awarded to advanced doctoral students with strong teaching and academic record. Typically, funded students receive a scholarship in the form of tuition waiver (instructional fee) during the academic year. Funded MA students who are making satisfactory progress are eligible to apply for second year funding. There is no guarantee that second year funding will be available. To apply for second-year funding, students must submit an application to the graduate secretary by March 1 of their first academic year of funding.

Graduate Program Committee

The Graduate Program Committee (GPC) is comprised of five individuals: The Graduate Coordinator, Assistant Graduate Coordinator, Basic Course Director, Strategic Communication Director, and one at-large Level 1 graduate faculty member. If there is any overlap between any of these roles (e.g., Assistant Graduate Coordinator is also the Basic Course Director), then there are two at large Level 1 graduate faculty members.

The GPC handles all policies for GA assistantships, exams, and other aspects of the PhD program. In addition, the GPC handles appeals of courses or exams/dissertations. For more information about appeals process, please see the Graduate Handbook.

Course Load

Most Media & Communication (MC) classes are three credit hours. Students who are currently working their way through coursework typically enroll in 9 hours (3 courses) in the fall and spring semesters and 6 credit hours (2 courses) in the summer session. Funded students who have completed their coursework must enroll in at least 4 credit hours.

Once a graduate student begins work on a master's thesis, s/he must be continuously enrolled in thesis hours during fall and spring semesters until graduation. Otherwise, the student will have to apply for readmission to the Graduate College and pay for the requisite credits then.

Transfer of Credits/Course Waiver

Students are eligible to apply for up to 9 hours of transfer credit from another accredited master's program or from BGSU graduate-level classes completed as an Advanced Undergraduate or Non-Degree Graduate Student. Should a student receive a waiver for a particular course, s/he will need to complete an elective course to make up the overall credit hours required. Waivers must be requested in writing, which should be submitted with proper documentation of prior coursework to the Graduate Coordinator.

Graduate Orientation

All incoming graduate students are required to participate in Graduate Orientation. This takes place before the fall semester starts. Returning students have participation obligations each year during orientation week within the school. All returning funded students should report by the beginning date of each year's contract.

Travel & Research Funding

The School of Media and Communication has limited funds available to assist full-time graduate students with travel and research expenses. Students who have peer-reviewed papers may apply for funding to attend a conference. Travel expenses to present papers at conferences can be reimbursed up to \$200, but the amount is subject to change, depending on the fund availability. No student is funded more than once in one fiscal year, from July 1 to June 30. MA students may only apply for funding during their first two years of work in their program of study.

Students must apply for funding at least 14 days prior to conference attendance. Documentation in the form of email notification of acceptance or program copy should accompany the application; the conference program must list BGSU as the student's institution.

The Graduate Coordinator must sign the application form. Travel reimbursement also requires students to submit a request after their travel, as instructed on the travel fund application form. To qualify for travel reimbursement, a student must be 1) a full-time MC graduate student, and 2) taking coursework, or enrolled for four or more graduate credit hours, if completed coursework.

Colloquium

The Colloquium is designed to create an active community for friendly scholarly discussion among graduate students and faculty. Typically, faculty, students, and/or guest speakers will present their research, which is then open to group discussion. Graduate students who regularly attend colloquium (three times in the fall, three times in the spring) will be eligible for travel funding.

Style Guidelines

Scholarly style and convention should be followed in all written work in Media and Communication. The manual used should be appropriate to the subject matter. The latest editions of the *American Psychological Association's Publication Manual*, Turabian's *A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertation*, the *Modern Languages Association Handbook* and *The Chicago Manual of Style* are acceptable manuals. However, if an instructor requires a specific style guide, students should follow as required by the instructor.

Forms (see Resources)

Many of the important forms necessary for the MA program that are mentioned herein can be found through DocuSign, which is accessible through the Graduate College website (<http://www.bgsu.edu/graduate/documents-and-forms.html>). Those necessary forms accessed through DocuSign include the following:

- Plan II Results, Topic Approval Form, Thesis Defense & Manuscript Form, ETD Submission/Approval Form, Application for Graduation.

In addition, there are School specific forms that MA students will need. These can be accessed through the SMC website. These forms include:

- Change of Advisor Form, Examination Schedule Form.

DocuSign forms for the Graduate College should be completed 24 hours prior to meetings (e.g., Prelim defense, dissertation proposal defense). School forms should be submitted to the Graduate Secretary. Students must complete all forms before submitting them to faculty, advisors, and/or administrators for signatures. Students are strongly encouraged to keep a copy of completed and signed forms in their personal records.

Degree Audit Proposal Report System (DARS)

While completing coursework, graduate students need to make appointments with their advisor to go over their DARS report. Students should do this each semester (fall and spring). During their discussion with their advisor, students should go over the courses that they have taken, and which degree requirements that they fulfill. They should also discuss the courses that they will take in order to complete other degree requirements.

Academic Honesty Policy

The graduate program of the School of Media and Communication is committed to the University's standards on academic honesty as expressed in the University Charter and Student Code. This statement supplements those provisions. As these documents note, cheating and plagiarism are destructive to the central purpose of the University and never tolerated.

Policy Definitions

As defined in the charter and code, violations of academic honesty include:

Plagiarism: Representing the words or ideas of another as one's own in any academic exercise.

Cheating: Using or attempting to use unauthorized materials, information or study aids in any academic exercise.

Fabrication: Falsification or invention of any information or citation in any academic exercise.

Facilitating Academic Dishonesty: Helping or attempting to help another commit an act of academic dishonesty.

Policy Applications for Media and Communication Graduate Students

A. Students must always be very careful to acknowledge any kind of borrowing that is included in their work, not only in words but ideas. Acknowledgment of whatever is not one's own work is the proper and honest use of sources. Ignorance of citation style is no excuse. Style manuals provide extensive information on appropriate forms of citation.

B. Unless explicitly permitted by the professor, students shall not submit any work that the student himself/herself prepared for any other purpose, including work prepared for other classes or for other degree programs.

C. Unless explicitly permitted by the professor, students must work independently on take-home examinations. Consultations with other students or other individuals over the content of take-

home exams are forbidden. All information provided in response to take-home examination questions that are not the student's own work must be fully credited to its source.

D. The use of professional term paper services or research services is always forbidden.

E. Students are always responsible for the data collection and analysis in works that they represent as their own, unless the work in question is explicitly credited to the source.

F. Students should take great care to comply with professional standards in regard to submission of their work to professional conferences and journals.

Enforcement & Penalties

Faculty members will report every instance of academic dishonesty to the Graduate College and keep the Graduate Coordinator informed in the process. At BGSU, students who plagiarize are subject to penalties described in the student code, ranging from failure on an assignment to dismissal from the University.

Probation & Dismissal

It is possible for a student to lose funding at the end of a semester and be placed on academic probation (without funding) for the subsequent semester. Graduate students are required to demonstrate "satisfactory progress toward the degree" in order to maintain a teaching, administrative, or research assistantship.

Failure to make satisfactory progress normally results in academic probation and may lead to dismissal from the graduate program.

Satisfactory progress means that a graduate student must maintain a cumulative GPA of 3.0 or higher. This GPA requirement applies to all graduate students at BGSU, including those who are currently enrolled as non-degree seeking students. Unsatisfactory progress is also indicated by the accumulation of two or more C's, a D, or an F. Students who are placed on or continued on probation will be notified in writing by the Graduate College.

In general, students should not remain on probation for more than two semesters; if satisfactory progress seems unlikely after one or two semesters on probation, the student is likely to be dismissed from the program.

Consensual Amorous Relationships Policy

On June 22, 2007, the Board of Trustees of BGSU approved the statement below to cover all university employees:

"The university takes seriously its duty to provide a place to study and work free of situations that

may be construed as abuse of authority, an inappropriate conflict of interest, preferential treatment, or other unprofessional and unethical conduct. The policy below is established in order to avoid such instances.

1. Within the University community, supervisors and faculty are not to have supervisory, evaluative, instructional, coaching, advisory, or other relationships with students or employees with whom they have or have had a consensual amorous relationship.
2. If an amorous relationship exists or develops, the faculty or staff member of superior rank must disclose the relationship to his/her immediate supervisor in a timely manner. The supervisor will then take steps to make alternate arrangements affecting one or both parties, to effectively discontinue any supervisory, evaluative, instructional, coaching, advisory, or other formal connections between them. If possible, such arrangements should be made in ways that respect the interest of all involved and will not be prejudicial toward or against either party.
3. The decision of an immediate supervisor may be appealed by either or both parties to the next higher administrative level.
4. Disclosure is the responsibility of those who engage in, or are about to engage in, amorous relationships within the University community. Failure to abide by this policy may result in disciplinary actions taken against any negligent party. The range of disciplinary actions would depend upon the circumstances and culpability of those involved. Disciplinary actions may include, but are not limited to, a verbal warning, a letter of warning, temporary reassignment, temporary suspension or other measures, as the case may warrant. The imposition of faculty sanctions beyond the written warning should abide by the policy on sanctions contained elsewhere in the Academic Charter. Disciplinary actions regarding administrative staff and classified staff are administered by the Office of the Executive Vice President; disciplinary actions regarding faculty are administered by the Office of the VPAA/Provost." [Source: *A Handbook of Commonly Shared Employment Policies for BGSU faculty, Administrative and Classified Staff 10/07*]

Incomplete Coursework

The School of Media and Communication follows the policy of the Graduate College regarding incomplete coursework. The policy, applied to both degree and non-degree seeking students, is as follows:

An INC (incomplete) may be given only when a student fails to fulfill a specified requirement in a course. An incomplete may be given at the discretion of the instructor, only with the agreement of the student (exceptions may be considered on a case by case basis). The instructor should notify the student of the deadline and expectations for completion. An INC may be removed and a grade substituted if the student completes course requirements to the satisfaction of the instructor prior to the deadline established by the Graduate College (or prior to an earlier deadline established by the instructor). The Graduate College deadlines for removal of incomplete grades for the respective academic semesters are:

- (a) Fall semester: March first
- (b) Spring semester: August first
- (c) Summer semester: November first

For an extension of the deadline, the student must make a written request to the instructor. If the instructor agrees, the instructor must petition their academic dean or designate for such consideration in writing prior to the expiration of the deadline stated above. For courses taken for a letter grade, any mark of INC not removed by these deadlines will change to F. For courses taken S/U, any mark of INC not removed by these deadlines will change to U. A student cannot graduate with a grade of INC in a graduate level course. If a student receives an INC in their graduation semester, they will be removed from the graduation list. They will then need to apply for graduation in a future semester after the incomplete has been resolved.

Graduation

Students must apply for graduation early in the semester they plan to graduate. Students file the form directly with the Graduate College. Students are eligible for graduation if they have fulfilled all their academic program requirements and met all the Graduate College deadlines and have applied for graduation.

MASTER OF ARTS

The master's degree in Media and Communication is designed to relate theory and practice in order to equip students to pursue their post-graduate goals, whether they decide to go on to doctoral studies or to transition/advance their professional careers. Students must complete the degree within 6 years from the end of the semester of the first course. The basic requirements for the master's degree are established by the Graduate Council of the

Graduate College and are published in the current Graduate Catalog available on the BGSU Graduate College line at the BGSU website. Additional Media and Communication program requirements are described in this handbook.

Degree Requirements

The master's program requires a minimum of 30 credit hours. Students must maintain a 3.0 cumulative GPA in all coursework, and have no incomplete grades in graduate coursework. MC 6000 and either MC 6300 or MC 6400 (total 6 credit hours) are required for all master's students. **The online and off campus versions of this course can be taken by those MA students who do not intend to pursue a PhD program with permission of the Graduate Coordinator and upon seat availability as determined by the Online MA program coordinator.** In addition to the two courses, students are then required to earn 21 additional course credits and 3 credits in thesis research or readings for master's project/comprehensive exam. Overall, 18 of the credit hours in the program must be from 6000/7000 level courses. This means that students may take 3 courses at the 5000 level. A maximum of 6 reading hours (e.g., independent study, internship, individually conducted practicum or workshop) may count toward the additional course credits. For the capstone, master's students choose between two options: Plan I entails writing a thesis, and Plan II entails taking comprehensive examinations or conducting a major project. Students opting for the exams or project usually complete their degree in three to four semesters; Students pursuing a thesis will need more time. No more than three credits earned in a thesis or a project may count toward the degree. It is strongly advised that students who wish to go on for study in a PhD program complete Plan I.

Coursework

Students who pursue the generalist option are free to take any coursework beyond the three core courses noted above. Students engaged in one of the two specializations need to complete a specific set of courses to complete their degree:

International/Intercultural Communication:

- MC 5080: Intercultural Communication
- MC 5090: International Communication
- Choose two of the following:
 - MC 5040: Communication & Conflict
 - MC 5670: Gender, Media &

Culture

- MC 5750: Perspectives on International Media
- MC 7610: Race & Communication
- MC 7630: Communication and Social Change
- MC 7650: International Media
- Two electives at the 6000/7000 level

Online Courses

MA students are free to take online courses throughout the academic year to complete their coursework, provided that they have access to those classes. In some cases, courses are reserved for students in particular MA specializations. Keep in mind, federal regulations stipulate that international students may only take one online course per semester.

Advising

The Graduate Coordinator will serve as the temporary advisor for incoming MA students, and can address questions that they might have concerning their program of study and course work. By the end of the students' first semester of study, they need to select a faculty advisor and submit the *Change of Advisor form* to the Graduate Coordinator for approval. Selection of an advisor will be made on the basis of: (1) the student's research interest and preferences; (2) the requested faculty member's availability and preferences; (3) approval of the Graduate Coordinator based on the qualifications of the faculty member to direct the type of research involved and the number of advisees s/he may have. If there is a change in advisor, the student should make sure to file the *Change of Advisor form* and seek approval from the Graduate Coordinator. Unapproved advisor changes will be deemed void.

MA Thesis (Plan I)

Completion of a thesis should demonstrate that a student is sufficiently acquainted with research methods to replicate or supplement existing research or undertake original research.

Students who opt for Plan I should anticipate taking two years (or four semesters) to complete their degree. A proposal must be developed in consultation with the chair of the thesis committee. It should include, at least: (1) a statement of the problem, (2) a justification or rationale for the research; and (3) the procedure or research design. Research involving human participants requires approval of the Human Subjects Review Board before gathering data. Students may enroll for as many thesis hours as necessary, but only three hours of thesis credit count toward the degree.

Thesis Committee

The committee for a thesis will include three faculty members: An SMC advisor who will act as the chair, another SMC faculty member, and a third faculty member who may be from SMC or another department.

Thesis Proposal

The thesis proposal must be submitted to committee members at least two weeks prior to the proposal defense date. At the time of proposal distribution, the student should also inform their committee of the time and place of defense. Formal approval of the proposal and committee by the Graduate College is sought by completing the *Topic Approval* form through DocuSign. The student should complete this form 24 hours prior to the thesis defense. The online form will be forwarded to the committee and Graduate Coordinator.

Thesis Defense

Students should work with their advisors as they develop their thesis. They should keep other committee members informed of their progress and, if deemed appropriate, should work with them to seek comments on each chapter. Once the advisor accepts the work, the student copies (at own expense) the thesis for the entire committee. Students must distribute thesis copies at least two weeks prior to the date of the oral defense.

The thesis copies provided to the committee members must be complete, readable, and fully documented. The advisor will poll the thesis committee and, if necessary, convene it to

determine if the thesis is defensible in form and content. If the committee indicates that major revisions are needed, the advisor and candidate will develop an appropriate plan to complete the suggested revisions. The oral exam may be postponed until such revisions can be made. The student should schedule the oral examination by coordinating the availability of all committee members. All members must be present face-to-face or via technology. The student should also confirm the place of defense with their committee when scheduling the oral examination. The room is reserved through the Graduate Secretary. A thesis defense is open to the public and notice of the event must be posted in West Hall. If a student fails the oral defense, s/he will be asked to do one of the following:

- Rewrite all or part of the thesis.
- Execute a second thesis on the topic.
- Select a new topic and do another thesis.
- Report a failure to the Graduate College.

Students may be asked to rewrite portions of their theses even though they have passed their oral exams. Some rewrite time should be allowed between the oral defense and the deadline for submission of the finished work to the Graduate College.

Thesis Submission

Students should use the university's guidelines on Theses and Dissertations to prepare the final version of their work.

When submitting the completed thesis to the graduate college, follow the guidelines for electronic submission of the thesis found at the graduate college website:

<http://www.bgsu.edu/graduate/thesis-and-dissertations/submission-and-approval-of-your-manuscript.html>. The electronic copy is the final copy and must be transmitted successfully to the Graduate College in order to graduate.

MA Project (Plan II Option 1)

The option may be elected to fulfill degree requirements by students whose professional-academic goals are more appropriately served by a project rather than a thesis, and/or when the topic warrants an alternative method of investigation other than a theoretical/thesis approach. Completion of the MA project demonstrates that a student is sufficiently acquainted with research/creative methods to replicate or supplement existing research, or undertake original research or creative scholarship. As an expression of graduate-level study, the project should achieve a creative or

intellectual rigor that far surpasses an undergraduate “honors” or “capstone” experience.

Project Committee

The committee for a Plan II project comprises two faculty members: SMC graduate faculty advisor who will act as the chair and a second SMC graduate faculty member. When appropriate, a third member whose expertise is related to the project can be invited.

Project Proposal

Before proceeding with the development of a Plan II project, the student must develop and present a proposal to the project committee and receive written approval from the committee to proceed. To initiate the proposal defense, the student must submit the *Plan II Results* form through DocuSign. This form should be prepared 24 hours prior to the proposal defense meeting to facilitate signatures of faculty committee members and the Graduate Coordinator. The purpose of the committee review and the proposal defense is to ensure the student has properly reviewed existing literature and/or appropriate foundational material, has selected a topic that is suitable for graduate study in project form, and has designed a suitable plan to both initiate and complete the project according to SMC standards.

Project Content and Design Elements

MA projects can take various forms including, but not limited to the following: digital humanities project; documentary video; screenplay or teleplay; application of new or emerging communication or media technology; original television series or pilot; research-centered photojournalism essay; in-depth, coherent series of investigative journalism reports; an extensive community outreach project related to health care or strategic communication; comprehensive website focused on a coherent theme; an applied communication project in organizational or health communication; or work of creative scholarship, for example, that could be accepted by the Performance Studies Division of the National Communication Association, the Festival of Media Arts of the Broadcast Education Association, or a similar juried competition. In all cases, the MA project must be significant and unique and should include theoretical/creative foundations pertinent to the topic. Although this may not be theoretical in the form of a thesis, it must still be produced within a scholastic and/or creative context and having equivalent rigor. The project requires a literature and/or media review; a statement of purpose or

research question; expression of what the project intends to deliver to the field of media and communication; a consideration of the ultimate audience; the actual project elements, which may take various forms; a proposed schedule for completion (and budget, if necessary); and, in addition to the proposal and final project elements, an analytic paper that must accompany the final defense and submission of the project.

Master’s Project Hours Enrollment

Enrollment should be done through MC 6910 (1- 3 S/U) with the signatures of advisor and Graduate Coordinator. A maximum of three credit hours will count toward the degree.

Interim Progress Points & Chair Review

Whereas a thesis has a generally accepted procedure involving proposal defense, data/evidence collection, and writing, the nature of a “project” invites unforeseen challenges, whether due to creative-design issues, computer or creative software outcomes, unexpected results in videography or photography, interactions with members of the community outside the university, or other imponderables that differ from the kinds of trials that can affect theoretical research. The nature of some projects may also necessitate re-doing certain creative or content elements because of unacceptable quality, experimental techniques, or other issues. In order to avoid untimely misunderstandings at the final review and defense of the project, it is important that students keep committee members informed of their progress and, if deemed appropriate, work with them to seek comments on interim stages of project development. The committee will determine at the proposal defense whether they desire incremental reports or the opportunity to review elements of the project content before reviewing final elements. The committee chair will establish a timeline with appropriate targets for the ongoing development of the project and apprise the committee of such progress as the project unfolds.

The committee chair will review and critique the final project, including all written elements, and provide feedback to the student in advance of the final review by the full committee. Once the advisor accepts the final version of the MA project, the student (at own expense) duplicates and distributes the project to the entire committee at least two weeks prior to the date of the defense and public presentation of the project. Project elements provided to the committee members must be complete, readable/viewable, and fully documented.

Project Defense & Submission

Once the project is distributed to the MA Project Committee, the advisor will consult the committee members and, if necessary, convene it to determine if the project is defensible in form and content. If the committee indicates that major revisions are needed, the advisor and student will develop an appropriate plan to apply the suggested revisions. The defense and presentation may be postponed until such revisions can be made.

The student should schedule the defense/presentation in consultation with the project advisor and committee members. All members must be present face-to-face or via technology. The examination will generally span two hours. The student, with advisor's input, should reserve an appropriate presentation space through the Graduate Secretary. Public notice of the event must be posted in the SMC building. The MA project presentation is open to the public.

If a student fails the oral presentation, s/he will be asked to do one of the following:

- Modify the project,
- Redo the project,
- Select a new topic and do another project, or
- Report a failure to the Graduate Coordinator, who will communicate with the Graduate College.

Even in the event of a successful defense, a student may be asked to redo portions of a project; therefore, some revision time should be scheduled between the oral presentation and the Graduate College deadline.

The student should prepare an electronic copy of the final approved project and upload the copy on the [SMC MA Project section of ScholarWorks@BGSU](mailto:ScholarWorks@BGSU) (http://scholarworks.bgsu.edu/ms_smc/)

MA Comprehensive Exam (Plan II Option 2)

The MA comprehensive examination is taken online over the course of 72 hours (typically one weekend; starting Friday and ending Monday). The exam features four questions: One question comes from MC 6000, one comes from a methods course (either MC 6300 or MC 6400), and the other two come MC courses the student selects in consultation with his/her advisor. Students need to confirm with each faculty member that they are willing to write a comprehensive exam question for them. Students should then prepare the *Examination*

Schedule Form. The form needs to identify which courses the questions will cover, which faculty member will write the question, which topic, and the semester the exam will be taken. The form should be submitted first to the advisor, then to the Graduate Coordinator. The form must be submitted to the office by the specified deadlines: schedule forms are due by Sept. 15th for a Fall comprehensive exam, Feb. 15th for a Spring exam, and May 15th for a Summer exam. If the schedule is not turned in by the deadline, it will be considered submitted for the following semester. There is a common schedule for comprehensive exam in each semester. See Important dates on p.14. In preparing for the exam, students are encouraged to meet with the faculty members writing questions to discuss the topic area and the faculty member's expectations. Faculty members writing questions have to submit their questions at least one week in advance to the Graduate Secretary. One week prior to the exam, the students should check with the Graduate Secretary to ensure that their exam questions are on file.

Along with the schedule, students should also submit the *Plan II Results* form through DocuSign. The form should be submitted online 24 hours prior to the exam.

On the exam day, students will receive the questions electronically. They will have 72 hours to complete the questions and return them to the appropriate site or person. The student can request for the answers at a later time. The student can request for the files at a later time.

Under the supervision of the Graduate Coordinator, the Graduate Secretary distributes copies of the student's exam answers to the faculty readers. Faculty readers are expected to return their responses within two weeks after receipt of the exam answer.

Once the faculty readers have turned in their report/evaluation to the Graduate Secretary, students may request from the Graduate Secretary a copy of the faculty response cover sheet and to review their exams. The original exam, the faculty copies of the exam and the cover response sheet remain in the School of Media and Communication at all times. The professor who wrote the question and at least two other faculty selected by the Graduate Coordinator will read each question. For the students to pass, a majority of the readers must vote to pass them on each of the four questions. Any student who does not pass one or more of the questions may, upon recommendation of the program's Graduate Coordinator and approval of the dean designate of the Graduate College, be

granted permission to retake the second examination of the course(s) he or she failed. Upon failing a second examination, the student is dropped from the program. The retake examination committee will consist of the original faculty body who evaluated the student's first examination. Each committee member will evaluate the answer(s) independently and report pass or fail to the Graduate Coordinator who will compile all the results and then file them with the Graduate College.

Important Dates & Deadlines

August 1

Spring semester incomplete grade due

September 15

Fall comps application due

November 1

Summer semester incomplete grade due

February 15

Spring comps application due

Mid-February

Awards application due

March 1

2nd year funding application due

Graduate assistantship & tuition scholarship application due

May 15

Summer comps application due

March 1

Fall semester incomplete grade due

Comprehensive Exam Schedules

Fall Graduation – the Friday before Thanksgiving break

Spring Graduation – the Friday three weeks before last day of class

Summer Graduation –the Friday three weeks before Summer Commencement date

Check the thesis or project/exam (Capstone experience) result due dates for each semester graduation at <https://www.bgsu.edu/graduate/graduation/degree-candidates-deadlines.html>

If you choose the thesis option, you must submit your thesis to Ohiolink successfully by the due date to obtain your degree.

MA Generalist Program Study
(COMS-MA) Check Sheet

Taken	Semester	Hours	Course Title
<input type="checkbox"/>	_____	3	MC 6000: Introduction to Media & Communication
<input type="checkbox"/>	_____	3	MC 6300: Social Scientific Methods OR MC 6400: Humanistic Methods*
<input type="checkbox"/>	_____	3	MC Elective _____
<input type="checkbox"/>	_____	3	MC Elective _____
<input type="checkbox"/>	_____	3	MC Elective _____
<input type="checkbox"/>	_____	3	MC Elective _____
<input type="checkbox"/>	_____	3	MC Elective _____
<input type="checkbox"/>	_____	3	MC Elective _____
<input type="checkbox"/>	_____	3	Elective Graduate Course
<input type="checkbox"/>	_____	3	MC 6990 Thesis Research, OR MC6830 Project Credit, OR MC6980 Readings for Exams

_____ TOTAL HOURS COMPLETED (30 minimum)

*Alternate methods courses can be taken, but they must be approved by the Graduate Program Committee. Students are encouraged to follow either the course work of Media Audiences & Processes, Interpersonal Communication, and Critical Media & Rhetoric Emphases.

Note: No more than 4 x 5000 level courses allowed.

MA Program Study
International/Intercultural
Communication Specialization
Check Sheet

Taken	Semester	Hours	Course Title
<input type="checkbox"/>	_____	3	MC 6000: Introduction to Media & Communication
<input type="checkbox"/>	_____	3	MC 6300: Social Scientific Methods OR MC 6400: Humanistic Methods*
<input type="checkbox"/>	_____	3	MC 5080: Intercultural Communication
<input type="checkbox"/>	_____	3	MC 5090: International Communication
<input type="checkbox"/>	_____	3	MC 5040/5670/5750
<input type="checkbox"/>	_____	3	MC 7610/7630/7650
<input type="checkbox"/>	_____	3	MC 6000/7000 level Elective _____
<input type="checkbox"/>	_____	3	MC 6000/7000 level Elective _____
<input type="checkbox"/>	_____	3	Elective Graduate Course
<input type="checkbox"/>	_____	3	MC 6990 Thesis Research, OR MC6830 Project Credit, OR MC6980 Readings for Exams
=====		TOTAL HOURS COMPLETED (30 minimum)	

*Alternate methods courses can be taken, but they must be approved by the Graduate Program Committee.

Note: No more than 4 x 5000 level courses allowed.

Resources for Graduate Students

SMC Internal Forms (graduate student forms):

<https://www.bgsu.edu/arts-and-sciences/media-and-communication/resources.html>

- [Change of Adviser Form](#)
- [Independent Courses Registration Form](#)
- [Capstone Hours Registration Form](#)
- [Comprehensive Examination Scheduling Form](#)
- [SMC Graduate Student Travel Fund Application](#)
- [Second-Year Funding Application](#)

Graduate College forms: <https://www.bgsu.edu/graduate/documents-and-forms.html>

Only the commonly used forms are listed here. Go to the graduate college web page for other forms and information.

- [Course Transfer Request Form](#)
- [Grade Replacement Request Form](#)
- [Incomplete Extension Form](#)
- [Leave of Absence Request](#)
- [Committee Change Form](#) (Master Thesis Committee)
- [Thesis Defense and Manuscript Approval](#)
- [Title Change Form- Thesis](#)
- [Thesis Topic Approval Form](#)

[BGSU Library Guide for Media and Communication Graduate Students](#)

Useful web sites:

1. Travel reimbursement (Chrome River on MYBGSU) must use VPN or on campus

2. **BGSU Multicultural Initiatives for Graduate Student Success**

<https://www.bgsu.edu/graduate/campus-resources/MIGSS.html>

3. **Aurora (professional development and career guide for graduate student):**

<https://www.bgsu.edu/graduate/professional-development-for-graduate-students/aurora-platform--behind-the-professoriate.html> After clicking the Aurora log-in, please select Bowling Green State University as the institution and log in using BGSU credentials.

4. **Porfolium:**

<https://portfolium.com/> (use your BGSU e-mail to login to gain free full membership benefits)

5. **SMC graduate student advisors and committee members**

https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1Zy7YZI_j8HccGoi-kXkrATTlpI1eeRC70huddavsPTg/edit?usp=sharing

6. **SMC graduate student publications and conference papers**

https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1v_mFSKViXJewtPw12Lfrg9qctxb9yFfamvi011ogdxs/edit?usp=sharing

7. **OhioLink BGSU SMC Dissertations/Master Theses**

https://etd.ohiolink.edu/apexprod/rws_olink/r/1501/6

Major National Communication Associations and Regional Communication Associations and Conference Times

[Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication](#) (AEJMC) - August

[Broadcast Education Association](#) (BEA) - April

[Central States Communication](#) (CSCA) - March

[International Communication Association](#) (ICA) – May or June

[National Communication Association](#) (NCA) – November

[Ohio Communication Association](#) (OCA) - October