

School of Media & Communication

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Graduate Student Handbook

For Students in the Accelerated BA to Masters of
Arts Program in Media & Communication

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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:

Global Communication and Social Change

This area of emphasis draws together several key and complementary dimensions of humanistic research methods, substantive areas and theory. These include Intercultural and International Communication, Development Communication, Social Movements and Activism, Alternative and Activist Media, Political Economy, Rhetoric, Organizational Communication. The area is modeled on the "Global Communication & Social Change" division that exists at the International Communication Association. At ICA, Global Communication & Social Change is described as an emphasis "to encourage and debate research on issues of production, distribution, content and reception of

communications media at global, 'glocal,' transnational, transcultural, international and regional levels. Within this purview it encompasses work across 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, social change or social justice." We adopt this approach to an integrated cultural-economic-political and critical engagement with social problems that often extend beyond localities to international and global processes.

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 uses a social scientific approach to study the behavior of audiences and the process of how media content and technology influence the public agenda and individuals' attitude, emotion, knowledge and interpretation of society. These include Media Technology Adoption, Advertising and Social Media Consumption, Persuasion Process, Effects and Effectiveness of Advertising and Social Media, Effects of Media Narratives, Audience Theories, Audience Research Methods, Media Psychology, Media Sociology, Media Industry Analysis, Social Network Analysis, Public Opinion, and Media Effects on Race, Gender and Society. This emphasis includes both administrative applied research and theoretical research on these topics. The research orientation is based on a quantitative approach and emphasizes the provision of generalizable empirical evidence in answering pertinent issues in media audiences and processes.

Accelerated BA to MA Program

Undergraduate students working toward a Bachelor's degree in the Departments of Communication, Media Production & Studies, or Journalism & Public Relations may also begin work on the Master's degree offered by the School of Media & Communication; these students may enroll in the Accelerated Bachelor and Master program if they meet all of the necessary application requirements. Those students who meet the requirements earn Pre-Master's status as an undergraduate student, and can enroll in graduate courses in the School of Media & Communication. Once they graduate with the Bachelor's degree, students will be granted full graduate student status. Students who choose this program will be eligible for the generalist option of the School's MA degree program. Overall, the accelerated program allows for students to complete both degrees, normally within five years.

Advantages to the Accelerated Program

There are three primary advantages to pursuing an accelerated BA to MA program:

1. While the student is still undergraduate, all graduate courses will cost the same as undergraduate courses.
2. Prospective students do not need to provide GRE scores in their application. This is not the case with the regular MA options.
3. The accelerated program allows for students to complete two degrees within the span of five years.

Admission Requirements

By the start of Pre-Master's status, prospective students must have 90 credit hours earned an overall BGSU GPA of at least 3.0. Prospective students must complete the Accelerated BA to MA Program Application, which can be found on the Graduate College website. Prospective students must also provide transcripts from the registration and records office at BGSU, as well as two letters of recommendation from full-time graduate faculty in the School of Media & Communication. Finally, all prospective students should provide an essay that explains their academic interests, as well as how those interests match with the areas of emphasis in the School of Media & Communication.

Course Load and the Time to Complete MA Degree

Graduate courses do not count toward a BA. In order to properly pursue the accelerated

program, students need to make sure that they have taken enough coursework that they can reach the required 122 credit hours necessary for graduation by only taking 6 or 7 classes in their fourth year. This means that prospective students should be taking summer courses through their first three years of undergraduate study. The amount of time required to complete the MA degree after they complete the BA will be dependent on how many graduate courses they are able to take in the fourth year.

During their fourth year of undergraduate study, they may take any 5000 level courses offered by the School of Media & Communication, as well as a limited group of 6000 level courses.

Students may not take 7000 level courses while they are still undergraduate students, nor may they take any of the core 6000 level courses for the MA program until they have formally become graduate students.

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.

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.

Graduate Policy Committee

The Graduate Policy 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.

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

All forms mentioned herein can be found on the BGSU Graduate College Website (<http://www.bgsu.edu/graduate/documents-and-forms.html>) or SMC website (<http://www.bgsu.edu/smcgrad>). Important forms for students to complete during their time in the School of Media and Communication include:

- For MA students: Change of Advisor Form, Topic Approval Form, ETD Submission/Approval Form (MA Plan I only), Examination Schedule (MA Plan II only), Comprehensive Exam/Project Approval (MA Plan II only).

Students must complete all forms before submitting them to faculty, advisors, and/or administrators for signatures. All forms that go to the Graduate College must go through the Graduate Secretary in the School office. 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

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 in both their undergraduate and graduate studies. 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.

Withdrawal from the Program

A student admitted to an Accelerated Bachelor's to Master's program with a Pre-Master's status may withdraw from the program and continue as a traditional undergraduate student toward the completion of the bachelor's degree.

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, for some justifiable reason, a student fails to take the final examination or to fulfill a specified requirement in a course.

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. The Graduate College deadlines for removal of incomplete grades for the respective academic semesters are:

- Fall semester: June 1
- Spring semester: September 1
- Summer semester: January 1

However, an individual instructor may come to an agreement with his or her student for an earlier deadline for removal of an incomplete grade.

The graduate dean designee has the authority to extend the deadline for an incomplete. The student must petition the graduate dean designee for such consideration in writing and prior to the expiration of the deadline. The

instructor's support is required for approval of the request.

For courses taken S/U, any mark of INC not removed by these deadlines will change to U. For courses taken for a letter grade, any mark of INC not removed by these deadlines will change to F. A student cannot graduate with a grade of INC.

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.

Accelerated Bachelor to Master of Arts in Media & Communication

Students enrolled in the accelerated program should follow the course schedule for planning graduate work that begins while still enrolled as an undergraduate student, followed by the courses taken when fully enrolled as a graduate student in the School's MA program. Overall, the program should include 4 years undergraduate + 1 year graduate. Students who choose the thesis option to complete their MA degree should expect their program to take an additional year.

Students who complete 12 credit hours (4 courses) during the Pre-Master's status could complete the degree program with course work in the Fall and Spring semesters. Students who complete 9 credit hours (3 courses) during Pre-Master's status could complete the program with course work in Fall and Spring, with one class in the Summer. For those who complete 6 credit hours (2 courses) during Pre-Master's status, the program could be completed with courses in Fall and Spring, and two courses in the Summer.

MA 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, MC 6300, and MC 6400 (total 9 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.

Students are then required to earn 18 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. Master's students are encouraged, but not required, to participate in the Colloquium in Media and Communication.

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 semesters; Students pursuing a thesis may 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.

Part 1: Pre-Master's status (limited to 12 credit hours maximum):

Undergraduate students should take up to four courses from the list below:

- MC 5040: Communication & Conflict
- MC 5050: Mediated Cultures & Identities
- MC 5080: Intercultural Communication
- MC 5090: International Communication
- MC 5610: Audience Research
- MC 5630: Media Programming
- MC 5640: Practicum in Interactive Online Media Production
- MC 5670: Gender, Media & Culture
- MC 5700 Electronic Surveillance & Privacy
- MC 5750: Global Journalism
- MC 6550: Organizational Communication
- MC 6551: Public Relations Research & Practice
- MC 6552: Social Media Seminar
- MC 6553: Advertising Research & Practice

Part 2(a): Master's Degree Graduate Student Status (if students have completed 12 hours during Pre-Master's status):

Fall semester:

- MC 6000: Introduction to Media & Communication
- MC 6400: Humanistic Research Methods
- One elective MC course

Spring semester:

- MC 6300: Social Science Research Methods
- One elective MC course
- 3 credit hours of one of the following: comprehensive finals, project, thesis.

OR

Part 2 (b): Master's Degree Graduate Student Status (if students have completed 9 hours during Pre-Master's status):**Fall semester:**

- MC 6000: Introduction to Media & Communication
- MC 6400: Humanistic Research Methods
- One elective MC course

Spring semester:

- MC 6300: Social Science Research Methods
- Two elective MC courses

Summer semester:

- One elective course
- 3 credit hours of one of the following: comprehensive finals, project, thesis.

OR

Part 2 (c): Master's Degree Graduate Student Status (if students have completed 6 hours during Pre-Master's status):**Fall semester:**

- MC 6000: Introduction to Media & Communication
- MC 6400: Humanistic Research Methods
- One elective MC course

Spring semester:

- MC 6300: Social Science Research Methods
- Two elective MC courses

Summer semester:

- Two elective courses
- 3 credit hours of one of the following: comprehensive finals, project, thesis.

Online Courses

MA students are free to take online courses throughout the academic year to complete their coursework. However, federal regulations stipulate that international students may only take one online course per semester.

Advising

During Pre-Master's status, the Graduate Coordinator will act as the graduate advisor for students as they work toward graduate status. After transitioning to graduate status, the student may keep the Graduate Coordinator as an advisor, or they may select another member of

the graduate faculty in the School of Media & Communication. If the student selects a new advisor, they must 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.

Completion of the MA Program

There are three plans that student may choose from to complete the MA program. They may take the comprehensive examination, engage in a research project, or write a thesis. Students who opt to write a thesis should expect for the Graduate Student status portion of the program to take longer than the one year.

Completion Option: MA Comprehensive Exam

The MA comprehensive examination consists of four one hour exams with ten-minute breaks in between: One on MC 6000, one on a methods course (either MC 6300 or MC 6400), and two on MC courses the student selects in consultation with his/her advisor. Students must be tested over courses by at least three different professors. In the second semester, students consult with their advisor to select courses as the topic areas for their exams. 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. Along with the schedule, students should also submit the *Comprehensive Final/Project Approval Form*. Both forms must be submitted to the office by the specified deadlines: schedules 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. 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.

The in-house, timed and proctored exams must be completed during a time set by the program. The Graduate Secretary will reserve the rooms for the exams.

On the exam day, students go directly to the assigned room. They will receive an external memory drive and a copy of their exam question. No reference materials may be used. After the student has completed the exam, s/he will save the final answer on the external memory drive. 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.

Completion Option: MA Research Project

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 a *Request for MA Project Topic Approval form* to the School office. This form should be prepared and printed 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.

Mater'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](http://scholarworks.bgsu.edu/ms_smc/) (http://scholarworks.bgsu.edu/ms_smc/)

Completion Option: MA Thesis

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 submitting a *Request for Thesis Topic Approval* form. This form should be printed and prepared prior to the proposal defense meeting to facilitate signatures of faculty and the Graduate Coordinator. Students may not submit the request until their completed MPPs have been approved by the GPC.

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.

Important Dates & Deadlines

September 1

Spring semester incomplete grade due

September 15

Fall comps application due

2nd Saturday of November, 9:00 am – 12:30 pm (8:00 am – 1:00 pm)

Fall MA comprehensive exams

January 1

Summer semester incomplete grade due

February 15

Spring comps application due

Mid-February

Awards application due

1st Saturday of April, 9:00 am – 12:30 pm (8:00 am – 1:00 pm)

Spring MA comprehensive exams

May 15

Summer comps application due

June 1

Fall semester incomplete grade due

Courses for 2018-2019 & 2019-2020 (Courses are subject to change)

Fall 2018:

- MC 5040: Communication & Conflict
- MC 5080: Intercultural Communication
- MC 5090: International Communication
- MC 5610: Audience Research
- MC 5630: Media Programming
- MC 6000: Introduction to Media & Communication
- MC 6100: Philosophical Foundations
- MC 6400: Humanistic Research Methods
- MC 7530: Theory & Practice in Interpersonal Comm
- MC 7630: Global Development & Social Change
- MC 7290: Construct Conceptualization & Management
- MC 6551: Public Relations Seminar (e-campus)
- MC 6552: Social Media Seminar (e-campus)

Spring 2019:

- MC 5040: Communication & Conflict
- MC 5080: Intercultural Communication
- MC 5090: International Communication
- MC 5640: Practicum in Interactive & Online Media
- MC 5700: Electronic Surveillance & Privacy
- MC 6300: Social Scientific Research Methods
- MC 6570: Intercultural Communication
- MC 7000: Relational Communication
- MC 7770: Advanced Social Science Research Methods
- MC 6550: Organizational Communication (e-campus)

Summer 2019:

- MC 7010: Interpretive Research Methods in Media & Communication
- TBA
- MC 6001: Introduction to Media & Communication (e-campus)
- MC 6401: Humanistic Research Methods (e-campus)

Fall 2019:

- MC 5040: Communication & Conflict
- MC 5080: Intercultural Communication
- MC 5090: International Communication
- MC 6000: Introduction to Media & Communication
- MC 6300: Social Science Research Methods
- MC 6400: Humanistic Research Methods
- MC 7110: Mass Communication Theory
- MC 6530: Interpersonal Communication
- MC 7xxx: Social Movements & Communication
- MC 6301: Social Science Methods (e-campus)
- MC 6553: Audience Research (e-campus)

Spring 2020:

- MC 5040: Communication & Conflict
- MC 5080: Intercultural Communication
- MC 5090: International Communication
- MC 6100: Philosophical Foundations
- MC 7370: New Media Research
- MC 7290: Topics in Interpersonal Communication
- MC 6010: Rhetorical Criticism OR MC 7300: Critical Media Studies
- MC 6551: Public Relations Seminar (e-campus)
- MC 6552: Social Media Seminar (e-campus)

Summer 2020:

- MC 7020: Descriptive & Inferential Statistics
- TBA
- MC 6001: Introduction to Media & Communication (e-campus)

MA Program Study 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*
<input type="checkbox"/>	_____	3	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	Elective Graduate Course
<input type="checkbox"/>	_____	3	MC 6990 Thesis Research, OR COMS 6830 Project Credit, OR COMS 6980 Readings for Exams

_____ TOTAL HOURS COMPLETED (30 minimum)

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