



Program Handbook

M.A. Communication Studies

2021-2022

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Table of Contents

Mission Statement.....	4
Diversity, Equity and Inclusion	5
Admission	8
Tuition Costs and Financial Aid	8
Program Requirements.....	9
Sample MA Communication Studies Plan of Study.....	10
Academic Advising.....	11
Plan of Study Guidelines	12
Applied Project Policy/Guidelines.....	18
Thesis Policy/Guidelines	20
Written Comprehensive Examination Policy/Process	30
Written Comprehensive Examination Question	32
Department and University Policies and Procedures.....	36
Satisfactory Academic Progress Policy	36
Student Code of Conduct.....	36
Academic Integrity.....	37
Funding for Travel	37
Campus/Departmental Resources	38
Program Contact Information	40
Graduate Faculty.....	41
My ASU Portal	43
BA/BS — MA Accelerated Program.....	44

Dear MACS Student,

Welcome to the Master of Arts in Communication Studies (MACS) at Arizona State University. We are pleased that you have chosen to join our program. In the spring of 2002 we proudly witnessed our first graduating class in the MACS program and have since enjoyed hearing about the impact and progress of our alumni in their chosen fields. We look forward to working with you during your time in the program.

Our program strives to emphasize the interconnection of communication with advocacy and/or social technologies, although the specific focus and direction you take remains in your hands. The emphases on advocacy and/or social technologies and digital media are both explicit and implicit. They may be central to some courses, but peripheral in others. Regardless, our program endeavors to develop the overt skills and subtle understandings that interconnect theory and research to a variety of applied contexts, practices, organizations, as well as global, cultural, and social events. Our program is unique from other graduate programs in this respect and we as a faculty are committed to the endeavor of fostering these connections, understandings, and related practices. This is why graduates from our program go on to work in a wide range of industries and careers or into a variety of doctoral programs.

As a graduate student in Communication Studies you will work intimately with a talented and devoted faculty and alongside other committed students. Our faculty are diverse in their interests and approaches, comprising some of the most respected scholars in their academic specialties. They are talented teachers who will challenge you, engage you, and invite you to be part of the academic vibrancy that permeates the graduate school experience. But this invitation requires *you* to engage and seek out these opportunities. You need to take advantage of and create your own possibilities, and work to build your communities and networks. You will find the students in our program have – like our faculty - varied backgrounds and experiences. Our students are talented, hardworking, and committed to finding unique ways to think about the world. I encourage you to attend campus and community events, and to create and organize events for the MACS community.

Graduate school will be demanding. You will be asked to read challenging material and to demonstrate independent and integrative thinking. You will have to learn to navigate through the graduate school experience. This handbook is designed to help you do this successfully. In particular, the handbook details program specific policies and procedures. But you should also consult the graduate studies section of the ASU Catalog for more detailed information about university policies. Please also visit the New College of Arts and Interdisciplinary Sciences Graduate Studies web site at <https://newcollege.asu.edu/graduate-studies>. Here you will find important forms and helpful advice. As a New College graduate student, you can also take advantage of the GPSA graduate lounge located in room N174 of the Faculty and Administration Building (FAB) 8am-5pm, Monday-Friday.

If you have any questions or concerns about the program please do not hesitate to reach out to me.

The faculty look forward to working with you. We sincerely hope the coming year brings less disruption and hardship than last year.

Regards,

Dr. Lindsey Meân
Graduate Director

Mission Statement: M.A. Communication Studies (MACS)

Within our M.A. program in Communication Studies we strive to explore, unpack, and - when necessary - deconstruct the theories, concepts, practices and impacts of communication and advocacy, with particular attention to the burgeoning interconnection with social technologies. This is achieved in varied ways including within the discipline's traditional classifications, from an interdisciplinary perspective, and across a variety of contexts. This approach allows us to journey collectively with our students to discover and develop existing and emerging understandings, theories, tools, and practices within and across communication and society.

We contend that communication, advocacy, and, increasingly, social technologies intersect our public and private lives as they interconnect and impact individual, social, political, organizational and cultural behaviors, processes, and structures, often in complex and challenging ways. Our intent is to produce graduates who understand the ways in which symbols, messages, representations, meanings, systems, technologies, and tools are constructed, arranged, and organized and, in turn, how these serve to establish, reinforce, detract, and undermine individual, social, organizational, cultural, and technological processes and structures. Our aim is to develop graduates with a strong and versatile repertoire of knowledge, practices, skills, and tools. For our graduates to be well-grounded and able to bring critical and methodical analysis together with the professionalism, tools, and techniques to effectively evaluate, serve, and - where necessary – affect change.

Our attention to these issues and concerns reflects the responsibilities we have for others in the global age—demanding that one be engaged and embedded not only within one's immediate community, but also within the global community. This requires one to perform critical and self-reflexive social, cultural and global citizenship. To be aware of the ways our experiences have shaped us and to endeavor to bring one's local community, social groups, and cultural needs into perspective, and to scrutinize these within and against wider society, contemporary and historic cultural formations, and globalization. We need to be able to unpack the influence, impact and intersections of a range of organizational, commercial, political, technological, social and cultural imperatives and attend carefully to the ways in which a variety of issues both shape and are shaped to affect practices, processes, and understandings in powerful yet subtle ways. And to use this knowledge and these understandings to inform our action and practices.

Our M.A. in Communication Studies serves a range of student interests and ambitions. Our program seeks to provide each individual the opportunity to develop the intellectual and conceptual skills necessary to follow their calling. We provide the opportunity to develop the organizational and applied skills need to work within a range of institutions, services, contexts, and industries, including preparing students for doctoral work. The program draws students and produces graduates who work in varied fields and contexts, but notably in professions that involve personal, mediated or social technologies to interact and communicate with clients, audiences, interest groups, and the public including: advocacy, media, social and/or digital media, community relations, government, politics, human resources, management, marketing. Equally, we have many students who have continued their education in Ph.D. programs. Graduates of the MACS program can be found across occupations, industries, and professions.

Diversity, Equity and Inclusion

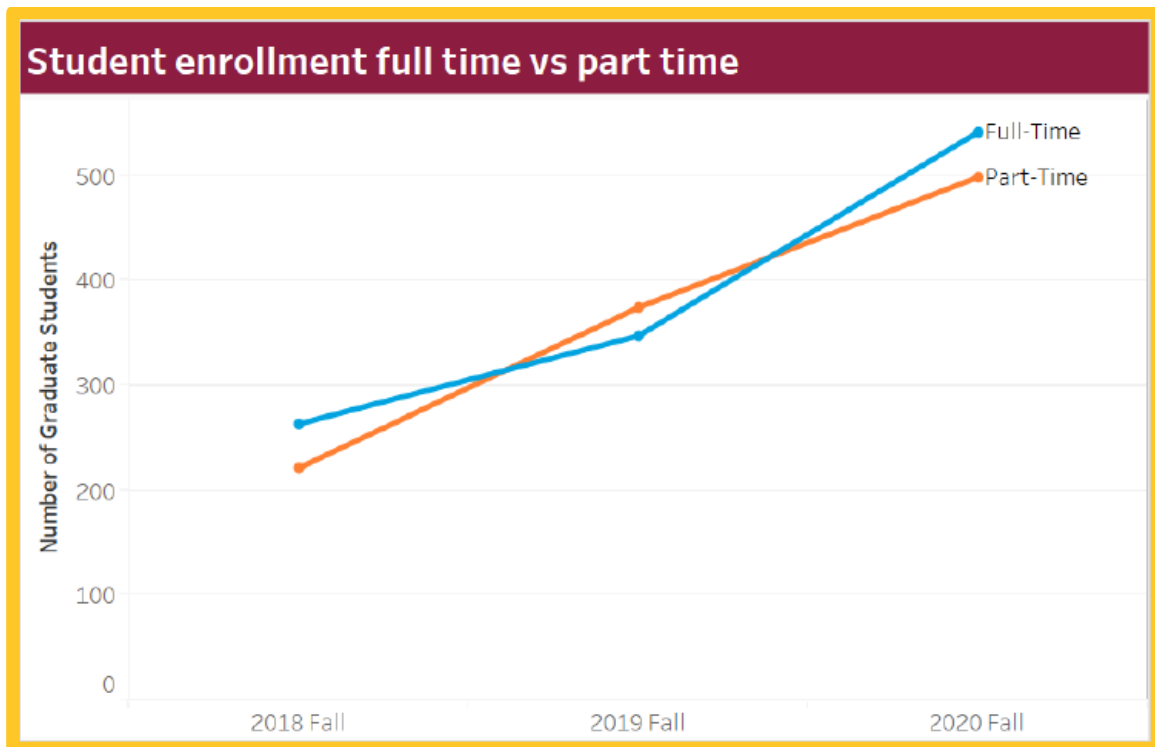
Statement

The New College of Interdisciplinary Arts and Sciences supports all forms of equity, diversity, and inclusion and aims to foster a sense of belonging for all its students, staff and faculty. Diversity and inclusion at New College encompass gender identity and expression, race and ethnicity and also socioeconomic background, religion, sexual orientation, age, disability status, veteran status, nationality, linguistic background and intellectual perspective. Our unit and the University are deeply committed to building excellence, enhancing access, and having an impact on our communities, state, nation, and the world. This is actualized by our faculty and staff who reflect the intellectual, ethnic, and cultural diversity of our nation and world to ensure that our students learn from the broadest perspectives, and are engaged in the advancement of knowledge with the most inclusive understanding possible of the issues that are addressed through our scholarly activities.

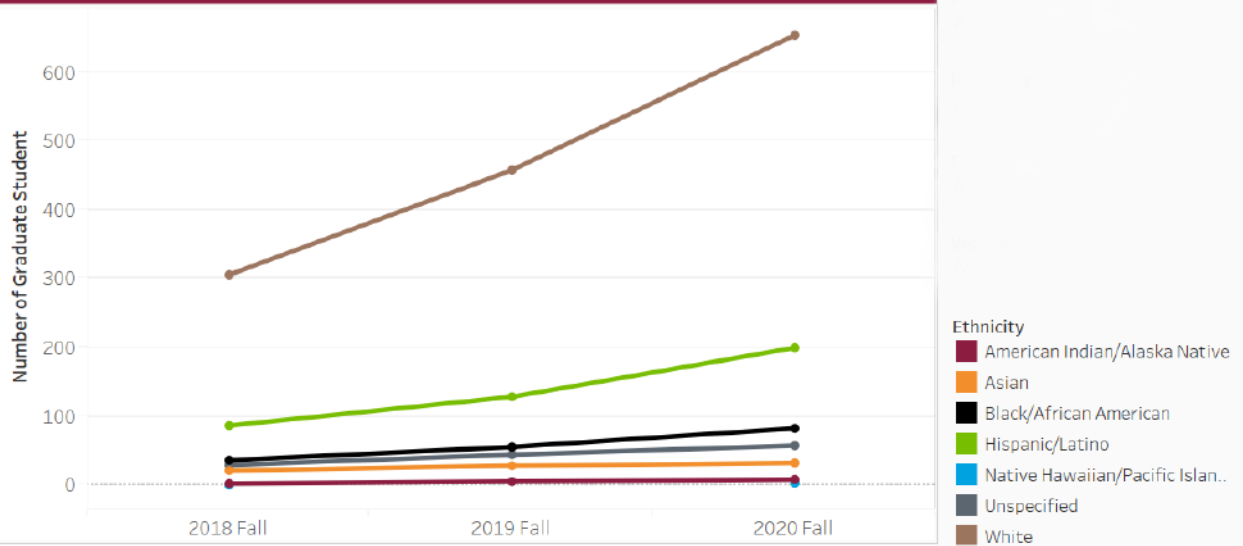
Resources: Find more information at [Graduate Student Diversity Resources](#); [Center for the Study of Race and Democracy](#)

Student Body

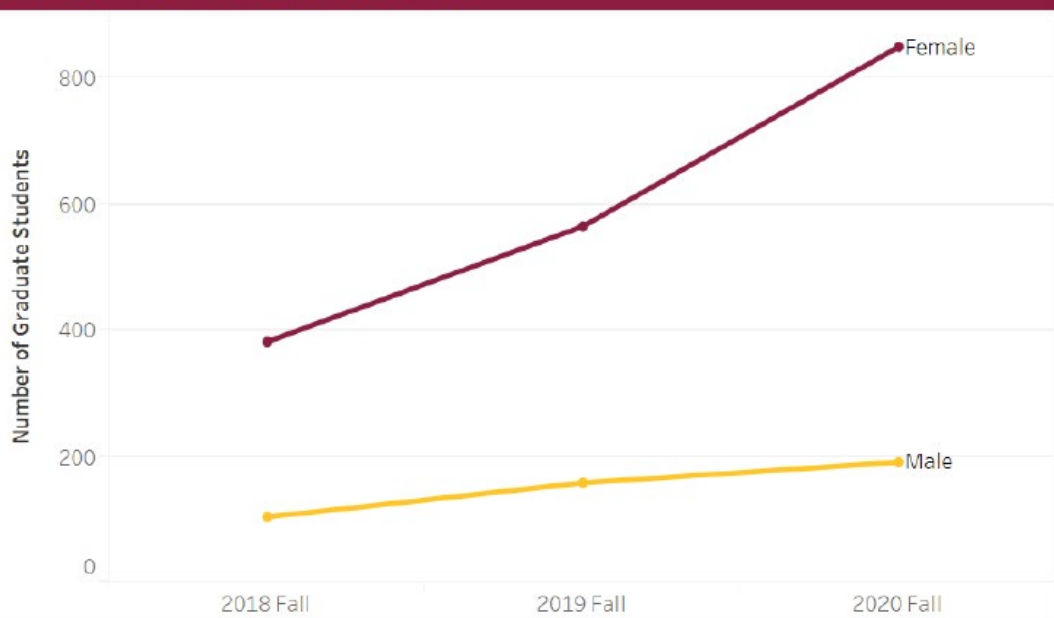
The below demographics represent the New College campus/ground and digital/online immersion graduate students for the 2021-2022 academic year as of July 1, 2021.



Student enrollment by ethnicity



Gender over time enrollment



[Current Student Profiles, Alumni, and Careers](#)

Get Involved

[Student Organizations](#)

Admission

Admission to the MA program is offered in Spring and Fall Semester. The program uses a rolling admission deadline. Please refer to the [Graduate Degree Search website](#) for up to date admission deadlines.

Tuition Costs and Financial Aid

Tuition

Tuition is set by ASU and the Arizona Board of Regents every year. You can see the general tuition and fees chart by [clicking here](#), or calculate your specific tuition costs by visiting [ASU's tuition calculator](#). Through the [Western Regional Graduate Program](#), out-of-state residents from participating states may be eligible to pay only in-state tuition rates.

Financial Aid

Financial aid is available through several different sources:

- 1) **[Graduate College Fellowship](#)**: Each year a small number of need-based fellowships may be awarded to MA students. Applicants are automatically considered for this scholarship and do not need to apply for it, but students must submit a FAFSA to be eligible for consideration. Students who receive the fellowships are notified before the beginning of their first semester.
- 2) **[Merit Scholarship](#)**: Depending on program funds, a small number of \$2,000 merit scholarships may be available. Applicants are automatically considered for this scholarship and do not need to apply for it. Students who receive the scholarships are notified before the beginning of their first semester.
- 3) **Course Assistant Positions**: The primary way that our students are funded is through Course Assistant (CA) positions. These positions typically assist with undergraduate courses that are offered online. Courses are either half-semester (7.5 weeks at 20 hours per week) or full semester (15 weeks at 10 hours per week), and CAs are paid a stipend for each course based upon workload. Although these positions are not guaranteed, most students who desire to serve as a CA have done so in one or more classes per year.
- 4) **Traditional Financial Aid (Loans & Grants)**: For information on general financial aid products, please visit [ASU's Financial Aid office \(https://students.asu.edu/financialaid\)](https://students.asu.edu/financialaid)
- 5) **Research Assistant Funding**: On occasion, faculty may have funds that could be used to hire masters-level students to be research workers. These would typically be advanced (second-year) students who are involved in grant-funded projects.

Program Requirements

The Master of Arts Degree in Communication Studies consists of 36 semester hours of coursework at the 500 level or above. Students will complete the core requirements, a selection of elected courses, and complete the comprehensive examination.

A. There are 3 required core courses (9 hours), students must obtain a grade B or above in core courses to complete the program:

- **CMN 502: *Theory and Practice in Communication and Persuasion*** Theoretical exploration of communicative and persuasive practices as applied in various contexts. Surveys classical, modern, and contemporary theories of persuasion.

OR

- **CMN 522 *Argumentation and Advocacy*** Introduces various models of argumentation and their applications to various spheres of advocacy.

- **CMN 505: *Methods in Applied Communication Research***

Examination of the intellectual, practical, and ethical dimensions of engaging in applied research. Emphasis on empirical and quantitative research methods.

OR (for students transferring from MA Social Technologies only)

- **STC 500: *Research Methods*** Introduces research with an emphasis on empirical/quantitative methods for Social Technologies

- **CMN 506: *Humanistic Inquiry and Field Research in Communication*** Examination of interpretive, critical, and rhetorical approaches to communication and advocacy; includes hermeneutics, ethnography, and cultural studies.

B. Students are required to take up to 27 semester hours of electives selected in consultation with the Director of MACS or their chosen graduate advisor (see the Communication Electives and the Plan of Study Guidelines sections of this handbook). Up to 6 hours can be outside the program with approval.

C. Written Comprehensive Examination. All students will take a written comprehensive examination designed to test their ability to broadly synthesize and integrate knowledge from across the program in a way that reflects their individual program of study and interests. For additional information see the Written Comprehensive Exam Policy/Process and the Written Comprehensive Exam Preparation Guidelines section of this handbook. Details of the Written Comprehensive Exam are also provided on the MACS Canvas. The comprehensive exam question is provided as part of the information included in this handbook and also on Canvas. There are core readings for the program and the exam also detailed, direct use of some of these core readings are required for the exam.

Sample MA Communication Studies Plan of Study

Full-time MACS Student (18 Month)

First Semester (Fall – 9 credit hours)	Second Semester (Spring – 9 credit hours)
CMN 505: Methods in Applied Communication Research AND Select two CMN* electives from available courses	CMN 506: Humanistic Inquiry and Field Research in Communication AND CMN 502: Theory and Practice in Communication and Persuasion OR CMN 522: Argumentation and Advocacy AND Select one CMN* electives from available courses
Third Semester (Fall – 9 credit hours)	Fourth Semester (Spring – 3 credit hours)
Select three CMN* electives from available courses	Select three CMN* electives from available courses AND Complete Comprehensive Examination

* If appropriate, you may select up to 6 credit hours (two courses) from a non-CMN prefix. **You may also select from a range of STC courses for electives.**

Part-time MACS student (24 Month)

First Semester (Fall – 6 credit hours)	Second Semester (Spring – 6 credit hours)
CMN 505: Methods in Applied Communication Research AND Select one CMN* electives from available courses	CMN 506: Humanistic Inquiry and Field Research in Communication AND CMN 502: Theory and Practice in Communication and Persuasion OR CMN 522: Argumentation and Advocacy
Third Semester (Fall – 6 credit hours)	Fourth Semester (Spring – 6 credit hours)
Select two CMN* electives from available courses	Select two CMN* electives from available courses
Fifth Semester (Fall – 6 credit hours)	Sixth Semester (Spring – 6 credit hours)
Select two CMN* electives from available courses	Select two CMN* electives from available courses AND Complete Comprehensive Examination

* If appropriate, you may select up to 6 credit hours (two courses) from a non-CMN prefix. **You may also select from a specified range of STC courses for electives.**

Academic Advising

Each student in the program brings a unique set of interests and aspirations. Thus, no two students will be advised the same and there is not a centralized advising process like you may have experienced in undergraduate programs. Instead, advising happens in a few key meetings with the Director of MACS or with other faculty to whom you have been directed. As noted above in the Graduate Studies Program Timeline, all students are advised to meet with the Director of MACS or with the New College Graduate Staff Advisor/Academic Success Coordinator for academic advising at least two points in time:

1. General advising designed to direct the student to courses and faculty who could best meet their academic and professional interests.
2. Interactive Plan of Study (iPOS) advising designed to assist students in the development and completion of their POS.

In preparation for these meetings, students should review:

- the elective courses in the program
- the core course rotation table below
- their intent to request Thesis or Applied Project
- relevant elective courses outside the program (within the College or ASU more widely)

Students also should consult the short faculty biographies provided in the ASU faculty directory on the ASU website to learn more about the research/teaching areas of each faculty member. This is especially important given that you will not have taken a course with all faculty and courses taught will not always reflect the main research and interests of faculty.

The table below lists the standard rotation of core courses.

Fall	Spring
CMN 505	CMN 502/522 CMN 506

Plan of Study Guidelines

The interactive Plan of Study (iPOS) is a document that all graduate students at ASU are required to submit. It serves to stipulate what courses a student intends to take to meet the university requirements for earning a graduate degree. It is submitted electronically and then routed to the Director of MACS and representatives from the Graduate College for approval.

The iPOS is binding once submitted so it is important that you give it due consideration before submitting. However, it also is amendable and can be changed as necessary when you progress through the program. Students may need to change their iPOS when courses originally scheduled are no longer available, when new courses are added that students would like to include in their iPOS, and when the scheduling of a course for a given semester prevents a student from being able to enroll in it. When changes are necessary, they can be made through the same system used to submit the iPOS initially (i.e., the student's My ASU account).

To prepare for submitting your iPOS, keep in mind that each iPOS submitted for MACS must include:

- 36 hours of total coursework
- 9 hours of the required core courses
- Up to 27 hours of elective courses
- 0 to 6 hours of culminating experience options

The elective hours will be comprised predominantly of MACS courses (see the list provided in the MACS Elective Courses section of the handbook)

In addition, students can include some combination of the following types of credit hours when appropriate and ***approved by the Director of MACS***:

- 6 hours of graduate omnibus credit (i.e., CMN 580, 584, 590, 592, & 594) — restrictions apply with regard to the certain omnibus courses (see the Omnibus Course section of the handbook)
- 6 hours of graduate credit from other graduate programs at ASU (see approval process)
- 3 hours of undergraduate credit at the 400-level (can be a COM course or a course from another discipline that is applicable to the student's Plan of Study) — must be taken as a graduate student and not part of a student's previous undergraduate curriculum (there is an exception for 4+1 students). If you are taking a cross-listed 400/500 level course and you already have 3 hours of 400-level credit included in your Plan of Study you must register for the cross-listed course at the 500 level.
- 12 hours of nondegree graduate credit (this is graduate credit earned by taking courses in the MA in Communication Studies program at ASU before a student is officially admitted and enrolled in the MA program)
- 6 hours of graduate pre-admission credit from another university. Approval of pre-admission credits is required by the Director of MACS and the Graduate College office and must have been taken within three years of admission to the program.

Approval for Credit Taken Outside the Program

Before taking courses outside the program please confer with the Director of MACS to determine if the course is appropriate for inclusion on your iPOS. This will involve sharing the following with the Director of MACS:

- a brief description of why the course is relevant to your iPOS
- the course prefix and number
- the course title
- the course catalog description

In instances where this information is not substantial enough to make a determination regarding the course, you may be asked to solicit and provide a sample syllabus from the course. Once the Director of MACS has approved the course you may enroll and include it on your iPOS.

Summer Credit

Summer graduate courses are not regularly offered. Those students who intend to take credit during the summer should consider the options described above when composing their program of study. This includes independent study options, although it should be noted that faculty are technically “off contract” and typically engaged in research, writing and other significant and/or demanding activities during the summer. As such, their availability or lack thereof to mentor students during this time should be respected and valued.

Core Readings

These core readings are provided to give you some foundational content on issues relevant to the issue of advocacy and social technologies, and their many forms, orientations, and interconnections. *These also provide the core readings for the Comprehensive Exam, although you are encouraged to read these early in your program of study.*

Readings:

Dahlgren, P. (2012). Social media and counter-democracy: The contingences of participation. In E. Tambouris, A. Macintosh, and Øystein Sæbø (Eds.). *Electronic Participation*, pp. 1-12. New York: Springer.

Hartnett, S. J. (2010). Communication, social justice, and joyful commitment. *Western Journal of Communication*, 74(1), 68–93.

Olson, K. M. (2008). The practical importance of inherency analysis for public advocates: Rhetorical leadership in framing a supportive social climate for education reforms. *Journal of Applied Communication Research*, 36 (2), 219-241.

Scholz, S. J. (1998). Peacemaking in domestic violence: From an ethics of care to an ethics of advocacy. *Journal of Social Philosophy*, 29 (2), 46-48.

Tufecki, Z. (2013). “Not this one”: Social movements, the attention economy, and microcelebrity networked activism. *American Behavioral Scientist*, 57(7): 848-870.

van Dijk, T. A. (1999). Editorial: Discourse and racism. *Discourse & Society*, 10(2), 147–148.

Winner, L. (1986). Do artifacts have politics? In *The Whale and the Reactor: A Search for Limits in an Age of High Technology*, pp.19-39. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Zompetti, J. P. (2006). The role of advocacy in civil society. *Argumentation*, 20, 167–183.

MACS Elective Courses

Students can take a variety of CMN and restricted STC electives as part of their MACS program of studies.

Electives

CMN 515 Ethical Issues in Communication Advocacy Variable Topics course examining the ethical issues or concerns related to communication advocacy. Course examines research, theory, and/or practice.

CMN 516 Mediation and Dispute Resolution Examination of advocacy's role in fair negotiation and effective and successful dispute resolution. Course examines research, theory and/or practice.

CMN 520 Communication Campaigns Exploration of public communication strategies aimed at advocating for general or specific audiences and/or for particular issues/causes.

CMN 522 Argumentation and Advocacy Introduction to various models of argumentation and their applications to various spheres of advocacy.

CMN 531 Communication and Social Change Exploration of human communication and technologies of communication as agents of social change within groups, communities, organizations, and/or cultures.

CMN 532 Advocacy in Interpersonal Settings Examination of particular relational contexts in which advocacy plays a pronounced role (e.g. personal, family, and service provider relationships).

CMN 550 Advocacy in Organizational Settings Examines issues of upward influence, the expression of dissent, and grievance systems within organizational contexts.

CMN 551 Democracy and Power in Organizations Examination of structural, historical, relational, and symbolic dimensions of organizational communication and discourses that foster or impede communication advocacy.

CMN 557 Communication and Technology Assesses technology's role in the social dynamics of human interaction. Emphasizing the impact of technology with regard to communication advocacy.

CMN 565 Globalization and Advocacy Exploration of the forces leading to increased intergroup contact and their impact on social, economic, and political dynamics.

CMN 570 Communication and Advocacy in Social Context Variable topics course exploring the intersection of communication and advocacy in specific contexts not addressed in other

elective courses (e.g., environmental advocacy, health care advocacy, political advocacy, etc.).
(May be repeated)

CMN 593 Applied Project (see the Applied Project Section of the handbook)

CMN 598 Special Topics Variable topics course that explores specific topics not emphasized in other elective courses. (May be repeated)

CMN 599 Thesis (see the Thesis section of the handbook)

Restricted Electives

STC 505 Theories of Social Technology Examines key theories of social technologies from social and behavioral perspectives.

STC 520 Advocacy and Social Technology Examines the potential for social technology in advocating for social change.

STC 525 Politics and Social Technology Concerns the political implications of social technology.

STC 535 Networked Social Technology Surveys human and social behaviors from the perspective of networks, with an emphasis on social technology.

STC 540 Critical/Cultural Approaches to Social Technology Examines critical and cultural approaches to social technologies with a focus on social issues and the cultural and social dimensions of technologies.

STC 545 Games as Social Technology Explores how games as networked and collaborative technologies facilitate community formation, interaction and development.

STC 547 Political Economy of Social Technologies Examines the economic, political and material structures of contemporary social and participatory media.

Omnibus Courses

In addition to the standing elective courses, students can incorporate what are known as omnibus courses into their program of study.

Below is a list of courses with omnibus designations that are available for graduate students in the program. Enrollment in these courses requires the student to petition a faculty member to sponsor/serve as advisor for the given course.

To enroll in omnibus courses students must seek and obtain (a) approval from the Director of MACS to include the course in one's plan of study and (b) a faculty member who will serve as the sponsor for the omnibus course. Then the student must obtain clearance from the MACS Academic Success Coordinator to enroll as entry into omnibus courses is restricted. To apply for registration for an omnibus course you will need to submit a formal request using the Online Individualized Instruction Form. This can be found on the [New College MACS graduate advising webpage](#) and the [Online Individualized Instruction Form](#).

Restrictions apply to the number of omnibus hours that can be included in an iPOS and to the number of hours earned in certain omnibus courses (see details below).

CMN 580 Practicum — Credit earned for graduate level teaching assistantships (see the Teaching Assistantship policy for more detail). Can only account for 3 credit hours of a student's iPOS.

CMN 584 Internship — Credit for traditional internships which students identify, acquire, and petition to have included in their program of study. Can only account for 3 credit hours of a student's Plan of Study.

CMN 590 Reading and Conference — Credit for graduate level independent study courses designed in consultation with a faculty member. Designed to focus on additional content not covered in existing courses.

CMN 592 Research — Graduate credit earned for conducting independent research under the supervision of a faculty member. Research conducted as CMN 592 must be distinct from and/or entirely preliminary to thesis/applied project research. Can only account for 3 credit hours of a student's Plan of Study.

CMN 594 Conference and Workshop—Graduate level courses offered periodically to a small group of students designed around a particular focus not covered in existing coursework. Traditionally offered during summer session.

In total, only 6 hours of omnibus credit should be included in a MACS iPOS.

CMN 580

Practicum (Graduate Teaching Assistant) Policy/Guidelines

The list below includes the minimum expectations associated with CMN 580. Faculty may ask teaching assistants to take on additional duties as necessary and appropriate.

1. Teach some significant portion of the course to be determined in consultation with the instructor.
2. Compose at least one exam (use to be determined by the instructor) or comparable assignment.
3. Grade at least one written assignment (e.g., essay test, essay) or a presentation assignment (e.g., speech, group presentation). Final grade to be at the discretion of the instructor.
4. Complete a Teaching Assistant Portfolio to include as available:
 - a. lecture notes
 - b. discussion questions
 - c. class activities/assignments
 - d. exam(s) composed for the course/assignments developed for the course
 - e. sample(s) of graded work
 - f. sample syllabus for potential course

CMN 593

Applied Project Policy/Guidelines

This course is an option for students who are interested in engaging the community in some meaningful way. The final product of an applied project should be useful to an agency, community, or group. The possibilities are numerous and too extensive to list here, but examples include an action research project, a needs assessment study, a program evaluation, the planning and conducting of an in-service training program, a proposal for funding, or a creative project of similar scope. Those interested in completing an applied project should consult the MACS Director or relevant MACS graduate faculty to discuss ideas, possible faculty involvement, and the necessary requirements.

Applied project is limited to 3 hours except in the unusual circumstances that a project stretches beyond a single semester and entails additional work that would merit more credit hours. Students are encouraged to develop ideas that are accomplishable within a single semester. The work accomplished during these credit hours must reflect the process of maturation of ideas and give ample time for researching and planning the project, particularly if the project is being applied to an outside agency. The project should demonstrate the application of theory, research, and communication advocacy (broadly defined) to a concrete social context.

All applied projects require a written report documenting the execution of the applied project (i.e., the Applied Project Report). This is the substantive requirement and is prepared for the Chair to evaluate (and any additional committee members). The Applied Project Report is a formally structured document, like a thesis, that adheres to a particular format. In addition, since an applied project by nature addresses a public or community issue, the results or part of the project/research must be presented in a public document or presentation (e.g., a talk or seminar, a paper, a handbook, a monograph, an exhibition, a training program, a film) that is made available to a relevant agency, community, the general public, or the MACS community (or similar). There is considerable flexibility regarding the nature and form for public presentation of results for the applied project – and this may in fact be deemed as fulfilled by an element of the project itself depending upon what was undertaken as part of, or during, its completion. The best means for presenting the results of one's applied project should be determined in consultation with your applied project faculty advisor/chair, and – if relevant - the agency and/or community members.

Like the other omnibus courses, applied project requires a faculty advisor also known as chair. The chair provides guidance during this process as necessary and evaluates the final applied project/applied project report. Before committing to oversee an applied project the chair may ask the student to provide any of the following:

- a brief (no more than 2 pages) prospectus outlining the applied project
- a writing sample
- other documentation as warranted

Students will be permitted to register for applied project semester hours only concurrent with or subsequent to completion of their 24th semester hour of coursework and an approved iPOS on file. To apply to register for an applied project you will need to complete the relevant form –

which requires the signature of your chair. This form can be found on the [New College MACS graduate advising webpage](#)

Applied project reports will vary in length and content, but at a minimum should include the following sections:

1. A rationale for the project and introduction to the subject matter.
2. A literature review that draws upon literature and resources pertinent to the subject matter.
3. A section detailing the steps undertaken in the applied project. This section will chronicle the student's applied project experience*.
4. A discussion section that considers the lessons learned from completing the applied project, the relative success/failure as well as the strengths/limitations of the applied project, and the possible directions for future work/efforts related to the project. Students are expected to integrate appropriate theory/literature from other MACS courses into their discussion of the applied project.
5. When appropriate, an appendix that documents any written or visual information produced as part of the applied project.

The applied project report should be turned into the chair by the end of the semester in which the student registered for the hours. A bound copy should also be deposited with the Director of MACS.

*If an applied project will involve collecting data from human subjects, students must complete the required Human Subjects Institutional Review Board (IRB) training and submit the relevant forms for IRB review before collecting data. Consult with your faculty advisor who must submit the materials for review. Details of training, submission process and exemplar materials are available from the ASU Office of Research Integrity and Assurance webpages at <https://researchintegrity.asu.edu/>

CMN 599

Thesis Policy/Guidelines

The thesis elective is an option designed for students who desire to thoroughly investigate a particular topic of interest through an extensive independent research project. An oral defense of the thesis is required. Thesis is reserved (and only recommended) for students who intend to pursue a doctoral degree after completion of the MACS program. Writing a thesis is a considerable undertaking and should only be pursued by those students who are well prepared to do so. Thus, there are several steps that must be completed in order to qualify for thesis hours. This process is designed to ensure that a student attempting to write the thesis possesses the requisite skills and can make the time commitment necessary to complete the thesis successfully.

Students enrolled in the thesis elective will earn 6 hours of credit (2 sections of CMN 599) spread across two semesters. Students will not be able to complete a 6-hour thesis in a single semester nor will they be able to enroll in thesis for fewer than 6 hours of credit.

To qualify to write a thesis, students must:

- Identify and solicit a thesis faculty advisor, known as a chair
- Draft a thesis prospectus
- Once their chair approves, submit the thesis prospectus to a potential graduate committee comprising the chair and two additional graduate faculty members.

The necessary steps for pre-qualification to write a thesis are outlined in greater detail below.

1. Students should begin by identifying a possible chair. This should be a member of the MACS faculty who has research expertise in an area related to the student's thesis topic. See the faculty roster at the end of this handbook to identify appropriate faculty to serve as the thesis chair.
2. Students should then meet with the thesis chair to discuss the thesis project in greater detail. If the faculty member agrees to chair the thesis committee then the student should consult with the chair regarding other possible committee members to solicit. Students should repeat this step with another faculty member if the initial faculty member approached does not accept the invitation to serve as the student's thesis chair.
3. The student should then submit a thesis proposal to the chair. Revise it as necessary.
4. The student then submits the thesis proposal along with an invitation to join the thesis committee to two other faculty members. One of these must come from the MACS faculty; the other can come from outside the program. This step may need to be repeated with additional possible committee members if those approached initially are unavailable.
5. The student can apply for thesis registration (see below) and start work on thesis subject to the approval of the chair.
6. The two other committee members should be identified as early in the process as possible. Ideally by the time the application for registration is submitted, and by the start of the

second semester of thesis at the latest. Committee members confirmed or changed after registration should be up-dated with ncgradvising@asu.edu.

7. Students should register for CMN 599 Thesis in the appropriate semesters according to the timeline stipulated and approved in their prospectus. Students will be permitted to register for thesis semester hours only concurrent with or subsequent to completion of their 24th semester hour of coursework and an approved iPOS on file. To apply to register for a thesis you will need to complete the relevant form – which requires the signature of your chair. The form to apply to register for thesis can be found on the [New College MACS graduate advising webpage](#).
- If students have already completed 6 hours of CMN 599 before completing the thesis they must register for 1 hour of CMN 595 Continuing Registration. Students must be enrolled in a minimum of 1 hour of CMN 595 for each additional semester necessary for completion of the thesis. Students must complete their Thesis within 3 hours of CMN 595 Continuing Registration. This equates to either 3 additional semesters or 2 additional semesters and a summer session. In the event that there are extenuating circumstances that prevent students from meeting this deadline, students may petition their graduate committee for an extension. When necessary students should consult the MACS Director and their thesis advisor/chair for more information about petitioning for an extension to complete the Thesis.

Students should also, as necessary, amend their iPOS to reflect thesis credits. Students can apply to write a thesis either prior to or after they have completed and filed their iPOS. When a student's application to write a thesis is approved prior to submitting the iPOS the student simply needs to incorporate 6 hours of CMN 599 (Thesis) into the iPOS. If the iPOS has been submitted already, the student simply needs to amend the existing iPOS so by including 6 hours of CMN 599 (Thesis) and by removing 2 courses (6 hours of credit) previously included on the iPOS. Students should also list their graduate thesis committee and the chair on the iPOS.

To actually write and complete a thesis, students must:

- Incorporate the feedback of their graduate committee
- Complete any necessary human subjects protocol
- Collect data
- Write the manuscript
- Follow the submission guidelines and calendar
- Participate in a public defense of the thesis

The necessary steps for writing a thesis are outlined in greater detail below.

1. After the student's committee has been composed and the prospectus reviewed the thesis advisor/chair will provide the student with feedback from the committee regarding the research plan and objectives. Give due consideration to incorporating their suggestions since they are intended to increase your likelihood of success.
2. Before beginning the methods and in order to conduct research with human participants, students must complete the required training and submit the appropriate paperwork to receive approval to conduct research. If the student is not using human participants but instead some form of archival texts completing these forms is neither mandated nor necessary. Consult with your chair who should submit the materials for review. Visit the ASU Office of Research Integrity and Assurance for details of training, submission process and exemplar materials at <https://researchintegrity.asu.edu/>
3. In addition to following the policies of the University with regard to research subjects, students must also adhere to the policies of the agency or site where the data collection will occur. This may entail completing human subjects paperwork specific to the agency or site. It is the student's responsibility to learn if additional paperwork is necessary and to complete the paper work accordingly and appropriately. Failure to do so jeopardizes both Arizona State University and MACS community relations and community support and therefore will not be permitted nor tolerated.
4. There are several different style guidelines used in academic writing (e.g., American Psychological Association, Modern Language Association). Students will need to follow the particular writing guidelines required by the thesis committee.
5. Conduct appropriate research and complete the thesis according to the recommendations, suggestions, and revisions provided throughout the process by your graduate committee.
6. In consultation with your faculty chair and, *once your chair indicates it is ready for wider committee review*, with your other graduate committee members ready your thesis for public defense. This involves two steps: (a) satisfactorily meeting the expectations of your thesis committee and (b) formatting your thesis according to Arizona State University guidelines. Regarding step B above, obtain the ASU Format Manual and follow the guidelines provided regarding formatting the thesis. The formatting of theses is strictly governed and therefore students need to consult and follow the Format Manual closely. The Format Manual is available from the Graduate College at ASU Tempe or on the Graduate College website at (<https://graduate.asu.edu/current-students/completing-your-degree/formatting-your-thesis-or-dissertation>).
7. Schedule an oral defense in consultation with your committee advisor/chair and your other committee members. Consult the timeline provided below before doing this. This needs to be a date when all committee members are available. This is done through the links available on your My ASU account.

8. Submit your thesis for formatting review by the Graduate College. There is a specific date by which this submission needs to be made every semester to ensure the Graduate College staff can make the recommendations without holding up a student's graduation. Be sure you know what this deadline is. You can find it by following the links under your My ASU account. Missing this deadline may prevent you from defending your thesis on the designated date set. Note: Currently the Graduate College requires that the Comprehensive Exam has been successfully passed before a defense can be formally scheduled. As such and given the logistics of finding a date that works for you and all the members of your committee, you are advised to informally set a date for the defense early in the semester.
9. Make any suggested revisions as necessary for final format approval once you have received feedback from the Graduate College.
10. Defend your thesis.
11. Submit your thesis electronically to UMI/ProQuest.

Check the [Graduate College](#) webpage for more detailed information on these steps, including current deadlines.

Thesis Completion Timeline

The final steps of the thesis process are quite involved. They are discussed in greater detail here along with a timeline which will assist you in ensuring you move through these steps as required. For any given semester, the Graduate College thesis submission and completion deadlines can be found at: <https://graduate.asu.edu/current-students/completing-your-degree/about-your-defense>

To successfully complete and defend a thesis, students must:

1. Complete the initial/defensible draft of the manuscript (a first-final draft that the student's graduate committee deems defensible)

Students in consultation with the thesis chair should identify an appropriate date to share the thesis with the other committee members. As a rule, committee members should be given 10 working days (two calendar weeks) to read the thesis and determine whether it is ready for the public defense.

2. Submit the thesis for format approval

Once deemed defensible students should submit their thesis to the Graduate College for format approval.

3. Defend the thesis

Once deemed defensible students should consult with their chair to determine how best to prepare for the thesis defense. Defenses which are scheduled for 2 hours typically follow a standard format whereby the student presents an overview of the thesis for the first 20-30 minutes. This is followed by a question and answer session in which the committee members pose questions about the thesis to the candidate.

4. Revise the thesis as necessary depending on the outcome of the defense

After the defense the committee will request any revisions they believe the thesis requires. These can range from no revisions requested to minor or substantive revisions.

5. Submit the revised/final thesis to your thesis chair.

If revisions were necessary, students will revise the thesis and resubmit it to the thesis chair to ensure that the revisions requested by the committee have been addressed adequately.

6. Submit the final draft of the thesis to the Graduate College.

Thesis Completion Timeline

CHECKLIST

Consult the timeline checklist below to ensure you take the appropriate steps according to the necessary dates.

All dates are set by the university based upon the scheduled date for graduation for a given semester. This checklist below is generic with regard to dates but will give you some sense of when they will fall in a given semester based upon graduation. The actual dates for a semester can be found by accessing the deadlines/procedures calendar on the Graduate College webpage at: <https://graduate.asu.edu/current-students/policies-forms-and-deadlines/graduation-deadlines> (general website address is graduate.asu.edu).

Deadline	Fall	Spring
Approximate Date to Submit Final Draft Thesis to One's Graduate Committee	Two Weeks Before Scheduled Defense Date	Two Weeks Before Scheduled Defense Date
Last Day to Submit the Draft of the Thesis for Format Approval	10 working days before the Scheduled Defense Date	10 working days before the Scheduled Defense Date
Last Day to Schedule a Defense	Mid-late October – see website for specific dates	End March - see website for specific dates
Last Day to Hold an Oral Defense	Early November – see website for specific dates	Early April - see website for specific dates
Last Day to Submit Final Revisions	Mid-November – see website for specific dates	Mid-April – see website for specific dates
Last Day to Submit the Thesis to UMI/ProQuest	In or Around the 3 rd week of November – see website for specific dates	In or Around the End of April – see website for specific dates

Quantitatively Oriented Thesis Guidelines

Numerical data collection and statistical analysis are the hallmarks of quantitatively orientated research. A thesis of this nature has several clearly identifiable parts. The various parts and the purpose of each respective portion of a quantitatively oriented thesis are detailed below. Although numerical data and statistical analysis serve as the source of interpretation in quantitatively oriented theses when possible and as appropriate students should interpret and relate their work to the practice of communication and advocacy.

Abstract

The abstract is a brief summary of the thesis. It summarizes all of the sections listed below in a concise format (1-2 pages).

Introduction/Rationale

The introduction/rationale introduces the reader to the topic of interest by clearly stating the purpose of the work and by establishing the importance of the work. First, the student describes and clarifies the topic of study for the reader. The student then makes a case for why the research is important for empirical reasons and/or practical reasons. The student describes the importance of conducting the research and the potential contribution of the research to the field of communication study. The student can discuss contributions the work will make in relation to the existing communication literature, in relation to communication theory, in relation to solving practical problems, and/or in relation to providing opportunities for future exploration in the area.

Literature Review

The literature review serves to summarize and review literature pertinent to the topic of interest. There are two identifiable sections of the literature.

In the summary of the literature section the student summarizes previous research and theory to inform the reader about the state of current knowledge in the area. The student identifies trends, themes, and ideas that exist within the literature in this section. The student as necessary also discusses relationships, gaps, inconsistencies, and contradictions in the literature.

In the critical evaluation section the student carefully examines the research done to date. In this section the student critiques the conduct and validity of the research in terms of theoretical applications, construct definitions, operationalization and measurement of constructs, research design and execution, and empirical conclusions. Additionally, the student concludes the literature review in this section by arranging the existing literature to support the proposition of clearly stated research questions and/or hypotheses.

Methods

In this section the student describes in detail the methods used to conduct the study. Specifically, the student discusses (a) the sample and sampling procedure, (b) the research design, (c) the data collection procedure, (d) the measures used and (e) any other methodological considerations not discussed in the areas previously listed. This section should be detailed and precise so that another researcher could replicate the study.

Results

In the results section the student describes the data analysis procedures and reports specific findings. This involves clearly and precisely describing how the student conducted the data analysis. The student also provides the reader with the specific findings and the necessary data representations to accompany these findings (e.g., statistical tests, summary tables, etc.).

Discussion

This is the final section of the thesis. Here the student discusses the findings of the research. In this section the student: (a) describes how current results align with or contradict previous findings, (b) discusses theoretical implications and/or practical applications of the findings, (c) considers where expected results were not found and attempts to provide explanations for the absence of expected results, (d) notes the limitations of the current work, and (e) suggests directions for future research in the area of study.

Qualitatively Oriented Thesis Guidelines

Writing a thesis from a qualitative perspective requires making a choice between two broadly construed areas of focus. We are all no doubt aware that one might well combine these two ways of investigation. For the sake of preparing a set of guidelines, however, we keep them separate. That said, one can either write a thesis that is a theoretical work or write a thesis that offers a reading of some cultural phenomena (the so-called application of theory) by way of an already existing and established theory/method.

In either case, one would be expected to make a theoretical contribution to or employ a recognized body of thought in communication studies. These areas include but are not exhausted by the following: critical theory; cultural studies; ethnography; hermeneutics; queer theory; phenomenology; psychoanalysis; post-colonial theory; semiotics; or one of the various means of rhetorical analysis such as fantasy theme; Burkean, feminist, narratological, for example. In each case students must relate their work to the practice of communication and to the concept and practice of advocacy as it is understood in their study.

We might think of the qualitative thesis as having at least three distinct parts each of which would be expected of any thesis. Below are the three requisite sections with a short description of what the author is minimally required to accomplish in each section.

Introduction and Method: What, why, and how

The author makes two related moves in this chapter. First, state the thesis of the work clearly. In a theoretically-oriented work, the author introduces the issue and/or issues to be addressed, and in a work that applies a specific theory, the author introduces the theory to be employed and the cultural phenomena that constitute the focus of the study. In both cases, you will need to provide a short introduction of the texts and thinkers to be utilized and engaged in the work. Also, in both cases, the introduction must give reasons for the undertaking of this particular project and how it either contributes to a theory of communication and advocacy or how this manner of reading cultural phenomena betters our understanding of communication and advocacy.

Your second primary concern is method. At a minimum, your objective here is to tell readers HOW you plan to go about your theoretical construction or your application of the theory you plan to apply.

In the case of an application of a theory/method the author explicates the major tenants of the established theory to be employed in the reading/evaluation of the cultural phenomena they have under study. This will include a review of other investigations of the same or related phenomena. (A lengthy study in which one is applying a theory/method might well separate the two moments of this first part into separate chapters. This is seldom done for theoretical work.)

Body: The doing of the what

Very simply stated—but more challenging to accomplish—the chapters in this section articulate the arguments that support the thesis/project. Thus, you would do well to organize these chapters in such a way as to show how each relates to the others. This is also where you have ample opportunity to provide the details of your interpretation, which makes this section the heart of your thesis.

Conclusion: The restatement of the why, review of the what, and speculations about what still remains for future work in this area

In this section you face four primary opportunities:

- reviewing your achievements,
- iterating your reasons for having undertaken the project in light of having reached its (near) completion,
- playing out the consequences this study has for our understanding of the practice of communication and advocacy, and
- pointing toward work that remains for those interested in investigations along the lines of your project.

Written Comprehensive Examination Policy/Process

1. Students are permitted to take comprehensive examinations only concurrent with or subsequent to completion of their 36th hour of coursework.
2. If a student is taking the written comprehensive examination during a semester when the student is not enrolled in any other coursework that appears on the Plan of Study then the student must register for at least one hour of graduate-level credit as CMN 595 Continuing Registration.
3. Comprehensive examinations require students to write (i.e., answer a designated question) that connects to the *Core Readings* listed earlier, with the exam question, and provided on the MACS Canvas and in this Handbook.
4. The Comprehensive Exam question will be composed by the student at home and turned in by the due date stipulated for the given semester.

Exam dates will be posted on MACS Canvas when formalized.

The answer or response to the Comprehensive Exam Question should be submitted in the MACS Canvas Comprehensive Exam Organization.

Students are expected to clear the date well in advance so that they prepare and submit the comprehensive exam on the day stipulated. In the event that you are unable to make the specified date, you must petition the MACS Academic Success Coordinator in order to receive permission to complete your comprehensive examination on an alternative date.

Early in the semester in which they intend to take the comprehensive examination, students must notify the MACS Academic Success Coordinator of their intent to do so via email communication to NCGradAdvising@asu.edu expressing desire to be invited to and gain access to the canvas organization referred to above.

5. Members of the Graduate Committee (a standing committee of 3 MACS graduate faculty) and other members of the graduate faculty will evaluate the answer/responses to the Comprehensive Exam Question.
6. The Graduate Committee will make a determination regarding the performance of the student on the comprehensive examination. Each member of the graduate committee will read each question and provide one of the following marks:
 - High Pass
 - Pass
 - Rewrite

- Failure

A high pass indicates an exceptionally high and strong answer/response in terms of content, argument, substantiation, and structure.

A mark of pass indicates that the student has demonstrated mastery.

A mark of rewrite indicates that the response has some deficiencies that need to be addressed before it can receive a passing mark.

A mark of failure indicates that the response is unacceptable and cannot be adjusted through a simple rewrite. Rather the response needs to be composed anew.

7. Once the review of examination answers/responses has been completed, the MACS Director will notify students of their respective performance outcome.

Students who receive a passing mark will have completed all requirements of the comprehensive examination process at that point in time.

Students who receive either a rewrite or failure mark will need to follow the steps outlined below.

8. **Rewrites** will require students to rework their responses based upon feedback from the Graduate Committee. The student will be notified of the rewrite by the MACS Director. A meeting can be scheduled in which the student and the MACS Director will review the feedback and discuss the rewriting process.
9. Students will have a designated time to complete their rewrite (see below) sufficient to incorporate the feedback provided into a re-written response that corrects for the deficiencies noted by the committee.
10. In the unlikely event that a student does not produce a substantive rewrite that warrants a passing mark, the overall exam mark will become a failure.
11. **Failure** of the written comprehensive examination is considered final unless the MACS Director and the Dean of the Graduate College approve a re-examination. Only one re-examination is permitted and may be administered no sooner than 3 months and no later than 1 year from the date of the original examination. Students sitting for a re-examination must register for 1 hour of CMN 595 Continuing Registration in the semester in which they will take the re-examination.

Written Comprehensive Examination Question

The MACS exam is an opportunity to reflect on your course work and synthesize those approaches that have become particularly meaningful and relevant to you as a communication scholar and as an advocate and/or as a scholar of communication and social technology.

Depending upon your preference and interest, you will be required to select one of the two questions to address for the exam.

Please read and respond to the exam question with the following description of the MACS program in mind:

The Masters of Arts in Communication Studies at Arizona State University West is designed around the practice and theory of advocacy and/or social technologies. As a necessary component of democratic life, advocacy is a fecund area of study for those who wish to have their academic study inform their concerns for community and social life. Similarly, the social and cultural impact, role and implications of (changing) social technologies is a burgeoning and shifting area of study. Further, how these interact and interconnect is powerful and significant, comprising and increasingly relevant area of study and discussion.

These foci, in all their various forms, allow the integration of the practical and theoretical study of social practices and institutions, persuasion, ethics, politics, and culture in a program of study designed to each student's interests. All the traditional areas of study within communication from interpersonal to organizational and from empirical research to rhetoric are brought to bear on an understanding of communication, advocacy and/or social technology.

Question 1

In a communication studies program focusing on advocacy, the question is raised concerning the relation between these two concepts (communication and advocacy) alongside the relation of advocacy with the concepts at the heart of the study of communication more generally. Drawing from what you have learned in your course work and the essays in the Communication and Advocacy Exam Reading List develop an essay exploring your understanding of one or more of the following:

- why advocacy needs the insights gained by the study of communication
- how the study of communication informs advocacy
- the role of advocacy in communication as a discipline and/or a practice.

Question 2

In a communication studies program focusing on advocacy and social technology, the question is raised concerning the relation between these three concepts (communication, advocacy, and social technology) alongside the relation of advocacy with the concepts at the heart of the study of communication more generally. Drawing from what you have learned in your course work and the essays in the Communication and Advocacy Exam Reading List develop an essay exploring your understanding of one or more of the following:

- why our understanding of social technology needs the insights gained by the study of communication
- how social technology informs the study and practice of advocacy

- how advocacy is an important perspective to understand social technologies

Your answer should be yours in that it uses the focus and understanding most appealing to *you*. This means the response you make may come from any one of the various ways of studying communication and any of the methods recognized by the discipline.

Answering the Question

Your answer should be yours in that it uses the focus and understanding most appealing to *you*. This means the response you make may come from any one of the various ways of studying communication and any of the methods recognized by the discipline.

Your exam answer should contain:

- a clear introduction that offers a rigorous and non-obvious statement of the relationship between communication and advocacy that you will be exploring in the essay to follow
- further, the introduction should signpost the scholars/concepts you will be employing in your response (that is, by the end of the introduction, the reader should have a clear sense of the organization of the essay to follow and the key communication and advocacy concepts it will explore)
- the exam answer should be at least 5000 words and no more than 8000 words in length *EXCLUDING* References section
- the exam answer should employ material from at least three of the essays on the Advocacy Exam Reading List and additional relevant scholarly readings of your choice (from classes, literature searches, etc.)
- the exam answer should cover a range of content as relevant, including (but not limited to) specific scholars, theories, theoretical concepts, methodologies, etc.
- do not name the classes done in course work nor simply report what you have learned in a list, rather develop the lessons and points most important into an argument
- the essay should correctly utilize the chosen citation system and format (e.g., APA, Chicago) including headings, sub-headings, in-text citations, and so forth
- the essay should be well-written and free of mechanical errors (grammar, spelling, punctuation, etc.)

Readings:

Dahlgren, P. (2012). Social media and counter-democracy: The contingences of participation. In E. Tambouris, A. Macintosh, and Øystein Sæbø (Eds.). *Electronic Participation* (pp. 1-12). New York: Springer.

Hartnett, S. J. (2010). Communication, social justice, and joyful commitment. *Western Journal of Communication*, 74(1), 68–93.

Olson, K. M. (2008). The practical importance of inherency analysis for public advocates: Rhetorical leadership in framing a supportive social climate for education reforms. *Journal of Applied Communication Research*, 36 (2), 219-241.

Scholz, S. J. (1998). Peacemaking in domestic violence: From an ethics of care to an ethics of advocacy. *Journal of Social Philosophy*, 29 (2), 46-48.

Tufecki, Z. (2013). "Not this one": Social movements, the attention economy, and microcelebrity networked activism. *American Behavioral Scientist*, 57(7): 848-870.

van Dijk, T. A. (1999). Editorial: Discourse and racism. *Discourse & Society*, 10(2), 147–148.

Winner, L. (1986). Do artifacts have politics? In *The Whale and the Reactor: A Search for Limits in an Age of High Technology* (19-39). Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Zompetti, J. P. (2006). The role of advocacy in civil society. *Argumentation*, 20, 167–183.

Origins of the word: ADVOCATE

(Online Etymology Dictionary)

mid-14c., "one whose profession is to plead cases in a court of justice," a technical term from Roman law, from Old French *avocat* "barrister, advocate, spokesman," from Latin *advocatus* "one called to aid; a pleader, advocate," noun use of past participle of *advocare* "to call" (as witness or advisor) from *ad-* "to" (see *ad-*) + *vocare* "to call," related to *vocem* (see *voice* (n.)). Also in Middle English as "one who intercedes for another," and "protector, champion, patron." Feminine forms *advocatess*, *advocatrice* were in use in 15c. ADVOCATE

(Arcade Dictionary of Word Origins)

"Etymologically, *advocate* contains the notion of 'calling,' specifically of calling someone in for advice or as a witness. This was the meaning of the Latin verb *advocare* (formed from *vocare* 'call,' from which English also gets *vocation*).

Written Comprehensive Examination Preparation Guidelines

Students should consult the guidelines below to prepare for the comprehensive examination.

1. The objective of the comprehensive examination is for students to demonstrate "mastery". There is no one way to do so. In fact, no two student answers will be the same or even similar. Rather they will draw upon their own experiences in the program to formulate their responses. Thus, students should forego the idea that there are "correct" answers to the comprehensive questions.
2. "Mastery" is not tied to providing "correct" answers, but rather is developed by producing well-informed and comparatively comprehensive responses versus less-informed and poorly developed responses.

Students' responses should show:

- a firm command of the material
- a breadth of knowledge
- accuracy and precision when discussing relevant ideas
- provide good support and substantiation, including relevant in-text citations (appropriately detailed in the References, etc).

Conversely, responses should not be:

- lacking in substantive content and substantiation
 - too narrowly focused
 - imprecise
 - poorly executed and edited
3. Students should follow the preparation steps outlined below to develop the best possible responses to the questions.
- A. Review the core readings, additional readings of your choice, and material from your courses
- B. Develop an outline for your response
- Carefully consider the content of material that you intend to include in your outline
 - Build a rough outline sketching the major points you intend to make
 - Add content until you have a detailed outline
- C. Compose your written response
- Compose your response in time so that you can reread, revise, and edit it as necessary to ensure that you have composed the best possible response
 - Check thoroughly before submission for format, style, typos, and other issues – every element of this document should be executed to the highest standard.

Graduation Checklist

By the time you have reached this page you've accomplished much. Early congratulations are in order as you are quickly approaching graduation. Before being able to graduate though students need to ensure they have all of the appropriate paperwork updated and completed. The checklist below will help make sure you have done everything you need in order to graduate.

Prior to the beginning of your final semester, please complete the following tasks:

- Review all course requirements and make sure you have completed them.
- Submit any required revisions to your iPOS and make sure they are approved by the MACS Director and the Graduate College. File any necessary petitions and have them approved by the MACS Director and the Graduate College. Review and comply with deadlines for thesis.
- Review all graduation requirements to ensure they have been met, meet with the MACS Director or MACS Academic Advisor if you have some issues or concerns or simply want to review requirements to make sure everything is in order.

Early in final semester file for graduation by the appropriate deadline. Information may be found at <http://students.asu.edu/graduation>.

Department and University Policies and Procedures

Graduate students are expected to review and be familiar with all University Policies that impact their degree progress.

- [ASU Academic Calendar](#) (registration)
- [ASU Graduate College Policy](#)
 - Pre-admission credits
 - Continuous enrollment policy
 - Leave of absence information

Satisfactory Academic Progress Policy

As a graduate student it is your responsibility to be aware not only of your program's requirements, but also policies set in place by the Graduate College. Students are required to be aware of and understand the current [ASU Graduate Policies and Procedures](#), the New College of Interdisciplinary Arts & Sciences [Satisfactory Academic Progress Policy](#), as well as any policies outlined in this manual.

In addition to requirements outlined in New College Satisfactory Academic Progress Policies students must achieve a grade of "B-" or higher in all *required courses* that appear on the approved Plan of Study (required courses are listed in the [ASU Academic Catalog](#)). A student who receives a C or lower in a core course in their program must repeat the course in a regularly scheduled (not an individualized instruction) class. Although only the "B-" or higher can be included on the iPOS GPA, both grades will be used to compute the Cumulative GPA and the Overall Graduate GPA.

Required Communication Studies Courses: CMN 505, CMN 506, CMN 502/CMN 522

Student Code of Conduct

All students are expected to adhere to the Arizona Board of Regents Student Code of Conduct and university policies and procedures: <https://eoss.asu.edu/dos/srr/codeofconduct>

Students are expected to regularly check their ASU email accounts for messages from the university and New College. Students also are expected to regularly check their My ASU priority tasks for messages and holds from the university. Students are responsible for managing their tuition payments, finances and tracking university academic calendar deadlines.

Syllabi and course content belong to ASU and faculty. Students may not audio or video record or share course content without the explicit permission of faculty. Equally, student and faculty discussions should not be recorded or shared without explicit permission of all involved. The classroom – in all its forms and contexts – should be a safe space for all faculty and students. Open and respectful discussion, with an expectation of confidentiality, is essential for educational

purposes. The classroom should be a space that allows the exploration of concepts and ideas - contentious and otherwise - regardless of whether these reflect our personal beliefs or not.

Academic Integrity

The highest standards of academic integrity and compliance with the university's Student Code of Conduct are expected of all graduate students in academic coursework and research activities. The failure of any graduate student to uphold these standards may result in serious consequences including suspension or expulsion from the university and/or other sanctions as specified in the academic integrity policies of individual colleges as well as the university.

For more information please visit: <https://graduate.asu.edu/current-students/policies-forms-and-deadlines/policy-manuals>.

Funding for Travel

We encourage our students to present research at national and international academic conferences. As such a number of options exist to apply for funding to attend such events. We recommend you apply to *all* three sources outlined below as funding is both limited and competitive.

1. MA program funding. The MA program makes limited funding available please review your [program advising website](#) for more information. Applications for travel funding should be submitted using the relevant form and submitted to the MACS Director.
2. ASU Graduate College Travel Grants. ASU's Division of Graduate College makes a limited number of travel grants available to students presenting at conferences. These grants typically cover airfare from Phoenix to the conference location. This award has four application deadlines per year and must be applied for well in advance of the travel date. Applications must be submitted to the director of the graduate program. See <https://graduate.asu.edu/current-students/funding-opportunities/awards-and-fellowships/travel-awards> for more information and deadlines.
3. Graduate and Professional Student Association (GPSA) Travel Grants. ASU's graduate student association offers a variety of travel awards available. Individual travel awards (to conferences) are up to \$950 and have a monthly application deadline. Group travel grants are for teams of student researchers presenting a symposium or other group project. Interview travel grants are need-based grants made available to students who require funds in order to travel to an academic interview (e.g., at a PhD program). Details and application materials can be found at <http://gpsa.asu.edu/funding>.

Campus/Departmental Resources

There are a number of resources available in the program and through the university.

University Resources

There are a number of resources available in the program and through the university.

New College/West Campus – Academic

- [Fletcher Library](#)
- ASU Library now has an online tutorial version of "Library 501: What Grad Students Need to Know about the Library" workshop available for online students and anyone else for whom it might be useful. The Library 501 tutorial can be found on our tutorials page: <https://lib.asu.edu/tutorials> or at bit.ly/Library501Tutorial.
- [Graduate Academic Support Center](#)– in-person (all campuses) and online, no-cost writing assistance and statistics tutoring (most services free except for special sessions, refer to website for more details)
- [Statistics and Methods \(SAM\) Lab](#)
- [Career & Professional Development Services](#) – resource for finding jobs and internships, career advising, and more; online services available

New College/West Campus - Amenities

- [Dining Options](#)
- [Banks](#)
- [Parking & Transit](#)
- [Campus Shuttles](#)

University Services

- [International Student Services Center \(ISSC\)](#)
- [Housing](#) and [Off-Campus Housing](#)
- [Health](#)
- [Counseling](#)
 1. [Graduate Wellness Resources](#)
 2. [Graduate Student Wellbeing](#)
- [Student Accessibility and Inclusive Learning Services \(SAILS\)](#)
- [Veterans](#)
- [Graduate Professional Student Association](#)
- [Educational Outreach & Student Services \(Dean of Students Office\)](#)
- [Student Rights and Responsibilities](#)
- [Graduate Student Diversity Resources](#)
- Business and Finance services (e.g. [student accounts](#), [ID cards](#))

University Contact Information

- [Provost's Office](#)
- [Graduate College](#)
- [IT Help Office](#)
- [Emergency services](#)
- Title IX Information and Coordinator
 - ASU prohibits all forms of discrimination, harassment and retaliation. To view ASU's policy please see <https://www.asu.edu/aad/manuals/acd/acd401.html>.
 - Title IX protects individuals from discrimination based on sex in any educational program or activity operated by recipients of federal financial assistance. As required by Title IX, ASU does not discriminate on the basis of sex in the education programs or activities that we operate, including in admission and employment. Inquiries concerning the application of Title IX may be referred to the Title IX Coordinator or to the U.S. Department of Education, Assistant Secretary, or both. Contact titleixcoordinator@asu.edu or 480-965-0696 for more information. Office located at 1120 S. Cady Mall, INTDSB 284. For information on making a report please go to www.asu.edu/reportit/.

Program Contact Information

Faculty offices for Communication Studies are located on the first floor of the Faculty Administration Building.

With specific questions about the Graduate Program in Communication Studies contact:

Dr. Lindsey Meân
Graduate Director, MA in Communication Studies
New College of Interdisciplinary Arts & Sciences
(602) 543-6631
FAB S141A
lindsey.mean@asu.edu OR Lmean@asu.edu

or

Academic Success Coordinator
New College of Interdisciplinary Arts & Sciences
602-543-3000
ncgradadvising@asu.edu

With questions about Plan of Study:

<https://graduate.asu.edu/current-students/completing-your-degree/how-guides>

With general questions about ASU Graduate Studies policies/procedures contact:

Graduate College
Administration Building, B Wing, Suite 285
(480) 965-6113
<http://graduate.asu.edu/>

With questions about tuition, scholarships, and financial aid:

ASU Financial Aid
<http://students.asu.edu/financial-aid>

Graduate Faculty



Catalina Cayetano (Ph.D., Arizona State University). Lecturer with research and teaching interests in intercultural and family communication with an emphasis on how the identity of cultural intermediary is constructed and negotiated by the Hispanic or Latinx bilingual adolescent child within their (im)migrant family.



Diane Gruber (Ph.D., Purdue University). Senior Lecturer with research and teaching interests in gender and communication, communication and consumerism, public speaking, persuasion, and rhetoric of social issues.



Jeffrey Kassing (Ph.D., Kent State University). Professor with research and teaching interests in organizational communication, applied communication, environmental communication, and communication and sport.



Douglas Kelley (Ph.D., University of Arizona). Professor with research and teaching interests in interpersonal communication, with a specific focus on issues related to the family, conflict management, and counseling.



Nicole Lee (Ph.D. in Media and Communication from Texas Tech University.) Assistant Professor with research and teaching interests that examine the intersection of science communication, public relations, and digital media. She is the author of several articles published in journals such as *Science Communication*, *Environmental Communication*, and *Journal of Communication Management*.



Lindsey Meân (Ph.D., University of Sheffield). Associate Professor with research and teaching interests in the intersection of ideology, power, identities, gender, sport, media, and culture across a variety of contexts. Her work focuses on representational practices (notably language and discursive action) in the construction, negotiation, and management of identities, meanings, social categories, discourses and cultural narratives.



Majia Nadesan (Ph.D., Purdue University). Professor with research and teaching interests in organizational communication, biotechnology and communication, and social power and control.



Ramsey Eric Ramsey (Ph.D., Purdue University). Associate Professor with research and teaching interests in the study of the imagination and theology as they can be used to inform questions concerning communication and ethics as well as studies in classical Greek rhetoric and philosophy investigating the long history between communication, rhetoric and philosophy.



Jameien Taylor (Ph.D., Arizona State University). Lecturer with research and teaching interests in ethics and their implications for care, kindness and compassion in intimate and in-acquainted interactions. His work is especially informed by phenomenology, philology, and grounded theory.



Vincent Waldron (Ph.D., Ohio State University). Professor with research and teaching interests in interpersonal communication processes in work and personal relationships including conflict management, interpersonal persuasion, relationship maintenance, social support, and information-seeking behavior. Professor Waldron increasingly studies these issues among older populations.



Michael Walker (Ph.D., Arizona State University). Lecturer with research and teaching interests in the rhetorical construction of social problems with an emphasis on intoxicant use, addiction, and mental illness.



Bonnie Wentzel (M.A., Arizona State University). Bonnie Wentzel is the director of the [CommLabASU](#) (formerly the Communication Assessment and Learning Lab - CALL). This nationally recognized communication lab is an innovative learning space that provides peer mentoring to undergraduates in developing, organizing and delivering public presentations.



J. Macgregor Wise (Ph.D., University of Illinois). Professor with research and teaching interests in cultural studies and the philosophy and sociology of technology with a particular focus on issues of culture and technology, new media, and theories of everyday life and globalization.

My ASU Portal

On your My ASU portal you will find information about your courses, transcripts, transportation, student success and support, finances, university policies and the academic calendar. Please take time to familiarize yourself with these areas:

Profile: Update your address, phone number, email information, or add guests, such as a parent, so they can look at FERPA-protected information including grades.

My Classes: Click on the name of each course to access the corresponding Canvas content. This is where you will see the syllabus, find links to readings and submit assignments.

Final Transcript: If you sent in a transcript for admission to the program before you graduated, send your final transcript that includes the degree conferral date.

Academic Integrity Module: ASU Graduate College module reviewing academic integrity expectations. Please complete this as soon as possible. Please note, this module explains the university-wide policy. The New College academic integrity policy includes additions specific to our students. Please be familiar with both policies.

Academic Calendar: This has important dates you need to monitor, including when classes begin, last day to register or drop/add classes, tuition and fee payment deadlines, holidays, withdrawal deadlines, schedule of classes available and when to enroll.

Campus Services: This includes Health and Wellness Resources, such as health insurance, counseling, disability services; Transportation, such as parking permits, METRO Light Rail, U-Pass and campus shuttles; Student Success and Support, such as disability services, tutoring and student success centers; and Job & Career Services. Please note these job resources are university-wide and not specific to the MA in Communication Studies program.

BA/BS — MA Accelerated Program Program Description

The accelerated program allows undergraduates in the BA or BS Communication program to share 12 credit hours with the MA in Communication Studies and to complete the 36 required hours in the MA program in just over one calendar year from their undergraduate graduation date (i.e., from May to August of the following year).

Once accepted students will take 6 hours of graduate credit in the fall semester of their senior year and another 6 hours of credit in the spring semester of their senior year. To maintain the accelerated program students have two main options:

First, to take 9 credit hours in the fall and spring semester of their first MA year plus CMN 592: Research (3 credit hours) during the first summer session and one graduate level elective course the second summer.

Second, to take 9 credit hours fall and spring semester of their first MA year plus another fall semester of 6 credits. Of course summer credits can be taken into account and these options amended within individual programs of study.

As part of this accelerated calendar students, then, will earn:

- 12 shared credit hours (must be completed at the West campus)
- 18 credit hours during fall/spring semesters of one academic year
- Optional: 6 credit hours spread across two consecutive summers after the undergraduate graduation, 3 credit hours of which must be CMN 592 Research *OR* 6 credits in an additional fall semester.

The accelerated program will culminate with successful completion of the comprehensive examination.

Accelerated Program Requirements

The Plan of Study (POS) for each student will include 12 hours of shared credit that corresponds with the program's 12 hours of required coursework (CMN 502 or 522, 505, 506, and one elective). Students will be required to take these courses in the fall and spring semesters of their senior year and therefore will be well situated to move forward in the graduate program once they have completed their undergraduate degree.

In addition to taking these core courses during one's senior year there is one additional requirement for students enrolled in the accelerated program: They must complete comprehensive examinations. If taking summer credit, these will occur during the second session (typically spring) of their MA year. Without summer credit, exams will occur during the third session (typically fall) of their second MA year.

NOTE: To complete the MA within one year summer credit options are required.

Beyond these stipulations, each Plan of Study will be personalized for the student. Students will complete the culminating process by sitting for comprehensive exams either in their final semester of coursework or in the semester after they complete coursework.

See the Accelerated Program Timeline for more information.

Accelerated Program Policies

Students enrolled in the accelerated program should be familiar with the guidelines/policies set forth below.

- Acceptance is conditional upon the final demonstration of a GPA of 3.50/4.00 or better in the 90 credit hours of prior undergraduate coursework.
- Students are considered undergraduates until all BS or BA requirements have been satisfied and the degree has been posted.
- If the student does not complete all requirements for the bachelor's degree within one year of being admitted to the accelerated program or does not maintain a 3.00 GPA the student may be recommended for dismissal by the Graduate College from the master's portion of the accelerated program.
- At any time, a student may choose to withdraw from the accelerated program and return to the regular BS or BA program in Communication. Withdrawal from the program will not prevent the student from applying to the regular (not accelerated) MA program in future semesters.
- Completion of the MA program does require completion of the BA or BS degree.
- Upon receipt of the B.S. or B.A. degree, the student must change his/her status from B.S. or B.A. to the graduate M.A. degree program.
- Enrolled students will work closely with the MACS Director to complete their initial coursework (i.e., the senior year graduate courses and the initial summer session). See the Accelerated Program Timeline for more details.
- After completion of 12 hours, students will file an interactive Plan of Study (iPOS).
- Satisfactory progress in the BS or BA — MA program is maintained when a student's GPA remains at or above a 3.0/4.00 in overall undergraduate coursework and in the student's graduate Plan of Study.
- Administration of the B.S. or B.A. — M.A. program will include a semester-by-semester review of each student's academic progress with the understanding that progress toward the undergraduate degree should be the primary focus of the program. This review will be conducted by the MACS Director.

Accelerated Program Timeline

Undergraduate — Senior Year		
Fall Semester 6 credits	Spring Semester 6 credits	M.A. (not shared) Summer Session 3 optional credits
CMN 505 (shared) Methods in Applied Communication Research CMN 500 Level Elective (shared)	CMN 506 (shared) Humanistic Inquiry & Field Research in Communication	CMN 592 Research (<i>not</i> shared)
	CMN 502 (shared) Theory and Practice in Communication & Persuasion or COM 522 (shared) Argumentation and Advocacy	
MA Year		
Fall Semester 9 credits	Spring Semester 9 credits	Summer Session (Optional) 3 credits
CMN 500 Level Elective Or equivalent	CMN 500 Level Elective Or equivalent	CMN 500 Level Elective
Comprehensive Exams Taken in final fall/spring semester		

Graduate Hours Accumulation Possibilities: 36 hours total required

With Summer credit

- Fall Semester (shared) - 6 hours
- Spring Semester (shared) - 6 hours
- Summer Term Senior Year - 3 hours
- Fall Semester MA Year - 9 hours
- Spring Semester MA Year - 9 hours
- Summer Term MA Year - 3 hours

No Summer credit

- Fall Semester (shared) - 6 hours
- Spring Semester (shared) - 6 hours
- Fall Semester MA Year - 9 hours
- Spring Semester MA Year - 9 hours
- Fall Semester 2nd MA year - 6 hours