



# Master's Student Handbook

2021-2022

Master of Arts in Mass Communication (MAMC)

**UF** College of Journalism  
and Communications  
*Division of Graduate Studies and Research*  
UNIVERSITY of FLORIDA

# Table of Contents

Introduction .....	3
Contacts and Communication.....	4
Academic Honesty and Behavioral Expectations.....	5
Links .....	6
Degree Programs and Specialties .....	7
Master’s Program Policies .....	8
General Requirements.....	9
Independent Study.....	11
Internships .....	12
Pro Master’s Practicum.....	13
Registration.....	15
Minors and Supporting Fields .....	16
Timing Policies.....	17
Grading Policies.....	18
Probation and Suspension .....	19
Course and Degree Policies.....	21
Thesis Preparation .....	22
The Thesis.....	24
Final Oral Examination .....	25
The Project in Lieu of Thesis .....	26
Professional Project .....	27
Thesis and Post-Thesis Resources.....	28
Honors and Awards.....	29
Graduate Program History .....	31



# THIS IS... GATOR COUNTRY

## You are here.

The University of Florida is a big, wonderful, comprehensive university. But sometimes its structure can be confusing. Here are some basic definitions that may help.

### [The Graduate School](#)

Since 1964, overall responsibility for graduate education at the University of Florida has been officially vested in the Graduate School. In 2007, the Graduate School became a unit in the Office of the Provost. It provides oversight for graduate education university-wide, as well as standards and policies governing all graduate programs.

### [The College of Journalism and Communications](#)

Also known as CJC, our college is one of 16 colleges at the University of Florida. The college is considered one of the nation's best. The strength of its programs, faculty, students, and alumni throughout its history has earned the college ongoing recognition as one of the best journalism and communication programs in the United States. The college offers bachelor's degrees in [advertising](#); [journalism](#); [public relations](#); and [media production, management, and technology \(MPMT\)](#). The college houses a department for each. CJC Graduate Faculty come from all four areas of expertise.

### [The Division of Graduate Studies and Research](#)

Sometimes referred to as the graduate division, this is the unit within CJC that administers graduate degree programs. The college awards two graduate degrees: the Master of Arts in Mass Communication (MAMC) and the Doctor of Philosophy in Mass Communication (Ph.D.).

### [Deans, Directors, Coordinators, Graduate Faculty](#)

Each track or specialization within the in-residence MAMC has a faculty coordinator (or faculty director in the case of the Professional Master's) who serves as the initial advisor to incoming students until that student selects a permanent advisor from the ranks of the CJC Graduate Faculty. The Associate Dean of Graduate Studies and Research reports to the college dean and serves as the chair of the CJC Graduate Committee, which includes department chairs and faculty representatives from each department as well as a student representative and representatives from various tracks. The committee makes recommendations on admissions, curriculum, and graduate faculty status. Major recommendations of the Graduate Committee, including catalog changes and conferral of degrees, are brought to the CJC Graduate Faculty before forwarding to the Graduate School.

# Contacts and Communication



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## Departmental Communication

The Graduate Studies and Research Division [website](#) provides information including: current student forms, the graduate student directory that includes contact information and pictures of current students, course offerings, links to the Graduate School, and other valuable information.

Graduate student and faculty mailboxes are located on the second floor in Weimer 2104, near the dean's office. Graduate student mailboxes are separated into doctoral and master's sections with master's students sharing mailboxes. CJC, the graduate division, and the Graduate School communicate with students through their GatorLink email accounts. Please use your GatorLink (@ufl.edu) email address as your primary email source for the university and this college. Your postal address should be kept current in the Registrar's database. The UF Identity Registry is the sole source of your contact information at the University of Florida. Make sure the information is up to date by logging on to the myUFL portal with your GatorLink username and password. Navigate to My Account > Update My Directory Profile in the myUFL portal. Updating of information does not occur through the emergency contact updates or through your program coordinator.

## Graduate Faculty

The college's graduate faculty members, along with the undergraduate departments in which they hold appointment, are [listed](#) on the graduate faculty website.

# Academic Honesty and Behavioral Expectations

All graduate students in the College of Journalism and Communications are expected to conduct themselves with the highest degree of integrity. It is the students' responsibility to ensure they know and understand the requirements of every assignment. At a minimum, this includes avoiding the following:

## Plagiarism

Plagiarism occurs when an individual presents the ideas or expressions of another as his or her own. Students must always credit others' ideas with accurate citations and must use quotation marks and citations when presenting the words of others. A thorough understanding of plagiarism is a precondition for admittance to graduate studies in the college.

## Self-plagiarism

Self-plagiarism is defined as an author's re-use of portions of his or her own earlier work without citing the original content. So, for instance, it would be considered self-plagiarism if you copied the literature review you wrote for one paper and re-used it in another related paper without substantial alteration. Obviously, when you are writing multiple papers on a similar topic, you are likely to cite many of the same articles more than once. However, to avoid self-plagiarism, you should write each new literature review independently so that you are not repeating the same sentences in more than one paper. Of course, direct quotes from other authors' works may be used in multiple papers, so long as they are cited properly in each

paper. And you may refer to your own work in a subsequent paper – simply cite that earlier paper, just as you would cite a paper written by another scholar.

Many students find the concept of self-plagiarism confusing because, after all, if you wrote the original paper, how can it be “stealing” to re-use your own words? The problem is that when readers pick up a new paper by a scholar whose previous work they have read, they expect all the material to be new. They don't expect to see “recycled” material. Certainly, a journal editor who agrees to publish your article expects that he or she would not be able to find identical or nearly identical material in articles you've had published earlier. Self-plagiarism, therefore, can damage your reputation as a scholar.

During your graduate program, you may want to write more than one paper on the same or a similar topic. When you do, you should discuss your plans – and any previous papers you've written using similar materials – with the professor in the class. Although it's expected that your work in later classes will build on work you've done in previous classes, most professors follow a fairly strict “no

recycling” policy in relation to your re-use of portions of earlier papers, even if you were the sole author of the earlier paper.

What types of materials must be cited to avoid plagiarism? In short, everything. Any material you use, from any source, MUST be properly cited. If you did not write the material – and if you did not write it the way it appears in the paper – you must give credit to the original author or source. This includes material from scholarly publications, social media, webpages, videos, newspapers, magazines, advertising, press releases, TV, conference papers, speeches, etc.

## Cheating

Cheating occurs when a student circumvents or ignores the rules that govern an academic assignment such as an exam or class paper. It can include using notes (physical or electronic) in an exam, submitting the work of another as one's own, or reusing a paper a student has composed for one class in another class. If students are not sure about the rules that govern an assignment, it is the students' responsibility to ask for clarification from their instructor.

## Misrepresenting Research Data

The integrity of data in communication research is a paramount issue for advancing knowledge and the credibility of our professions. For this reason, any intentional misrepresentation of data, or misrepresentation of the conditions or circumstances of data collection, is considered a violation of academic integrity.

Misrepresenting data reported in a thesis, project, or dissertation is a clear violation of the rules and requirements of academic integrity and honesty.

Any violation of the above stated conditions is grounds for immediate dismissal from the program and will result in revocation of the degree if the degree previously has been awarded.

## Behavioral Expectations

As stated in the UF Student Conduct Code, "By becoming a member of the University of Florida community, a Student agrees to adhere to its Student Honor Code and its Student Conduct Code. Students acting as individuals or as members of Student Organizations are expected to follow all applicable Laws and Regulations. University Regulations have been designed to promote the safety of people and the campus community, to create an environment conducive to learning, and to achieve the mission of the Institution." Please review the code [online](#).



## Deadline Dates

All graduate school deadline dates are available [online](#).

## Checklist for Master's Thesis

This checklist is an essential guide to help the student through the thesis process and can be found [online](#).

## The University Calendar

The [calendar](#) is published online in the graduate catalog.

## Graduate School Listserv

The Graduate School maintains a [listserv](#) for all UF graduate students and will communicate only through your GatorLink email account. Please use your GatorLink email as your primary email source for the university and this college.

The graduate student listserv is one of the primary ways the Graduate School keeps in touch with graduate students to share the latest information on academic policy and deadlines, financial aid news, and professional development opportunities.

All currently enrolled graduate students are added to the listserv automatically and cannot opt out. The list membership is adjusted nightly based on the UF Office of the Registrar's nightly enrollment updates.

# Degree Programs and Specialties

The college offers, through its Division of Graduate Studies and Research, college-wide graduate degree programs, with faculty members drawn from the four undergraduate departments. All college faculty members hold an appointment in one of the undergraduate departments: Advertising; Journalism; Public Relations; and Media Production, Management, and Technology. The master's program leads to a degree bearing the title Master of Arts in Mass Communication (MAMC). The MAMC includes both thesis and non-thesis options on campus.

**Professional Master's (non-thesis):** The [Professional Master's program](#) is an on-campus program designed specifically for those who want to develop additional skills to become more competitive in the job market. The program's "mix and match" coursework structure allows students to develop their own customizable degree plans, with 15 credits of required core courses and a wide range of electives available across the college's four departments. Degree plans culminate with a capstone project, completed over at least two semesters and supervised by a Graduate Faculty Committee. Student projects range from documentary films and long-form journalistic narrative pieces to public relations and advertising campaigns, and many others in between. These projects allow students to explore various interests within the college and showcase a variety of skills learned during their course of studies.

**Customizable Research & Theory Master's (thesis):** In the [Research and Theory track](#), students learn the ideas and skills needed for satisfying life-long careers in media and communication research. The customizable on-campus thesis option focuses on research and theory in communication, including courses in the areas of advertising; journalism; international and intercultural communication; and media production, management and technology. Students are required to take courses that focus on research, theory, ethics, and writing, leading to a master's thesis as the capstone. This option is appropriate for students wishing to pursue careers in research or a Ph.D. A project in lieu of thesis option is available for some areas.

**Public Relations (thesis):** The Public Relations track is an on-campus research-based program designed to prepare students for careers and advancement in the industry or for entering doctoral studies. Students learn the conceptual foundations of public relations and develop professional and research competency within the duration of the program. Courses in the public relations specialization focus on conceptual foundations of public relations, including media and society; professional and managerial skills mastery; and research expertise.

**Science and Health Communication (thesis):** The Science and Health Communication track is an on-campus program designed to teach scientists and health specialists to communicate effectively via media, and to teach mass media specialists the background science to translate the language of science and health into meaningful and understandable stories for their audiences. These goals are achieved through theoretical writing and applied courses. At least two aspects of the program make it unique among science communication programs nationwide. First, other existing science communication programs in the U.S. focus on training journalists. UF's program is open to journalists who want to specialize in covering science and health, offers training for people planning to work as public affairs or public information officers for science and health organizations, for other communication specialists, and for scientists who need to be able to communicate with the public about their work. Second, the program focuses on training students to understand and communicate effectively about science and health policy.

## More Programs

The college also offers a separate [online master's program](#) and a [Ph.D. program](#).

A [joint MA/JD](#) is offered in conjunction with the College of Law. The joint degree plan with the College of Law provides both a Juris Doctor and MAMC and requires a student to be admitted into the second program no later than two semesters before graduating from the first program. The student must apply for admission to both the College of Law and the College of Journalism and Communications.

# Master's Program Policies

## Forms

Forms required by this college are available [online](#) or in the Division of Graduate Studies and Research office.

## Degree Plans

Each student must prepare a degree plan, which includes a list of courses to be completed in partial fulfillment of degree requirements. Plans must be signed by the student, the academic advisor, and the



Associate Dean for Graduate Studies and Research. Degree plan forms are available online for [Professional Master's](#) students and [Research and Theory](#) students.

Each specialty has a separate form to facilitate preparation of the plan. Degree plans should be completed early in the student's program, usually by the end of the student's first semester or as early as possible in the second semester. Degree plans can be changed over the course of the student's

program, but any changes must be approved by the student's academic advisor. A signed degree plan must be attached to the student's supervisory committee form at the time of submission to the Division of Graduate Studies and Research.

## Academic Advisors (Research and Theory Students)

The graduate coordinator or director of the track the student initially applied for usually serves as the initial academic advisor and is the first point of contact for assistance. This initial advisor is named in each student's letter of acceptance. Students may select a new advisor once research and specialty interests have been clarified. The advisor must be a member of the college's Graduate Faculty.

Graduate School policy requires that a supervisory committee be appointed before the completion of two terms or 12 credits, whichever comes first. When the supervisory committee is formed, the chair of the committee becomes the student's official advisor. From this point on, the committee chairperson, not the graduate coordinator or director, has primary responsibility for determining which courses the student should take.

## Academic Advisors (Professional Master's Students)

The graduate coordinator or director of the track the student initially applied for usually serves as the initial academic advisor and is the first point of contact for assistance. This initial advisor is named in each student's letter of acceptance. Professional Master's students will continue to work with an advisor in coordination with their selected committee chairperson throughout the program.



# General Requirements

Although tracks differ in their requirements, all MAMC thesis and project students are required to earn 36 credits including 6 hours of thesis or professional project credits split over a minimum of two terms. Undergraduate articulation courses do not count toward the 36 credits required.

Students may take additional credits of MMC 6971 (Thesis Research) or 6973 (Project in Lieu of Thesis), but anything over six credits will not count toward the degree. All courses must be numbered 5000 or above. Students must take all courses for a letter grade unless the course is listed in the university's catalog as carrying a S/U grade. See individual degree plans for total number and distribution of credits required.

## Mass Communication Background

Students admitted to the master's program who are judged by the appropriate graduate specialty coordinator to be deficient in some mass communication skills or knowledge, typically must master specific undergraduate articulation course material with a C or better at the same time they study in graduate courses. Those courses do not count toward the requirements for the master's degree but do count toward the student's GPA. No student may take undergraduate articulation courses under an MMC 6905 or 6936 designation.

## Statistics Requirement

Some tracks require that master's students take a course in statistics if they have not done so in their undergraduate programs. The course may be taken before graduate study begins at the University of Florida or while in the program. Please consult with your advisor or check the degree plan for your track to determine if you must have statistics.

## Departmentally Controlled Classes

If you wish to be registered in a departmentally controlled (DEPX) course, please contact the instructor for permission.

## Undergraduate Courses

No undergraduate courses may be taken for credit on the degree plan. However, if students wish to take a 3000- or 4000-level course for graduate credit, they must secure the approvals of their advisor and the instructor of the course. Please be advised that faculty members are not obligated to accept the student's request to take the class at the graduate level and may refuse the request. If the student's advisor and the course instructor agree with the request, a graduate-level version of the course must be arranged (MMC 6905, or MMC 6936 for Professional Master's students). The student will not earn credit toward the MAMC degree for an undergraduate course at the 3000- or 4000-level. Using the MMC 6905 [Independent Study Form](#) or the MMC 6936 Undergraduate Class for Grad Credit form in the case of Pro Master's students, the student must contract with the course professor for extra work to take the course to graduate level. Proposals for MMC 6936 or independent study taken as MMC 6905 must show evidence that the expectations will go beyond that expected for any similar courses at the undergraduate level. For Research and Theory students, the course instructor MUST be a Graduate Faculty member. All current Graduate Faculty members can be found [online](#). For students in the Professional Master's, you must have instructor and advisor approval prior to registering for these courses. Any exceptions must be approved by the Associate Dean of Graduate Studies and Research.

## Course Distribution Requirements

Students can earn the MAMC by completing either a research-and-theory-focused degree plan that culminates in a thesis or a professionally oriented degree plan that culminates in a professional capstone project.

	Pro Master's – Project	Customizable Research & Theory – Thesis	Health & Science – Thesis	Public Relations – Thesis
Research	Select at least one (3 credits): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• MMC 6936 Applied Com Res</li> <li>• PUR 6506 PR Res</li> <li>• MMC 6135 Data Viz</li> <li>• MMC 6426 Qualitative Res</li> </ul>	MMC 6421 Mass Com Research (3)	MMC 6421 Mass Com Research (3)	PUR 6506 PR Research (3)
Theory	MMC 6936 Applied Com Theory (3)	MMC 6400 Mass Com Theory (3)	MMC 6487 Interpersonal Health Com Theory (3) <i>or</i> MMC 6400 Mass Com Theory (3)	PUR 6005 PR Theories (3)
Ethics/Social Responsibility	MMC 6660 Com, Tech, & Society (3)	MMC 6660 Com, Tech, & Society (3)	MMC 6409 Science/Health Com (3)	PUR 6206 PR Ethics (3)
Writing	MMC 6936 Professional Writing (1)	MMC 6XXX Academic Writing (3)	MMC 6XXX Academic Writing (3)	MMC 6XXX Academic Writing (3)
Specialization Requirements	MMC 6936 Professional Master's Seminar (2)  <i>and</i>  Select at least one (3 credits): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• MMC 6466 Digital Persuasive Com (for PR- or ADV-interested students)</li> <li>• MMC 6936 Digital Storytelling (for JOUR interested students)</li> <li>• MMC 6936 Visual Storytelling Workshop (for MEDIA PROD interested students)</li> </ul>	<i>At least one methods class (3)*</i>	MMC 6XXX Health/Science Policy (3)  <i>At least one methods class (3)*</i>	PUR 6607 PR Management (3)  PUR 6934 (3) OR Internship (2-3)
Electives	<i>15 credits of electives developed in consultation with faculty advisor, at least 3 credits should be internship, immersion, or experiential</i>	<i>15 credits of electives developed in consultation with faculty advisor</i>	<i>12 credits of electives developed in consultation with faculty advisor</i>	<i>12-13 credits of electives developed in consultation with faculty advisor</i>
Capstone (6 credits)	<b>MMC 6973 “Professional Project” (6)</b> (6 credits, split over at least two terms, <i>requires chair and one additional committee member</i> )	<b>MMC 6971 Research for Master's Thesis (6)</b> (6 credits, split over at least two terms, <i>requires chair and two additional committee members</i> )		
Total	36 credits			

# Independent Study

The master's program has four courses (other than the thesis research and project courses) that do not normally involve classroom participation. The four are COM 6940 – Supervised Teaching (S/U grade), MMC 6905 – Individual Work (letter-graded), MMC 6910 – Supervised Research (S/U grade), and MMC 6949 – Internship (S/U grade). Consult the [graduate catalog](#) for details about these courses. Maximum credits students may take in the courses throughout their graduate careers are listed in the catalog. Requirements for the thesis and internship courses are discussed in detail later in the handbook.

If a student wants to be registered for a non-classroom course, the form (available in the graduate division office as well as on the graduate studies [webpage](#)) and an attachment describing the proposed work and method of evaluation must be approved by the supervising professor, advisor, and Associate Dean for Graduate Studies and Research. After receiving the appropriate approvals, the student will submit the form to the Division of Graduate Studies and Research in Weimer 2014 or send by email to [k.dukes@ufl.edu](mailto:k.dukes@ufl.edu) for registration prior to the registration deadline.

## Proposals for Individual Work MMC 6905

Must include:

- the sub-topics to be studied,
- the resources to be used,
- the requirements for completion, and
- the method of evaluation (basis on which the work will be graded).

Typically, students taking Individual Work must conduct original research. Building on an exhaustive search of the literature, students must make an original contribution to the understanding of mass communication. The finished products ideally would be accepted for publication or presentation at a conference. Regular meetings with the course instructor must be scheduled. The course “instructor” MUST be a Graduate Faculty member. Any exceptions to this rule must be approved by the Associate Dean for Graduate Studies and Research. Graduate students cannot be the instructor of record for any independent study courses. The maximum number of credits allowed will be six, with an additional three by petition if necessary.

## Supervised Research MMC 6910

Max five credits, proposals must include:

- the goal of the activity,
- the specific duties to be fulfilled,
- how often and for how long the student will confer with the instructor, and
- the method of evaluation.

## Supervised Teaching COM 6940

Max five credits, proposals must include:

- the goal of the activity,
- specific duties to be fulfilled,
- how often and for how long the student will confer with the instructor,
- the method of evaluation,
- the name/number of the course.

The student and instructor should also be aware of the following expectations for students taking COM 6940:

- The student is there for class observation and does not have to attend every lecture.

- The instructor should provide tutoring in grading techniques with no actual grading responsibilities for the student, as well as discuss the process with the student.
- The student is not required to spend more than three hours per credit per week.
- Unlike TAs, this should be more of a learning experience to help the student, not to provide assistance to faculty members.
- The student is allowed to present up to 10% of lectures.

TAs may not receive credit for the class to which they are assigned. The student should discuss the required information with the person supervising the course and present the completed form and accompanying details (typed) for the supervisor's approval. Forms are available in the Division of Graduate Studies and Research office or [online](#). A completed proposal, including the signed form, must be submitted to the Division of Graduate Studies before the student will be registered. Students must have the signature of the instructor to be registered for the course.

# Internships

The maximum number of internship credits allowed in a graduate academic degree plan is three. The field supervisor, the chair of the student's supervisory committee, and the Associate Dean for Graduate Studies and Research must approve the internship. The field supervisor is the individual to whom the student will report during the internship. The chair of the student's supervisory committee will act as the academic advisor and instructor for the internship. The appropriate internship form (available in the graduate division and [online](#)) must be completed and signed by the student, field supervisor, and instructor. Completed and signed forms should be emailed to [k.dukes@ufl.edu](mailto:k.dukes@ufl.edu) before the deadline for registration.

## Internship Report

From Student:

- The student must submit both a mid-semester and final report
- The report must be 1-2 pages in length and include:
  - Location of internship
  - Supervisor
  - Position title
  - Job description
  - Description of the skills developed or honed during the internship
  - Description of tasks completed and, in the case of mid-term reports, tasks yet to complete
  - Description of how these skills or experiences will likely apply to the student's future professional career

From Employer:

At the conclusion of the internship, the supervisor should write a letter of evaluation that details:

- The student's job duties
- Quality
- Usefulness and timeliness of work products
- Work ethic
- Attitude
- General expectations and the degree to which those expectations were met

## General Requirements

100 hours must be worked for each one credit hour taken.

Mid-semester reports are due at the end of the eighth week of the semester during Fall, Spring and Summer C; and at the end of the third week of the semester during Summer A or B. Final reports (employer/supervisor and student's) are due on the last day of class in the semester during which internship credit will be given. Copies of mid-semester and both final reports must be given to the academic supervisor, chair of the student's committee, and the graduate division.

To be eligible for an internship, students must have completed two semesters of relevant coursework and/or have relevant professional experience. All internships must be approved by the graduate coordinator or assigned faculty member before applying. No retroactive credit will be awarded for internships. Internships are S/U and will not count toward the electives on all degree plans. Please check your specific plan.

## Internship Criteria

An internship provides an opportunity to test and apply what the student has learned in college courses and to enrich that learning with on-the-job training. An internship must fulfill certain criteria:

- The work must be highly relevant to the student's degree plan.
- A person whose qualifications have been approved by the student's supervisory committee chair must oversee the student's work on the job. The supervision should consist of conferences at least once a week.
- The supervisor must be willing to arrange for experiences that will be truly educational. It is hoped that the student will be of practical value to the host office, but this is at the option of the student's supervisor. Sometimes well-planned observation may benefit the student even more than the work.

## Compensation

Most students in the college have been paid at least subsistence wages while serving their internships. However, payment should be settled between the student and the field supervisor. An internship that consists mostly of highly beneficial observation may be valuable enough to justify little or no pay.

# Pro Master's Practicum

Practicums and immersion opportunities within the College of Journalism and Communications Professional Master's (Pro Master's) program are hands-on experiences that allow students to both observe and participate in the performance of skills that contribute to their career preparation.

Students will observe, learn, and perform tasks under the supervision of program professors and on-site staff, often in collaboration with advanced-level graduate students. The course number is MMC 6936, and your advisor will guide you on how to register for the appropriate experience.

Students will be allowed to enroll in an area of specialization based on career interests, prior experience, levels of technical skills, and practicum availability. Placement decisions will be based on student interest, student discussions with their academic advisor, and interviews with the supervisors of the practicums.

Several options are listed here but others will be considered and are encouraged, both within and outside the College of Journalism and Communications.

## Innovation News Center

The INC is home to the college's news, weather, and sports operations. Students can work as reporters, photographers, anchors, editors, and producers to create content for the college's many distribution channels, including WUFT-TV, WUFT-FM 89.1, ESPN 850 WRUF, Country 103.7 the Gator, WRUF-TV6, wuft.org and other affiliated websites.

## ESPN Experience

This option is for students focused on developing or enhancing multi-platform sports reporting skills. ESPN 98.1/850 serves 13 counties with seven hours of locally hosted sports talk shows as well as regular coverage of Gator sports. WUFT-TV Sports allows students to produce and anchor sports updates and/or the sports segment for the WUFT-TV evening newscast.

## GatorVision

GatorVision is the video production arm of the University Athletic Association, providing interested students the opportunity to be a part of in-house video board productions as well as SEC Network productions for many of the home Gator sporting events. From cameras to graphics, audio, and much more, this experience will prepare students for a career in live-event sports production.

It is recommended that students interested in the ESPN Experience first enroll in the graduate version of RTV 3593 – Multimedia Sports Reporting. This can be arranged through your graduate advisor and the course instructor. It is recommended that students interested in GatorVision opportunities should consider enrolling in the graduate level version of RTV 4929C – Sports Production. This can be arranged through your graduate advisor and the course instructor.

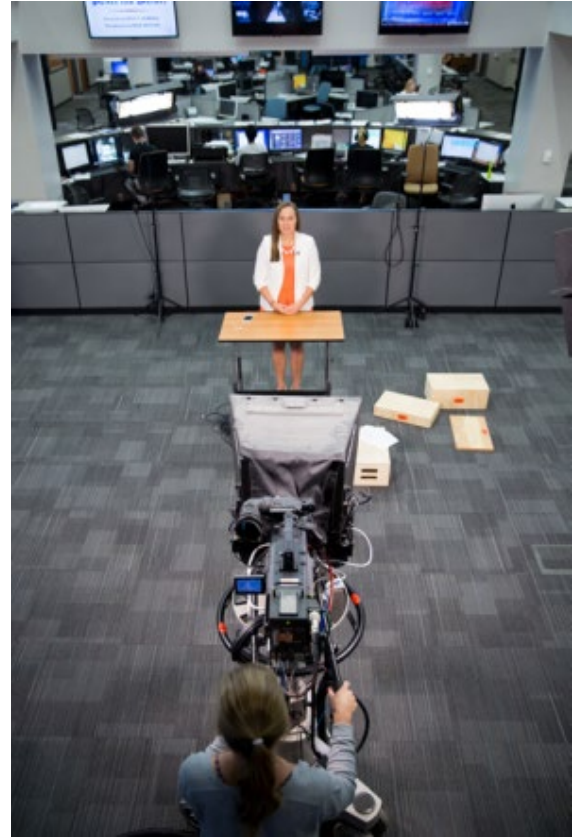
## The Agency

Led by professionals, staffed by students, and inspired by faculty, The Agency is a team of seasoned professionals and hand-selected students with a passion for ideas that resonate with emerging consumers. Built on a foundation of research, The Agency develops inspired and informed campaigns to build brand loyalty among a segment of the population that will spend trillions of dollars in their lifetimes. For more information, visit the [webpage](#).



## STEM Translational Communication Center

The mission of the STEM Translational Communication Center (STCC) is to improve human health and well-being by making scientific research more accessible, understandable, and usable. Properly translated and communicated to various audiences, basic research in science, technology, engineering, and medicine (STEM) can lead to enhanced individual, family, group, and policy-level decision-making. The STCC fosters partnerships among university researchers, community members, and industry. The messages, techniques, and strategies resulting from these collaborations can foster improved science and health literacy. The STCC offers multiple opportunities for portfolio development professional students, such as visual design, social media, videography, and event planning that advance and enhance the STCC mission.



### Public Interest Communications

Public Interest Communications (PIC) is an emerging field, and those who practice or study it are continuously applying new insights and techniques to make their work more effective. The field borrows elements from its sister fields of public relations, advertising, journalism, and marketing, but is informed by sociology, psychology, political science, and neuroscience. Public Interest Communications is using communications to drive social change. Students interested in Public Interest Communications can take courses to enhance their knowledge and skills and/or work with the PIC team to advance its mission.

### Media Properties Revenue Division

The college's Division of Media Properties includes a Revenue Division responsible for sales and underwriting for several broadcast properties. It takes teamwork, effective outreach, and excellent communication skills to engage these diverse audiences. Students can assist with social media communication and other strategic communication strategies to advance the work of this team.

### Media Services

The college's Division of Media Properties also includes a Media Services Division that works with clients on video and studio projects, storytelling, and live events. Students can assist with various phases of the planning and production process.

### METL

The Media Effects & Technology Lab is an interdisciplinary laboratory where faculty and students design, develop, and disseminate the effects of media content and technologies to improve the human spirit and condition. From 360-degree video to virtual reality, the team explores the possibilities for new technologies and information processing.

### More Options

Other options inside or outside of the College of Journalism and Communications are encouraged, based on the student's area of academic focus or career goals. Placement approval will be based on student interest, discussions with the academic advisor, and interviews with the supervisors of the practicums.

# Registration

## Registration Preparation

To enable registration, students must go to <https://one.ufl.edu> to complete the Registration Preparation requirement and update emergency contact information every term prior to registration start time. Students will have a “registration preparation hold” until this is completed. For instructions or assistance with the registration preparation process, please utilize the [instruction guide](#).

## Registration Process

Students are responsible for their own registration except for some departmentally controlled courses and independent studies. For instructions or assistance with the registration process, please utilize the [instruction guide](#).

## Summer Registration in MMC

6971/6973

All students planning to defend their thesis/project during the summer semester must meet certain criteria:

- Have an agreement signed by every committee member that stipulates if and when he/she will be available during the summer for committee meetings, defense, reading, etc.
- Submit a reasonable timeline as part of this agreement for all steps of the approval process (i.e., submissions to chair and/or committee, revisions, submissions to Graduate School, etc.) when you register for thesis/project hours. Students will not be allowed to register for thesis/project hours without the signed agreement and timeline.



# Minors and Supporting Fields

Elective credits may be applied toward either a minor or supporting field. Elective courses also may stand alone, without being placed into one of the groupings.

## Minor

A student may choose a minor as part of approved electives. A minor is defined by the university as a discipline offered by a department outside the college. For most subjects, the student may secure an official minor by taking six to nine semester hours in the minor department at the graduate level. Some departments require a greater number of credits or specific courses; check with the department in which you seek to complete the minor. A faculty member from the minor department must serve on the supervisory committee for the final examination. The thesis research or project must bear relevance to the minor as well as the major field of study.

## Minor for Students Outside the College

Students from outside this college who are pursuing a minor in Mass Communication must have a professor from CJC as a member of their supervisory committee. The student must take four Mass Communication courses. The minor professor can determine the four courses but a minimum of six credits must be non-methodological and should be theoretical or substantive in Mass Communication.



## Supporting Fields

The student may concentrate electives in a supporting field. A supporting field requires six to nine credits outside the college. Unlike the minor, a supporting field does not require that a representative of the field serve on the student's supervisory committee or that the student's thesis or project pertain to the field of study. Course combinations from more than one discipline, if approved by the student's academic advisor and the Associate Dean for Graduate Studies and Research, may make up the supporting field. One type of supporting field is the traditional area study. The student completes courses offered by different departments that all focus on one geographical area. The university has strengths in Latin America, Africa, and Europe.

## Graduate Certificates

A certificate may be used to recognize that a student has completed a defined program of specialized cohesive study consisting of for-credit UF courses. Students may earn a certificate in a particular field of study in the discipline of their academic major or enhance their major by pursuing a program outside of a discipline of their academic major but complementary to their major or career interests. Students who earn a graduate certificate in the College of Journalism and Communications complete four courses or 12 to 14 credit hours in a communication specialization of their choice. Visit the [webpage](#) for more information on on-campus certificates in Health Communication and Science Communication, and online certificates in Global Strategic Communication, Social Media, Web Design, and Audience Analytics.



# Timing Policies



## Time Limit

All work to be counted toward the master's degree must be completed within seven years immediately preceding the date on which the degree is to be awarded. Any transfer work must fall within the seven years.

## Readmission

Graduate students who do not enroll at UF for three consecutive terms, including any summer term, must apply for readmission. Readmission is not guaranteed and is subject to the availability of space in the program. If applying to a different program, a new application will be required. It is strongly advised that students who wish to take a leave of absence for two or more consecutive terms obtain prior written approval from their department. Readmission applications are available [online](#). There is a readmission fee. The student will be required to prepare a new degree plan, valid for the program in effect at time of resumption of studies and any prior degree plans will be considered invalid.

Students graduate under the catalog in effect at the time of their initial enrollment as degree-

seeking students at UF provided they maintain continuous enrollment. Students who do not maintain continuous enrollment will use the catalog in effect at the time enrollment is resumed.

## Transfer of Courses

Master's students, with approval of the student's supervisor and the Associate Dean, may petition the Graduate School for permission to transfer up to nine semester hours into the master's program from an institution approved by the Graduate School, or 15 semester hours from graduate work at UF. All transferred work must have been taken at a U.S. institution or an international institution in which English is the first language, be at the graduate (5000 or 6000) level, and carry grades of A or B. The petition form must be submitted during the first term as a graduate student. Obtain the required form in the Division of Graduate Studies and Research or [online](#).

The Graduate School computes courses transferred in from UF graduate work in the GPA. Courses transferred into the program from another institution are credited to total hours but are excluded from GPA computation

# Grading Policies

## Computing the GPA

The Graduate School computes two GPAs for all students: overall and major. For students with a minor, the Graduate School also computes a minor GPA. The major GPA includes only graduate courses in the college. In computing the overall GPA, the Graduate School counts all courses at the 5000 level or above and 3000/4000 level outside the major taken while the student has been classified as a 7, 8, or 9. Students may repeat courses in which they earn failing grades. The grade points from both the first and second attempts will be included in the computation of the GPA, but the student will receive credits only for the second attempt. When computing the GPA, the Graduate School does not round up fractions. Thus, a 2.99 GPA fails to meet the 3.0 requirement.

Courses receiving grades of satisfactory/unsatisfactory (S/U) are excluded in GPA computation,

as are courses at the freshman and sophomore (1000/2000) levels. The Graduate School also excludes any courses at the junior and senior (3000/4000) levels if in a student's major. Hours at the 1000/2000 level may not count toward residency or toward the total credits required for a degree. Courses designated with a grade of H (used only in special situations when the work is expected to be developed over a period of time greater than a single term) are excluded until such time as grade changes are processed. All H grades must be cleared prior to graduation. The grade of H is not a substitute for a grade of S, U, or I. Courses for which H grades are appropriate are noted in their catalog descriptions and must be approved by the UF Graduate Curriculum Committee and the Graduate School. Please note that the GPA listed on ONE.UF may not be the same as the GPA calculated by the above Graduate School definitions, if the student has digressed from their degree plan by taking freshman

and sophomore (1000/2000) level courses or undergraduate courses within the college.

## Grades of Incomplete, Unsatisfactory, or NG

Grades of I (incomplete) must be removed by the date stated on the [Incomplete Grade Contract](#) or the deadline stated in [The University Calendar](#)— whichever comes first. If grades of I or NG have not been changed within 150 days, the grade will be treated as an E in calculating the GPA and for suspension purposes. If the student receives a grade of I, U, or NG while on probation, it constitutes a violation of probationary or conditional status.

Grades of I cannot be given for a graduate level S/U course.

Courses in which students receive grades of U or NG do not meet the Graduate Council's standard of satisfactory performance. Accordingly, such grades either must be changed or the Graduate School must approve a petition setting forth the reasons why the student should be allowed to graduate with the U grade on the record.

Master's students may have a maximum of two incompletes (including "no grades") and two unsatisfactory grades for their entire academic program.



## Incomplete Grade

### Contract

The Incomplete Grade Contract should be used in every instance of assigning an incomplete grade. The procedure is described in detail on the form which is available on the graduate studies [webpage](#). The form should be completed and filed with the graduate division before the end of the semester in which the incomplete grade is given. Please be aware that I grades are reserved for extraordinary circumstances and a majority of the course work must be completed. If the student has not completed the majority of course requirements, it is advisable that they officially drop the course.

Unfortunately, this action will result in the loss of tuition dollars paid if the drop occurs after the drop/add period established in UF registration policy. If the student is on a graduate assistantship, dropping credits during the semester may result in the termination of the assistantship.

Penalty for I/U grades over the limit: master's students are allowed a maximum of two incompletes (including "no grades") and two U grades. Per the vote of the CJC Graduate Faculty, a student who receives more than the allowed number of I/U grades will be forbidden from registering for two semesters and will be required to reapply to the program by submitting the application for readmission to the Graduate Committee for approval.

# Probation and Suspension

## Unsatisfactory Progress

Any student may be denied further registration in the university or in a graduate major if progress toward the completion of the planned program becomes unsatisfactory to the college or the dean of the Graduate School. The Graduate School defines unsatisfactory progress as failure to maintain a cumulative overall GPA of 3.0 (B) or a cumulative major GPA of 3.0 (B). Students who declare a minor must maintain a 3.0 GPA in the minor.

The college has defined unsatisfactory progress more severely than the Graduate School. Beyond considering a GPA of less than 3.0 as unsatisfactory, the college also considers as unsatisfactory progress receipt of grades below C+. See probation, suspension, and grades of incomplete or unsatisfactory below.

## Probation

Students may be placed on probation if their progress becomes unsatisfactory. The Associate Dean for Graduate Studies and Research will attempt to contact any student whose GPA has fallen below 3.0. However, the student bears the responsibility of determining whether the grade point average is sufficient to remain on regular status. If it is not, the student must confer with the Associate Dean for Graduate Studies and Research at the start of the first term during which the GPA falls below 3.0.

Any master's student who earns a GPA less than 3.0 and/or receives one grade below C+ will be placed on probation, except for courses taken from the Levin College of Law, undergraduate statistics course, or articulation classes. For these courses, any student receiving one grade below C will be placed on probation. Students on probation are not eligible to hold a graduate assistantship.

If students are placed on probation, they will need to work with their chair to devise a plan to improve their grades. They will need to submit the plan to the Associate Dean for Graduate Studies and Research for approval, and that plan must be approved in order for the student to re-start or maintain an assistantship. If students satisfy the approved plan in the term of probation and their cumulative GPA is at or above a 3.0, the probation flag will be lifted.

If the plan or GPA requirement is not satisfied, the student will be suspended. If a student satisfies the probation plan but the situation arises in future terms, the student will not be granted another probation term, they will be suspended.

## Suspension

Per the official University definition of suspension: “The student is required to leave the University for a given or indefinite period of time, the termination of which shall depend upon specified acts of the student's own volition related to mitigation of the offense committed. The student must comply with all sanctions prior to readmission.” The college does not guarantee readmission; it is subject to review by the Graduate Committee. Students on suspension are not eligible to hold a graduate assistantship.

Any master's student who accumulates two grades below C+ (with the exclusion of courses taken from the Levin College of Law, undergraduate background statistics class, or articulation classes) during graduate studies will be suspended, as will any master's student who receives one grade of D+ or lower at any time during graduate studies.

When a student is suspended, the student's records will be flagged and future registration will be forbidden until the Graduate Committee approves lifting the flag. To have the suspension flag lifted, the student will need to devise a plan, in conjunction with their chair, for review and approval by the Graduate Committee. Students who remain on suspension are not eligible to hold a graduate assistantship. Students will be allowed only one suspension. If another suspension is necessary, the student will be removed from the program.

If the suspension is due to a GPA <3.0, the student will have one semester to bring the GPA to a 3.0 or higher before further actions are taken. Please note, a student that does not register for three consecutive semesters must apply for re-admission to the program and acceptance is not guaranteed.

Any violation of the academic honesty guidelines is grounds for immediate dismissal from the program and will result in revocation of the degree if the degree previously has been awarded.

## Conditional Admission

Any student admitted to the graduate program conditionally must satisfy the conditions stated in the admission letter. Fulfillment of conditions must be certified in writing by the Associate Dean for Graduate Studies. If a student fails to meet the conditions of admission, the student will be removed from the program, placed on probation, or suspended. New conditions will be imposed if the student is not removed from the program. If the student is placed on probation or suspension and any new conditions are not met, the student will be suspended. Exceptions will be granted only on approval of a written petition to the Graduate Committee for approval of continued registration.



# Course and Degree Policies

## Dropping or Adding Courses

At the beginning of a semester, during the drop/add period, students may drop or add courses to their pre-registered courses with no fee penalty. After the drop/add period, however, students are expected to complete all courses for which they are enrolled. Students may be administratively dropped from a class if they miss the first week's meetings unless they notify the instructor before the first week and have an acceptable excuse such as a medical or family emergency.

Students who find it necessary to drop a course after drop/add should visit the graduate division office or webpage to obtain a [Course Schedule Change Request form](#). The form requires signatures of the student, academic advisor, and Associate Dean. To add a class, the student must have the signature of the instructor of the course, in addition to those mentioned above. After completion of the form, the student should return it to the graduate division. International students must receive approval from the UF International Center to drop a course following the drop/add deadline.

If the student is on a graduate assistantship, dropping credits during the semester may result in the termination of the assistantship.

Excessive drops are not allowed. Ordinarily, more than two drops are considered excessive. Remember: students are TUITION and FEE LIABLE for all courses on their schedule at the end of the drop/add period. Fees will not be refunded for courses dropped after the drop/add deadline. You cannot switch out one class for another. You would be financially responsible for both classes.

## Miscellaneous Petitions

Students may petition to receive exemption from a core course, to continue in attendance after failing to meet criteria spelled out in a conditional admission or probation status, or to deviate from any other rules or regulations regarding graduate study. The petition form (available in the graduate division) will be placed in the student's academic file as a written record of action. The chair of the supervisory committee or, if the committee has not yet been named, the academic advisor, typically must act on the petition before it is reviewed. Any time the student receives permission to deviate from usual

policy governing the master's program, signed and dated written confirmation of the action is advised. A copy of the confirmation should be placed in the student's academic file. Failure to place documentation of deviation from the usual policy into the file may delay graduation.

Students who wish to petition for changes in grades they have received may do so through the College Grade Appeals Committee. The chair of the committee should be contacted regarding procedure. Students may obtain the chair's name through the Office of the Dean.

## Minimum Registration

Students who will graduate in a fall or spring semester must register for at least three credits in their final term of study. August graduates need to sign up for only two credits during a summer term. Thesis master's students must take the final term's minimum credits in MMC 6971—Thesis Research. Project students must take the final term's minimum credits in 6973— Project in Lieu of Thesis.

If registering in a term, in no case may a student register for fewer than three credits in either the spring or fall semesters or two credits in the summer semester.

*The minimum registration requirements will differ for students who are utilizing financial aid (i.e., student loans). To be eligible for financial aid funding, students must be enrolled [at least half-time](#) by the end of the drop/add period each term. For Summer B courses to be considered in financial aid eligibility determinations, students must be enrolled in those courses by the end of the Summer A/C drop/add period. To verify eligibility for financial aid, students should contact the [Office of Student Financial Aid and Scholarships](#).*

## Degree Requirements

Thesis and project specializations share some requirements and differ on others. All master's students must have a supervisory committee and prepare a degree plan, obtain the required approvals, and follow the plan or modify it as changes arise. Thesis students must, in the final oral examination, successfully defend the thesis. Project students must, in the final oral examination, successfully defend the project.

# Thesis Preparation

## Prospectus and Proposal

A prospectus is a preliminary document that is used in several ways. It is used primarily to inform potential committee members of the topic and to solicit their participation. A thesis prospectus outlines the student's proposed topic, its importance and relevance, the literature to be covered, methodology, timeline, and expected findings. The length varies as directed by the chair of the committee.

Master's students planning a project should also write a brief prospectus before selecting a committee. This paper, usually about five pages long, explains what a student plans to do, the need or purpose for the project, the methods the student plans to use, and a timeline to completion.

A thesis proposal is composed of the entire first three chapters of the thesis: the introduction, the literature review, and the methods. The proposal should be presented to the committee members at a mid-course meeting of the committee.

## Committee Examination Policy

Only the student and the chair or co-chair are required to be in the same physical location. All other committee members can participate via advanced communication technology. Exceptions to this rule may be granted on approval of a written petition to the Graduate Committee.

## Appointment of Supervisory Committee

All master's students are required to have a supervisory committee. Graduate School policy requires that a supervisory committee be appointed before the completion of two terms or 12 credits, whichever comes later. Supervisory committees will NOT be formed in the term of graduation.

The student's supervisory committee chair will act as academic advisor for the remainder of the master's program. To propose the members, students should use the Supervisory Committee Form available from the Division of Graduate Studies and Research or on the [website](#). Please return the completed form to Weimer 2014 or email to [k.dukes@ufl.edu](mailto:k.dukes@ufl.edu) for processing. A copy of the student's degree plan must be attached to the supervisory committee form. The committee chair should review the degree plan and sign indicating approval of the courses listed.

The supervisory committee both helps the student and examines the quality of the student's work. Committee members should be chosen with a view to their expertise and qualifications. The student should consult with the committee chair and committee members about academic problems in general, the thesis/project process, and the oral final defense of the thesis or project. Although candidates for

the master's degree must be approved at various levels, the committee's decision is considered crucial.

Master's students planning a thesis must submit a prospectus (see section above) with the supervisory committee form and degree plan. The prospectus must include a statement of the research problem, description of the method planned for examining the problem, and a preliminary bibliography. The document must also include an explanation of the theoretical or methodological expertise necessary for the thesis topic and the appropriate expertise of each committee member. The relevant expertise of the committee chair shall be explained in no less than one paragraph. The explanation for each other member shall be presented in at least one sentence each.

Faculty members appointed to the supervisory committee must hold appointment to the university's Graduate Faculty or a special exception must be granted by the dean of the Graduate School. A list of all current Graduate Faculty members is available on the [webpage](#). The college requires a minimum of three members on all thesis committees. The chair and at least one other member must hold Graduate Faculty appointments in the college. Committees must have at least one faculty member from the student's specialty. If the student declares a minor, a Graduate

Faculty member from the minor department must be appointed. If a proposed member is not on the Graduate Faculty or is not a tenure-line faculty member, the proposed chair of the committee must attach (to the supervisory committee form) a brief explanation of the "special" member's area of expertise along with a copy of the proposed member's vita—if it is their first committee. The student should submit the form and attachments to Weimer 2014 or email to [k.dukes@ufl.edu](mailto:k.dukes@ufl.edu). Special members MAY NOT serve as chair, co-chair, or minor member. Upon request by supervisory committee chairs, the Division of Graduate Studies and Research will dissolve supervisory committees if students have failed to maintain contact with the committee chairs or the Division of Graduate Studies and Research

for a period of two years. Students whose committees have been dissolved will be sent subsequent written notice of the action.

Students or faculty members may change the chair and other members of the supervisory committee through application to the Associate Dean of the Division of Graduate Studies and Research. Students who wish to change their committees must submit a statement to the Associate Dean listing the composition of old and proposed new committees and detailing reasons for changes. Members proposed to be dropped will be given an opportunity to raise objections. As a courtesy, the student should notify the committee member being removed. Reasons for changes must be well founded, not merely reflections of personal

likes and dislikes. Changes to a committee cannot be made after the midpoint of the term of graduation. Faculty members most qualified to supervise research on a particular subject or projects of a particular type should be named to the student's committee. For example, a student whose work has a legal focus would be expected to have at least one member, if not all members, with a legal background. Likewise, a student in advertising would be expected to have at least one member, if not the chair, from the advertising faculty. Faculty members may request that they be dropped from a committee. Typically, faculty members submit such requests when students change their area of interest.



# The Thesis

Students in a thesis sequence must receive the grade of S in MMC 6971—Research for Master's Thesis—for the number of credits required by their degree plan. No fixed number of credits must be taken in any one term (except during the term of graduation as noted in discussion of minimum registration above). Students must satisfy their supervisory committee chairs that they have made enough progress to warrant a grade of S each time they register. To register for MMC 6971, the student must have selected the chair of the supervisory committee. The appropriate individual work [form](#) must be completed, signed by the student and committee chair, and submitted to the Division of Graduate Studies and Research in Weimer 2014 or by email to [k.dukes@ufl.edu](mailto:k.dukes@ufl.edu) before the deadline for registration so the student can be officially registered.

No matter how many thesis credits students take, they must prepare theses acceptable to their supervisory committee, the College Dean, and the Graduate Dean. The UF Graduate Student Handbook defines a thesis as stated below. The definition must be followed.

*Each thesis or dissertation candidate must prepare and present a body of work that must be of publishable quality and must be in a form suitable for publication, using the Graduate School's format requirements. The department is responsible for quality and scholarship. Graduate Council requires the Graduate School Editorial Office, as agents of the Dean of the Graduate School, to briefly review theses and*

*dissertations for The Thesis acceptable format, and to make recommendations as needed. Every thesis should have a thesis statement, which tells the reader what the writer has investigated. It gives the writer's point of view and indicates what focus the paper will take. According to the Prentice Hall Handbook for Writers, a well-formed thesis statement has four main characteristics:*

- *Unity: The thesis states a single controlling idea. The idea may be complex and have several parts, but it should be one idea.*
- *Focus: The thesis should be restricted and specific enough for the reader to gain a clear idea of the subject and the direction.*
- *Structure: If the thesis is sufficiently focused, it will provide a basis for decisions about which information to include and which to exclude from the paper.*
- *Interest: The thesis should sharpen the reader's interest in the subject. In some fields, a thesis statement may be known as the problem statement, research question, or statement of purpose. The common thread running through all of these variations is the notion of the advancement in knowledge that the document is attempting to convey. A project report cannot become a thesis by using Graduate School format. There must be some version of a thesis statement and the appropriate scholarly investigation relative to that thesis statement.*

It is not realistic to expect to form your committee, write the proposal, and do a thesis or project all in one semester.

Three stages in thesis work must be completed by students: (1) Write a prospectus. The length varies as directed by the chair of the committee, usually about five pages. Circulate the prospectus among prospective committee members. If they agree to serve, the student will complete a supervisory committee [form](#), obtain signatures from all committee members, and submit the form to Weimer 2014 or by email to [k.dukes@ufl.edu](mailto:k.dukes@ufl.edu). The current student records coordinator submits the form and the final version of the prospectus to the Associate Dean for Graduate Studies and Research for approval.

The student should then arrange an initial meeting of the supervisory committee to assure agreement on subject and method. (2) Write a proposal. It will consist of the first few chapters of the thesis (the number depends on the method and format chosen) and a detailed outline of the remainder. Graduate School regulations require a mid-course meeting of the supervisory committee at this point. (3) Write the remainder of the thesis. When the thesis has been shaped into its final form, arrange a time and place through the graduate division for the final oral examination.

Students are required to submit their thesis or dissertation electronically. This is part of a national electronic thesis and dissertation (ETD) initiative which will make University of Florida graduate research available online.



# Final Oral Examination

When thesis master's students have completed all courses (except final-term courses in progress) and the thesis, the supervisory committee conducts the final oral examination. The oral examination is open to the public and covers:

- the thesis,
- courses (including specialty and minor or supporting field), and
- matters of a general nature pertaining to the student's field of study.

The thesis student is responsible, after consulting with the committee chair, for:

- providing a copy of the thesis in final typed form to each member of the committee for inspection at least a week before the examination,
- arranging the time and place of the exam to fit the schedules of committee members (contact Kimberly Dukes in Weimer 2014 or email [k.dukes@ufl.edu](mailto:k.dukes@ufl.edu) to reserve a room),
- having a copy of the final exam report form and signature page at the exam for committee members to sign (see Kimberly Dukes in Weimer 2014 for those forms), and
- delivering the signed final exam report form to Weimer 2014, Division of Graduate Studies and Research immediately following the defense.

## Format

- Visitors are welcomed and introduced to committee members and the examinee.
- The committee chair explains that students will be requested to leave during discussion of the candidate and that only official members of the committee may vote, though visiting faculty are welcome to sign the examination form.
- The candidate presents a brief synopsis of the thesis or project and describes how the work might have been conducted differently, given the experience of having completed it.
- The candidate is questioned by committee members and others.
- The candidate is excused, and the committee votes on the exam result.
- The student is informed of the exam result.
- As appropriate, signatures are obtained on the thesis signature page and the final exam report

form and returned to Kimberly Dukes in Weimer 2014.

If performance on the exam is judged satisfactory, the student should get signatures on the final exam form of all members of the supervisory committee at the end of the examination. Committee members should sign the signature page of the thesis as well as the final exam form. Other faculty members attending the exam also sign the form but not the signature page.

Using the final exam form, the committee's decision must be reported to the Graduate School following the defense. If the thesis is judged generally acceptable, but some work remains to be done, the signature page can be held until the entire thesis has been satisfactorily completed. The signature page must be entered in GIMS no later than the date specified in [Deadline Dates](#). The oral examination may not be scheduled earlier than six months before the graduation date. The final exam form is returned to Weimer 2014, Division of Graduate Studies and Research, for further processing.

Prior to the semester the student plans to begin the thesis, it is very important to read the information found on the Graduate School Editorial [website](#). Rules can change from semester to semester so stay current by checking the site regularly. The guidelines are very specific and not following them could delay graduation.

## Student Responsibilities

- providing a copy of the project in final form to each member of the committee for inspection at least a week before the examination,
- arranging the time and place of the exam to fit the schedules of committee members (contact Kimberly Dukes in Weimer 2014 to reserve a room),
- having the final exam report form available at the exam for committee members to sign (see Kimberly Dukes in Weimer 2014 for those forms), and
- delivering the signed final exam report form to Weimer 2014, Division of Graduate Studies and Research immediately following the defense.

# The Project in Lieu of Thesis

## For Research and Theory Students

Students in a project sequence must receive the grade of S in MMC 6973 or RTV 6973, Project in Lieu of Thesis, for the number of credits required by their degree plan. Unless stated otherwise on the specific degree plan, no fixed number of project credits must be taken in any one term (except during the term of graduation as noted in discussion of minimum registration above). Students must satisfy their supervisory committee chairs that they have made enough progress to warrant a grade of S each time they register for project credits. To register for MMC or RTV 6973, the student must have selected the chair of the supervisory committee. The appropriate individual work [form](#) must be completed, signed by the student and instructor, and submitted to the Division of Graduate Studies and Research in Weimer 2014 or by email to [k.dukes@ufl.edu](mailto:k.dukes@ufl.edu) before the deadline for registration so the student can be officially registered.

No matter how many project credits students take, they must prepare a project acceptable to their supervisory committee, the college dean, and the graduate dean.

Master's students planning a project will be required to conduct background research, compile a literature review, and provide a thorough description of the methods to be employed to complete the project. All members of the supervisory committee must approve the literature review and methods before work may commence. Students may select the project option only if they possess the prerequisite technical skills to complete the project. The project may be designed to teach students basic production or graphics skills.

For more information regarding guidelines to writing a project in lieu of thesis in your specialization, please consult with your supervisory committee or learn more on this [webpage](#).

The student will present and explain the results of the project and provide an oral defense to the supervisory committee. All committee members must agree and sign off on the final examination form that the student has met all project requirements and passed the oral defense before the project is approved. Only the student and the chair or co-chair are required to be in the same physical location. All

other committee members can participate via communication technology. Exceptions to this rule may be granted on approval of a written petition to the Graduate Committee.

Project in lieu of thesis students do not submit a copy of their project to the Graduate School; however, they will be required to submit a copy of their projects to the graduate division.



# Professional Project

## For Professional Master's Students

Professional Master's students are required to complete a culminating project, called a professional project. These projects provide breadth and integration of knowledge that students gain through applying what has been learned through the course of their degree program. Students will have the opportunity to explore a variety of topics and media for delivering their project under the guidance of a Supervisory Committee Chair and committee members. Our professional projects can include a wide range of multimedia components, which may be delivered as websites, films, whitepapers, and campaigns, among others.

Students will be required to work with a "specialist" in their field who will commit to serving as a chair for their project. Developing a sufficiently focused project can be difficult, particularly when one is passionate about their chosen topic. Students will commonly attempt too much, for example, by identifying a problem that is too broad or too complex and time-consuming to be tackled in just a few short months. The project might need to address only a small piece of the larger puzzle. The committee will work with students to define the scope of the project and make sure that the proposed deliverables are attainable within the determined time frame.

Students in the Professional Master's must complete six credits (over at least two semesters) of MMC 6973 and receive an S (satisfactory) grade. Students should plan to register for two credits of MMC 6936 (Professional Master's Seminar) in their first semester after being admitted into the program. Upon successful completion of this course and development of a project proposal, students will identify their supervisory committee chair and begin to select their committee, which includes at least two additional members. If they agree to serve, the student will complete a supervisory committee [form](#), obtain signatures from all committee members, and submit the form to Weimer 2014 or by email to [k.dukes@ufl.edu](mailto:k.dukes@ufl.edu).

Committee members should be selected thoughtfully and may come from diverse backgrounds, allowing them to contribute to various aspects of the student's project. Members can represent one discipline but are typically interdisciplinary and bring complementary skills and perspectives. Committee chairs and at least one additional committee member MUST hold Graduate Faculty status. Current Graduate Faculty can be found [online](#). Once the committee chair has been selected, students will complete a minimum of three credits of MMC 6973 as individual work with their chair/committee members. Students will defend their projects during their final semester in the program and will register for three credits of MMC 6973 during that semester. Prior to registering for their professional project defense credits, students must obtain their supervisory committee chair's approval that they are ready to defend their projects.

Upon completion, students should submit their final projects electronically to the graduate division.



# Thesis and Post-Thesis Resources



## The Editorial Office of the Graduate School

The Editorial Office (106 Grinter Hall) oversees the thesis/dissertation process, offering help and guidance to ensure the students' theses and dissertations meet UF's high standards and are ready for electronic submission and digital archiving. Staff members answer questions about format and reference systems; tables, figures, and equations; and copyright and documentation issues. It also provides referrals to editors and formatters for hire. Staff members do not examine or critique content, scholarship, research methods or writing style, which is the responsibility of the students and their supervisory committees. For more detailed information, visit the [webpage](#).

## Applying to the Doctoral Program

When applying to the doctoral program in the College of Journalism and Communications, current UF students do not pay the \$30 application fee or submit the application materials through the Registrar's Office or online. (See [webpage](#).) The student will need to submit the following items to the CJC Admissions Officer:

- CV/Resume
- Letter of Intent/Statement of Goals
- Summary form
- Three Letters of Recommendation
- Updated Transcripts
- GRE Scores (please refer to the admissions section of the graduate division [website](#) for current requirements)
- Writing samples (optional)

ALL materials must be received by the December 15th deadline. The Doctoral Committee will review all completed applications. Decision letters are sent throughout the months of February and March. Decisions regarding assistantships and fellowships are made once all admissions are finalized, and only those students receiving funding are notified. Please contact the Graduate Admissions Office, Weimer 2013, if you have any questions.

# Honors and Awards

Master's students are eligible for the honor of graduation with distinction, a college honor that does not show on the student's transcript. All master's students may compete for the college's Outstanding Master's Student Award (if graduating within the specified period) and the Outstanding Graduate Student Research Award. All teaching assistants are eligible to compete for the college's Julie Dodd Outstanding Graduate Student Teacher Award.



## Graduation With Distinction

Master's students with an overall GPA of 3.8 or higher who wish to graduate with distinction must apply to the Graduate Committee. Conferment is decided by the college faculty on recommendation by the committee. It is not automatic for all students with the necessary GPA. Because the honor comes from the college rather than the university, "with distinction" is not an official university designation, and it will not appear on transcripts or the diploma. Procedures and application forms are posted in the Division of Graduate Studies and Research and [online](#). You will receive a certificate by mail and can include the distinction on your academic vita.

## Outstanding Master's Graduate

The Graduate Committee each spring recommends to the college dean one Outstanding Master's Graduate from the preceding calendar year's graduates, including the current semester. Students may be nominated by faculty or may self-nominate. The recipient is honored at the college's annual awards ceremony and receives a plaque. Current Ph.D. students who received their master's degree in our college within this time period are eligible. All submitted materials, including GPA, publications, service, etc., must pertain only to the master's degree and not have occurred following the awarding of the master's degree.

## Outstanding Graduate Student Research

One student each year receives an award for outstanding research. Applicants may submit documentation (e.g., research articles, conference papers, projects) themselves, or faculty members may nominate candidates and submit documentation. Application is made to the college's Research Committee, which recommends to the college dean a student to receive the honor. For more information, students should contact their committee chair. The recipient is honored at the college's annual awards ceremony and receives a plaque.

## The Julie Dodd Outstanding Graduate Student Teacher Award

Applicants may submit documentation (e.g., letter of recommendation, teaching evaluations, syllabi/teaching materials, teaching philosophy) themselves, or faculty members may nominate candidates and submit documentation. The Graduate Committee each spring recommends to the college dean one outstanding graduate student teacher from the year's teaching assistants. The student is honored at the college's annual awards assembly and receives a plaque.

## Graduate Student Travel Awards and Assistance

Travel grants are awarded by the college for resident students whose research papers are accepted for presentation at refereed sessions of mass communication scholarly conferences. These funds are available for use on a fiscal year basis, July 1 to June 30, each year, and student allocations of travel funding are based on the fiscal year in which a conference occurs. Students may apply for a maximum of \$500 per conference for up to two conferences in a fiscal year (maximum of \$1000 if the full \$500 is available and awarded for both events). Travel grants will be awarded only as graduate division funds are available, and funding is not guaranteed— funds are limited.

Forms and specific requirements and rules are available on the [webpage](#).

The following policies were developed and approved by the Graduate Students in Mass Communication Association (GSMCA) and the Graduate Committee:

- Both master's and Ph.D. students will be eligible equally for conference funding. Students must be registered and in residence as full-time graduate students in the college at the time the paper is presented.
- One student on an accepted paper will be funded as long as funds are available.
- In the case of a multi-authored paper, the student authors must decide which author will request college funding to attend the conference. In the case that the authors disagree about who should be funded, authors may appeal to the Graduate Committee.

Also, the student must:

- submit to the graduate division a [Travel Award Request Form](#) at least 30 days before travel dates.
- submit a copy of the acceptance letter/email with the Travel Grant Award Request Form.
- submit all original itemized receipts. Reimbursement will be made for things such as lodging, airfare, and personal meals.
- include the original airfare receipt and/or rental car invoice and the hotel bill, even if neither of these is being used as the basis for reimbursement. Evidence of extravagant expenditure will nullify this award.
- turn in receipts within 30 days of return.
- submit a copy of the complete conference program.
- follow University of Florida's travel procedures and policies.

We are committed to supporting graduate student success by supporting travel and conference participation to the maximum extent the budget allows. We feel it is important to our students as well as to the college, to continue funding conference travel to present student research to national audiences. Please remember that some conferences try to help with graduate student travel and offer small grants for that purpose.

Additional travel funding is offered by the Graduate School and UF Graduate Student Council. Research and travel funding also may be available through the University of Florida's Latin American Studies Center, African Studies, or Asian Studies, for research projects involving those areas.

# Graduate Program History

- 1947** First master's degree conferred
- 1969** 100<sup>th</sup> student graduated from master's program
- 1990** First two doctoral degrees in mass communication conferred
- 1999** College awards its 50<sup>th</sup> Ph.D. degree
- 2000** The Graduate Division was officially renamed the Division of Graduate Studies and Research
- 2004** College awards its 100<sup>th</sup> Ph.D. degree
- 2012** College offers first online master's program
- 2013** College's doctoral program named as one of UF's top 10 doctoral programs in the university
- 2015** College awards its 2,000<sup>th</sup> master's degree and 250<sup>th</sup> doctoral degree
- 2016** College launches Professional Master's program
- 2020** College awards 2,500<sup>th</sup> master's degree (and 302<sup>nd</sup> Ph.D.) and its 500<sup>th</sup> online master's degree

