



# *Master's* STUDENT HANDBOOK

**MASTER OF ARTS IN MASS COMMUNICATION (MAMC)**

**2023-2024**

**UF** | College of Journalism  
and Communications  
UNIVERSITY of FLORIDA



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# 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 of these undergraduate degrees, but [CJC Graduate Faculty](#) come from all four departments and many interdisciplinary areas of expertise to teach and mentor Master's and Doctoral students.

## 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 concentration within the Research and Theory MAMC has a faculty coordinator who serves as the initial advisor to incoming students until that student selects a permanent advisor from the ranks of the CJC Graduate Faculty. Professional Master's students are served by the Professional Master's advising team throughout the program, so those students do not need to select a permanent advisor. The Associate Dean of Graduate Studies reports to the college dean and serves as the chair of the CJC Graduate Committee. The committee makes recommendations on admissions, curriculum, and graduate faculty status. Major recommendations, including catalog changes and conferral of degrees, are brought to the CJC Graduate Faculty before forwarding to the Graduate School.



# CONTACTS AND COMMUNICATION

Administrative offices are located on the second floor of Weimer Hall. Students may contact staff in-person, via phone (352-392-6557), or via email (GradStudies@jou.ufl.edu).

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## DIVISION ADMINISTRATION



**Robyn Goodman, Ph.D.**  
Associate Dean of  
Graduate Studies



**Timothy Selph**  
Administrative Support  
Assistant I



**Coming Soon**  
Admissions Officer



**Kimberly Dukes**  
Academic Program  
Specialist III



**Kim Holloway**  
Administrative Specialist III

## RESEARCH AND THEORY COORDINATORS



**Amy Jo Coffey, Ph.D.**  
Coordinator, Research  
& Theory Customizable



**Jay Hmielowski, Ph.D.**  
Coordinator, Public  
Relations Concentration



**Haoran "Chris" Chu, Ph.D.**  
Coordinator, Science &  
Health Comm Concentration

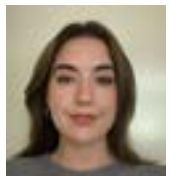
## PROFESSIONAL MASTER'S TEAM



**Elizabeth "Lissy" Calienes**  
Director



**Kim Fowler**  
Academic Advisor



**Samantha Redditt**  
Program Assistant

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## DEPARTMENTAL COMMUNICATION

The Graduate Studies 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. The 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 GatorLink credentials will also be required to log in to most UF services, including canvas, ONE.UF for registration, zoom, etc.

To communicate with the Division of Graduate Studies, students should e-mail [gradstudies@jou.ufl.edu](mailto:gradstudies@jou.ufl.edu) so that all correspondents can be reviewed efficiently and saved in the student's file for future reference.

E-mails from the Graduate Division may display as a staff member's name or as "UF CJC - Grad Division." Students must acknowledge and respond to all emails received from the division.

The UF Graduate School also maintains a ListServ for graduate students to communicate the latest information on academic policy and deadlines, financial aid news, and professional development opportunities. All active graduate students are automatically included in the ListServ, and students are not able to opt out.

All UF deadlines are available via the University Calendar on the [University Registrar](#) and [UF Graduate School](#) websites.

The divisions of Graduate Studies & Research can be found on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and Threads.

# 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 their 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 their own earlier work without citing the original content. So, for instance, it would be considered self-plagiarism if a student copied the literature review they wrote for one paper and then re-used it in another related paper without substantial alteration. Obviously, when writing multiple papers on a similar topic, it is likely that they will cite many of the same articles more than once. However, to avoid self-plagiarism, they should write each new literature review independently so that they 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. Students may make references to their own work in a subsequent paper – by simply citing that earlier paper, just as they 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.

Plus, more and more journals are running articles through plagiarism checkers, and it could be embarrassing for you to have an editor contact you about not publishing a piece due to self-plagiarism. Self-plagiarism, therefore, can damage your reputation as a scholar because it is unethical and may violate copyright law.

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 the material 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.

There are many free online tutorials, trainings, and simulations on plagiarism. Here are a few suggestions:

- [What Every Student Needs to Know About Avoiding Plagiarism](#)
- [How to Avoid Plagiarism](#)
- [How to Recognize Plagiarism: Tutorials and Tests](#)

## 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 physical or electronic notes 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 their responsibility to ask for clarification from the instructor.

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## MISREPRESENTING RESEARCH DATA

The integrity of data in mass 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 or dissertation is a clear violation of the rules and requirements of academic integrity and honesty.

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## ACADEMIC HONESTY VIOLATIONS

Any violation of the academic honesty section of this handbook will result in a case being filed with the Dean of Students office. The case will be investigated by the Student Conduct and Conflict Resolution Committee, and the committee will decide on sanctions. As stated in the Graduate School student handbook, "Plagiarism is punishable by expulsion. If detected after a degree is awarded, UF may revoke the degree."

## BEHAVIORAL EXPECTATIONS

The University of Florida encourages the intellectual and personal growth of its students as scholars and citizens. As an educational institution, the University recognizes that the transmission of knowledge, the pursuit of truth, and the development of individuals requires the free exchange of ideas, self-expression, and the challenging of beliefs and customs. To maintain an environment where these goals can be achieved safely and equitably, the University promotes civility, respect, and integrity among all members of the community. Students are expected to exhibit high standards of behavior and concern for others. Please review the [student conduct code](#) for more information.



# DEGREE PROGRAMS AND SPECIALTIES

The college offers, through its Division of Graduate Studies, college-wide graduate degree programs, with faculty members drawn from the four undergraduate departments. 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 tracks on campus. Thesis concentration options include Public Relations, Science & Health Communication, or a customizable Research & Theory track. The non-thesis concentration in Professional Communication is referred to as the Professional Master's

Students are committed to the track to which they are offered admission. Students are not permitted to switch between tracks and/or concentrations once an offer of admission is extended.

## PROFESSIONAL MASTER'S (NON-THESIS)

The Professional Master's program immerses students in the highest level of professional education at our college. Our flexible curriculum accommodates recent graduates, as well as professionals looking to advance their careers or become more competitive in the industry. With mentors from top professionals and researchers in the College of Journalism and Communications, students develop skills in leadership, critical thinking, and the application of research & theory to real-world problems. The program's mix-and-match coursework structure allows students to develop their own customizable degree plans, with fifteen 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 three semesters and supervised by a committee of at least one graduate faculty member and one CJC faculty member. An additional member is optional and may be added with prior approval. 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 Customizable Research & 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 concentration 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 concentration 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.



# MASTER'S PROGRAM POLICIES

## 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 or committee chair, and the Associate Dean for Graduate Studies. Degree plan forms are available online for **Professional Master's** students and **Research and Theory** students.

Each concentration 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. Students should consult their academic advisor regarding the timeline that is applicable to their specific program or concentration. Degree plans can be changed throughout the student's program, but any changes must be approved by the student's academic advisor.

## ACADEMIC ADVISORS

The graduate coordinator of the concentration to which the student initially applied 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.

Thesis students will initially work with their graduate coordinator to select their classes for the first semester.

The graduate coordinators are as follows:

- **Dr. Coffey** (Customizable Research & Theory Track)
- **Dr. Hmielowski** (Public Relations Concentration)
- **Dr. Chu** (Science & Health Communication Concentration)

By the end of their first or second semester, thesis students will select a supervisory committee chair from the college's graduate faculty. The supervisory committee chair becomes the student's official advisor (instead of the graduate coordinator) and has the primary responsibility of mentoring the student's research efforts and determining which courses the students should take. Graduate School policy requires that a supervisory committee (chair + two additional graduate faculty members) be appointed before the completion of two terms or twelve credits, whichever comes first.

Non-thesis students will work with the Professional Master's advising staff for the duration of their degree program regarding registration and degree planning. Students will select a capstone project committee chair from the college's Graduate Faculty to direct their capstone project research by the end of the first or second semester, upon completion of the Professional Master's seminar. The committee chair will direct the capstone project; the Professional Master's advising staff will continue to direct the student regarding registration and academic requirements. In addition to the committee chair, students must choose at least one other committee member from the list of CJC Faculty to serve on the project committee.



# GENERAL REQUIREMENTS

Although the tracks and concentrations 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 thesis or capstone research, 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. Students should check with their advisor or check the degree plan for their track to determine if they must have statistics.

## DEPARTMENTALLY CONTROLLED CLASSES

If you wish to be registered in a departmentally controlled (DEPX) course, please contact [gradstudies@jou.ufl.edu](mailto:gradstudies@jou.ufl.edu) for permission.

## UNDERGRADUATE COURSES

No undergraduate courses may count for credit towards a graduate degree. However, if students wish to incorporate a 3000 or 4000-level course as part of the requirements of a graduate level course in their degree plan, there are two options: Individual Work or Co-Listed Courses.

## Individual Work

As part of an independent study, students may secure the approvals of their advisor and the instructor of the course to enroll in MMC 6905 for graduate level credits. Please be advised that faculty members are not obligated to accept the student's requests to take classes at the graduate level and may refuse the request. If a student's advisor and the course instructor agree with the request, a graduate level version of the course must be arranged and the student must register for MMC 6905 (see Independent Study section of this handbook) to earn credit toward the MAMC degree. The student will not earn credit toward the MAMC degree if registered for the undergraduate course at the 3000 or 4000-level. Using the MMC 6905 registration form, the student must be contract with the course instructor for extra work to raise the course to graduate level and must show evidence that the expectations will go beyond that expected for any similar courses at the undergraduate level.

For thesis students, the 6905 course instructor MUST be a Graduate Faculty member.

## Co-Listed Courses

A co-listed course is a course with undergraduate and graduate level components. The course is taught with a common lecture component for undergraduate and graduate students, but there are differing assignments and grading components. In many cases, the graduate course number will be MMC 6936 and will be available on ONE.UF for graduate students to register when available. If graduate students register for the undergraduate course number, instead of the graduate course number, they will not earn credit toward their MAMC degree plan. Only select 3000 and 4000-level courses are offered as co-listed courses. In the event that a student wants to incorporate a 3000 or 4000-level course that is not co-listed, the student must utilize the Individual Work option detailed above. Students will be limited on the amount of these courses that will count towards their degree plan.

For thesis students, the 6936 course instructor MUST be a Graduate Faculty member. Both thesis and non-thesis students should discuss co-listed courses with their academic advisor prior to registration as co-listed courses will only apply in certain individual degree plans.

# 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.*

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# COURSE DISTRIBUTION REQUIREMENTS

	PRO MASTER'S — NON-THESIS	CUSTOMIZABLE RESEARCH & THEORY — THESIS	HEALTH & SCIENCE — THESIS	PUBLIC RELATIONS — THESIS
RESEARCH	<b>Select at least one (3 credits):</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• MAMC 6936 Applied Methods</li> <li>• MMC 6421 Mass Comm Research</li> <li>• MMC 6426 Qualitative Research Methods</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) or 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 6960C Professional Master's Seminar (3)	MMC 6936 Academic Writing (3)	MMC 6936 Academic Writing (3)	MMC 6936 Academic Writing (3)
SPECIALIZATION REQUIREMENTS	<b>MMC 6936 Professional Master's Seminar (2) and</b> <b>Select at least one (3 credits):</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• MMC 6466 Digital Persuasive Com</li> <li>• MMC 6936 Digital Storytelling</li> <li>• MMC 6137C Visual Storytelling Workshop</li> <li>• MAMC 6936 Advertising Strategy</li> </ul>	At least one methods class (3)*	MMC 6XXX Health/Science Policy (3)  At least one methods class (3)*	PUR 6607 PR Management (3)  PUR 6934 (3) OR Internship (2-3)
ELECTIVES	15 credits of electives developed in consultation with advisor, at least 3 credits should be professionally focused	15 credits of electives developed in consultation with faculty advisor	12 credits of electives developed in consultation with faculty advisor	12-13 credits of electives developed in consultation with faculty advisor
CAPSTONE (6 CREDITS)	MMC 6973 or 6910 "Professional Project" (6) (6 credits, split over at least two terms, requires chair and one additional committee member)	MMC 6971 Research for Master's Thesis (6) (6 credits, split over at least two terms, requires chair and two additional committee members)		

**TOTAL CREDITS**

**36**

# INDEPENDENT STUDY

The master's program has five courses (other than the thesis research and project courses) that do not normally involve classroom participation. The five are COM 6940 – Supervised Teaching (S/U grade), MMC 6905 – Independent Study (letter-graded), MMC 6910 – Supervised Research (S/U grade), MMC 6949 – Internship (S/U grade), and MMC 6945 Pro Master's Practicum. The first three are described below, while internship and practicum are discussed in the following sections of this 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. After receiving the appropriate approvals, the student will submit the form to the Division of Graduate Studies prior to the form submission deadline.

## MMC 6905: INDEPENDENT STUDY

Students may have a maximum of six credits of 6905 in their degree plan; maximum of three credits in a single term. This course is letter-graded.

**Proposals 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).

Students taking MMC 6905 must conduct original research and make an original contribution to the understanding of 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. 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.

As previously discussed, MMC 6905 may sometimes include a 3000- or 4000-level classroom component. In those instances, the proposal must include the completion of the 3000- or 4000-level class requirements, plus additional graduate level work agreed upon by the instructor and the student. See the applicable handbook section for additional information.

## SUPERVISED RESEARCH MMC 6910

Students may have a maximum of five credits of 6910 in their degree plan; maximum of three credits in a single term. This course is S/U graded.

**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

Students may have a maximum of five credits of 6940 in the degree plan; maximum of three credits in a single term. This course is S/U graded.

**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, and the name/number of the course.

The student and instructor should also be aware of the following expectations:

- 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 teaching assistantships, 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.

The student should discuss the required information with the person supervising the course and present the completed form and accompanying details for the supervisor's approval. A completed proposal, including the signed form, must be submitted to [gradstudies@jou.ufl.edu](mailto:gradstudies@jou.ufl.edu) before the student will be registered.

Graduate teaching assistants may not receive credit for the class to which they are assigned.

# INTERNSHIPS

Students may have a maximum of three internship credits in the degree plan. This course is S/U graded.

The field supervisor, the academic advisor, and the Associate Dean for Graduate Studies must approve the internship. The field supervisor is the individual to whom the student will report during the internship. For thesis students, the graduate coordinator or committee chair (if one has been selected) will act as the academic advisor and instructor for the internship. For non-thesis students, the Director of the Professional Master's program will serve as the academic advisor and internship instructor.

The appropriate, completed form must be signed and approved by the student, field supervisor, academic advisor, and Associate Dean for Graduate Studies. After receiving the appropriate approvals, the student will be registered by the graduate division administration. Students must submit completed and signed registration forms to [gradstudies@jou.ufl.edu](mailto:gradstudies@jou.ufl.edu) at least two weeks in advance of the registration deadlines to avoid late fees.

## INTERNSHIP REPORTS

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

**Additionally**, 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 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 advisor and the graduate division ([gradstudies@jou.ufl.edu](mailto:gradstudies@jou.ufl.edu)).

To be eligible for an internship, students must have completed two semesters or 12 credits (depending on the specific concentration) of relevant coursework and/or have relevant professional experience. Specific eligibility requirements are determined by the academic advisor or program director. All internships must be approved by the academic advisor or program director before applying. No retroactive credit will be awarded for internships. Internships will not count toward the electives on all degree plans; please check with your advisor for eligibility.



## 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 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 6945, and your advisor will guide you on how to register for the appropriate experience. Students may have a maximum of six credits of MMC 6945 in their degree plan; maximum of three credits in a single term. The course is letter-graded.

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.

It is recommended that students interested in the ESPN Experience who did not take RTV 3593 as an undergraduate student first enroll in a graduate-level version of Multimedia

Sports Reporting. If available, this may be arranged through your graduate advisor and the course instructor, possibly as a co-listed or Individual Work course (see previous sections of this handbook for information). If a graduate-level version of the course is not available, students may take the undergraduate course (RTV 3593) as an articulation course; however, the undergraduate course will not count in the total credits required to fulfill the MAMC degree plan.

## 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 GatorVision opportunities who did not take RTV 4929C as an undergraduate student first enroll in the graduate-level version of Sports Production. If available, this may be arranged through your graduate advisor and the course instructor, possibly as a co-listed or Individual Work course (see previous sections of this handbook for information). If a graduate-level version of the course is not available, students may take the undergraduate course (RTV 3593) as an articulation course; however, the undergraduate course will not count in the total credits required to fulfill the MAMC degree plan.

## 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.

## 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.



# 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](#). Students may contact [GradStudies@jou.ufl.edu](mailto:GradStudies@jou.ufl.edu) for registration assistance.

## 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. Students must confirm eligibility for graduate certificates prior to enrolling since some circumstances (i.e., assistantships, EEP, etc.) will prevent students from being eligible for degree credits or funding.



# TIMING POLICIES

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## TIME LIMIT

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

As a general guideline, full-time students are expected to complete the program within two academic years. Part-time students are expected to complete the program within four academic years. The recommended timelines may be flexible as long as the student is making adequate progress towards completion of the degree, which is monitored and determined by the Division of Graduate Studies. If a student is considered to not be making progress towards successful completion of the degree, a notice will be sent from the Associate Dean of Graduate Studies with a recommended plan for remaining in good academic standing. Taking courses that do not count in the degree plan, taking courses that are unrelated or irrelevant to the student's course of research, and repeating courses unnecessarily are a few examples of actions that could lead to a student's lack of progress.

Students who fail to make adequate academic progress throughout the program may face academic penalties such as probation, suspension, and/or dismissal. For further discussion, see the GPA, Grades, and Probation and Suspension section of this handbook, as well as the dismissal policy in the UF Graduate School Handbook.

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## HANDBOOKS AND CATALOGS

Students graduate under the CJC and Graduate School handbooks and catalogs in effect at the time of their initial enrollment as degree-seeking graduate students at UF provided they maintain continuous enrollment. Students who do not maintain continuous enrollment will use the handbooks and catalogs in effect at the time enrollment is resumed (see Readmission section below).

For combination degree students, the handbooks and catalogs in effect for graduation are the ones in effect when the student is admitted to and enters the master's program (not the handbooks and catalogs in effect when the student is approved for the combined degree program as an undergraduate student).

## 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.

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## TRANSFER OF CREDITS

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

"I\*" and "I" grades are incomplete grades, assigned if students do not complete work in a course by the end of the semester. Incomplete grades are not to be used to extend deadlines except in cases with extenuating circumstances and documented rationale approved via an Incomplete-Grade Contract (see

below and the CJC graduate program webpage for the contract form). Instructors are not required to assign incomplete grades. Incomplete grades may only be given at the discretion of the instructor and in compliance with the terms in the contract. Incomplete grades start as an I\* on student transcripts and do not count in the grade point average for 150 days. If students do not complete the requirements of the incomplete grade contract within 150 days I\* grades will turn into I grades and count in the grade point average as failing grades. All I grades must be resolved before a graduate degree can be awarded by the Graduate School. To resolve an I\* or I grade, students must complete course work, not retake the course. Incomplete grades cannot be given for a graduate level S/U course.

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

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.

If the student receives an I, U, or NG grade while on probation, it constitutes a violation of probationary or conditional status and the student will be suspended.

### 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 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. To have the grade updated from an incomplete to a letter grade, the course instructor must submit a request to [gradstudies@jou.ufl.edu](mailto:gradstudies@jou.ufl.edu).

# 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 and suspension below.

## PROBATION AND SUSPENSION

Students may be placed on probation if their progress becomes unsatisfactory. The Associate Dean for Graduate Studies will attempt to contact any student whose grade point average has fallen below a 3.00 truncated GPA. However, the student bears the responsibility of determining whether the grade point average as calculated by the UF Graduate School is sufficient to remain on regular status. Any student who earns a truncated GPA less than 3.0 and/or receives a C, C-, D+, D, D-, E, I, N or U grade 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 that is a C-, D+, D, D-, E, I, N or U will be placed on probation.

Any courses where a student earns a C-, D+, D, D-, E, I, N or U must be retaken; otherwise, the course will not count in the degree plan. An I or N grade would signify an incomplete or no grade that has not been resolved, so that grade is a non-passing grade. I\* or N\* grades recorded on the student record indicate the non-punitive initial-term receipt of an I or NG. A grade of I\* or N\* is not considered a failing grade for the term in which it is received, and it is not computed in the grade point average. However, if the I\* or N\* has not been changed after 150 days, it will be counted as a failing grade and used in computation of a student's grade point average.

If a student is placed on probation, they will need to work with their committee chair or advisor to devise a plan to improve their grades and achieve an accumulative truncated GPA of 3.00. They will need to submit the plan to the Associate Dean for Graduate Studies, and that plan must be approved by the first day of the next semester for the student to maintain registration. If a student satisfies that plan in the term of probation and achieves accumulative truncated GPA of 3.00 or above as calculated by the UF graduate school, the probation flag will be lifted. If a student satisfies that plan in the term of probation but does not achieve cumulative truncated GPA of 3.00 or above as calculated by the UF graduate school, the probation period will be extended until the truncated 3.0 GPA is achieved. If the plan is not satisfied, they will be suspended for one term. Students may only have one semester with grade(s) that is/are a C, C-, D+, D, D-, E, I, N or U. If the student has more than one semester with grade(s) of C, C-, D+, D, D-, E, I, N or U, the student will also face suspension. These semesters do not need to be consecutive semesters of enrollment. When a student is suspended, the student's records will be flagged, and the student will not be allowed to enroll in any courses for one semester.

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.

Students 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. Please note: a student who does not register for three consecutive semesters must apply for readmission to the program and acceptance is not guaranteed.

## 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.

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## **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.

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## **GPA MINIMUM FOR ASSISTANTSHIPS**

Per university requirements, if a student's grade point average falls below 3.00, as calculated by the UF Graduate school, they may not hold an assistantship or fellowship. If on probation, they may register for classes and work to satisfy the probation plan, but they cannot be funded with an assistantship or fellowship while their GPA is below 3.00 as calculated by the Graduate School.



# COURSE AND DEGREE POLICIES

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## DROPPING OR ADDING COURSES

At the beginning of a semester, during the drop/add period, students may drop or add courses to their schedule 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.

Fees will not be refunded for courses dropped after the drop/add deadline. Students cannot switch out one class for another; they would be financially responsible for both classes.

Students who find it necessary to add and/or drop a course after the drop/add period should follow the procedure described on ONE.UF. 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 and students would need to confer with their chair/advisor to ensure expectations of academic progress are being met.

Remember: Students are TUITION and FEE LIABLE for all courses on their schedule at the end of the drop/add period. Tuition and fees will not be refunded for courses dropped after the drop/add deadline.

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## 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 upon written request from the graduate division) will be placed in the student's academic file as a written record of action. The committee chair/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, a signed and dated written confirmation of the action is advised. A copy of

the confirmation should be placed in the student's academic file, and the student should maintain a copy. 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 of the college.

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## 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 students must take the final term's minimum credits in MMC 6971. Non-thesis students must take the final term's minimum credits in 6973 (for students who entered the program prior to Fall 2022) or 6910 (for students who entered the program Fall 2022 or later).

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 federal financial aid. To be eligible for federal 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.

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## DEGREE REQUIREMENTS

Thesis and non-thesis tracks 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

For the oral defense of the thesis, the student and the chair or co-chair are required to be in the same physical location. All other committee members may participate via advanced communication technology. If there is an extreme extenuating circumstance that prevents the chair or co-chair from being able to be in the same physical location, another CJC committee member must be in the same physical location as the student.

Any additional situations will be considered by petition to the Associate Dean of Graduate Studies.

All defenses are public, and attendees may join in person or via remote telecommunication methods, if established. If all committee members are meeting in person, no remote telecommunication methods are required to be established. If remote telecommunication methods are necessary or requested, the method must be established by an administrator from the Division of Graduate Studies. Under no circumstances is the student allowed to establish the telecommunication methods/links. No recordings are allowed.

## 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.

For thesis students, the 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 on the Division of Graduate Studies website. Also, a copy of the student's degree plan must be submitted to [gradstudies@jou.ufl.edu](mailto:gradstudies@jou.ufl.edu) with 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 process, and the oral final defense of the thesis. 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. 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. Special members MAY NOT serve as chair, co-chair, or minor member. Upon request by supervisory committee chairs, the Division of Graduate Studies will dissolve supervisory committees if students have failed to maintain contact with the committee chairs or the Division of Graduate Studies 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. 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 allowed 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 should be named to the student's committee. 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 the 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 and the student must submit a registration form (found on the website or the Google Drive). Registration forms must be completed and submitted to [gradstudies@jou.ufl.edu](mailto:gradstudies@jou.ufl.edu) by the form submission deadline to avoid late registration fees.

No matter how many thesis research 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 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. The student should then arrange an initial meeting of the supervisory committee to assure agreement on the 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 ([gradstudies@jou.ufl.edu](mailto:gradstudies@jou.ufl.edu)) for the final oral examination.

## THE EDITORIAL OFFICE

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

The Editorial Office 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. The Editorial Office 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.

# 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)
- 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 one week before the examination. Students must arrange a time and place of the exam to fit the schedules of the committee members, and students must notify the graduate division ([gradstudies@jou.ufl.edu](mailto:gradstudies@jou.ufl.edu)) of the date and time of the examination. The graduate division staff can assist with scheduling a location for the examination.

For the oral defense of the thesis, the student and the chair or co-chair are required to be in the same physical location. All other committee members may participate via advanced communication technology. If there is an extreme extenuating circumstance that prevents the chair or co-chair from being able to be in the same physical location, another CJC committee member must be in the same physical location as the student. Any additional situations will be considered by petition to the Associate Dean of Graduate Studies.

All defenses are public, and attendees may join in person or via remote telecommunication methods, if established. If all committee members are meeting in person, no remote telecommunication methods are required to be established. If remote telecommunication methods are necessary or requested, the method must be established by an administrator from the Division of Graduate Studies. Under no circumstances is the student allowed to establish the telecommunication methods/links. No recordings are allowed.

## 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.
- 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 from the committee and processed by the grad division.

Using the final exam form, the graduate division will report the committee's decision 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.

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 students must check the site regularly. The guidelines are very specific and failing to follow the guidelines could delay graduation.

# THE PROJECT IN LIEU OF THESIS

## For Thesis Students

Thesis students interested in conducting a project in lieu of thesis must receive permission from their committee chair or advisor and the Associate Dean of Graduate Studies. Project in lieu of thesis is only permitted on rare occasions when a student's research is best conveyed through a project instead of a thesis.

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 and the student must submit a registration form (found on the website or the Google Drive). Registration forms must be completed and submitted to [gradstudies@jou.ufl.edu](mailto:gradstudies@jou.ufl.edu) by the form submission deadlines to avoid late registration fees.

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 concentration, please consult with your supervisory committee.

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 ([gradstudies@jou.ufl.edu](mailto:gradstudies@jou.ufl.edu)).



# PROFESSIONAL PROJECT

## For Non-Thesis Students

Professional Master's students are required to complete a Non-Thesis students are required to complete a culminating project, called a capstone 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. 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 non-thesis track should plan to register for MMC 6960C, 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. The committee must consist of a chair and at least one other member. The committee chair must hold Graduate Faculty status in the College of Journalism and Communications. Any additional members must hold faculty status.

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.

Students must complete six credits (over at least two semesters) of MMC 6973 or MMC 6910 and receive an S (satisfactory) grade. To register for MMC 6973 or MMC 6910, a student must have taken Professional Master's Seminar, completed a proposal, and selected a committee chair to mentor their project.

Once the committee chair has been selected, students will complete a minimum of three credits of MMC 6973 or MMC 6910 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 or MMC 6910 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.

# 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). 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. Eligible students will receive an invitation to apply after successful completion of the thesis or project defense. Students awarded the honor will receive a certificate by mail and can include the distinction on their academic vita.

## Outstanding Master's Graduate

The Graduate Committee each spring recommends to the college dean two Outstanding Master's Graduate (one in our online program and one in our in residence program) 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.

## 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

The Graduate Studies Division grants travel funds to students who are accepted to present papers at conferences. Students can apply for two awards per year of up to \$500 each to attend regional, national and international conferences within the fiscal year (July 1 - June 30). Awards are given on a first come/first serve basis and until the funds are no longer available. Please see the graduate division for more information.

Forms and specific requirements and rules are available in the graduate division or on the CJC graduate division webpage.

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

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- 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, applicants must:

- Submit a Travel Grant Award Request Form to the graduate division at least 30 days before the travel dates.
- Submit a copy of your 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 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 policies and procedures.

We are committed to supporting graduate student success by supporting travel to the maximum extent the budget allows. We feel it is important to you, as well as to the college, to continue funding your conference travel to present your research to national audiences. Hopefully, these guidelines will enable us to support the broadest range of student work possible during the present budget limitations.

Please remember that some academic organizations that host 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 Graduate Student Council. Research and travel funding also may be available through the University of Florida's Latin American Studies Center, Center for African American Studies, or Asian Studies, for research projects involving those areas.





# COLLEGE HISTORY



- 1947** First master's degree conferred
- 1969** 100th student graduated from master's program
- 1990** First two doctoral degrees in mass communication conferred
- 1999** College awards its 50th Ph.D. degree
- 2000** The Graduate Division was officially renamed the Division of Graduate Studies and Research
- 2004** College awards its 100th 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 2,000th master's degree and 250th doctora degree
- 2016** College launches Professional Master's program
- 2020** College awards 2,500th master's degree (and 302nd Ph.D.) and its 500th online master's degree



Left to Right; Elmer J. Emig; John Paul Jones, Jr.; William L. Lowry; Roe O. Weimer, Director; Edward C. Hanna.



# Master's **STUDENT** **HANDBOOK**

**MASTER OF ARTS IN MASS COMMUNICATION (MAMC)**

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