



# Department of Communication

*The* UNIVERSITY of OKLAHOMA



## Graduate Student Handbook

---

\*Note: Portions of this document are taken from the Graduate College's Graduate Student Bulletin. Please note that graduate students must adhere to both Graduate College and Departmental requirements. Graduate College requirements can be found in the [Graduate College Bulletin](#) on the [Graduate College Webpage](#).



**Content**

**Introduction ..... 6**

**Admissions ..... 8**

    Admission in Full Standing .....8

    Conditional Admission .....10

    Non-Degree Seeking Admission .....11

**Registration and Enrollment..... 12**

    Lapsed Enrollment .....12

    Frequently Asked Questions by Graduate Applicants .....13

**Master of Arts ..... 15**

    Requirements.....15

    Program Options.....15

    Advising and Permanent Advisor .....15

    Transfer Credit Limitations .....16

    Standards of Performance.....16

    Conducting Research.....17

    Time Limits for Completion.....17

    Program of Study.....17

    Details for Two Options .....18

    Master’s Thesis Option.....18

    Enrollment in Research for Thesis .....18

    Thesis Defense and Graduation .....19

    Master’s Thesis Paperwork and Timetable at A Glance.....20

    Master’s Non-thesis Option.....21

Master’s Non-thesis Paperwork and Timetable at A Glance .....	22
<b>Doctor of Philosophy .....</b>	<b>24</b>
Requirements .....	24
Core Requirements .....	24
Master’s Degree Transfer Credits .....	24
Master’s Degree plus Additional Hours Transfer Credits .....	24
Master’s Degree Completion .....	25
S/U Graded Courses .....	25
Time Limits for Completion .....	25
Standards of Performance .....	26
Advising .....	26
Permanent Advisor .....	26
Committee .....	27
Plan of Study Meeting and the Advisory Conference Report .....	27
<b>ADVISORY CONFERENCE REPORT .....</b>	<b>28</b>
Graduate Student Enrollment in Off Campus Courses .....	31
Change in Committee Membership .....	31
General Examination .....	32
Dissertation Proposal Meeting .....	34
Preparation for Dissertation .....	35
Enrollment in Research for Doctoral Dissertation .....	36
Reading Copy of the Dissertation/Preparation for the Final Oral Examination .....	36
Dissertation Defense .....	37
Post-Defense and Graduation .....	38
Ph.D. Paperwork and Expected Timetable at a Glance .....	38
<b>Annual Reviews .....</b>	<b>40</b>
Annual Review of Graduate Students .....	40
Evaluation Criteria .....	40
Evaluation Process .....	40
Unsatisfactory Evaluation .....	41
Annual Review of Departmental Graduate Assistants .....	41
<b>Graduate Student Awards and Scholarships .....</b>	<b>43</b>
General Procedures for Graduate Awards .....	43

The Ragan-Kramer-Wieder Qualitative Dissertation Proposal Award.....	43
H. Wayland Cummings Quantitative Dissertation Proposal Award.....	43
Outstanding Graduate Student Teaching Award .....	44
Ralph E. Cooley Memorial Award .....	44
Josh Lee Scholarship .....	44
Ted Beard Scholarship .....	45
Michael Pfau Scholarship.....	45
Michael W. Kramer Scholarship .....	45
Dan and Mary John O’Hair Outstanding Graduate Student Award .....	46
Kristi D. Wright Graduate Student Citizenship Award .....	46
Graduate Student Dissertation Grants .....	46
<b>Graduate Assistantships.....</b>	<b>48</b>
Initial Appointment Procedures.....	48
Requests for Appointment.....	48
Reappointment of Graduate Students .....	48
Stipends for Graduate Assistants.....	49
Instructors.....	49
Workload for Graduate Assistants.....	49
Enrollment Load for Assistants .....	50
Termination of Graduate Assistants .....	50
Maximum Number of Appointments to Assistantship .....	50
Assigning Graduate Teaching Assistantships for Extra Funding .....	50
English Proficiency for International Graduate Assistants.....	51
Quantitative and Qualitative Exemption (Place-Out) Exam Policy.....	51
<b>Graduate Courses.....</b>	<b>53</b>
<b>Departmental Forms .....</b>	<b>60</b>
Request for Appointment of Committee Chair.....	60
Thesis Proposal Approval Form .....	61
Dissertation Proposal Approval Form .....	62
<b>Contacts in the Department of Communication.....</b>	<b>63</b>
<b>Other Useful Contacts .....</b>	<b>64</b>



## Introduction

The Department of Communication at the University of Oklahoma (OU) began as the Department of Speech and Dramatic Arts in 1904. Like other programs at the time, initially it focused on public speaking but gradually, through multiple transitions and name changes, it eventually became the Department of Communication in 1977. The department is committed to diverse methodological approaches for studying the nature, processes, and effects of human communicative behavior. For general information about the Department of Communication please visit: <http://www.ou.edu/cas/comm>.

The department offers a broad-based liberal arts education promoting communication research and development, following a long tradition of quality graduate and undergraduate study in the field of human communication. The department specializes in a diverse range of study areas including:

Communication Technology/Computer-Mediated Communication  
Health Communication  
Intercultural/International Communication  
Interpersonal Communication/Social Influence  
Organizational Communication  
Political/Mass Communication



Students generally focus on one of these areas, but the program is flexible, permitting students to combine interests in more areas. Students tailor their studies to fit their individual goals and professional objectives.

The Department of Communication offers both the Master of Arts and the Doctor of Philosophy degrees. Our graduate program is regularly ranked among the finest in the country. We are a major center of communication research in the world. Our faculty and graduate students take pride in the department's excellent reputation among peer institutions.

Today, on the Norman campus, the Department of Communication serves roughly 350-400 undergraduate majors and 40-50 masters and doctoral students. The department plays a key role in the University of Oklahoma's undergraduate general education curriculum.

Our department has earned solid rankings in the [latest National Communication Association Doctoral Program Guide](#). The NCA assessment based on a national survey of graduate faculty across the communication discipline, ranked the doctoral program in communication in the top 22% in research output, the top 33% in number of citations, and lists the department as a top ten research programs in 15 of 93 research areas. Of the 79 programs ranked, our program is ranked 9<sup>th</sup> in intercultural/international communication (the highest ranked Big 12 school), and 13<sup>th</sup> in health communication (second-highest Big 12 school) and political communication.



The department was also ranked in other areas in our program, including 21<sup>st</sup> in interpersonal communication and 24<sup>th</sup> in mass communication (second-highest Big 12 ranking). Our department's faculty works continuously to solidify and improve these ratings in future NCA assessments, striving to maintain the department as one of the finest doctoral programs in communication in the country.

Through publications, grants, honors, and research projects, faculty members represent the finest combination of excellence in teaching, research, and service. Professors in the Department of Communication have won numerous awards. These include several prestigious university-wide teaching and research awards, as well as National Communication Association and International Communication Association awards, among others. The department includes a prolific faculty that published extensively, ranking the department among the top 20 programs in the nation. Many of our graduates hold teaching and research positions in top universities around the nation and around the world.

# Admissions

To be eligible for enrollment in graduate study in the OU Department of Communication, students must be admitted to the University, the Graduate College, and the Department of Communication. Students seeking admission in full standing must meet the admission requirements of the Department of Communication, as well as those established by the Graduate College.

- Application information for admissions to the University and the Graduate College, including requirements and the application process are available at: <http://www.ou.edu/content/admissions/graduate.html>
- Application information specifically for the Department of Communication is available at: <http://www.ou.edu/cas/comm/academics/graduate>

Questions related to the Department of Communication may be addressed to:

*Stephanie Terrazas*  
*Academic Advisor*  
Department of Communication  
University of Oklahoma  
610 Elm Avenue, Room 110  
Norman, OK 73019  
405.325.7710  
[terrazas@ou.edu](mailto:terrazas@ou.edu)

*Lindsey Meeks, Ph.D.*  
*Director of Graduate Studies*  
Department of Communication  
University of Oklahoma  
610 Elm Avenue, Room 135  
Norman, OK 73019  
[lmeeks@ou.edu](mailto:lmeeks@ou.edu)

General admission to the University for graduate students is coordinated by the Graduate College. In addition to being admitted to the University, students must also be recommended for admission by the Department of Communication.

The department welcomes qualified applicants regardless of their sex, gender, age, race, ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, or national origin.

**Regular admission with consideration for funding begins during the fall semester only. The deadline for applications is January 5<sup>th</sup>.** Please be advised that the Department's January 5<sup>th</sup> deadline supersedes all other deadlines otherwise specified by the Graduate College.

Applications for Fall admission may be submitted as late as May 5<sup>th</sup>; however, funding opportunities may not be available after January 5<sup>th</sup>.

Applications for Spring admission are accepted only under exceptional circumstances. Please email the Director of Graduate Studies for further information.

Prospective students must submit all required forms to complete their application. The graduate committee will only consider an application when all materials have been submitted.

## Admission in Full Standing

Graduate students in full standing are those who have been accepted by both the Graduate College and the Department of Communication. To be considered for admission in full standing, prospective graduate students must satisfy the following requirements:

1. Meet the requisite grade point average:
  - a. Students seeking admission at the Master's level should have earned a Baccalaureate degree with a GPA of 3.0 or higher.
  - b. Students seeking admission at the Doctoral level should have earned a Master's degree with GPA of 3.5 or higher on all graduate work.
2. Complete the online application form.
3. Submit a copy of their curriculum vitae.
4. Submit a statement of purpose.
  - a. The letter should clearly indicate the student's goals for a graduate degree, the track(s) they are interested in pursuing from the ones offered in the department, and any topics or research they wish to pursue.
  - b. Students are encouraged to identify faculty with whom they may wish to work in their statement of purpose.
  - c. Students are also encouraged to indicate how they believe they would fit within the department and how they believe pursuing a degree in our program would help them accomplish their goals.
5. Submit three letters of recommendation, preferably from academic sources.
  - a. Prospective students should ask three faculty members who best know their work to fill out the recommendation forms.
  - b. When completing their online application students will have the option to enter contact information for their recommenders who will receive an email request to submit their letter electronically.
  - c. Students should ensure recommenders submit their letters before the application deadline.
6. Submit a writing sample.
  - a. A writing sample of 10-12 pages (suggested length) on a research-relevant topic area in your experience, or a sample of your job-related/professional writing.
  - b. The writing sample should represent the applicant's focus of interest, or otherwise reflect the applicant's writing ability. The topic does not matter so much as how the writing reflects the applicant's thinking and facility with the written word.
7. Submit Graduate Records Examination (GRE) scores.
  - a. GRE scores are not required but strongly encouraged.
  - b. If submitting GRE scores, they should be sent directly to the Graduate College for the Department of Communication by Educational Testing Services (ETS). The school code is 6879; the Department of Communication code is 4599.
8. Submit evidence of English proficiency (international students for whom English is a second language only).
  - a. The Graduate College requires a score of 79 or higher on the Internet-based Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL), or a score of 6.5 or higher on the International English Language Testing System (IELTS).
  - b. English proficiency can also be demonstrated based on completing academic work in the U.S. Please see <https://www.ou.edu/admissions/apply/international/english-proficiency-requirements> for further details.

Note that M.A. students admitted to the Ph.D. program must complete their M.A. degree before beginning their doctoral studies, or, under exceptional circumstances, until the end of their first term in the doctoral degree, at the latest.

### Conditional Admission

Students unable to meet one or more of the requirements for admission in full standing by the department may be granted conditional admission allowing them to begin graduate work while taking steps to satisfy admission in full standing requirements. The Department of Communication makes three types of conditional admissions:

1. **Low Grades:** Entering M.A. students whose undergraduate GPA is 2.75 to 2.99 may be admitted conditionally on recommendation of the department and approval of the Graduate College.
  - a. The department will specify up to the first twelve hours to be taken, which must be completed in one calendar year with a minimum 3.25 GPA earned and no letter grade below a “B.”
  - b. Credit hours may not be applied retroactively to satisfy this condition, nor may independent or directed readings hours be applied.
  - c. In accordance with Graduate College policy, this form of conditional admission is equivalent to academic probation.
2. **Course Work Deficiencies:** Entering M.A. students who do not have a baccalaureate degree in communication will usually be accepted into the program if their degree is in one of the social sciences.
  - a. Students holding degrees in other areas of study that have included little or no course work in communication or related areas may be required to complete some undergraduate communication hours before entering the Master’s degree program.
  - b. Entering Ph.D. students with a degree in another field and with less than 21 hours of undergraduate or graduate credit in communication may be required to complete up to 9 hours of undergraduate and/or graduate level supplemental courses in communication. The number and nature of the hours required will be contingent upon the extent of the deficiency.
  - c. The Department Chair and/or the Director of Graduate Studies in collaboration with appropriate faculty will specify the content courses and hours to be taken. Those supplemental hours will not include independent study, task group, or directed readings hours.
  - d. Supplemental courses must be completed within a specified time with a minimum of a 3.5 GPA.
  - e. The Department Chair, Director of Graduate Studies, or a specified faculty member will serve as the conditional student’s advisor until supplemental coursework is completed.
  - f. Hours taken to satisfy the course work deficiency may not be applied toward the Ph.D.
3. **Incomplete Credentials:** Students who have allowed insufficient time for receipt and processing of their application materials or who have not submitted all required materials may be admitted conditionally for one semester or summer term.
  - a. The student must satisfy the credentials requirement during that term.

- b. The student will either be accepted to the program or denied admission after the conditional semester or term is completed.

## Non-Degree Seeking Admission

There are two categories on non-degree seeking students:

### *Graduate visitors*

Graduate visitors are graduate students in good academic standing who are seeking an advanced degree at another accredited institution and are only plan to take coursework at OU in a limited basis.

Graduate visitors have all the rights and privileges of other graduate students EXCEPT they are not admitted to a graduate program and are not considered degree-seeking students at OU. The following requirements are in effect for graduate visitors:

- They must be a degree-seeking graduate student in good standing at another accredited university
- Graduate visitors are not required to provide transcripts.
- Graduate visitors are required to submit a letter of good standing from the dean or appropriate designate at the student's home institution.

### *Unclassified graduate students*

Unclassified graduate students are those who wish to take graduate level courses, not seeking a graduate degree or have not yet chosen an academic field of study.

Unclassified students

- are not candidates for a degree
- are not assured future admission to a degree program
- are not eligible for conditional admission
- are not typically eligible for financial aid
- are limited to a maximum of 12 hours in unclassified status

***International students are not eligible for the unclassified graduate status*** due to their student visa requirements that they be enrolled in a degree-seeking program.

The following requirements are in effect for such students:

- They must provide the transcript from the last degree-granting institution
- They must have earned at least a bachelor's degree from a regionally or nationally accredited institution
- They must have earned at least a 3.0 cumulative GPA on their most recent degree transcript (bachelor's or higher).

## Registration and Enrollment

Each semester, students can enroll in courses for the next semester(s). A hold may be placed on a student's enrollment (usually due to academic or bill-not-paid issues); such holds must be cleared prior to students being able to enroll in courses.

Full-time enrollment for GTAs holding a 0.5 FTE appointment is at least five credit hours during the fall and spring semester and three credit hours in the summer to be classified as a full-time student in the Graduate College. During their last semester of coursework, GTAs may enroll in fewer than five credit hours (three hours in the summer) and still be considered full-time students for the purpose of maintaining tuition waiver and FICA tax exemption. Students should submit the *Graduate Assistant Final Semester* form online (see <https://www.ou.edu/gradcollege/cost-and-aid/graduate-assistantship>) by the specified dates for each semester.

Full-time enrollment for graduate students who do not hold a 0.5 FTE appointment is nine or more credit hours during the fall and spring semesters and six credit hours in the summer.

International students can enroll in fewer than the required number of hours only due to a limited number of reasons. A reduced course load request must be submitted to and approved by the International Student Services. Please see <https://www.ou.edu/cis/iss/students/enrollment#rcl> for further information.

A graduate student may not carry more than sixteen credit hours per regular semester nor more than nine hours during summer session without permission from the Dean of the Graduate College.

Students working on a thesis or dissertation must maintain continuous enrollment as a student by enrolling in a minimum of 2 dissertation credit hours. Students can enroll in more hours; the number of hours required varies depending on the student's status (e.g., international), plan of study (e.g., number of hours listed), and any financial aid agreements. The student should consult with their advisor and/or Financial Aid Office to determine the appropriate number of hours for their enrollment.

### Lapsed Enrollment

A graduate student who has a lapse of enrollment for one calendar year must reapply for admission following the same procedures as used for first-time admission. After readmission, the student will be subject to the regulations applicable during the term of the first enrollment.

## Frequently Asked Questions by Graduate Applicants

### 1. **When is the deadline to apply?**

The application deadline is January 5<sup>th</sup> of each year for full funding consideration. If January 5<sup>th</sup> falls on a weekend, materials will be due on the following business day. Funding is unlikely for applications after January 5<sup>th</sup>. You may also apply by May 5<sup>th</sup> for fall admissions but with limited opportunities for funding.

### 2. **Do you admit students in the spring semester?**

We do not usually admit students for the Spring semester. Under exceptional circumstances, students may begin taking classes under the unclassified status described above. Please contact the Director of Graduate Studies for further information.

### 3. **Where do I send the application materials?**

All materials are submitted online. You can access the application through this link:

<http://www.ou.edu/gradcollege/apply>

More information from the Office of Admissions is available at:

<http://www.ou.edu/gradcollege/admissions>

### 4. **Do I need to take the GRE for admissions?**

No, the GRE is not required. We strongly encourage you to submit such scores with your application. Official GRE scores must be sent to the Graduate College from Educational Testing Service (ETS). You may provide a copy of your unofficial scores, but you will need to have official scores sent to the university if admitted.

### 5. **What codes do I use for the GRE?**

The school code is 6879; the Department of Communication code is 4599.

### 6. **When should I take the GRE so that you receive the scores before the deadline?**

We advise you to take the GRE before the end of December, well in advance of the January 5<sup>th</sup> deadline. Both Education Testing Service and the University of Oklahoma may take several days/weeks to process the before we receive them in the department. Please do not wait until the last minute to take the test.

### 7. **I have questions about TOEFL or English proficiency. Who can help me?**

All questions regarding TOEFL or English proficiency should be directed to the Office of Admissions. You can contact them via telephone at 405-325-2252 or check their web site for details at <http://www.ou.edu/gradcollege/admissions/international-applicants>. You can also e-mail them at [gradadm@ou.edu](mailto:gradadm@ou.edu).

International Students who wish to receive a teaching assistantship must be certified to instruct in English prior to the beginning of the semester. Refer to this link for additional information: <https://www.ou.edu/gradcollege/student-life/etcs>

**8. Is there an office that helps international students?**

Yes, please contact the International Student Services Office. Their web site is <http://www.ou.edu/content/cis/iss.html>. Their phone number is (405) 325-3337.

**9. If I have only completed my bachelor's degree, can I apply directly to the Ph.D. program?**

No, you will only be considered for the M.A. degree. Once you are in our M.A. program, you may apply for our Ph.D. program.

**10. Do I have to fill out a separate application to apply for an assistantship?**

No. The application for the Department of Communication is an automatic request for a graduate assistantship unless you state otherwise.

**11. I don't want to be considered for a graduate assistantship. What do I need to do?**

You can decline consideration for an assistantship in the online application.

# Master of Arts

## Requirements

The following core curriculum (6 hours) is required of all Master's students:

- COMM 5013: Introduction to Graduate Study. This class must be taken during the first fall of enrollment in the program
- COMM 5003: Quantitative Research Methods **OR** COMM 5313: Qualitative Research Methods

## Program Options

Master's students may follow one of two options in planning their program:

1. Non-thesis option: A minimum of 30 credit hours of coursework and a comprehensive examination or
2. Thesis option: A minimum of 30 credit hours of coursework (a minimum of 26 credit hours + four credit hours of thesis research, COMM 5980) and a thesis

Students are encouraged to take some coursework outside of the department. However, a minimum of 24 coursework hours of the student's M.A. must be in Communication courses.

No more than six hours of the course work for a Master's degree (excluding thesis, 5980) may be in Satisfactory/Unsatisfactory graded courses. Students may exceed the 6-hour limit on these courses only if they take hours beyond the minimum hours required for their degree. M.A. students should not take more than three hours of Directed Readings, which is letter graded.

## Advising and Permanent Advisor

Once accepted into the program, M.A. students can seek guidance from the Director of Graduate Studies. Students may also contact the departmental Academic Advisor to discuss their enrollment options and ask any questions. M.A. students are also assigned a first-year mentor by the Director of Graduate Studies to aid with advising. First-year mentors are based on students' stated interests in their statement of purpose and faculty availability. The goal is that there will be roughly equal distribution of the new students across faculty mentors from year to year.

Students should select a permanent advisor from the department's graduate faculty by the second semester. Students may but do not need to select their first-year mentor as their permanent advisor. Students must secure the agreement of the faculty member in question prior to listing that person as their advisor. The student, advisor, and Director of Graduate Studies must sign the ***Request for Appointment of Committee Chair*** form included at the end of this handbook and turn it in to the department for inclusion in the student's file. With the help of the permanent advisor, the student will develop a program of courses and research to meet their individual needs.

If a student wishes to change their advisor prior to submitting their ***Committee Membership*** form with the Graduate College, they need to (1) communicate this decision with their current advisor, (2) ensure the new advisor agrees to be their permanent advisor, and (3) obtain signatures from the new advisor and Director of Graduate Studies on an updated ***Request for Appointment of***

**Committee Chair** form, included at the end of this handbook, and turn it in to the department for inclusion in the student's file.

If a student wishes to change their advisor once their **Committee Membership** form has been approved (thesis students only), they will need to submit a **Request for Change in Committee** form with the Graduate College. Non-thesis students can change their committee membership without having to submit a **Request for Change in Committee** form. Non-thesis students need to notify the Director of Graduate Studies of the committee change in e-mail. Note, for thesis students, no change in committee membership is permitted 14 calendar days before the thesis defense, and for non-thesis students, no changes to the committee membership will be approved after the Graduate College has authorized the exam.

### Transfer Credit Limitations

No more than 25% of the credit hours required for the Master's degree may be transfer credit from another department at the University of Oklahoma or from another university. In order for transfer credits to be accepted toward a graduate degree, the transfer credit must:

1. Represent valid graduate credit earned in graduate level courses at an accredited university;
2. Carry a grade of A, B, or Satisfactory (B- does not transfer);
3. Not be more than five-years old at the time of admission;
4. Be applicable to the degree program;
5. Be approved by the department and the Dean of the Graduate College.

If a transfer course has the same title as a course taken at OU, the content of the course must be substantially different to count both courses for credit. To make this case, the student must provide a syllabus and a letter from the Director of Graduate Studies illustrating that the classes covered different content. This letter must be submitted to the Graduate College with the Admission to Candidacy Form.

Transfer credit is considered neutral in computing the University of Oklahoma grade point average. No graduate credit may be earned by advanced standing examinations. However, credit from a professional degree may be applied toward a graduate degree if it meets the criteria listed above. Credit hours may be counted toward satisfying the requirements for one Master's degree only, with the exception of approved dual-degree programs.

### Standards of Performance

All Master's degree students are required to maintain an overall 3.0 GPA in all graduate courses attempted.

One grade of C or lower will lead to a warning letter from the department. Should a student receive a second grade of C or lower or should their GPA drop below 3.0 for a term, the student will be placed on departmental academic probation and have a hold placed on their enrollment. To have this hold lifted, the student must propose a plan to improve their performance that needs to be approved by their advisor (or first year mentor) and the Director of Graduate Studies. The student will have a 9-hour probationary period (or the remaining number of hours in the program if less than 9 hours) during which they must not make lower than a B or earn a grade of U.

Should a student accumulate 3 or more grades of C, D, and/or F, they will be dismissed from the program.

The Graduate College will stop a student's enrollment if their GPA is less than 3.0 for more than one semester or if they earn a grade of U in two consecutive semesters. The Director of Graduate Studies will seek the input of the student's advisor, their advisory committee, and the department chair to determine whether a recommendation should be made to the Graduate College for the student to be permitted to continue in the program. If all parties involved decide not to make such a recommendation, the student will be dismissed from the program. If all parties involved agree to make such a recommendation, a plan to remedy the student's academic situation must be devised. The plan should outline all criteria, expectations, and conditions the study must satisfy to improve their performance. Should a student fail to fulfill these criteria, they will be dismissed from the program.

### Conducting Research

Any research students conduct utilizing human participants while attending the University of Oklahoma must obtain approval from the University of Oklahoma—Norman Campus Institutional Review Board (OU-NC IRB), *even if the individual is not collecting data from participants at the University of Oklahoma*. This standard applies to all research and not just the thesis. This approval must be obtained *before* any participants are recruited or data are collected. Before anyone can obtain IRB approval, he or she must complete the Collaborative IRB Training Initiative (CITI), which is required for all investigators. *A student should complete this training before submitting an IRB application, as otherwise, it will be returned.* For further information see <https://compliance.ouhsc.edu/HRPP>. If the student plans to utilize the Department of Communication Research Subject Pool (SONA), he or she should contact the SONA Administrator and consult the SONA guidelines for researchers.

### Time Limits for Completion

A student registered in the Master's program should complete all of the degree work within five calendar years after their first graduate enrollment at OU. The student's committee may request an extension to the Dean of the Graduate College, with endorsement from the Director of Graduate Studies.

### Program of Study

A Master's student who has done satisfactory graduate work and has maintained an overall GPA of 3.0 on all residence graduate level courses may be admitted to candidacy for the Master's degree.

All master's students need to complete a *Program of Study* form. This form must be submitted to the Director of Graduate Studies (first) and the Graduate College (once approved by the Director of Graduate Studies) no later than the first Monday in April for fall graduates, the first Monday in October for spring graduates, or the first Monday in March for summer graduates. All listed coursework on this form must have satisfactory grades and no incompletes.

Changes to the *Program of Study* form must be submitted in writing to the Graduate College and endorsed by the Director of Graduate Studies. The student should contact the Director of Graduate Studies to request approval for any changes before enrolling in coursework that is not listed on the program of study. Failure to follow this procedure could delay a student's thesis defense, non-thesis examination, and/or graduation.

All forms must be approved by the Graduate College before the student will be authorized to begin the non-thesis examination or thesis defense (described below).

### Details for Two Options

Master's students should choose between the thesis and non-thesis option for their program. A Master's student should choose between these options *as soon as possible*, in conjunction with their advisory committee, *especially when considering the thesis option*.

### Master's Thesis Option

The student should select a thesis topic and then prepare a thesis proposal in close consultation with their advisor. Different advisors have different expectations for the precise preparation of the proposal. In general, the proposal should include: A thorough discussion of relevant literature that situates the proposed study within the field of study, and provides context and support for the proposed research questions and/or hypotheses. Further, the proposal should discuss how the proposed study will make a valuable contribution to the scholarship in this area, as well as any relevant stakeholders. Finally, the proposal should discuss the proposed method and study design.

The student will submit the proposal to their committee after approval from the advisor. The committee will then meet with the student to discuss the proposed study. The student is required to hold this meeting, and in-person or virtual attendance by all advisory committee members is strongly encouraged. These meetings are open so that other interested faculty and graduate students can attend.

If the proposal is satisfactory, the committee will give the student permission to proceed with the proposed research. The results of the proposal meeting are documented in the departmental ***Thesis Proposal Approval Form***, which is located at the end of this handbook. This serves as a contract between the student and the committee after the defense of the proposal regarding the aspects that need to be revised in the proposal for the final thesis.

If the proposal is unsatisfactory, the committee will provide the student with specific feedback on necessary changes. The student will implement these changes in consultation with their advisor and resubmit the proposal to the committee for review, and if deemed necessary by the committee, a secondary meeting. Once the committee approves the revisions, the results of the proposal meeting are documented in the departmental ***Thesis Proposal Approval Form***.

***Thesis proposal meetings will not be scheduled in the summer.***

### Enrollment in Research for Thesis

Following initial enrollment in COMM 5980, which must be for a minimum of two hours, the Master's student must maintain continuous enrollment during each fall and spring semester until the degree requirements are completed or candidacy is discontinued. Thesis enrollment may need to be maintained during the summer semester. Requirements for full-time enrollment status are in effect while the student is engaged in thesis research. Taking no other course work and enrolling in only two hours of COMM 5980 does not constitute full-time status.

If a Master's student does not comply with the continuous enrollment policy, the student must enroll during the semester in which graduation is expected in the exact number of hours of COMM 5980 that would have been completed with continuous enrollment. In addition, a late enrollment fee must be paid for each missed semester. The final determination of the number of COMM 5980 hours in which the student must enroll in the final semester in the degree program, along with the collection of the appropriate fees, is the responsibility of the Graduate College, Office of the Registrar, and the Bursar's.

### Thesis Defense and Graduation

A student must be enrolled in at least two credit hours of 5980 and be in good academic standing during the semester in which the thesis defense is scheduled.

A student must be admitted to candidacy by the Graduate College before scheduling the thesis defense. The Program of Study form must be up to date. Any changes to this form must be approved by the Graduate College before the defense can be authorized. No later than the second week of the semester in which the student intends to defend the thesis, the student must complete the online *Request for Degree Check* form.

In preparation for writing the thesis, students should review the [Thesis/Dissertation Instruction Packet](#). This packet contains important information about research-related issues and copyright and explains the Graduate College formatting requirements for master's theses. If your thesis research may involve human subjects research, animal research, information that is protected from dissemination by applicable law or contract, or intellectual property that may potentially be patentable, you should discuss this with your committee chair as early as possible in the research process.

During the final semester, when the student has completed the thesis to the satisfaction of their advisor, a copy of the thesis should be provided to every committee member at least three weeks before the defense to allow committee members sufficient time to read the thesis in preparation for the oral defense. Committee members may request a paper or electronic copy.

Ten working days before the proposed defense date, the student must submit the ***Report of Reading Copy Submission and Request for Authority to Defend*** form to the Graduate College and receive authority to defend their thesis. At least five working days before the defense, the committee members must sign to affirm they have reviewed the reading copy and support the student's request for authority to defend. Only then will the student be authorized to defend their thesis. The student cannot defend until he or she has obtained this form. The result of an unauthorized thesis defense will not, under any circumstances, be considered valid.

As each thesis defense is public, the student is also responsible for posting a notice announcing the impending defense several days before it is to be held.

The M.A. thesis defense meeting cannot be held when a student's committee members are unavailable. Most faculty members are on 9-month appointments; therefore, summer thesis defenses will generally not be scheduled. Under extreme extenuating circumstances it may be possible to schedule a summer dissertation defense if the advisor and all the committee members are willing to do so.

A unanimous vote of the examining committee is expected. However, on occasion some dissenting reports are received. If one member of the examining committee dissents, the dissent is recognized as a minority report, and the student is still considered to have passed the defense. The committee member(s) who dissent from the majority opinion should not sign the Authority Report Form but should instead attach a memo explaining the rationale for their dissent. When a committee consists of more than three members and two dissent, the Dean of the Graduate College will investigate and make the final decision on the student's performance. If two members of a committee of three dissent, or more than two members of a committee of more than three members dissent, the performance is deemed unsatisfactory. *Only one attempt is afforded the candidate in defending the thesis.* If the defense is unsatisfactory, it cannot be repeated, and the student will be dismissed from the graduate program.

Within 72 hours after the thesis defense, the **Authority Report Form of the Thesis Defense** must be returned with the results and signatures of all committee members to the Graduate College. Within 60 days of the defense or by the deadline of the desired graduation semester (which is usually the last day of classes or the end of "dead" week), whichever is earlier, the student must deliver to the Graduate College a final version of the thesis in the form described in the instructions provided by the Graduate College to the SHAREOK system. Before submitting the final thesis to SHAREOK, the student must submit the **Approval for Thesis/Dissertation Submission to SHAREOK** form to the Graduate College. The committee members must sign this form to indicate the date by which the student completed all required revisions and is eligible to submit the final document to SHAREOK. If the thesis involves human subjects research, the student must also submit additional documentation (i.e., a study closure report) from the IRB. A student who does not submit the final thesis during the semester of the defense must enroll in at least two hours of 5980 during the semester in which the thesis is submitted.

The semester in which the thesis is submitted will be the semester of graduation if all other outstanding requirements for the degree have been completed.

### Master's Thesis Paperwork and Timetable at A Glance

Step	Due	Required Paperwork
Selection of advisor and committee	2 <sup>nd</sup> Semester (full-time) or Equivalent (part-time)	Request for Appointment of Committee Chair (Dept. Office)
Program of study/Admission to candidacy	1 <sup>st</sup> Monday in April (fall grads), 1 <sup>st</sup> Monday in October (spring grads), and 1 <sup>st</sup> Monday in March (summer grads).	Program of Study Form Master's Thesis Topic and Committee Membership Form (Graduate College)
Thesis proposal	Semester prior to beginning research	Proposal signed by all thesis advisory committee members (Dept. Office)
Request for degree check	Second week of the semester in which you plan to graduate	Degree Check Form (Grad College)

Apply for graduation	May 1 (fall grads), December 1 (spring grads), February 1 (summer grads).	Graduation Application (Office of the Registrar)
Thesis draft to committee	Three weeks before planned defense date	
Thesis defense request	Ten business days before planned defense date	Report of Reading Copy Submission and Request for Authority to Defend (Grad College)
Thesis defense	At the time scheduled + 72 hours after defense	Signed Authority Report Form for the Thesis Defense
Submission of thesis to SHAREOK	Within 60 days of defense or last day of classes (dead week), whichever is earlier	Approval for Thesis/Dissertation Submission to SHAREOK

### Master's Non-thesis Option

Non-thesis Master's students follow the same *Program of Study* procedures described above, but they are required to take a comprehensive examination instead of writing a thesis.

A student must be enrolled in at least two hours and be in good academic standing during the semester the non-thesis examination is scheduled. Furthermore, comprehensive exams may not be taken until all I's (incompletes) have been resolved.

A student must be admitted to candidacy by the Graduate College before scheduling the non-thesis examination. The Program of Study form must be up to date. Any changes to this form must be approved by the Graduate College before the exam can be authorized.

The exam requires the student to undertake a general review and integration of all studies. The examination typically consists of a written exam and may also include an oral portion if requested by any member of the examining committee. The exam is organized around fields of study rather than around courses and is not intended to repeat the final exams of actual courses. Eight hours are scheduled for the exams, which are usually divided among two 3-hour areas and one 2-hour area, as approved by the student's committee. One exam area must relate to a core course. All exams are closed book.

In preparation for the exam, students are expected to read and study beyond their course requirements.

Because the non-thesis examination is comprehensive, a student should complete all required or core courses and at least 75 percent of all coursework listed on the approved Program of Study form before taking the exam.

To schedule the examination and obtain the proper paperwork, the student must contact the Director of Graduate Studies at least two weeks prior to the planned examination date. The Director of Graduate Studies will request, on behalf of the student, authority from the Graduate College for the examination to be administered. Once authorization is secured, the student and

advisor will set the exact date of the exams. The result of an unauthorized exam will not, under any circumstances, be considered valid.

After the Dean of the Graduate College authorizes the exam, the student should arrange a time, place, and format for taking the examination with their doctoral committee and the Academic Advisor. Exams are administered in-person in Burton Hall or virtually via Zoom and Canvas. There are limited rooms and/or time options for exams. Rooms/Timeslots are assigned on a first come, first-serve basis, so it is *best to schedule the exam as early as possible*. The non-thesis examination should be held before the deadline indicated on the Academic Calendar.

The examining committee consists of at least three members from the faculty of the Department of Communication. Committee members should send their questions to the Academic Advisor at least one week prior to the start of the written exams. The comprehensive exam may not be held during the period of final course exams, when the university is not in session, or when a suitable committee cannot be assembled. The M.A. comprehensive exam cannot be held when a student's committee members are unavailable. Most faculty members are on 9-month appointments; therefore, summer exams will not be scheduled.

All committee members must be present if an oral portion is requested. Just as for the thesis option, the back of the Authority for Comprehensive Examination form must be returned to the Graduate College with the results and the signatures of all committee members within four weeks after the student has completed the comprehensive exam. The same dissenting procedures described for the thesis option apply to the non-thesis option. Unlike the one-shot chance at a thesis option, if a student fails the comprehensive exam, the exam may be repeated once in the following semester (at the earliest) at the discretion of the examining committee. The academic unit must administer a new exam for the student's second attempt. No more than two attempts to pass the non-thesis examination are permitted.

### Master's Non-thesis Paperwork and Timetable at A Glance

Steps	Due	Required Paperwork
Selection of advisor and committee	2 <sup>nd</sup> Semester (full-time) or Equivalent (part-time)	Request for Appointment of Committee Chair (Dept. Office)
Program of study/Admission to candidacy	1 <sup>st</sup> Monday in April (fall grads), 1 <sup>st</sup> Monday in October (spring grads), and 1 <sup>st</sup> Monday in March (summer grads).	Program of Study Form (Graduate College)
Apply for graduation	May 1 (fall grads), December 1 (spring grads), February 1 (summer grads).	Graduation Application (Office of the Registrar)
Schedule comprehensive exams	Final semester (75% coursework completed)	Memo from Director of Graduate Studies requesting permission to administer examination (Department)

Exams	At the time scheduled	
Oral Exam Defense (if requested by at least one committee member)	At the time scheduled	
Exams Results (Pass/Fail)	Within four weeks of completed exams	Signed Authority Report Form for the Non-Thesis Exam

# Doctor of Philosophy

## Requirements

The Ph.D. in the Department of Communication requires **at least 96** semester hours beyond the baccalaureate degree. The 96+ hours must be in a planned course of study approved and overseen by the student's advisor and advisory committee. *At least* 30 hours of coursework (excluding transfer credit and dissertation hours) must be in Communication.

## Core Requirements

Students must meet the requirements in place when they entered the program. The current requirements are:

COMM 5013 Introduction to Graduate Studies (which must be taken in the first year of studies in order to maintain enrollment).  
COMM 5003: Quantitative Research Methods  
COMM 5013: Introduction to Graduate Studies  
COMM 5313: Qualitative Research Methods  
COMM 6023: Research Task Group (6 hours)  
COMM 6314: History and Theory of Communication

AND one of the following:

COMM 5033: Advanced Statistics OR  
COMM 5323: Advanced Qualitative Methods

## Master's Degree Transfer Credits

Students may enroll in the Ph.D. program after completing a Master's degree in communication or a related discipline. The Ph.D. student's advisory committee will determine which courses from the Master's program may be counted as part of the Ph.D. program. ***The Department of Communication allows a maximum of 30 hours of Master's degree credit to be counted toward the Ph.D.*** All transfer credit must have a grade of A, B, or S. A student cannot transfer a course with a grade of B- or lower. The grades in these courses or the Master's GPA do not count toward the student's Ph.D. GPA.

If the student is transferring 30 hours from their Master's toward their Ph.D., the Graduate College can accept up to as many hours of thesis as counted for the Master's degree by the department (i.e., four hours).

If a transfer course has the same title as a course taken at OU, the content of the course must be substantially different to count both for credit. To make this case, the student must provide a syllabus and a letter from the Director of Graduate Studies illustrating the classes covered different content. This letter must be submitted to the Graduate College with the Admission to Candidacy form.

## Master's Degree plus Additional Hours Transfer Credits

On occasion the advisory committee may accept some graduate coursework completed beyond the Master's degree. Up to 44 semester hours of a Master's degree program plus post-Master's

course work may be applied toward a Ph.D. If students have a second Master's degree, they can transfer up to 14 hours from that degree, as long as the total number of hours transferred from the Master's degree and the post-Master's coursework does not exceed 44 hours. The advisory committee has complete discretion in determining the number of hours that may be applied to the prospective candidate's Ph.D. program. All graduate hours transferred from other institutions must meet the criteria concerning transfer credit. Any courses taken at the University of Oklahoma which were not part of a completed Master's degree cannot be more than five years old.

### Master's Degree Completion

Students accepted into Ph.D. are expected to complete the Master's degree prior to enrolling in the Ph.D. program. If a student fails to complete the Master's degree prior to enrolling in the Ph.D. program in the fall and has not completed the Master's degree by the end of their first semester in the Ph.D. program, they will lose their assistantship and tuition waiver and a stop will be placed on their enrollment in the Ph.D. program.

### S/U Graded Courses

No more than 18 hours of Ph.D. coursework beyond the Master's (excluding COMM 6980, Research for Doctoral Dissertation) may be graded S/U. Communication courses graded S/U are Independent Study and Research Task Group. Independent Study has a maximum of eight hours, and Research Task Group has a maximum of 15 hours. Students may take more than 18 hours of S/U coursework beyond the 96-hour requirement.

No more than nine hours of Ph.D. coursework beyond the Master's can be Directed Readings, which is letter-graded.

Regardless of how many hours of COMM 6980 (Research for the Doctoral Dissertation) are taken, the Ph.D. candidate, must take a minimum of two or a maximum of 15 hours that can be counted toward the 96 hours of coursework required for the Ph.D. degree.

### Time Limits for Completion

Ph.D. students who enter the program with a Master's degree are expected to take the Ph.D. general exams during the third or fourth year of their enrollment. Students are expected to pass the general examination within four calendar years of their first enrollment in a graduate course applied to the doctoral degree which was not applied to the master's degree. A student becomes a doctoral candidate upon successful completion of the general examination. A doctoral candidate is expected to complete all degree requirements, including the defense and final submission of the dissertation, within five calendar years after passing the general examination. When warranted, the department may determine that additional time is needed for a student to complete their degree requirements, in which case the student's committee (with endorsement from the Director of Graduate Studies) should request that the Dean of the Graduate College approve an extension. Approval of such extension requires the department to certify the student is current in the discipline and it is appropriate for the degree to be awarded. Certification may involve additional coursework or exams.

The department encourages all graduate assistants to take nine credit hours per semester (i.e., three graduate courses) because this allows students to meet the recommended timetable for their degree program.

### Standards of Performance

All Ph.D. students are expected to maintain an overall 3.25 GPA in all graduate courses attempted.

One grade of C or lower will lead to a warning letter from the department. Should a student receive a second grade of C or lower or should their GPA drop below 3.25 for a term, the student will be placed on departmental academic probation and have a hold placed on their enrollment. To have this hold lifted, the student must propose a plan to improve their performance that needs to be approved by their advisor (or first year mentor) and the Director of Graduate Studies. The student will have a 9-hour probationary period (or the remaining number of hours in the program if less than 9 hours) during which they must not make lower than a B or earn a grade of U. Should a student accumulate 3 or more grades of C, D, and/or F, they will be dismissed from the program.

The Graduate College will stop a student's enrollment if their GPA is less than 3.0 for more than one semester or if they earn a grade of U in two consecutive semesters. The Director of Graduate Studies will seek the input of the student's advisor, their advisory committee, and the department chair to determine whether a recommendation should be made to the Graduate College for the student to be permitted to continue in the program. If all parties involved decide not to make such a recommendation, the student will be dismissed from the program. If all parties involved agree to make such a recommendation, a plan to remedy the student's academic situation must be devised. The plan should outline all criteria, expectations, and conditions the study must satisfy to improve their performance. Should a student fail to fulfill these criteria, they will be dismissed from the program.

Graduate students can have no more than 3 incompletes (or 9 hours of "I") to attain a satisfactory annual performance rating and not endanger their graduate teaching assistantship. Once a student has a 3<sup>rd</sup> incomplete, they have one semester to remove this incomplete or else jeopardize their annual performance rating and, if applicable, their graduate teaching assistantship.

A student admitted conditionally (low grades, course work deficiencies, or incomplete credentials) to the Ph.D. program who does not satisfy the terms specified in the ***Statement of Conditional Admission*** will be denied further enrollment.

### Advising

Once accepted into the program, Ph.D. students can seek guidance from the Director of Graduate Studies. Students may also contact the departmental Academic Advisor to discuss their enrollment options and ask any questions. Ph.D. students are also assigned a first-year mentor by the Director of Graduate Studies to aid with advising. First-year mentors are based on students' stated interests in their statement of purpose and faculty availability. The goal is that there will be roughly equal distribution of the new students across faculty mentors from year to year.

### Permanent Advisor

Students must secure their permanent advisor from among the department's graduate faculty. Students may but do not need to select their first-year mentor as their permanent advisor.

Permission to become a faculty member's permanent advisee must be secured from the faculty member in question. *Full-time Ph.D. students should obtain a permanent advisor by the end of their first year of enrollment.* Part-time Ph.D. students should secure a permanent advisor by the end of their first twelve hours of course work in the department. The student, advisor, and Director of Graduate Studies must sign the ***Request for Appointment of Committee Chair*** form included at the end of this handbook and turn it in to the department office for inclusion in the student's file. The permanent advisor and the student collaborate in selecting an advisory conference/doctoral committee for the prospective candidate typically *by the end of the third semester in the program.* Self-advising is most strongly discouraged, as it often leads to future difficulties for the student.

If a student wishes to change their advisor prior to submitting their ***Advisory Conference Report*** with the Graduate College, they need to (1) communicate this decision with their current advisor, (2) ensure the new advisor agrees to be their permanent advisor, and (3) obtain signatures from the new advisor and Director of Graduate Studies on an updated ***Request for Appointment of Committee Chair*** form, included at the end of this handbook, and turn it in to the department for inclusion in the student's file.

If a student wishes to change their advisor once their ***Advisory Conference Report*** has been approved, they will need to submit a ***Request for Change in Committee*** form with the Graduate College. Note, no change in committee membership is permitted 30 calendar days before the general examination or the dissertation defense.

## Committee

The advisory committee consists of a minimum of three departmental members and one Graduate College representative. The advisory committee may be more than four members as long as the number of regular faculty departmental members outnumbers the number of members from outside the department. The student must have selected an advisor and committee members prior to the Advisory Conference meeting.

The Graduate College representative must be at every meeting of the committee throughout the student's doctoral program. The Graduate College representative cannot be from the College of Law, the Health Sciences Center, or be an adjunct faculty, a faculty member from another institution, or retired. If a student's Graduate College representative retires, they must be replaced. Students can designate co-chairs, but one person must be designated as the primary chair on all paperwork. In addition, the primary chair cannot be the Graduate College representative. On thesis/dissertation signature pages, chair and co-chair can both be listed as co-chairs by petition.

Students should offer paper or electronic copies of anything they send to their committee members (e.g., Advisory Conference form, Dissertation proposal, and final dissertation reading copy) to allow the members their preference.

## Plan of Study Meeting and the Advisory Conference Report

The first responsibility of the advisory committee is to meet with the student to assist in planning the student's Ph.D. program, taking into consideration the student's strengths and deficiencies and, if necessary, suggesting ways to overcome any deficiencies. ***Students should have the plan***

*of study meeting at least by the end of their third semester in the Ph.D. program.* Otherwise, they chance either taking classes that will not apply to their program or that a committee member will request that a student take a class not originally planned, potentially lengthening a student's time in the program, and potentially not being covered by a tuition waiver.

At the plan of study meeting, the student and their committee discuss the ***Advisory Conference Report Form*** (ACR; see below). The ACR lists all coursework to be applied to the doctoral degree to meet the 96-hour requirement, identifies all members of the student's advisory conference committee, and requires approval of all committee members and the Director of Graduate Studies. The committee members decide how much of the Master's program credit can be applied to the Ph.D., with a maximum of 30 hours. The committee members also select research methods the student should take and determine a tentative calendar for the student's degree completion.

Instructions for filling out the advisory conference report and the form itself can be found at <https://www.ou.edu/gradcollege/forms-and-policies/forms>, by scrolling down to Doctoral Forms. Always check this place (instead of using the form included in this handbook) to ensure you have the latest version of the document.

***Students should check with the Director of Graduate Studies prior to their plan of study meeting and definitely before submitting the ACR to the Graduate College to ensure their ACR meets requirements for courses, limits of transfer credit, etc.***

After the Plan of Study meeting is held, the student is responsible for finalizing their ACR and requesting its approval by the Dean of the Graduate College via the online Doctoral Advisory Conference Report (ACR) Submission form (on the same page indicated above where the form is available). Once the Graduate College reviews the form, it will be sent to the Director of Graduate Studies and the student's committee for signatures.

Any changes to the approved ACR require the approval of the Dean of the Graduate College. To make changes after the ACR has been approved, the student must complete a new ACR document and request approval via the online Doctoral Advisory Conference Report (ACR) Submission form. The Graduate College will notify the student, committee, and Director of Graduate Studies to confirm final approval or denial of the updated ACR.

***Plan of study meetings will not be scheduled in the summer.***

---

## ADVISORY CONFERENCE REPORT

---

### INSTRUCTIONS

The Advisory Conference Report (ACR) lists all the coursework and credits needed to fulfill the [requirements](#) of your doctoral degree program. **Before scheduling your advisory conference and completing this form, you should review:**

- The "Information for Doctoral Students" section of the [Graduate College Bulletin](#), and
- the [Doctoral Degree Requirements](#) check sheet for your program.

**To submit your ACR, upload this document via the online [Doctoral Advisory Conference Report \(ACR\) Submission form](#). Other means of submission (email, hard copy) will not be accepted.**

### TIMELINE *for the* GENERAL EXAMINATION

- **If you entered the program with a master’s degree:** Your deadline for the doctoral general examination will be determined by the oldest course on the ACR that was not applied to your master’s degree. You will have four (4) years from this course to pass the exam.
- **If you entered the program with a bachelor’s degree:** Your deadline for the doctoral general examination will be determined by the oldest course on the ACR. You will have five (5) years from this course to pass the exam.

STUDENT INFORMATION			
Enter your name, OU ID, major, name of degree (Ph.D., D.M.A. or Ed.D.) and previously awarded degrees below.			
<b>Name:</b>		<b>OU ID:</b>	
<b>Major:</b>		<b>Name of Degree:</b>	
<b>Previously Awarded Degrees:</b>			

TOOLS of RESEARCH
If your <i>Doctoral Degree Requirements</i> check sheet includes Tools of Research, indicate below how and when you will fulfill this requirement. Otherwise, skip this section.
<i>COMM NOTE: We do not have any required tools of research courses</i>

#### **How to List Coursework on the ACR**

- **Do not list any coursework that is not applicable to your doctoral degree.** No undergraduate credit may be used.
- Within each section of the ACR, list courses **in the order they were/will be completed.**
- For each course, list the **course prefix and number** (if they are on the transcript), **course title, grade, semester and year** (e.g., SP21 for Spring 2021), **semester hours** and **institution**. Section numbers are not necessary.
  - List information **exactly** as it appears on your transcript(s).
- **You may insert or delete rows from each section as needed, but do not insert or delete entire sections.**

<b>The following section is for coursework taken after admission to the doctoral program.</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• For <b>courses taken more than once</b>, such as seminars or independent studies, list each enrollment on a separate line.           <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Incorrect: “BIOL 5990 Independent Study, 6 hours, FA20-SP21.”</li> <li>○ Correct: “BIOL 5990 Independent Study, 3 hours, FA20. BIOL 5990 Independent Study, 3 hours, SP21.”</li> </ul> </li> <li>• <b>Do not include each semester of dissertation research hours (6980) here.</b> Instead, list the total of dissertation hours at the end of the ACR in the “Summary of Credit Hours” table.</li> <li>• <b>For coursework you have not yet completed:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Do not enter anything in the “grade” column.</li> <li>○ Be as specific as possible with the other information. If the semester &amp; year is blank or placeholder course information is listed, approval of your ACR will be delayed until complete information is provided.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• If you plan to <b>enroll concurrently at another institution</b>, your academic unit must request Graduate College approval in advance.</li> </ul>

COURSEWORK TAKEN WHILE ENROLLED <i>in</i> OU DOCTORAL PROGRAM					
Course Prefix & Number	Course Name	Grade	Semester & Year	Semester Hours	Institution
				<b>Total Hours:</b>	

The following two sections are for master’s degree credit and other credit taken before admission to the doctoral program. When combined, hours transferred from other institutions and OU hours taken before admission to the doctoral

program may not constitute more than 49 percent of the hours required for the doctoral degree. **For a 90-hour program, this limit is 44 semester hours.**

**Course Age Limits**

- For credit applied to a completed master’s degree, there are no age limits.
- For other types of credit, coursework taken more than five (5) years before admission or readmission to the doctoral program may not be applied to the degree. (For example, a student admitted in Fall 2020 may not use credit older than Fall 2015.)

**Transfer Credit Information**

- For credit taken at another institution, ensure that you have submitted an **official, complete transcript** to the [Office of Graduate Admissions](#). For master’s degree credit, the transcript must indicate conferral of the degree.
- Do not list credit that does not meet all [Graduate College Bulletin](#) criteria for transfer credit applied to the doctoral degree.
- Quarter hour credits must be **converted to semester hours** on the ACR (3 quarter hours = 2 semester hours). For work from an institution outside the U.S., contact the [Office of Graduate Admissions](#) to determine the semester hour equivalency.

**The following section is for coursework that was applied to a completed master’s degree.**

- Credit for thesis research is limited to the number of thesis research hours required for the equivalent OU master’s degree (maximum 6).
- For OU master’s degree credit, use your *Program of Study* form to help you complete this section. Contact the Graduate College if you do not have a copy of this form.
  - If you completed any coursework while pursuing the master’s degree that was not listed on the *Program of Study*, it should be listed in the next section instead.

COURSEWORK FORMING COMPLETED MASTER’S DEGREE					
Course Prefix & Number	Course Name	Grade	Semester & Year	Semester Hours	Institution
<b>Total Hours:</b>					

**The following section is for coursework completed before admission to the OU doctoral program that was not already applied to a degree.**

Coursework taken more than five (5) years before admission or readmission to the doctoral program may not be applied to the degree. If you have coursework to list in this section, the oldest course listed will determine your deadline to complete the general examination.

- If you entered with a master's, you would have four (4) years from this course to pass the exam. If you entered with a bachelor's instead, you would have five (5) years from this course to pass the exam.
- If this would cause your general exam deadline to be in the past, the course cannot be applied to your doctoral degree.

OTHER COURSEWORK COMPLETED PRIOR to DOCTORAL ADMISSION					
Course Prefix & Number	Course Name	Grade	Semester & Year	Semester Hours	Institution
<b>Total Hours:</b>					

Below, list the total hours from each of the previous three sections, the total number of dissertation research hours that will be applied to your degree, and the total overall hours (must be at least 90).

- Most programs specify a minimum and/or maximum number of dissertation research hours that may be applied to the doctoral degree requirements.
- Dissertation research only includes 6980, Research for the Doctoral Dissertation (for D.M.A. students, research only includes MUS 6880, Doctor of Musical Arts Project). Thesis research, independent studies and special studies do not count toward the dissertation research requirement.

SUMMARY of CREDIT HOURS	
Type of Credit	Semester Hours
Coursework Taken While Enrolled in OU Doctoral Program	<i>COMM NOTE: List total number of PhD hours (required + elective courses) here</i>
Coursework Forming Completed Master's Degree	<i>COMM NOTE: List number of MA hours imported here. You may import up to 30 hours</i>
Other Coursework Completed Prior to Doctoral Admission	
Dissertation Hour Total	<i>COMM NOTE: List total number of dissertation hours here. Must be between 2 and 15 hours</i>
<b>Total Hours</b> (at least 90 required)	<i>COMM NOTE: Total must be 96 hours</i>

Your Graduate College academic advisor will contact you at your OU email address after reviewing your ACR. When your ACR is approved, your academic advisor will send official notification to you, your committee, and your academic unit.

### Graduate Student Enrollment in Off Campus Courses

Under normal circumstances, graduate students accepted into the Department of Communication Norman Campus Graduate Program (MA or Ph.D.) should not enroll in OU Online or similar courses as part of their program of study. One exception to this is if a student enrolled in a degree-seeking program in an off-campus program and later is accepted into a Norman Campus MA or Ph.D. program. Those credits would count the same as if they were taken on campus. A non-degree seeking graduate student enrolled in OU Online classes, who is accepted into the MA or Ph.D. program later, can only include 12 hours of non-degree seeking coursework as part of a plan of study by university policy. Any other exception to take off-campus courses needs unanimous approval by the student's advisory committee, the Director of Graduate Studies, and the department chair.

### Change in Committee Membership

A student must submit the online **Request for Change in Committee** form to change any of their Advisory Committee members. This form requires approval from all committee members, including those being removed, with the exception of anyone no longer associated with the University of Oklahoma. If faculty members on leave will not be available during their absence, the academic unit chair/director will have authority, with approval of the Dean of the Graduate College, to act for them on these changes. The Graduate College will notify the student, committee, and Director of Graduate Studies to confirm final approval or denial of the changes requested.

No change in committee membership is permitted 30 calendar days before the general examination or the dissertation defense.

If a member of a student's committee terminates employment with or retires from the university and wishes to continue to serve, that member in consultation with the student must request, in

writing, permission from the Dean of the Graduate College to be appointed as a special member. *This does not apply to the Graduate College representative, who must be replaced.* If the chair retires, he or she can remain on the committee as a co-chair, and a current member of the departmental graduate faculty must be designated as the other co-chair. The following criteria must be met for a member who is leaving the university to remain on a student's committee:

1. The faculty member must be *willing to consult regularly* with the student, read the student's dissertation, and attend the student's final dissertation oral examination. All of these must be accomplished at no cost to the university.
2. The student must have *passed the general examination before* the faculty member leaves the university.
3. The student should be in the *final year* of dissertation research.

Note that a special member may or may not count towards departmental majority on committees, which means another regular departmental faculty member may need to be added to the committee to meet the required committee composition.

### General Examination

When students have completed their coursework (or have completed all required coursework and are in their final semester of elective only courses), they can request to take the general exam. The student must be enrolled in at least two hours of graduate credit during the semester they take the general exam.

The student's ACR must be up to date and approved by the Graduate College before the student may apply to take the general examination. A student should be in good academic standing during the semester the general examination is scheduled. Also, the general exam cannot be taken until all "I" (incomplete) grades on a student's transcript have been resolved.

The student must complete the ***General Exam Application for the Doctoral Degree*** form and submit it to the Graduate College. The form is available at <https://www.ou.edu/gradcollege/forms-and-policies/forms>. The form must be submitted no later than 10 days into the semester in which the exam will be taken.

If the examination can be approved, the Graduate College will issue the Authority Report Form for the General Examination to the doctoral committee, the student, and the Director of Graduate Studies. The student may not begin work on the written portion of the exam until this form has been issued. The result of an unauthorized exam will not, under any circumstances, be considered valid.

Individuals must complete both the written and oral exam in the semester for which the exam is authorized. The exam may not be scheduled during final examination periods or when the doctoral committee cannot be assembled.

The department recommends that students schedule the written exams before April 1<sup>st</sup> during the spring semester and before November 1<sup>st</sup> during the Fall semester to ensure adequate time before the oral defense. Any exceptions require the approval of all committee members and the Director of Graduate Studies.

After the Dean of the Graduate College authorizes the exam, the student should arrange a time, place, and format for taking the examination with their doctoral committee and the Academic Advisor. There are limited rooms and/or time options for exams. Rooms/Timeslots are assigned on a first come, first-serve basis, so it is *best to schedule the exam as early as possible*.

The student's doctoral committee will prepare and conduct the general examination. The general exam will consist of a written portion followed by an oral portion in the presence of the entire committee.

Topics and hours for the exams are developed by the student's advisor in conjunction with the student. The adviser will send the other members of the student's committee a list of topics and the number of hours allowed for each topic. Once the committee has approved the distribution of hours, the student should meet with each committee member to discuss the exams and receive any reading list that the faculty may wish for the student to review. Committee members should send their questions to the Academic Advisor at least one week prior to the start of the written exams.

The written portion of the exam is divided into two parts. These two parts together must be 16 to 18 hours in length:

1. First, the exam consists of questions on communication theory and methods, with three to four hours of questions for each of these areas. These two exams are closed book.
2. Second, the exam consists of questions individually tailored for the student, considering their area (and sub-areas) of specialty, course work, dissertation topic, etc. Each faculty member writing questions will determine if these questions could include any notes.
3. Exams are administered in-person in Burton Hall or virtually via Zoom and Canvas.
4. ***Exam questions will not be provided in advance.***
5. The written portion of the exam should be spread over a time period not to exceed two weeks.

Generally, students should orally defend their answers as soon as possible after the faculty have two weeks to read them. A student may not proceed to the oral portion until the written portion has been satisfactorily completed.

If the result of the written portion is satisfactory, the student may proceed to the oral portion as scheduled.

If the result of the written portion is marginal, but not unsatisfactory, the committee may choose either to proceed to the oral portion and make a determination about the result of the exam after the oral portion is complete or to submit a request to the Graduate College to hold the result of the exam in abeyance.

If the result of the written portion is unsatisfactory, the student has failed the general examination and may not proceed to the oral portion.

A written report signed by all committee members must be submitted to the Dean of the Graduate College within 72 hours after the oral portion of the exam. The report should indicate whether the student passed or failed the examination. If the student passes the exam, the Dean of the Graduate College will admit the student to candidacy for the doctoral degree.

If all or any portion of the general exam is failed, a report must be submitted to the Dean of the Graduate College indicating a failure on the examination. A student who has failed the first attempt of the general examination may, at the discretion of the committee, attempt the exam a

second time in a following semester. If the committee and the Director of Graduate Studies approve the second attempt, the student must submit a new General Exam Application for the Doctoral Degree to the Graduate College. Both the written portion and the oral portion must be repeated. The committee must administer a new exam for the student's second attempt. If a student fails any portion of the general exam on the second attempt, he or she will be terminated from the doctoral program. No portion of the exam may be taken a third time.

If the result of either portion of the general examination is marginal, but not unsatisfactory, and the committee wishes the student to do further reading, investigations, etc., the committee can request to hold the result of the exam in abeyance. The committee and Director of Graduate Studies may submit a written request for abeyance to the Dean of the Graduate College. The request must identify the additional work required of the student and state a specific time period, usually limited to two months, during which the student must complete the extra work. If the request for abeyance is approved by the Dean of the Graduate College, the student may complete the additional work specified by the doctoral committee.

At the end of the time approved for abeyance, the committee must report its decision to the Graduate College on the Authority Report Form for the General Examination by indicating a "satisfactory" or "unsatisfactory" result for each portion.

If the request for abeyance is denied by the Dean of the Graduate College, the committee must report the unsatisfactory result of the examination to the Graduate College on the Authority Report Form for the General Examination.

In the event that the committee does not reach a unanimous decision, the committee member(s) who dissent from the majority opinion should not sign the Authority Report Form but should instead attach a memo explaining the rationale for the dissent. The Dean of the Graduate College will review the dissenting opinion and may choose to confer with the dissenting member(s), the committee chair or the entire committee. The decision of the Dean of the Graduate College is final.

If the authorized general examination is not held during the period for which it was authorized, the Director of Graduate Studies or committee chair must notify the Graduate College in writing as to why the exam was not held and the authority form must be returned marked "Not Taken." The exam must then be rescheduled for a future term and the student must submit a new General Exam Application for the Doctoral Degree.

***General exams will not be scheduled in the summer.***

### Dissertation Proposal Meeting

At some time, usually near the time of the general exam, the student, in collaboration with their advisor, will determine a dissertation topic. Sometime after the general exam has passed, the student prepares a dissertation proposal in close consultation with their advisor. Different advisors have different expectations for the precise preparation of the proposal. In general, the proposal should include: A thorough discussion of relevant literature that situates the proposed study within the field of study, and provides context and support for the proposed research questions and/or hypotheses. Further, the proposal should discuss how the proposed study will make a valuable contribution to the scholarship in this area, as well as any relevant stakeholders. Finally, the proposal should discuss the proposed method and study design.

The student will submit the proposal to their committee after approval from the advisor. The committee will then meet with the student to discuss the proposed study. The student is required to hold this meeting, and in-person or virtual attendance by all advisory committee members is strongly encouraged. These meetings are open so that other interested faculty and graduate students can attend.

If the proposal is satisfactory, the committee will give the student permission to proceed with the proposed research. The results of the proposal meeting are documented in the departmental ***Dissertation Proposal Approval Form***, which is located at the end of this handbook. This serves as a contract between the student and the committee after the defense of the proposal regarding the aspects that need to be revised in the proposal for the final dissertation.

If the proposal is unsatisfactory, the committee will provide the student with specific feedback on necessary changes. The student will implement these changes in consultation with their advisor and resubmit the proposal to the committee for review, and if deemed necessary by the committee, a secondary meeting. Once the committee approves the revisions, the results of the proposal meeting are documented in the departmental ***Dissertation Proposal Approval Form***.

***Dissertation proposal meetings will not be scheduled in the summer.***

### Preparation for Dissertation

In preparation for writing the dissertation, students should review the [Thesis/Dissertation Instruction Packet](#). This packet contains important information about research-related issues and copyright and explains the Graduate College formatting requirements for doctoral dissertations. If your dissertation research may involve human subjects research, animal research, information that is protected from dissemination by applicable law or contract, or intellectual property that may potentially be patentable, you should discuss this with your committee chair as early as possible in the research process.

To obtain a Ph.D. from the University of Oklahoma, any research utilizing human participants must be approved by the University of Oklahoma—Norman Campus Institutional Review Board (OU-NCIRB), ***even if the individual is collecting data from participants at a location other than the University of Oklahoma.*** This approval must be obtained ***before*** any participants are recruited or data collected. If the dissertation utilizes participants from any other university or is affiliated with any other university, then permission must be obtained from that university's IRB board as well.

Before one can obtain IRB approval, he or she must complete the Collaborative IRB Training Initiative (CITI), which is required for all investigators. *Students should complete this training before submitting any IRB applications, as otherwise, the applications will be returned.* For further information, see <https://compliance.ouhsc.edu/HRPP>. If the student plans to utilize the Department of Communication Research Subject Pool (SONA), he or she should contact the SONA Administrator and consult the SONA guidelines for researchers.

Any graduate student traveling outside of the United States for academic purposes (e.g., research) should check with Export Controls

([https://www.ou.edu/exportcontrols/export\\_controls\\_andinternationaltravel](https://www.ou.edu/exportcontrols/export_controls_andinternationaltravel)) about any additional requirements pertaining to their travel.

### Enrollment in Research for Doctoral Dissertation

Doctoral students in the Department of Communication may only enroll in dissertation hours during their final semester of elective coursework, when they are taking their general examination, or after successfully passing their general examination. Any exceptions must be cleared with the Director of Graduate Studies. The initial enrollment in COMM 6980 must be for at least two credit hours. Following initial enrollment in COMM 6980, the student must maintain continuous enrollment in at least two hours of COMM 6980 during each regular spring and fall semester until the degree requirements are completed or the degree candidacy is discontinued. The number of hours for each semester will be determined by the faculty based on the amount of faculty and university services required by the individual student. A graduate assistant holding a 0.5 FTE appointment will be required to enroll in at least five hours of COMM 6980 during the fall and spring semesters to be considered a full-time student. Dissertation enrollment may also need to be maintained during the summer semester.

Regardless of the total number of hours of COMM 6980 accumulated while working on the dissertation, no less than two or more than 15 will be counted toward the Ph.D. requirements.

The number of hours of COMM 6980 the student must enroll in during the final semester of the degree program, along with the collection of the appropriate fees, is the responsibility of the Graduate College, the Office of the Registrar, and the Bursar's.

### Reading Copy of the Dissertation/Preparation for the Final Oral Examination

Prior to the semester when you plan to defend your dissertation and graduate...

- A. Apply for graduation at the beginning of the semester by completing the [Application for Graduation](#) to the Office of the Registrar. See the Graduate College Bulletin or the Graduate College website for deadlines for each semester.

In the semester when you plan to defend your dissertation and graduate...

- A. Submit the online Request for Degree Check to the Graduate College no later than the end of the second week of the semester.
- B. At least **four weeks before** the intended defense date (i.e., 10 business days before submitting the Request for Authority for Dissertation Defense form to the Graduate College):
  - a. **Provide committee members a reading copy of the dissertation.**
    - i. If at least four committee members view the dissertation to be acceptable to proceed with oral defense, proceed with the planned defense.
    - ii. If they reject it, the student will be given another opportunity to submit an acceptable dissertation to the committee.
- C. **At least 10 business days** before the planned defense date submit the *Report of Reading Copy Submission and Request for Authority to Defend* to the Graduate College.

In other words, the committee members should have the dissertation at least a month (20 business days) prior to the scheduled defense date. This is two weeks (ten working days) before the student plans to turn in the *Report of Reading Copy Submission and Request for Authority to Defend*. This form must be turned in two weeks (ten working days) prior to the actual defense date.

This long lead-time for a defense is designed to protect the student. If the dissertation defense is unsatisfactory, then: (a) the committee decision is final, and a defense cannot be repeated and (b) the student will be disenrolled from the Graduate College and the student's candidacy for the doctoral degree will be terminated. The one-month lead time allows committee members to read the dissertation prior to turning in the *Report of Reading Copy Submission and Request for Authority to Defend* and allows the defense to be delayed until the dissertation is considered defensible by the committee rather than resulting in an unsatisfactory defense.

The reading copy should be in an acceptable dissertation format and must include all figures and tables, numbered pages, and a complete bibliography. It should not contain grammatical or spelling errors.

During the first two weeks after they receive it, all members of the student's doctoral committee read and determine whether the dissertation demonstrates the student's ability to conduct original research and makes a significant contribution to the communication discipline prior to the submission of the *Report of Reading Copy Submission and Request for Authority to Defend*. If they reject it, the student will be given another opportunity to submit an acceptable dissertation to the committee. If they accept it and a degree check indicates that the student has completed all course work with acceptable grades, the student may schedule the final oral examination by turning in the *Report of Reading Copy Submission and Request for Authority to Defend* to the Graduate College at least ten working days (two weeks) before the dissertation defense date.

## Dissertation Defense

The defense must occur during the semester for which authorization is given by the Graduate College. All members of the doctoral committee, including the Graduate College representative and the advisor, must participate in the examination. Because faculty members are on 9-month appointments, summer dissertation defenses will generally not be scheduled. Under extreme extenuating circumstances it may be possible to schedule a summer dissertation defense if the advisor and all the committee members are willing to do so.

The final oral examination is a defense of the dissertation and is open to the public. The student is responsible for posting a notice of the impending dissertation defense several days before it is to occur.

When applying to the Graduate College via the *Report of Reading Copy Submission and Request for Authority to Defend* form, the candidate will be issued the **Authority Report Form for the Dissertation Defense**. After the defense, the Committee must report its decision by completing this form and returning it to the Graduate College within 72 hours after the oral defense.

A unanimous vote of the committee is expected. However, on occasion some dissenting reports are received. If one member of the committee dissents, the dissent is recognized as a minority report, and the student is still considered to have passed the defense. When there are two

dissents, the Dean of the Graduate College will investigate and make the final decision on the student's performance. If more than two members of the committee dissent, the performance will be unsatisfactory.

### Post-Defense and Graduation

In most cases, even though the student's committee has agreed that the student successfully defended the dissertation, the committee will request several changes to the dissertation prior to submitting it to the Graduate College. These changes can range from minor corrections of errors to more substantive changes such as additional analysis or revisions of the discussion section. These changes will be specified at the defense. Once those changes are approved by the advisor and/or committee, the dissertation is ready for submission.

To submit their dissertation, students should submit the online ***Approval for Thesis/Dissertation Submission to SHAREOK*** form to the Graduate College, which will need to be signed by all committee members. IRB documentation indicating the study has been closed (if your dissertation involved human subjects research) will also be needed when submitting this form. Finally, students should submit their dissertation to SHAREOK according to the instructions provided in the thesis/dissertation instruction packet.

### Ph.D. Paperwork and Expected Timetable at a Glance

Step	Due	Required Paperwork
Selection of advisor	2 <sup>nd</sup> semester (full time) or equivalent (part-time)	Request for Appointment of Committee Chair (Department)
Selection of committee and Plan of study meeting	3 <sup>rd</sup> semester or equivalent	Advisory Conference Report (Graduate College)
General exam	3 <sup>rd</sup> Year (i.e., 6 <sup>th</sup> semester)	General Exam Application for the Doctoral Degree (Graduate College)
Admission to candidacy	3 <sup>rd</sup> Year (i.e., 6 <sup>th</sup> semester)	Written report of general exam results submitted to the Graduate College within 72 hours of oral exam
Dissertation proposal	After completing general exams (i.e., 6 <sup>th</sup> or 7 <sup>th</sup> semester)	Dissertation proposal Approval form (Department)
Planning to graduate	End of the semester prior Beginning of the final semester	Application for Graduation (Registrar) Degree check (Graduate College)
Submission of dissertation	Final semester four weeks prior to expected defense date	Complete dissertation to all committee members
Scheduling the defense	Final semester two weeks prior to defense date if	Report of Reading Copy Submission and Request for

	dissertation has been approved by committee	Authority to Defend (Graduate College)
Dissertation defense	Final semester prior to last week of classes	Authority Report Form for the Dissertation Defense
Submit dissertation	Final semester after successful dissertation, by the last day of classes (end of “dead” week)	Approval for Thesis/Dissertation Submission to SHAREOK Final Copy submitted to SHAREOK Embargo form (optional)
Cleared for graduation		Per graduation requirements

# Annual Reviews

## Annual Review of Graduate Students

In the spring semester of every academic year The Department of Communication conducts annual reviews and evaluations of its graduate students' progress in meeting degree requirements. The student's faculty advisor/first year mentor conducts this review. Participation in this review is mandatory. Failure to participate may result in an unsatisfactory evaluation, which may impede progress to degree completion as well as future graduate assistantship positions.

## Evaluation Criteria

All aspects of a student's performance are evaluated including but not limited to:

- timely completion of the coursework required for the degree
- completion of applicable milestones: plan of study, comprehensive/general examinations, thesis/dissertation proposal, thesis/dissertation defense
- progress made in advancing research program and conference presentations/publications
- quality of all the above

## Evaluation Process

The Director of Graduate Studies or departmental academic advisor will distribute, via OU email, the annual review form to be completed.

Students should complete the form and return a copy of it to their advisor/first year mentor, the departmental academic advisor, and the Director of Graduate Studies by the date indicated in the initial email and/or on the annual review form. Students who are on leave of absence and/or not actively enrolled in any credit hours may need to submit their annual evaluation at a different time and should consult with the Director of Graduate Studies about their timeline.

Students should provide their advisors additional information they believe is pertinent to their evaluation.

Students should schedule a meeting with their advisor/first year mentor to discuss the annual review form once it has been submitted.

The student's advisor/first year mentor will provide an evaluation letter summarizing the student's progress towards degree and their overall evaluation for the previous year. The advisor will email a copy of this letter to each student, the Director of Graduate Studies, and departmental academic advisor by late March.

A student cannot receive a satisfactory annual evaluation if they have 3 or more grades of "I" that are older than one semester or if they are not in good academic standing with the Graduate College. Students who are on departmental academic probation could receive an unsatisfactory or marginally satisfactory annual evaluation depending on their overall performance.

If a student's annual evaluation is unsatisfactory, the evaluation letter will specify the steps the student needs to take to receive a satisfactory annual evaluation the next time. A copy of this evaluation letter will be forwarded to the Graduate College.

## Unsatisfactory Evaluation

Students who are rated “unsatisfactory” are placed on academic probation. The department monitors the performance of students with an unsatisfactory performance review and conducts a second review at the end of the next semester or designated period.

If the second evaluation is also unsatisfactory, the Graduate College will stop a student’s enrollment (or cancel any future enrollment). In this case, the Director of Graduate Studies will seek the input of the student’s advisor, their advisory committee, and the department chair to determine whether a recommendation should be made to the Graduate College for the student to be permitted to continue in the program. If all parties involved decide not to make such a recommendation, the student will be dismissed from the program. If all parties involved agree to make such a recommendation, a plan to remedy the student’s academic situation must be devised. The plan should outline all criteria, expectations, and conditions the student must satisfy to improve their performance. Should a student fail to fulfill these criteria, they will be dismissed from the program.

## Annual Review of Departmental Graduate Assistants

In the spring semester of every academic year The Department of Communication conducts annual reviews and evaluations of its **departmental** graduate assistants’ performance in their assistant roles. Failure to participate may result in an unsatisfactory evaluation, which may impede graduate assistantship positions and/or future funding.

## Evaluation Criteria

All aspects of an assistant’s performance are evaluated, including but not limited to:

- appropriate management of assigned courses in the case of teaching assistants (e.g., grading, student interactions)
- timely submission of required course material in the case of teaching assistants (e.g., textbook, course modules, grades)
- quality of teaching in the case of teaching assistants
- fulfillment of one’s assistantship expectations/duties as outlined by one’s supervisor (for all assistants)
- quality of research products in the case of research assistants
- efforts towards professional development as directly related to the assistant position
- engaging in ethical and professional conduct with undergraduate students, fellow TAs, faculty, and staff
- quality of all the above

## Evaluation Process

During the departmental annual evaluation period (spring of every year), students will submit their graduate student annual review form. Students who are on leave of absence and/or not actively enrolled in any credit hours may need to submit their annual evaluation at a different time and should consult with the Director of Graduate Studies about their timeline.

In preparation for the annual evaluation, students are responsible for requesting their direct supervisors provide an assessment of their performance as an assistant to their advisor/first year mentor at the end of each semester. The student's direct supervisor will complete the evaluation template summarizing the student's overall evaluation as an assistant for the semester and send the completed form to the student's advisor/first year mentor. Direct supervisors of GTAs for Spring courses should provide their assessment to the GTA's advisor/first year mentor no later than May. For Fall courses, assessments should be sent to the advisor/first year mentor no later than January. Students are also encouraged to discuss their assistant performance with their direct supervisor. If the direct supervisor deems the GTA's performance unsatisfactory during a semester, they should notify the departmental chair as well (in addition to the GTA's advisor/first year mentor) as soon as possible during the semester but not later than May/January.

Students are encouraged to seek additional performance observations, indicators of their assistantship performance, and general feedback about their assistantship performance from their supervisors, peers, or other faculty in the program. Students should provide their advisor/first year mentor any additional relevant documentation of their performance as an assistant (e.g., teaching evaluations, observation letters, student feedback, professional development certifications).

Students should discuss their departmental assistant performance with their advisor twice a year—after the Spring semester and after the Fall semester—and consider what adjustments/improvements need to be made to their teaching, if any. The advisor will complete an overall annual evaluation, if applicable, of the graduate assistant's performance once a year, in the spring. The evaluation will summarize the advisor's assessment of the GTA's performance based on letters from the GTA's direct supervisor and any other means of assessing the assistant's performance (e.g., course evaluations, direct teaching observations, professional development, etc.). A copy of this letter will be sent to each student, the Director of Graduate Studies, and the departmental Academic Advisor by late March.

### Unsatisfactory Evaluation

Departmental graduate assistants who are rated “unsatisfactory” in either semester of the previous year are placed on probation. The department monitors the performance of its departmental graduate assistants with an unsatisfactory performance review, which may entail classroom observations and/or pedagogy trainings deemed necessary to help the assistant improve their teaching. A second review is conducted at the end of the following semester or designated period. If the second evaluation is also unsatisfactory, the department may withdraw a student's assistantship, decline further funding for the student, and/or recommend the student not have their assistantship renewed (by another department).

If a graduate assistant's *annual* evaluation is unsatisfactory, the evaluation letter will specify the steps the student needs to take to receive a satisfactory annual evaluation as a departmental assistant during the next evaluation period.

## Graduate Student Awards and Scholarships

Each year, awards are given for excellent performance by graduate students. The criteria for each award and the procedure for choosing each award are listed below. Generally, first year graduate students are not eligible for the awards because they do not have a long enough record of teaching or research. In addition, it is important to note that the financial amount of each award has no bearing on the significance of the award; rather, the amount reflects the endowment associated with the award. We view these awards as celebrations of the success and accomplishments of our students. Plaques in the main office list recent recipients of the awards.

### General Procedures for Graduate Awards

Each year in February-March, the Graduate Student Awards Committee begins deliberations to select the recipients of each award. There are two additional committees for the two dissertation proposal awards recipients.

- Members of the three committees will consist of volunteers. If there are no volunteers, the chair will appoint committee members.
- All faculty members in the Department of Communication can nominate individuals for each award.
- All faculty members will be contacted by the chair of each committee and/or by the Director of Graduate Studies and/or the department chair and asked for nominations.
- Faculty members are encouraged to nominate non-teaching assistants for appropriate awards.
- After nominations are solicited, the chair of the committee will convene a meeting of its members. Each member of the committee will have one vote.

### The Ragan-Kramer-Wieder Qualitative Dissertation Proposal Award

The Ragan-Kramer-Wieder Dissertation Proposal Award serves two purposes. First, it honors three long-time faculty members in the department. Two of the scholars have retired, Sandy Ragan (1983 to 2006) and Larry Wieder (1977 to 2005). The third, Eric Kramer, has been a faculty member in the department since 1991. We have honored these three qualitative scholars by giving out this award since 1998. The award was re-endowed by the department in 2013. Second, the award recognizes the accomplishment of one of our current graduate students for a qualitative dissertation proposal.

#### *Eligibility criteria:*

- Qualitative dissertation proposal approved by the committee, defended in the year for which the award is given (i.e., previous year time of award to current year time of award)

#### *Nomination procedures:*

- Advisor submits a nomination letter to the Ragan-Kramer-Wieder award committee chair
- Include an electronic copy of the dissertation proposal only.

### H. Wayland Cummings Quantitative Dissertation Proposal Award

The Cummings Dissertation Proposal Award serves two purposes. First, it honors Wayland Cummings who served the department from 1970 to 1994. We have honored Wayland by giving out this award since 2004. The award was endowed by the department in 2013. Second, the

award recognizes the accomplishment of one of our current graduate students for an outstanding quantitative dissertation proposal.

*Eligibility criteria:*

- Quantitative dissertation proposal approved by the committee, defended in the year for which the award is given (i.e., previous year time of award to current year time of award)

*Nomination procedures:*

- Advisor submits a nomination letter to the H. W. Cummings award committee chair
- Include an electronic copy of the dissertation proposal only.

For all awards below the nomination procedures entail:

- Any faculty member submits a nomination letter to the Graduate Student Scholarship and Awards Committee chair.
- Include a copy of the student's CV.

### Outstanding Graduate Student Teaching Award

The Outstanding Graduate Student Teaching Award is the most time-honored award in the department having been given out since 1978. Although the nature of the award changed over time, in recent years it has returned to its original purpose. The award has been endowed by the department in 2018. Each year, this award recognizes two graduate teaching assistants (MA of PHD) who have excelled in teaching their classes during their time in the Department of Communication. Seniority can be considered when deciding who receives this award.

*Eligibility criteria:*

- At least two semesters of course evaluations (M.A. or Ph.D.)
- High student evaluations for overall teaching effectiveness and/or other evidence of teaching effectiveness (e.g., faculty observations, letters from students, participation in teacher training activities, excellent service as course director)

### Ralph E. Cooley Memorial Award

The Ralph Cooley Graduate Student Award is named after Ralph Cooley, who was instrumental in the early development of the International and Intercultural Communication Division of NCA. He taught in the Department of Communication here from the time he earned his Ph.D. in 1972 until his unexpected death in 1982. The award, given out since 1991, recognizes outstanding students in the area of intercultural, international, cross-cultural, or Native American studies. The department endowed the award in 2012.

The award recognizes one graduate student and one undergraduate student, who excel in one of these areas.

*Eligibility criteria:*

- Undergraduate, M.A. or Ph.D. student
- Research in cross-cultural or Native American language studies.

### Josh Lee Scholarship

The Josh Lee Memorial Scholarship is named in honor of former Oklahoma State Congressman and U. S. Senator Josh Lee who was associated with the University of Oklahoma from 1917-1934. His daughter, Mary Louise Symcox, endowed funds to support a bi-annual Josh Lee

Lecture Series and the public speaking contest for undergraduate students every semester. Since 2011, the Josh Lee Scholarship has been awarded to honor an outstanding Ph.D. student in the area of political or mass communication. The award was endowed by private donations in 2010.

*Eligibility criteria:*

- 2<sup>nd</sup> or 3<sup>rd</sup> year Ph.D. student who has filed their plan of study
- Research in political or mass communication

### Ted Beard Scholarship

Ted Beard served as the Executive Secretary of the University of Oklahoma Alumni Association and Director of the Memorial Union Building from 1926-1950. He was instrumental in organizing the Oklahoma High School Speech League and National Junior College Forensic Association. The original scholarship endowed in 1950 supported students from those two organizations who continued their education at the University of Oklahoma and majored in communication (speech at the time). After those organizations disbanded, the Ted Beard Scholarship was re-commissioned to honor an outstanding Ph.D. graduate student in communication. The award was endowed by private donations in 1987 and has been given out since 2012.

*Eligibility criteria:*

- 2<sup>nd</sup> or 3<sup>rd</sup> year Ph.D. student who has filed their plan of study
- Research in any area of specialty

### Michael Pfau Scholarship

Michael Pfau was chair of the Department of Communication from 2001 to 2009. He was known for his research on inoculation theory using experimental designs. After his untimely death, friends and family members donated money to honor him. In 2012, his wife helped establish the Michael Pfau Scholarship to support a graduate student whose teaching and research interests are associated with the social influence and interpersonal communication emphasis within the department. The scholarship was endowed by private donations in 2012 and has been given out since 2013.

*Eligibility criteria:*

- 2<sup>nd</sup> or 3<sup>rd</sup> year Ph.D. student who has filed their plan of study and has at least a 3.50 GPA
- research in social influence and/or interpersonal communication.

Priority will be given to students studying social influence and interpersonal communication, but the award may be given to students in any other area in the department.

### Michael W. Kramer Scholarship

Michael Kramer became chair of the Department of Communication in 2010. He is known for his research on the socialization/assimilation process in groups and organizations, and leadership and decision making. He uses a range of research methods to explore various topics including volunteers. He and his parents have created this scholarship to support a Ph.D. student whose teaching and research focuses on organizational or group communication. The award was endowed by private donations in 2013 and was first given out in 2014.

*Eligibility criteria:*

- 2<sup>nd</sup> or 3<sup>rd</sup> year Ph.D. student who has filed their plan of study

- Research in organizational or group communication.

### Dan and Mary John O’Hair Outstanding Graduate Student Award

Dan O’Hair was a member of the Department of Communication from 1994 to 2009. He helped establish the Center for Risk and Crisis Management and served as department chair from 1994 to 2000. After leaving for a position as Dean at the University of Kentucky, he used some of his remaining grant funds to endow the Dan and Mary John O’Hair Outstanding Graduate Student. The award was endowed by private donations in 2011 and was first given out in 2012. It has honored a graduate student who has excelled in all three areas of teaching, research, and service.

#### *Eligibility criteria:*

- 2<sup>nd</sup> or 3<sup>rd</sup> year Ph.D. student who has filed their plan of study and has at least a 3.50 GPA
- Excellence in teaching, research, and service. Seniority will be considered when deciding who receives this award.

Evidence of teaching excellence may include: teaching evaluations, letters from students, participation in teacher training activities, excellent service as course director.

Evidence of research excellence may include: conference presentations to state, regional, national, and international conferences, submissions and publications in refereed journals or scholarly books, awards that recognize research, such as top paper awards at scholarly conferences, or grants to support research.

Evidence of service excellence may include: involvement and leadership activities in department level service (e.g., CGSA, brown bags, student representative on search committee), involvement and leadership activities at the university level (e.g., Graduate Student Senate), involvement and leadership activities at the discipline level (e.g., chairing panels, being a paper reader for conferences, reviewing for journals).

### Kristi D. Wright Graduate Student Citizenship Award

This award is named in honor of Kristi Wright, who is the department’s financial and operations manager. Kristi joined the department in 1992 and has worked closely with numerous department chairs, faculty, and staff throughout her long tenure in Burton Hall. Her service includes working in the department, for the university, and the Norman community. The award recognizes a graduate student who has engaged in formal or informal outstanding acts of service to the department, the university, and/or the Communication discipline. The award was first given out in 2022.

#### *Eligibility criteria:*

- A graduate student (M.A. or Ph.D.) in good academic standing who has filed their plan of study
- The student is making satisfactory progress to graduation and has achieved a cumulative 3.5-grade point average on a 4.0 scale.

### Graduate Student Dissertation Grants

This program is designed to promote and support dissertation research for graduate students within the Department of Communication. This program began in the 2011-2012 academic year.

Graduate students who have had their dissertation proposals approved are eligible to apply for a dissertation grant up to \$1,000 to assist in conducting their research. The funding must relate

directly to data collection or analysis for the dissertation. The expenses can include costs of travel needed to collect data, software or equipment needed to conduct the research, and costs associated with data collection, entry, transcription, or analysis. The grant cannot be used to cover costs associated with attendance at conferences or costs of printing copies of the dissertation.

Each student may only receive funding during one semester in the program. Students who receive the dissertation grant will be reimbursed for documented expenses up to the amount awarded. Eligible expenses may have been incurred either before or after the grant is awarded. If the student has not requested reimbursement after one year, the funding will be forfeited.

To apply, the student must submit three documents to the Department Chair:

- A letter requesting the funding including a 1-2 paragraph description of the study.
- A detailed budget for expected expenses.
- A brief letter from the advisor indicating that the proposal has been approved.

Applications may be submitted at any time. Decisions will be announced within a week of the application. This funding is awarded independently from any dissertation proposal award.

Students should check with Kristi Wright about the financial procedures for receiving the award as well as any limitations that may exist for how the award can be spend and/or procedures to follow for expenditures.

## Graduate Assistantships

A graduate assistant is defined as any graduate student appointed to provide the department with teaching, research, technical, or administrative assistance.

### Initial Appointment Procedures

In the spring semester, after the January admissions deadline, the graduate faculty will evaluate the completed applicant files for assistantships. The faculty ranks applicants, and the Director of Graduate Studies attempts to secure informal commitments from applicants who are offered a teaching assistantship as soon as possible. When the Department notifies applicants of their appointment, in writing, the letter includes an informal contract that the applicant should sign and return to the Director of Graduate Studies. This contract is not legally binding; it is a letter intended to make a moral commitment between the applicant and the department. The official letter offer of any position must come from the Office of the President. In addition, international students' appointments are contingent upon having lawful United States immigration status. According to federal law, an international graduate assistant must have an immigration status that permits their appointment, and that status must be documented for the university. International students are responsible for meeting all U.S. immigration requirements—from determining which immigration status is appropriate to following U.S. immigration law and maintaining immigration status. They should contact the International Student Services Office at (405) 325-3337, or [iss@ou.edu](mailto:iss@ou.edu) for further information on these matters.

All first-time graduate teaching assistants (GTAs) must attend a series of mandatory orientation programs in August, including departmental ones and university-wide ones. In addition, international students' English proficiency for instruction in the classroom must be certified by the Graduate College's English Trainings and Certification Services. Please see section for "English Proficiency for International Graduate Assistants" in this handbook.

### Requests for Appointment

Students who have not received an assistantship upon their admission to the program may apply to be considered for funding from the department in subsequent years. The application process entails submitting the following documents when the yearly graduate assistant request for appointment or renewal call is made (usually late Fall semester):

- The application form (which is sent via email by the assistant to the chair)
- a cover letter detailing the request for funding from the department
- a copy of the student's current CV
- one-two letters of recommendation from the student's current mentor/advisor and from a supervising faculty member who is familiar with the student's work and/or teaching
- any additional relevant material to support the request (e.g., summary of teaching evaluations from previously taught courses, teaching observation letters, list of professional development seminars, updated GRE or ECC test scores, etc.).

### Reappointment of Graduate Students

Each year, the assistant to the chair will request that graduate assistants indicate if they plan to return/continue their assistantship the following year. Students are eligible to return if they have remaining funding in their assistantship, have made satisfactory progress in their program, and

have completed their current responsibilities satisfactorily. Students will indicate their plans and rank their preferences for assignments for the following year. Those requests will be considered, but assignments will ultimately be made based on the needs of the department.

### Stipends for Graduate Assistants

Salaries are paid to graduate assistants in monthly checks, to which standard deductions apply. The graduate assistantship includes a full tuition waiver for fall, spring, and summer (under specific conditions) up to the total hours needed for the degree. **GTAs must be enrolled in a minimum of five credit hours during the fall and spring semesters to receive these waivers.** Students are responsible for covering the fees associated with credits taken.

In the final semester, GTAs may take fewer than five minimum credit hours and maintain full-time status for tuition waivers and FICA tax exemptions. Students should submit the *Graduate Assistant Final Semester* form online (see <https://www.ou.edu/gradcollege/cost-and-aid/graduate-assistantship>) by the specified dates for each semester.

Graduate assistants with summer appointments are not required to enroll in courses for the summer.

Arrangements for medical insurance, social security, income tax deductions, and any other available benefits should be made with the University of Oklahoma's Human Resources. The university provides health coverage for GTAs but students will need to pay themselves to include eligible family members on their plan. Health insurance coverage starts the first day of employment or as soon as classes start, or the day students sign up for the insurance. Please visit [Health Insurance for Students and Graduate Assistants](#) page for specific details about eligibility, enrollment options, plan details, dental insurance option, and FAQs.

### Instructors

In some instances, a graduate student may have already exhausted their years of funding and eligible tuition waiver or may have already completed his/her degree. Such individuals may be hired as instructors to complete another semester or year or if there is high demand for instruction. The stipend or salary will be the same as the regular GTAs but there will be no tuition waiver included.

### Workload for Graduate Assistants

Since the primary purpose of being a graduate assistant is to aid the student in the successful completion of a program, graduate assistants may not be appointed for more than one-half (0.5 FTE) employment without special permission of the Dean of the Graduate College. The department must certify all appointments greater than 0.5 FTE. No FTE above 0.70 will be approved. International students cannot be hired over 0.5 during the fall or spring semesters. International students can be hired up to 0.70 during summer or breaks.

A 0.5 FTE graduate teaching assistantship involves 20 hours per week. Graduate teaching assistants are generally assigned to teach two sections of a lower-division course in communication or the equivalent. The 20 hours includes time spent in the classroom, preparations, and office hours.

A syllabus covering the content of certain courses is issued to all instructors at the beginning of the semester. The director of the large section courses (COMM 1113 & COMM 2613) holds

regular meetings to facilitate coordination of the course. Any GTA assigned to teach an alternative course will be under the supervision of a faculty member. Other duties may be assigned in lieu of teaching. Research assistants' nonteaching duties should occupy approximately 20 hours per week for a 0.5 FTE nonteaching assistantship.

The primary responsibility of a GTA appointed in the University of Oklahoma Department of Communication is to the department. Outside commitments may not interfere with this primary responsibility nor can modifications to a GTA's departmental or university commitments be made to accommodate such commitments. If outside commitments affect a GTA's performance, their assistantship may be terminated.

### Enrollment Load for Assistants

The graduate assistant's academic course load for each term should ensure that he or she is making satisfactory progress toward the degree. The department encourages all graduate assistants to take nine credit hours in the fall and spring (i.e., three graduate courses) and three to six credit hours in the summer to stay on track and meet the recommended timetable for their degree program. The minimum enrollment for GTAs for fall and spring semesters is five hours. Exceptions to this regulation are very rare and must be approved by the Dean of the Graduate College.

### Termination of Graduate Assistants

Graduate students must meet the general Standards of Performance described above including GPA requirements and limits on incompletes to remain eligible to continue in the program. In addition, if the performance of the graduate assistant does not meet the requirements of the assignment (teaching or research), the Departmental Chairperson, course coordinator, or project director will advise the assistant both orally and in writing. An attempt to work with the graduate assistant in improving their performance will be made before the department begins action toward termination. When grounds for termination exist prior to the end of the contract period, notice will be given in writing to the graduate assistant, and a copy of the notice will be sent to the Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences, the Dean of the Graduate College, and the Provost. Procedures for termination are outlined in the university's *Graduate College Bulletin*.

### Maximum Number of Appointments to Assistantship

A graduate assistant working toward a Master's degree may not be appointed to an assistantship for more than the number of semesters required to complete the degree, up to, but not to exceed, two years. Students working toward a Ph.D. degree may not be appointed to an assistantship for more than the number of semesters required to complete the degree, up to, but not to exceed, four years.

### Assigning Graduate Teaching Assistantships for Extra Funding

From time-to-time additional funding for graduate student support may exist. This may be due to factors such as the funding of a research grant, the addition of sections to manage enrollment with funding from the Dean's office, money to replace teaching for a faculty member who leaves or is on leave, or an incoming graduate student changing plans, among other reasons. The overall goal when these events occur is to fund as many different graduate students as are eligible and interested, to assist them in completing their degrees. When extra funding occurs, the following

guidelines will be used to support additional graduate students who are making adequate progress toward graduation:

1. Ph.D. students who have received less than four years of funding.
2. MA students who have received less than two years of funding and Ph.D. students requesting a fifth year of funding (see next section).
3. Students who have already received a 0.50 FTE assignment.

For Ph.D. students who are being considered for a fifth year of funding, the guidelines are:

1. Graduate students with the skills needed to fill the newly funded position. \*
2. Ph.D. students' progress toward graduation (e.g., one who has defended a proposal over one in the same year's class who has not defended a proposal, or one who has passed general exams over one in the same year's class who has not yet taken them).
3. If the previous criteria are equal, students with better teaching evaluations.
4. If the previous criteria are equal, students with a noticeably higher GPA.
5. If the previous criteria are equal, the Graduate Committee and the chair will make a decision based on a holistic examination of the students' vitas.

If all current eligible graduate students have been offered the extra position, individuals who have completed their degrees may be hired as instructors (same pay scale).

\*In some instances, previously assigned duties will be changed for other graduate students to accommodate the skills of the additional graduate students. For example, a TA with the appropriate skills to be a graduate research assistant (GRA) may be taken out of 2613 and the newly funded graduate student assigned to teach 2613 because he/she does not meet the criteria to be a GRA.

### English Proficiency for International Graduate Assistants

International students for whom English is a second language must demonstrate oral and written English proficiency before they can be assigned an assistantship involving instruction. This is both a university and state of Oklahoma requirement. Assessment is provided through the Graduate College's English Trainings and Certification Services. To qualify for a teaching assistantship, the student must be certified to fulfill the specific instructional duties required by the assistantship (e.g., lead a discussion section). Certification entails taking several tests, including a written and oral test. Please see <https://www.ou.edu/gradcollege/student-life/etcs#certification-process> for further details. Please note that the international students need to cover the testing fees themselves.

International students who have been awarded a teaching assistantship should make arrangements to take their English proficiency tests prior to the beginning of the semester to ensure they can begin their assistantship duties.

### Quantitative and Qualitative Exemption (Place-Out) Exam Policy

Students who believe their graduate-level research methods coursework was very strong are eligible to attempt to place out of one of these two introductory methods courses:

1. COMM 5003 Quantitative Research Methods and/or
2. COMM 5313 Qualitative Research Methods

Placing out involves passing (i.e., with 80% or higher) a 3-hour exam prepared and approved by

the faculty for the specific courses. The exam is closed book/no notes. Placing out of the course does not give the student any credit hours for the course. It simply means that the student can take an advanced methods course instead of the introductory course to meet requirements for the degree.

The following process will be used to administer this policy:

1. During fall orientation, the Director of Graduate Studies will provide incoming students with a copy of this policy. The policy will also be in the Graduate Student Handbook.
2. Students will have until October 1 of their first semester to make a request to place out of the specific course. They must make the request to the Director of Graduate Studies. The request must include an explanation for the request and evidence (e.g., syllabus) of similar graduate-level coursework or the request will be denied.
3. Students must take the exam by November 1 of their first semester.
4. Two faculty members with expertise in the specific method will be selected by the Director of Graduate Studies to independently read and score the exam. The two faculty members will report their scores to the Director of Graduate Studies within one week of the completion of the exam.
5. The Director of Graduate Studies will inform the student as soon as possible of the outcome so that the student may plan their course work accordingly.
6. If the student has placed out of an introductory course, the graduate student and his/her advisor will be responsible for coordinating the paperwork with the Graduate College for substituting the advance course for the introductory course for the required courses on the Program of Study form (Advisory Conference Report).

## Graduate Courses

A note on delineating Directed Readings, Independent Study, and Communication Research Task Groups coursework: Directed Readings are focused on enabling the student to learn more about a topic area through intensive reading, which could result in the production of a literature review by the end of the semester. Independent Study is envisioned as student-driven work with a faculty member as a guide, which could result in developing any project materials needed prior to data collection, such as literature review, project design, and IRB application. Communication Research Task Groups can have the student or faculty member as the lead of the project and are typically aimed at seeing a project through the data collection and analysis phases, at minimum.

To inquire about enrolling in one of these courses, first approach the applicable faculty member with a topic/plan in mind, discuss the required outcomes of the coursework, and gain their permission to enroll. This permission will need to be e-mailed to the Academic Advisor for final enrollment.

### **COMM 5003. Quantitative Research Methods**

Prerequisites: graduate standing. Introduction to social-behavioral science processes of inquiry about human communication phenomena. Examines the relationship of theory and method, looks at various research paradigms and designs, and provides an introduction to descriptive and inferential statistics. (Fa, Sp)

### **COMM 5013. Introduction to Graduate Study**

Prerequisite: graduate standing or permission. Traces the development of research and professions in communication, providing an integrative conception of the discipline and an introduction to research and theory formulation. Students are exposed to those skills critical to success in graduate training in communication. (F)

### **COMM 5023. Introduction to Quantitative Research Methods**

Prerequisite: graduate standing. Introduction to social-behavioral science processes of inquiry about human communication phenomena for graduate students not pursuing a Ph.D. Examines the relationship of theory and method, between research paradigms and designs, and provides an introduction to descriptive and inferential statistics. (F, Sp, Su)

### **COMM 5033. Advanced Statistics**

Prerequisite: graduate standing and COMM 5003, or permission of instructor. Advanced statistics covering topics which include: ANOVA, ANCOVA, MANOVA, multiple regression, path analysis, and confirmatory and exploratory factor analysis. (F, Sp)

### **COMM 5043. Organizational Research Practicum**

Prerequisite: graduate student major who has completed two-thirds of the communication courses required for graduation, plus permission. Applicants must have an overall grade point average of 3.25 or higher. Provides practical research experience in an organization. Student

adviser and organization's sponsor must agree through a written contract about the goals, plan, and activities associated with the research project. (Irreg.)

### **COMM 5053. Introduction to Qualitative Research Methods**

Prerequisite: graduate standing. Introduction to various qualitative methodological strategies used in the social sciences for students not pursuing a Ph.D. Examines the relationship of method and theory and the process of collecting, coding, and analyzing data. (F, Sp, Su)

### **COMM 5213. Interpersonal Communication**

Prerequisite: graduate standing or permission. Studies the research and theories in interpersonal communication with emphasis on dyads and small groups, public address, message analysis and nonverbal communication. (Irreg.)

### **COMM 5233. Communication and Social Change**

Prerequisite: graduate standing or permission. Studies alternative theories of social change, both historical and modern, with emphasis on the role played by communication at the interpersonal, group and social levels. (F)

### **COMM 5243. Language Perspectives of Communication**

Prerequisite: graduate standing or permission. Investigates the role of language behavior research, epistemological foundations, linguistics, speech act theory, sociolinguistics, psycholinguistics and ethnomethodology. (Irreg.)

### **COMM 5253. Cross-Cultural Communication: Theory and Research**

Prerequisite: graduate standing or permission. Study of theory of cross-cultural communication with special attention to language, stereotyping, perception, role, power and nonverbal communication as such variables operate in cross-cultural situations. (Irreg.)

### **COMM 5263. Health Communication in Interpersonal Contexts**

Prerequisite: graduate standing or permission of instructor. Provides a broad overview of theoretical and applied approaches to health communication. A variety of health communication topics including doctor-patient communication, health information campaigns, mass media influences on health, role of culture in health and disease, health care organizations, and group influences on well-being will be presented. (F)

### **COMM 5313. Qualitative Research Methods**

Prerequisite: graduate standing. Survey of different qualitative methodological strategies used in the social sciences to collect, code, and analyze information. (Sp)

### **COMM 5323. Advanced Qualitative Research**

(Crosslisted with SOC 5323) Prerequisite: 5313. Designed to immerse students in the actual experience of conducting qualitative research in the field. Emphasis on participatory observation, ethnographic research, and textual analysis. (F)

### **COMM 5333. Organizational Communication**

Prerequisite: graduate standing. Focuses on the communication environment of organizations, both internal and external, emphasizing implications of organizational designs for communication, communication principles to motivate employees, and the role of communication for productivity and the quality of life. (Irreg.)

### **COMM 5353. Conflict Management**

Prerequisite: graduate standing. Examines theory and research about conflict management in various communication contexts. Takes a social scientific approach to conflict management with emphasis on cognitive processes, affective systems, interaction sequences and strategies and tactics related to how people negotiate the meaning and management/resolution of conflict. (Irreg.)

### **COMM 5363. Communication and Technology**

Prerequisite: graduate standing or permission. Provides a comprehensive overview of emerging technologies (e.g., teleconferencing, electronic mail, videotext, electronic bulletin boards, telecommuting, distance education, media richness, voice messaging, invisible technologies, etc.) and analyzes some of the social and behavioral effects of these technologies on human interaction in interpersonal, organizational, small group, and international contexts. (F)

### **COMM 5373. Communication and Leadership**

Prerequisite: graduate standing. Examines theory and research related to the philosophy and behaviors associated with leadership communication in various contexts. Emphasis placed on unique aspects of messages as individuals enact leadership roles. Scholarship from several areas of the social sciences will be considered, but communication theory will be given primary emphasis. (F)

### **COMM 5383. Survey of Political Communication.**

(Crosslisted with PSC 5383) Prerequisite: graduate standing. Embraces the premise that meaningful democracy requires an effective political communication system. Examines some of the tensions between the requirements of democracy and the forms of communication that have emerged to meet them, exploring the roles of political leaders, citizens, and the media in the evolution of a democratic political information system. (Irreg.)

### **COMM 5393. Risk and Crisis Communication**

Prerequisite: graduate standing. The term "risk communication" refers to a body of knowledge and a set of practical skills that can be used in characterizing and managing issues, disseminating information, and communicating effectively in crises or emergency situations. Examines key concepts of risk communication, investigates risk communication theories and approaches as

well as implements practical application in learning about communicating in risk situations. (Irreg.)

### **COMM 5453. Social Influence**

Prerequisite: graduate standing. A social scientific approach to the study of influence (persuasion), emphasizing scholarship drawn from speech communication, mass communication and social psychology. (F)

### **COMM 5553. Survey of Communication Campaigns**

Prerequisite: graduate standing. Theory and research about persuasive communication campaigns which involve conscious sustained communication efforts designed to influence the thinking, feelings and/or behaviors of targeted receiver groups. (Sp)

### **COMM 5810. Special Topics in Communication**

Prerequisite: graduate standing or permission of instructor. May be repeated with change of content; maximum credit nine hours. Topics will vary and are intended to acquaint the graduate communication major with specialized study involving communication theory, methodology and research. 1 to 4 credit hours. (F, Sp, Su)

### **COMM 5960. Directed Readings**

Prerequisite: graduate standing and permission of instructor. May be repeated; maximum credit applicable toward degree, three hours for the MA degree and nine hours for the Ph.D. Intensive survey of the literature in a selected area of communication under the direction of a graduate faculty member. Variable enrollment; 1-3 credit hours. (F, Sp, Su)

### **COMM 5970. Seminar**

Prerequisite: graduate standing; others vary by topic. May be repeated with change of content; maximum credit nine hours. Varied special topics in communication. 1 to 3 credit hours. (Irreg.)

### **COMM 5980. Research for Master's Thesis**

May be repeated; maximum credit applicable toward degree, four hours. Prerequisite: graduate standing and permission of instructor. Directed research culminating in the completion of the master's thesis. Variable enrollment, 2 to 9 credit hours. (F, Sp, Su)

### **COMM 5990. Independent Study**

Prerequisite: graduate standing and permission of instructor. May be repeated; maximum credit eight hours. Contracted independent study for a topic of interest to the student and supervised by the faculty member. Independent study may include library and/or laboratory research and field projects. 1 to 3 credit hours. (F Sp, Su)

### **COMM 6023. Communication Research Task Groups**

Prerequisite: graduate standing and permission of instructor. May be repeated; maximum credit 15 hours. Designed to explore numerous topics in communication study, with a focus on the development and execution of empirical research in communication. (F, Sp, Su)

### **COMM 6233. Small Group Processes**

Prerequisite: graduate standing. Considers current status of small group theory and research, emphasizing leadership. Includes both the development of a tentative theory of leadership and the application of small group theory to the process of decision making. (F, Sp)

### **COMM 6314. History and Theory of Communication**

Prerequisite: 5003, 5013, and 5313 or permission of instructor. Presents the evolution of communication theory from ancient rhetorical traditions to the present. Topics covered include: classical origins of communication; enlightenment contributions to theory; interdisciplinary roots of communication study; and contemporary theories of communication. (Sp)

### **COMM 6323. International Communication**

Prerequisite: graduate standing or permission. An interdisciplinary survey of theory and research pertaining to issues of mass media and information and communication technologies and their interaction with culture, identity, politics, and ethics. (Irreg.)

### **COMM 6373. Seminar in Mass Communication**

Prerequisite: graduate standing. May be repeated with change of content; maximum credit nine hours. Considers differing topics in contemporary mass communication theory and research. (Sp)

### **COMM 6413. Interethnic Communication Seminar**

Prerequisite: graduate standing or permission. An interdisciplinary survey of theory and research pertaining to issues of interethnic/interracial communication. Specific verbal and nonverbal communication behaviors are examined in conjunction with salient contextual factors of the macro-societal, situational, and psychological milieu surrounding the communication process. (Irreg.)

### **COMM 6423. Communication in Health Organizations**

Prerequisite: graduate standing. Examines delivery and exchange of messages within health organizations with emphasis on conflict, bargaining, and negotiating, communication networks and environments, virtual systems of communication, etc. (Sp)

### **COMM 6433. Seminar in Intercultural Communication**

Prerequisite: graduate standing. Studies communication across cultural boundaries with emphasis on comparative analysis of communication systems of various cultures, factors involved in predicting intercultural communication patterns and effects, and the role of communication in cultural and technological development. Special attention is given to communication problems between subcultures in American society. (Irreg.)

### **COMM 6453. Seminar in Social Influence**

Prerequisite: graduate standing. May be repeated with change of content; maximum credit six hours. Seminar on specialized topic in social influence. Content focus varies with instructor. (Sp)

### **COMM 6463. Media and Political Behavior**

Prerequisite: graduate standing. Examines the interplay of mediated communication and political behavior. Focuses on individual-level psychological processes that shed light on how news, political campaigns, new media, and entertainment programming may influence socialization, attitude formation, political decision-making and participation. (Irreg.)

### **COMM 6473. Communication and Public Opinion**

Prerequisite: graduate standing. Focuses on how collective and individual opinions are formed, communicated, and deployed to make decisions. Examines different conceptions of public opinion, such as the aggregation of individual citizens' opinions, the development of shared values and beliefs, and the active negotiation of opinion in the public sphere. (Irreg.)

### **COMM 6483. Media and Civic Life**

Prerequisite: graduate standing. Focuses on the relationship between media and civic life, including campaigns and engagement in the electoral arena, as well as broader perspectives of life as part of the general body politic. Examines the changing news and media landscape, including the affordances and limitations of contemporary and emerging communication platforms in democratic politics. (Irreg.)

### **COMM 6523. Health, Culture, and Communication**

Prerequisite: graduate standing and permission of department. Examines the complex definitions and dimensions of culture and the various pathways in which culture can shape patients' illness experiences and providers' behaviors. This course focuses on three general areas: culture and health behaviors; healthcare delivery in cross-cultural contexts, and minority health. (Irreg.)

### **COMM 6563. Structural Equation Modeling**

Prerequisites: graduate standing and COMM 5033. Introduction to the analysis of covariance structures. Topics covered include confirmatory factor analysis, structural equation modeling, multi-group analyses, and latent means models. (Irreg.)

### **COMM 6573. Social Network Analysis**

Prerequisites: graduate standing and COMM 5033. Reviews theoretical, conceptual, and analytic issues associated with network perspectives on communicating and organizing. The course will review scholarship on the science of networks in communication, economics, organizational science, public health, political science, psychology, and sociology, in order to take an in-depth look at theories, methods, and tools to examine the structure and dynamics of networks. (Irreg.)

### **COMM 6960. Directed Readings**

Prerequisite: graduate standing or permission of instructor. May be repeated; maximum credit applicable towards degree three hours for the MA degree and nine hours for the Ph.D. Directed readings and/or literature review under the direction of a faculty member. Variable enrollment; 1-3 credit hours. (F, Sp, Su)

**COMM 6970. Seminar in Communication**

Prerequisite: graduate standing. May be repeated with change of content; maximum credit 15 hours. Variable enrollment; 1 to 4 credit hours. (F, Sp, Su)

**COMM 6980. Research for Doctoral Dissertation**

May be repeated; maximum credit applicable toward degree, 15 hours. Prerequisite: graduate standing and permission of instructor. Directed research culminating in the completion of the doctoral dissertation. Variable enrollment, 2 to 16 credit hours. (F, Sp, Su)

**COMM 6990. Independent Study**

Prerequisite: graduate standing and permission of instructor. May be repeated; maximum credit applicable toward degree eight hours. An individual course of intensive study with the area and problem to be determined by the student and the instructor responsible for supervising the study. Variable enrollment; 1-4 credit hours. (F, Sp, Su)



Thesis Proposal Approval Form  
Department of Communication  
University of Oklahoma

Student's Name:

Student ID Number:

Title of thesis proposal:

Date of thesis proposal meeting:

---

The above-named student has held an oral proposal defense with the following outcome:

- \_\_\_\_\_ approved to proceed with the study as written (minor changes)
- \_\_\_\_\_ approved to proceed with the study with changes listed on the attached sheet
- \_\_\_\_\_ approved pending resubmission with changes listed on the attached sheet
- \_\_\_\_\_ not approved

Signatures of doctoral committee members:

---

Chair

---

Member

---

Member

---

Member (if applicable)

Submit to the Director of Graduate Studies then, once signed, to Departmental Advisor.

---

Director of Graduate Studies

Dissertation Proposal Approval Form  
Department of Communication  
University of Oklahoma

Student's Name:

Student ID Number:

Title of dissertation proposal:

Date of dissertation proposal meeting:

---

The above-named student has held an oral proposal defense with the following outcome:

- approved to proceed with the study as written (minor changes)
- approved to proceed with the study with changes listed on the attached sheet
- approved pending resubmission with changes listed on the attached sheet
- not approved

Signatures of doctoral committee members:

---

Chair

---

Member

---

Member

---

Member (if applicable)

---

Graduate College representative

Submit to the Director of Graduate Studies then, once signed, to Departmental Advisor.

---

Director of Graduate Studies

## Contacts in the Department of Communication

*Ioana A. Cionea*

*Interim Chair of the Department*  
Department of Communication  
University of Oklahoma  
610 Elm Avenue, Room 101  
Norman, OK 73019  
[icionea@ou.edu](mailto:icionea@ou.edu)

*Lindsey Meeks, Ph.D.*

*Director of Graduate Studies*  
Department of Communication  
University of Oklahoma  
610 Elm Avenue, Room 135  
Norman, OK 73019  
[lmeeks@ou.edu](mailto:lmeeks@ou.edu)

*Kristi Wright*

*Financial and Operations Manager*  
Department of Communication  
University of Oklahoma  
610 Elm Avenue, Room 101  
Norman, OK 73019  
(405) 325-3112  
(405) 325-7625 (fax)  
[cosmo@ou.edu](mailto:cosmo@ou.edu)

*Stephanie Terrazas*

*Academic Advisor*  
Department of Communication  
University of Oklahoma  
610 Elm Avenue, Room 110  
Norman, OK 73019  
(405) 325-7710  
(405) 325-7625 (fax)  
[terrazas@ou.edu](mailto:terrazas@ou.edu)

*Mary Burdge*

*Administrative Support Specialist*  
Department of Communication  
University of Oklahoma  
610 Elm Avenue, Room 101  
Norman, OK 73019  
(405) 325-4496  
(405) 325-7625 (fax)  
[maryburdge@ou.edu](mailto:maryburdge@ou.edu)

## Other Useful Contacts

What?	Who?	Where?	How?
Add/Drop	<a href="#">Graduate College</a>	Robertson Hall	325-3811
Academic Records	<a href="#">Records</a>	Buchanan Hall (Third floor)	325-4147
Enrollment	<a href="#">Registration</a>	Buchanan Hall (Second floor)	325-4147
Financial Aid	<a href="#">Financial Aid</a>	216 Buchanan Hall	325-9000
Parking Permits	<a href="#">Parking &amp; Transit</a>	1332 Jenkins Avenue	325-3311