Welcome to Graduate School!

This handbook is designed to provide you with some basic information and advice to ease your transition into the graduate school experience. It includes:

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Introduction

The Master of Arts degree in Communication offers students the opportunity for advanced study in Communication. This program is grounded in the concept of Integrated Communication and encourages broad perspectives in applying research, discovery, critical thinking, and creative enterprise for individuals and groups in a variety of settings. Students can develop knowledge and skills in communication that are requisite for success in leadership, scholarship, and/or creative endeavors in business, public sector, and non-profit environments.

The Curriculum

Coursework for the M.A. in Communication includes a required core of foundational courses, upper-level courses in four main content areas, and electives that include occasional special topics courses as well as a limited number of internships, independent study opportunities, and courses in other departments.

Communication Core

The Communication Core is required of all students and includes:

• COM 5003: Introduction to Graduate Studies in Communication
• COM 5013: Communication Theory
• COM 5023: Quantitative Research Methods
• COM 5033: Qualitative Research Methods
• COM 5103: Theories and Practice of Communication

The introductory course (5003) maps the field, introduces its epistemological foundations, and orients students to the expectations of graduate school. The two research methods courses (5023 and 5033) explore the roots and recent developments in quantitative and qualitative communication inquiry. The theory course (5013) sensitizes students to diverse conceptual approaches in the field. The “theory and applications” courses (5103) extend students’ knowledge of communication theories and applications in a specialized area of study. The “theory and applications” course can be repeated for up to six hours when the topics vary.

Interpersonal and Small Group Communication

Interpersonal and Small Group Communication courses include:

• COM 5213: Relational Communication
• COM 5223: Small Group Communication

This area of study offers students the opportunity to investigate the processes of communication in human relationships. General emphasis is on verbal and nonverbal transactions as they occur in interpersonal and small group settings. More specialized topics may include interpersonal communication and health, narrative, marriage and family, difficult communication, emotion and social interaction, and gender. The faculty members teaching in this area share an interest in the social dynamics of health communication.

Organizational Studies

Organizational Studies courses include:
• COM 5413: Seminar in Organizations
• COM 5423: Organizational Implementation of Integrated Communication

This area of study offers students the opportunity to analyze the functions and processes of communication in complex organizations. It takes an interdisciplinary approach to organizational studies, with general areas of emphasis in organizational communication, conflict resolution and negotiation, and integrated communication. More specialized topics may include leadership, crisis management, philosophy and ethics in organizations, organizational culture, planning, managing and assessing communication programs, organizational change and development, and public relations and strategic planning.

New Media and Information Design

New Media and Information Design courses include:
• COM 5613: New Media Design and Production I
• COM 5623: New Media Design and Production II

This area of study offers students the opportunity to work as both creators and analysts of new media. The area will emphasize the technical, economic, organizational and regulatory aspects of new media as well as principles of rhetorical structure, visual design, audience analysis, and other aspects of information presentation. The courses are designed for students with interests in both theoretical implications of new media and in design principles.
International and Intercultural Communication

International and Intercultural Communication courses include:

- COM 5813: International Communication
- COM 5823: Intercultural Communication

This area of study offers students the opportunity for advanced study of communication across social, political, economic, and cultural boundaries in the United States and around the world. This interdisciplinary area highlights critical yet flexible thinking in theory and practice. Courses in international communication examine the structures, institutions, and processes of collective transnational communication, while those in intercultural communication focus on communication among diverse individuals and communities in multicultural settings. The topics in this area draw upon research and practice from a wide range of fields, including the humanities, social sciences, public policy and business.
Overview of Degree Requirements and Options
As soon as you complete 12 hours of graduate coursework in Communication, you must meet with the Graduate Advisor of Record (GAR) to devise a program of study. Please see the Program of Study for Master’s Degree form in this handbook.

Overview of Course Requirements
The minimum number of semester credit hours required for this degree, exclusive of coursework or other study required to remove admission deficiencies, is 36. Any grade lower than B in a graduate course, and any undergraduate background hours required for admission will not count toward the 36 semester credit hours of coursework required in items A through D below. You should plan to complete your degree requirements, including written comprehensive examinations, thesis/project, and oral defense during either a Fall or Spring semester. Written comprehensive exams will not be administered during summer months.

A. COM 5003 must be taken in your first semester of graduate coursework.

B. The Communication Core consists of COM 5013, COM 5023, COM 5033, and COM 5103. These courses should be taken within the first two semesters of coursework for full-time students, or prior to upper-level prescribed electives in Communication for all students. Please see the Sequence of Courses map in the back of this handbook for further information.

C. Additional hours will be comprised of nine semester credit hours (for the thesis or project option) or 15 semester credit hours (for the comprehensive exam only option) of prescribed electives in Communication.

D. The final six semester credit hours will be comprised of free electives. These graduate-level courses may be in Communication or outside the program; they may also consist of Internships, Directed Readings, and / or Independent Study hours. (Students may only take 6 credit hours of these, combined). You should consult with the GAR prior to enrolling in elective courses outside of the department.

E. If you pursue the thesis or project option, you must complete COM 6983: Master’s Thesis (6 hours) or COM 6993: Master’s Project (6 hours). You must successfully complete at least 18 hours of coursework and maintain a 3.25 grade point average before you may enroll in COM 6983: Master’s Thesis or COM 6993: Master’s Project.

Advisement
All incoming graduate students should schedule a meeting with the GAR during the first semester of classes in the program. The GAR will serve as your official faculty advisor upon admission. Students must select a faculty advisor from among the graduate faculty in the Department of Communication as soon as possible, but not later
than following the completion of 12 hours of program coursework. Once you have completed 12 hours of graduate coursework in Communication, you should notify the GAR of your selection. The faculty advisor will assist you in selecting courses related to your program of study. Additionally, the faculty advisor may serve as the chair of your comprehensive exam committee, or as the chair or member of your thesis or project committee.

Once you have completed 18 credit hours, you in consultation with your faculty advisor should determine which option (comprehensive examination only, thesis, or project) you will pursue. Additionally, you and your faculty advisor should determine who will serve as committee chair.

**Selection of Degree Option**

Full-time students will usually complete an M.A. degree in two years (four long semesters). You will work in consultation with a faculty advisor to select a degree completion plan. Although some students opt to complete a thesis or research project, most students will complete their degrees by selecting the comprehensive examination only option. All students must take the comprehensive examination. *Please note that specific application procedures are required for thesis/research projects, and if you wish to apply, you must have at least a 3.25 grade point average.*

**The Comprehensive Examination.** By the time you have completed 18 hours of coursework (two long semesters for full time students), you should consult with your faculty advisor about taking the comprehensive exam. The faculty advisor will guide you through the degree completion process and help you select a Comprehensive Exam Committee Chair. Before the end of the second week of classes during the semester in which you plan to take the comprehensive exam, you must complete and turn in the Application for Comprehensive Exams form. You should consult with your faculty advisor or Comprehensive Exam Committee Chair to select two additional Communication Graduate Faculty members to serve on your exam committee. It is your responsibility to secure membership on your committee before the application will be approved by the GAR.

The exam has three parts. Part one is a closed-book test, which will consist of a single question asking you to compare, contrast, and apply two theories selected by your committee from a list of five submitted by you. This test will take place on campus, from 9:00-12:00 on the Saturday of the fifth week of the long semester. The second part is a take-home, open-book test which will require you to write a 10-20 page research proposal. It will be due at 5:30 pm (electronically) on the second Monday after the closed-book test. After your committee has determined that your written answers are ready to be defended, you will be invited to an oral defense of both written sections. If you fail either the written or oral portion of the comprehensive exam, you must retake the entire test in a different semester. You will be given a different theory question, and must write a new research proposal. Any student who fails two attempts at the
comprehensive exam will be dismissed from the M.A. program.

Please see the Application for Comprehensive Exam form in this handbook.

**Thesis Option.** By the time you have completed 18 hours of coursework (two long semesters for full time students), you should consult with your faculty advisor if you opt to pursue the Thesis option. The faculty advisor will guide you through the degree completion process and help you select a Thesis Director. The Thesis Director must be a member of the graduate faculty in Communication. During the semester immediately preceding the semester you intend to take thesis credit hours, you must meet with the Thesis Director, select two additional thesis committee members, and prepare a three to five-page thesis proposal. Your thesis committee should consist of three members: the Thesis Director who will serve as chair and two graduate faculty members, one of whom must be from the Department of Communication. (Faculty can only advise a limited number of thesis students, therefore it is recommended to plan ahead to ensure your opportunity to work with the faculty members of your choice). Upon approval of your thesis proposal by your director and committee, you must submit the **Application for Thesis** form, with an attached copy of the approved proposal, to the GAR before the beginning of the semester you intend to enroll in COM 6983 – Master’s Thesis. Only after the thesis proposal is approved the GAR may you enroll in thesis hours and/or begin work on the thesis. You must have at least a 3.25 grade point average for your first 18 hours of graduate coursework before you can enroll in COM 6983 – Master’s Thesis. Pursuing the Thesis Option is dependent on a selective process; no student is guaranteed acceptance. Please see the Application for Thesis form in this handbook.

The steps in the development of the thesis, once the proposal is approved, include the development and approval of the research prospectus (normally during the first three hours of COM 6983), and the conduct of research and oral defense (normally during the second three hours of COM 6983). More specifically, the first three hours involve:

- Selection of the thesis committee
- Development of the prospectus, including the introduction, review of literature, and description of methodology (with guidance from the Thesis Director)
- A Formal Prospectus Meeting with the thesis committee. The prospectus should be distributed to committee members at least two weeks prior to the scheduled prospectus meeting.
- Institutional Review Board (IRB) Application Process – For theses involving the collection of data from human subjects, formal application for research approval from the University Institutional Review Board must be made. Please see section below on IRB Approval.

- **NOTE:** Your prospectus MUST be approved by your committee before advancement to the second three hours of COM 6983. In the event you do not
pass the prospectus process, you may revert to the Comprehensive Examination Only Option. The requirements for the Comprehensive Examination Only Option will be in force, including total number of credit hours needed for degree completion. In such a case, you will not receive credit for the first three hours of COM 6983.

The second three hours of COM 6983 – Master’s Thesis involve:

- Data collection and analysis, and development of the final chapters of the thesis (result, analysis, and conclusion), with guidance from the thesis advisor. The student will provide the first draft of the thesis, including the revised prospectus and the final chapters, to the Thesis Committee. The Committee will review the draft and offer comments for revision. Following approval of the Committee Chair, a revised draft should be provided to the Thesis Committee at least two weeks prior to scheduling of the Oral Defense. The Oral Defense must take place at least two weeks prior to the deadline for submitting the final copy of the thesis to the Graduate School.

- The Oral Defense of the thesis – The student will orally defend the thesis to the Thesis Committee. The student may be required to revise the thesis after the Oral Defense before submission of the final copy to the Graduate School.

**Project Option.** By the time you have completed 18 hours of coursework (two long semesters for full time students), you should consult with your faculty advisor if you opt to pursue the Project option. The faculty advisor will guide you through the degree completion process and help you select a Project Director. The Project Director must be a member of the graduate faculty in Communication. During the semester immediately preceding the semester you intend to take Project credit hours, you must meet with the Projects Director, select two additional project committee members, and prepare a three to five-page project proposal. Your project committee should consist of three members: the Project Director who will serve as chair and two graduate faculty members, one of whom must be from the Department of Communication. (Faculty can only advise a limited number of project students, therefore it is recommended to plan ahead to ensure your opportunity to work with the faculty members of your choice). Upon approval of your project proposal by your director and committee, you must submit the Application for Project form, with an attached copy of the approved proposal, to the GAR before the beginning of the semester you intend to enroll in COM 6993 – Master’s Project. Only after the project proposal is approved the GAR may you enroll in project hours and/or begin work on the project. You must have at least a 3.25 grade point average for your first 21 hours of graduate coursework before you can enroll in COM 6993 – Master’s Project. Pursuing the Project Option is dependent on a selective process; no student is guaranteed acceptance. Please see the Application for Project form in this handbook.
The steps in the development of the project, once the proposal is approved, include the development of the project prospectus (normally during the first three hours of COM 6993), and the completion and oral defense (normally during the second three hours of COM 6993). More specifically, the first three hours involve:

- Selection of the project committee
- Development of the prospectus including: a) the project description and rationale; b) the purpose, the audience, and the review of similar projects/technology; and c) a tentative timeline for completion.
- A Formal Prospectus Meeting with the project committee. The prospectus should be distributed to committee members at least two weeks prior to the scheduled prospectus meeting.

**NOTE: Your prospectus MUST be approved by your committee before advancement to the second three hours of COM 6993. In the event you do not pass the prospectus process, you may revert to the Comprehensive Examination Only Option. The requirements for the Comprehensive Examination Only Option will be in force, including total number of credit hours needed for degree completion. In such a case, you will not receive credit for the first three hours of COM 6993.**

The second three hours of COM 6993 – Master’s Project involve:

- The student will provide the first draft of the project to the Project Committee. The Committee will review the draft and offer comments for revision. Following approval of the Committee Chair, a revised draft should be provided to the Project Committee at least two weeks prior to scheduling of the Oral Defense. The Oral Defense must take place at least two weeks prior to the deadline for submitting the final copy of the project to the Graduate School.
- The Oral Defense of the project – The student will orally defend the project to the Project Committee. The student may be required to revise the project after the Oral Defense before submission of the final copy to the Graduate School.

**Note:** Any Thesis or Project involving the collection of data from human subjects requires prior approval from the University Institutional Review Board (IRB). Please see section below on IRB Approval.

**Oral Defense.** Regardless of whether you choose the thesis, project, or comprehensive exam only option, you must successfully complete an oral defense in your final semester as part of your degree requirements. NOTE: Eligibility for the Oral Defense is based on having satisfactorily completed the thesis, project and/or written comprehensive exam. Occasionally, faculty may ask you to undergo additional
preparation for the oral defense. Additional preparation for the oral defense might include additional writing or editing the thesis/project, further oral or written explanation of comprehensive exam answers, or further preparation for oral articulation of content covered in the oral defense.

The one-hour oral defense of the comprehensive exam must be completed within one week of taking the written exam, and will be a discussion of your exam answers. In the case of a thesis or project, it will be a discussion of the completed thesis or project. Successful completion of the oral defense is required for graduation.

**IRB Approval**

Any research involving the collection of data from human subjects requires prior approval of the UTSA Institutional Review Board (IRB). This requirement includes theses, master’s projects, independent studies, or class projects. If the research will be submitted for presentation at a conference or publication, it must be approved prior to any data collection. All student projects require the signature of a faculty supervisor. The faculty supervisor will take responsibility to review the research protocol and appropriate forms prior to submission to the IRB. Additionally, all students conducting human subjects research must complete the Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative (CITI) Training prior to submission of the protocol and forms to the IRB. The IRB will not review applications for approval of human subjects research without documentation of the CITI Training. Research projects conducted solely for the purpose of a class project, which will not be submitted for presentation or publication, will not need IRB approval.
Graduate Course Offerings
The following is a listing of courses that are part of the Master of Arts in Communication Program. Please note, not all of these courses are offered each semester. Careful planning is required to complete the program in a timely manner. A Sequence of Courses chart is included in the handbook to assist you with your planning. The courses are grouped according to Specialized Areas of Study. Following each course title are listed the prerequisites required in parentheses. See below for course descriptions and requirements.

- COM 5003: Introduction to Graduate Studies in Communication
- COM 5013: Communication Theory (5003)
- COM 5023: Quantitative Research Methods (5003)
- COM 5033: Qualitative Research Methods (5003)
- COM 5103: Theories and Applications of Communication (5013)
- COM 5213: Relational Communication (5103)
- COM 5223: Small Group Communication (5103)
- COM 5313: Health Communication (5103)
- COM 5413: Seminar in Organizations (5103)
- COM 5423: Organizational Implementation of Integrated Communication (5103)
- COM 5613: New Media Design and Production I (5103)
- COM 5623: New Media Design and Production II (5613)
- COM 5813: International Communication (5103)
- COM 5823: Intercultural Communication (5103)
- COM 5973: Topics in Communication (5013)
- COM 6931-3: Directed Readings (grad standing)
- COM 6941-3: Internship in Communication (grad standing)
- COM 6951-3: Independent Study (grad standing)
- COM 6961: Comprehensive Examination (grad standing, No Credit)
- COM 6963,6: Master's Thesis (GAR)
- COM 6993,6: Master's Project (GAR)

**Communication 5003: Introduction to Graduate Studies in Communication**

*Prerequisite:* Admission to the Master of Arts program in Communication or consent of instructor.

Tracks the development of research and practice in communication, stressing integration of inquiry, theory, and practice as well as grounding in various areas of specialized study. Emphasis on the development of skills critical to success in graduate-level communication study.
**Communication 5013: Communication Theory**

**Prerequisite:** Completion of or concurrent enrollment in COM 5003 or consent of instructor.

Critical review of the historical roots, major paradigms, and current status of communication theory. Special emphasis on the diversity of theoretical approaches and applications as well as the integral relationship of theory and research.

**Communication 5023: Quantitative Research Methods**

**Prerequisites:** Three semester hours of undergraduate research methods. Completion of or concurrent enrollment in COM 5003 or consent of instructor.

Introduces social scientific approaches to communication inquiry. Focus on design, measurement, and data analysis of quantitative research. Also covers principal statistics applied in communication and related computer programs. Students apply course concepts by evaluating and conducting research projects.

**Communication 5033: Qualitative Research Methods**

**Prerequisites:** Three semester hours of undergraduate research methods. Completion of or concurrent enrollment in COM 5003 or consent of instructor.

Introduces humanistic approaches to communication inquiry. Focus is on design, coding, analysis, data interpretation, and reporting of qualitative research. Examines a variety of qualitative research methods as well as challenges facing researchers in diverse social settings. Students apply course concepts by evaluating and conducting research projects.

**Communication 5103: Theories and Practice of Communication**

**Prerequisites:** Completion of, or concurrent enrollment in COM 5003, COM 5013, and COM 5023 or COM 5033.

Integration of theory and practice in one or more contextual areas of communication, such as interpersonal and small group communication, organizational communication, new media and information design, or international and intercultural communication. Practical experience will be gained through service learning or other applied projects such as volunteer work or participatory, collaborative research in the community. May be repeated for credit when topics vary, but no more than nine hours will apply to the Master’s degree in Communication without permission of Graduate Program Committee.

**Communication 5213: Relational Communication**

**Prerequisite:** COM 5103 or consent of instructor.

An examination of communication processes in relational systems such as marriages and families, friendships, and other applied contexts. This course emphasizes the role and function of verbal and nonverbal communication in developing and maintaining human relationships.
Communication 5223: Small Group Communication
Prerequisite: COM 5103 or consent of instructor.
An examination of communication processes in bona-fide groups such as interdisciplinary health care teams, community groups, and corporate teams. This course emphasizes the role and function of verbal and nonverbal communication in group processes of decision-making, dialogue, and problem-solving.

Communication 5313: Health Communication
Prerequisite: COM 5103.
Examination of the ways that health professionals and health seekers, journalists, politicians, and society in general contribute to the creation of health issues and the promotion of health activities. Health issues as they relate to interpersonal relationships and communication will be addressed. The course includes integration of theory with research and/or practice.

Communication 5413: Seminar in Organizations
Prerequisite: COM 5103 or consent of instructor.
Examination of communication processes in complex organizations such as culture, socialization, leadership, decision-making, diversity management, technologies, and methods for adapting to change through strategic planning and continuous process improvement. This course emphasizes the role of organizational communication theory and research in applied organizational settings.

Communication 5423: Organizational Implementation of Integrated Communication
Prerequisite: COM 5103 or consent of instructor.
Examination of communication and organizational development with external audiences such as managing integrated communication to enhance the dissemination, comprehension, acceptance, and application of information to achieve organizational goals. This course emphasizes the role of communication specialists as message managers for organizations.

Communication 5613: New Media Design and Production I
Prerequisite: COM 5103 or consent of instructor.
Introduction to information design. Advanced study of new media development. Hands-on skill development in creating digital elements for use in multimedia and combining these elements into interactive presentations.

Communication 5623: New Media Design and Production II
Prerequisite: COM 5613 or consent of instructor.
Advanced study of information design theories and practice. Emphasizes new media production techniques.

Communication 5813: International Communication
Prerequisite: COM 5103 or consent of instructor.
Exploration of global media systems, transnational information flows, and their impacts. Issues surrounding globalization, media representation, development communication and communication policy are examined.

Communication 5823: Intercultural Communication
Prerequisite: COM 5103 or consent of instructor.
Examination of communication dynamics in diverse societies and between different
cultural communities. The interactions among communication, culture, and identity are explored within historical and contemporary perspectives.

**Communication 5973: Topics in Communication**

*Prerequisite:* COM 5003 and COM 5013 or consent of instructor.

Intensive study of one or more specific issues in communication. May be repeated for credit when topics vary, but no more than 9 hours will apply to the master’s degree.

**Communication 6931-3: Directed Readings** (1 to 3 hours credit)

*Prerequisites:* Graduate standing and permission of the Graduate Program Committee.

Reading, research, discussion, and writing under the direction of a member of the graduate faculty. Enables students to explore/prepare an area of specialization when other appropriate classes are unavailable.

**Communication 6941-3: Internship in Communication**

*Prerequisites:* Graduate standing and permission in writing (form available) of the instructor and Graduate Advisor of Record.

Supervised experience, relevant to the student’s program of study, within selected organizations. May be repeated for credit. Must be taken on a credit/no credit basis. No more than three hours will apply to the master’s degree.

**Communication 6951-3: Independent Study** (1 – 3 hours credit)

*Prerequisites:* Graduate standing and permission in writing (form available) of the instructor and Graduate Advisor of Record.

Independent reading, research, discussion, project development and/or writing under the direction of a faculty member. Intended for specialized work not normally available as part of the regular course offerings. May be repeated for credit, but not more than six hours, regardless of discipline, will apply to the master’s degree. May not be substituted for COM thesis or project courses.

**Communication 6961: Comprehensive Examination (1 hour credit)**

*Prerequisite:* Approval of the Graduate Advisor of Record.

Independent study course for the purpose of taking the Comprehensive Examination. May be repeated once. Enrollment is required each term in which the Comprehensive Examination is taken if no other courses are being taken that term. The grade report for the course is either CR or NC. Credit earned in COM 6961 may not be counted in the 36 hours required for the Master’s degree in Communication. Please see the description for the Comprehensive Exam Option as well as the Application for Comprehensive Exam form in this handbook.

**Communication 6963,6: Master’s Thesis (3 or 6 hours credit)**

*Prerequisites:* Permission of the thesis advisor and Graduate Advisor of Record.

Supervised thesis research and preparation. May be repeated for credit, but no more than six hours will apply to the master’s degree. Credit will be awarded upon completion of the thesis. Enrollment is required each term in which the thesis is in progress. Please see the description for the Thesis Option as well as the Application for Thesis form in this handbook.
**Communication 6993,6: Master’s Project (3 or 6 hours credit)**

*Prerequisites:* Permission of the project advisor and Graduate Advisor of Record. Supervised development and completion of a professional-quality project in the student’s area. May be repeated for credit, but no more than six hours will apply to the master’s degree. Credit will be awarded upon completion of the project. Enrollment is required each term in which the project is in progress. **Please see the description for the Project Option as well as the Application for Project form in this handbook.**
Financial Assistance

Graduate, teaching and research assistantships are available to qualified students enrolled in the program, along with reader/grader positions.

A Graduate Assistant serves in office support roles with the MA Program or Communication Department. A Teaching Assistant (I) assists faculty with class preparation, occasional lecturing, individual/small group student instruction, and grading in designated courses. A Teaching Assistant (II) serves as instructor of record for lower-level undergraduate courses. TA II positions are only available to graduate students who have successfully completed eighteen (18) graduate-level courses in communication. Research Assistants (RA) assist faculty with research or creative projects. They may be required to do work in the library, field research, computer-based activities, or work in other contexts. Reader-Graders (RG) assist faculty with class preparation, coordination and grading in designated courses.

To be eligible to work as a GA, RA or TA, graduate students must be enrolled for 6 hours in long session or three hours in summer. Please note, acceptance of an assistantship precludes additional outside employment. University policy requires that all employees, including students, undergo a criminal background check before appointments are approved. For information on scholarships/grants and loan information please refer to the Graduate School Financial Aid page http://graduateschool.utsa.edu/funding/

*Note: Preference for RA/TA appointments will be given to second-year students.*

Additional requirements include:

1. Fit between the position, your area(s) of interest, and your availability. Most assistantships require the ability to work weekdays.
2. Evaluation of past performance. When you work as a GA, TA, RA, or RG your productivity and professionalism will be evaluated by the faculty member to whom you are assigned. Reappointments will be based, in part, on this evaluation.
3. Availability of assistantships. The department does its best to ensure a fair distribution of assistantships across those students who are interested and qualified for them. Since there are usually not enough assistantships to go around, you may not be awarded assistantships in consecutive semesters, even if your performance evaluation is positive.

For more information on assistantships please contact:

UTSA Department of Communication
Master of Arts in Communication Program
One UTSA Circle
San Antonio, TX 78249-0732 Phone: (210) 458-7750; Fax: (210) 458-5991
Email: comgrad@utsa.edu
Expectations in Graduate School

You should expect a period of adjustment, and a certain amount of initial uncertainty as you begin your graduate studies. Look to your peers for moral support, and to faculty and staff for answers to your questions. Don’t try to take on too much in your first semester.

Academic work in graduate school is very different from that at the undergraduate level. For example, a typical three-credit course at the graduate level is much more demanding than its undergraduate counterpart in terms of both the amount and the level of difficulty of the coursework. Most graduate students - even full-time students - do not take more than three courses per semester. Graduate-level courses may include 20-page papers, in addition to very dense reading and other work.

Successful students pursue graduate school for multiple reasons, but an inherent interest in the material is essential. Faculty members will assume that you are internally motivated to learn (rather than just collect a degree), and that you are a mature adult who will demonstrate high levels of responsibility, initiative, and academic integrity. Whereas a Bachelor’s degree often emphasizes mastery of knowledge, the Master’s degree requires a higher level of creative production and independent scholarship.

Relationships with Peers, Faculty, and Staff

Graduate programs are much smaller than undergraduate programs, and you will likely take most of your courses with the same group of classmates. This cohort of fellow students can be an important source of support, and it will be important to foster a sense of community (rather than competition) among your peers.

Teaching assistants often experience the “sandwich” phenomenon of being students and authority figures simultaneously. This can be uncomfortable or confusing for some, especially those who have been recent undergraduates in the same program. New TAs should take extra care to demonstrate high levels of professionalism, and to be aware of teaching-related policies (e.g. confidentiality of student information, avoiding sexual harassment, etc.) at both the department and university levels.

Your relationships with professors will also be a bit different than at the undergraduate level. While you are still their students, you are also becoming their fellow scholars, and may collaborate with them individually on research projects or assist them in teaching undergraduate classes. Ideally, you will have at least one close mentor among the UTSA faculty. To a great extent, initiating such relationships will be up to you. Do not be afraid to approach individual faculty members to ask them about their research, inquire about the possibility of working together on research, or invite them to serve as advisor for your comprehensive exam, thesis, or project. Keep in mind, there are individual differences among faculty in regard to preferred modes of communication; when in doubt, ask! Also, recognize that faculty members’ individual workloads may prohibit them from working with you, and try not to take it personally if a professor declines...
your requests for this reason. Most faculty members will be interested in getting to know you and helping you to find the most appropriate mentors.

UTSA’s Communication Department has some of the most able, efficient, and helpful office staff anywhere! You will enjoy getting to know them, too. If you have requests to make of them, just be sure to do so with respect for their heavy workloads.
# UTSA Department of Communication

## Program of Study for Master’s Degree

**STUDENT NAME** ____________________________________________________________

(Last) __________________________ (First) __________________________ (Middle) ________________

**BANNER ID #_______________________**

ENTRY CATALOG 20_______

**AREA(S) OF SPECIALIZED STUDY ______________________________________________**

**FACULTY ADVISOR _________________________________ ____________________________**

(Date Selected)

**ANTICIPATED TRACK:**  ___ THESIS / PROJECT  ___ COMPREHENSIVE EXAM

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<th><strong>CORE COURSES (15)</strong></th>
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<td>5033: Qualitative Methods</td>
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<td>5103: Theory &amp; Applic. (Area)</td>
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<th><strong>PRESCRIBED ELECTIVES (15)</strong></th>
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<th>Notes</th>
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<th><strong>THESIS/PROJECT (6)</strong></th>
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<th><strong>COMPREHENSIVE EXAM</strong></th>
<th>Semester</th>
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**TOTAL CREDIT HOURS** 36

*Revised 08/16/2008*
COLLEGE OF LIBERAL AND FINE ARTS
COMPREHENSIVE EXAMINATION REQUEST/APPROVAL

Student’s Name ___________________________ Student ID# __________________

Major __________________ Emphasis __________________ Catalog ____________

I. The graduate faculty of the Department of ___________________________ recommend that the following faculty members be named as this student’s Comprehensive Examination Committee

Chair ___________________________
Member _________________________
Member _________________________
Member _________________________

Recommended: __________________________

Graduate Advisor of Record Date

Transmitted: __________________________

Department Chair Date

Approved: ___________________________

Associate Dean Date

II. The examination will be administered during the __________________ semester.

Written Date: ___________ Time: _______ Location: ____________

Oral Date: ___________ Time: _______ Location: ____________

Graduate Advisor of Record

III. This is to certify that ___________________________

Student’s Name

_________________________ has successfully passed the Comprehensive Examination for Master of Music/Arts/Science in ________.

_________________________ has successfully HIGH PASSED the Comprehensive Examination for Master of Music/Arts/Science in ________.

_________________________ has failed to pass the Comprehensive Examination for Master of Music/Arts/Science in ________.

_________________________ must pursue the following action as pertains to Master of Music/Arts/Science in __________________________.

Date _________________

_________________________, Chair ___________________________, Member

_________________________, Member ___________________________, Member

Master of Arts in Communication
Graduate Student Handbook
INTENT TO WRITE A THESIS

This form **must** be completed and on file in the Dean’s Office before enrollment in Master’s Thesis, designed as **6983 or 6986** in the Graduate Catalog for each program.

Name of Student ___________________________    ID# ______________

Graduate Program ________________ Concentration (If applicable) ________________

Date of Comprehensive Exam __________  Expected Graduation Date __________

Preliminary Thesis Title:
______________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________

Brief abstract (100 word maximum)
______________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________

The following approval signatures are required in sequence:

Thesis Chair ___________________________    Date _____________

Thesis Committee Member ________________    Date _____________

Thesis Committee Member ________________    Date _____________

Graduate Studies Committee Chair ___________    Date _____________

Graduate Advisor of Record ________________    Date _____________

Dean ___________________________    Date _____________

*Master of Arts in Communication*
*Graduate Student Handbook*
INTENT TO WRITE A PROJECT

This form must be completed and on file in the Dean’s Office before enrollment in Master’s Project, designed as 6993 or 6996 in the Graduate Catalog for each program.

Name of Student ___________________________ ID# ______________

Graduate Program ________________ Concentration (If applicable) ________________

Date of Comprehensive Exam ___________ Expected Graduation Date ___________

Preliminary Project Title: ______________________________________________________

Brief abstract (100 word maximum)

___________________________________________________________________________

___________________________________________________________________________

___________________________________________________________________________

___________________________________________________________________________

___________________________________________________________________________

___________________________________________________________________________

The following approval signatures are required in sequence:

Thesis Chair ___________________________ Date ___________ 

Thesis Committee Member __________________ Date ___________

Thesis Committee Member __________________ Date ___________

Graduate Studies Committee Chair ___________ Date ___________

Graduate Advisor of Record ________________ Date ___________

Dean ___________________________________ Date ___________
Communication Graduate Faculty

Renee Cowan, Assistant Professor
Ph.D., Texas A&M University
Organizational Communication

Karen Daas, Assistant Professor
Ph.D., University of Nebraska
Interpersonal and Small Group Communication

Sara DeTurk, Associate Professor
Ph.D., Arizona State University
Intercultural Communication, Intergroup Communication

Christopher Hajek, Associate Professor
Ph.D., University of California, Santa Barbara
Intercultural Communication, Intergroup Communication

Seok Kang, Assistant Professor
Ph.D., University of Georgia, Athens
New Media, Health, Entertainment Education

Ali Kanso El-Ghori, Professor
Ph.D., Ohio University
Public Relations, Organizational Communication

Kimberly Kline, Associate Professor
Ph.D., University of Georgia, Athens
Intercultural Communication, New Media, Health, Women's Studies, Popular Media

H. Paul LeBlanc, Associate Professor
Ph.D., Southern Illinois University, Carbondale

Interpersonal and Small Group Communication, Family Communication

Steven Levitt, Associate Professor
Ph.D., Ohio State University
Organizational Communication, New Media

Chad Mahood, Assistant Professor
Ph.D., University of California, Santa Barbara
New Media, Mass Communication Effects

Jamie McDonald, Assistant Professor
Ph.D., University of Colorado, Boulder
Organizational Communication, Work and Occupations, Feminist & Queer Theory

Jessica Raley, Assistant Professor
Ph.D., The University of Texas at Austin
Health, Interpersonal, & Instructional Communication

Viviana Rojas, Associate Professor
Ph.D., University of Texas at Austin
International Communication, Health Communication, Media Studies

Juyan Zhang, Assistant Professor
Ph.D., University of Missouri, Columbia
International Communication, Public Relations