Cornell University

Field of Communication
Graduate Program Manual

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This manual is intended to help Ph.D. students in the Field of Communication. The information has been compiled by the Field’s Graduate Program Committee (GPC). In general, the GPC establishes the detailed requirements and regulations for students in the Field listed in this manual.

I. THE COMMUNICATION GRADUATE PROGRAM

Graduate study in Communication at Cornell appeals to students willing to rethink how the traditional categories, such as mass and interpersonal communication, still fit in an age of chat rooms, virtual reality, cell phones, and 500 channel cable systems. We’re looking for students who, for example, see that when a community is upset over a public works project this is not just a public relations problem, but a complex system of social influences that needs to be understood.

Cornell Communication students are the kind of students who think differently and change things. They may be interested in changing how institutions collaborate to improve natural resources management, or in exploring how teenagers combine the use of TV and Instant Messenger. We don’t believe in shoving students into a mold. There are few required courses. With the guidance of a committee of faculty members, each student designs a rigorous program that fits his or her goals.

The Communication program at Cornell examines communication in a variety of domains, including:

- media psychology
- health
- youth and media
- risk and environmental communication
- groups, organizations, and communities
- science and technology
- social networks
- technology and social behavior
- media, technology, and society
- human-computer interaction
- social influence and persuasion
- cultural and inter-cultural communication
- communication and public policy

Our faculty approach these domains at various levels of analysis (individual, dyadic, group, organizational, cultural, institutional, and societal) and with a variety of methods and theoretical approaches for the purpose of generating knowledge about communication as a process and set of institutions that shape the social world. We expect all our students to be familiar with the range of tools used in the program (level of analysis, theories, and methods) and prepared to draw from them as appropriate.

Our students will become communication scholars who are critical thinkers looking at socially-relevant questions, based on global knowledge and using their abilities for research, teaching, outreach, consulting, and government service.

Communication at Cornell isn’t for everybody. Our approach is firmly embedded in the social sciences but also draws from both the humanities and natural sciences. We are proud of our base within Cornell’s College of Agriculture and Life Sciences — a connection that provides special opportunities for students interested in health, risk, and environmental, as well as the use of technology and media to address contemporary social issues.
A. **Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.)**

The Field of Communication at Cornell University offers a Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.) degree. The Ph.D. degree is a research degree. The doctoral program in the Field of Communication at Cornell is designed to be a small, high quality program that will encourage students’ interests in proposing, testing, and refining communication theory using empirical, social science research methods. Doctoral students will become active, independent researchers. Program graduates will compete successfully for teaching and research positions at colleges and universities, work at consulting firms, or conduct research and contribute to policy in government and private organizations.

II. **ADMISSIONS**

Students who wish to apply to the Communication graduate program at Cornell University should apply directly to the Graduate School. The Graduate School then forwards each student’s information to the Field of Communication. Cornell uses online applications, available at [http://www.gradschool.cornell.edu/admissions](http://www.gradschool.cornell.edu/admissions).

Applicants are required to submit the following materials in addition to the application form: TOEFL scores for international students, GRE scores, transcripts from all undergraduate and graduate institutions, three letters of recommendation, and a statement of purpose. Students are also required to submit samples of their academic or scholarly writing. The Graduate Committee in the Field of Communication also may request additional information.

**Requirements**

1. Applicants must complete the Graduate School web-based application through CollegeNet.

2. Applications for fall admission should be received by December 15th. There is no spring admission.

3. Applicants should provide current GRE scores. The Field of Communication does not require any specific level of GRE score, but most students admitted to graduate studies in the Field of Communication past few years had combined verbal and quantitative scores above 300.

4. Applicants whose first language is not English should have a TOEFL minimum score of 600 paper-based, 250 computer-based, or 100 on the new Internet-based test, or should have studied for two or more years in an undergraduate or graduate program in a country where both the language of instruction and an official language is English. [http://www.gradschool.cornell.edu/admissions/english-language-proficiency-requirement](http://www.gradschool.cornell.edu/admissions/english-language-proficiency-requirement)

5. The Field of Communication does not require any specific grade point average. However, most students admitted to graduate studies in the Field of Communication have an undergraduate grade point average of at least 3.25 (in a 4.0 system) or a grade point average in their Master’s program of 3.7 or above (in a 4.0 system).
III. DEGREE PROGRAM: DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY (Ph.D.)

A. Graduate School Requirements
The student is responsible for all Graduate School requirements whether listed here or not. Field requirements may be more stringent than Graduate School requirements in some instances.

1. Student progression toward an advanced degree is determined not only by the quality of work completed (through faculty evaluations and formal exams), but also the length of time spent in the pursuit of the degree. For research degrees, the Graduate School measures this progress in terms of registration units (RUs). One registration unit corresponds to the satisfactory completion of one academic semester of full-time study and research. Registration units are awarded to the graduate student by their Special Committee chair, thus representing an evaluation of the student’s academic progress. If a full registration unit is not awarded by the special committee chair, documentation of the non-satisfactory performance of the graduate student should be given to the graduate student and the Director of Graduate Studies. (For further information, please refer to the Cornell University Code of Legislation of the Graduate Faculty located on the Graduate School website [www.gradschool.cornell.edu](http://www.gradschool.cornell.edu).)

Ph.D. candidates are required to obtain a minimum of six registration units (equivalent to six semesters of study at a satisfactory level). Two of these six RUs are required after the A exam. At least one-half of the RUs earned toward the above requirements must be earned from full-time, academic-year study on the Ithaca campus.

2. All requirements for the doctoral degree must be completed within seven years of the first registration in the Graduate School.

3. A Ph.D. candidate may be granted a maximum of two residence units for a Master’s degree earned at Cornell or at another institution.

4. Students are required to take two examinations: a comprehensive admission to candidacy examination (the “A exam”) after the student has earned at least two residence units, and a final examination after completion of the dissertation (the “B exam”). (See details on the “A” and “B” exams below).

5. Students must complete a dissertation.

6. Graduate School regulations regarding general examinations, residency, and dissertation preparation must be satisfied.

B. Field of Communication Requirements
Although the regulations of the Cornell Graduate School preclude establishing specific course requirements, it is expected that most students in the Ph.D. program will take approximately 15 courses for credit – two to two and a half years of coursework – for a total of about 45 course credits. Of those courses, it is expected that a significant portion will be taken outside the Field of Communication.
1. The Ph.D. program involves two stages of study. Stage I spans years one and two and culminates with the Second Year Project, described below. During Stage I students take the core courses (COMM 6800, COMM 6810, and COMM 6820) and, typically, two statistics or methods courses. Students should also take three to six credits of independent research to complete the Second Year Project by the end of their second year in the program.

2. Stage II involves completing the A and B exams, which are described below.

3. Students should maintain a minimum grade point average of 3.7. Grades of B- and below do not normally constitute satisfactory progress.

4. All students in the Ph.D. program will develop core knowledge of communication theory and research methods. Although the specifics of each student’s Ph.D. program will be determined by his/her Special Committee, most students will take a core of at least two courses in communication theory, two courses in research methods, and two courses in statistics. Normally, it is expected that Ph.D. students will take their two theory and two methods courses their first year on campus.

5. Most Ph.D. students will take four or more courses in a substantive intellectual area outside the Field of Communication. These courses may not count toward more than one requirement. These courses would normally be taken for a letter grade, but in some circumstance the Special Committee can approve taking one of these courses for an S/U grade.

6. A student’s elective courses should have definite focus, usually relating to a specialization, to the dissertation topic, etc. This focus can be achieved by taking a number of courses within a field or across fields which offer related courses.

7. Each Ph.D. student is expected to teach or assist in teaching an undergraduate course for at least two semesters. This requirement may be completed through a funded teaching assistantship (TAship).

8. Students are expected to complete a Second Year Project (described in detail below) and present it during a Department Colloquium.

9. By the end of their first semester, students must provide documentation that they have completed Cornell’s Responsible Conduct in Research Online Training http://www.oria.cornell.edu/rcr/

C. The Special Committee
The student’s program is guided by a Special Committee composed of graduate field faculty members chosen by the student in consultation with the Director of Graduate Studies (DGS). The Special Committee system places considerable responsibility on the student to determine, with his or her Special Committee, appropriate courses and an appropriate program of study to fulfill the requirements for the degree. Under this system the student works with the faculty members who can best direct the student’s course of study.
1. The minimum Ph.D. Special Committee will consist of at least four members: the Chair (“Chair”) and at least two other members (“Minor Members”) must be from the Field of Communication, and one “Additional Member” whose primary appointment is outside of the Field.

2. To ensure that a student is clearly identified with the Field of Communication, each student is encouraged to select his/her Chair from Field of Communication graduate faculty who has primary appointments in the Department of Communication.

3. One Field member will be appointed temporary advisor until the Chair is selected. The Special Committee Chair should be selected by the end of the student’s first semester of residence. The remainder of the Special Committee should be selected by the end of the student’s first year of residence.

4. The Special Committee must meet at least annually.

D. **Second Year Project**
Students enrolled in the doctoral program will be required to produce an original empirical research paper by the end of the second full year of study. These papers will be presented in a colloquium to the entire Communication Graduate Field Faculty during the first month of the fall semester.

1. **Second Year Project Goals**
   - To provide a mechanism for students to gain experience in conducting independent empirical research prior to embarking on their dissertation research.
   - To provide a means for faculty to evaluate students’ ability for conducting such research.
   - To introduce students early in their careers to important professional skills such as producing high quality scholarly work by a specified deadline, and making professional research presentations.
   - To provide an important socialization and community-building event, in the form of the yearly seminar, for the department and graduate field as a whole.

2. **Second Year Project Procedure**
   **At the end of the second semester of the Ph.D. program,** each student should begin work with his/her advisor to identify an empirical research project on which s/he will take the scholarly lead.

   a. This might be an entirely independent project or a component of a group project for which the student will have primary responsibility. It might be a project based in a course, or it might be independent of coursework. It might be a project that is intended to explore a potential
dissertation topic, or it might be unrelated to the student’s intended dissertation research.

b. The key requirement is for the student to be the primary intellectual leader of the project.

c. The main advisor for the project may be any member of the Communication Graduate Field faculty (not necessarily the Chair of the student’s Special Committee).

d. The student with the advisor will identify an outlet for the research paper and follow its guidelines for submission (e.g., formatting, length, etc.). Outlets include journals (e.g., Journal of Communication) or archived and peer-reviewed full proceedings (e.g., CHI, CSCW).

By **May 1st of the second year of study**, the student should submit to the main advisor at least a three-page summary of the project’s status (a draft paper would also meet this requirement). This summary will be available to all faculty during the Field’s annual assessment of student progress.

By **August 15th of the summer following the second year of study**, students should submit to the project advisor a completed paper, in polished form appropriate for submission to a conference or journal. The final draft copies should be submitted to the student’s Special Committee and the Director of Graduate Studies. Note: This version should have been reviewed extensively by the project advisor. Plan therefore on getting initial drafts to the advisor by late June to allow time for revisions.

During **the first month of the fall semester**, students who have recently completed their Second Year projects will formally present them during a Department Colloquium.

3. **Second Year Project Evaluation**

The primary project advisor and the Special Committee will provide brief written assessments of the project, including both the paper and the presentation, and make a recommendation for pass or fail to the student’s Special Committee Chair. Members of the Field who attended the presentation are welcome to provide feedback to the Committee Chair. The Committee Chair will provide written assessments of the formal paper to the student and the Director of Graduate Studies by September 30th.

In addition, the Director of Graduate Studies will provide the Field with a judgment based on the Special Committee’s feedback and assessment about the student’s suitability for continuing in the program. If the assessment is negative, the Director of Graduate Studies, in conjunction with the Special Committee Chair, will meet with the student to discuss the suitability of continuing in the program. Subsequent decisions about funding and other support will be affected by the assessment.
Students who fail to meet the deadline for the written or oral versions of the Second Year Project will be considered to not being making satisfactory progress toward their degree. This will affect their status in the program, particularly their continuing ability to receive funding in the form of teaching or research assistantships.

E. Exams

1. A Exam. A graduate with a Ph.D. is expected to be able to conduct a program of his/her own research, as well as to be able to teach and supervise others who are formulating research. The A exam is intended to insure that the Ph.D. student is making appropriate progress toward those goals. Thus the exam has both a backward-looking and a forward-looking purpose, assessing mastery of material already covered and preparation for conducting independent dissertation research. Upon passing the A exam the student is admitted to candidacy for the Ph.D.

Timing of the A Exam. Normally, the A exam is taken in the third year of the Ph.D. program. By Graduate School rules, the A exam may not be taken before two units of residence credit as a doctoral student (i.e., beyond the Master’s), but it must be taken before the student begins the seventh unit of residence. The A exam may not be scheduled if there are any outstanding incompletes or missing grades.

Content of the A Exam. The A exam is a comprehensive breadth and depth review of the theoretical and methodological material the student has studied over the last few years. Normally, the exam will test at least the following: knowledge of theory development and methodology, including epistemology of social science; knowledge of a broad range of communication theory relevant to the student’s work; depth knowledge of the theory, research and methods in the student’s area of specialization.

The student’s Special Committee will determine the specific content of the A exam. The Field recommends that the student meet with the full committee to agree on the scope of the exam questions and the procedures to be followed. The Chair of the Committee will coordinate this process to ensure that questions achieve the goals set for the A exam. This coordination may include defining areas of inquiry and recommending reading lists.

Procedures for the A Exam. The A exam consists of a written examination and an open oral examination by the Special Committee. Generally, students should set the approximate date of the oral exam (which comes after the written exam) approximately three to six months in advance. The student must formally notify the Graduate School seven calendar days in advance of the oral part of the A exam and must follow all other Graduate School rules regarding A exams.
Members of the Special Committee may give closed or open book questions and may set other rules for the nature of materials and equipment the student may use in the examination. Normally, students may refer to the literature and other written material as well as the student’s own notes, but the student must not receive any other form of outside help that would compromise the assumption that the A exam is the student’s own work.

The written part of the exam will usually consist of a question or set of questions from each Special Committee member. Typically, the Committee will set a definite deadline for the A exam. Then each committee member will give the student a question that requires two to four weeks of work to complete serially or parallel. Committee members may request revisions of the answers before the oral exam.

A paper suitable for submission to a journal that represents original for which the student took primary intellectual leadership may fulfill the depth of the goal of the A exam. A dissertation proposal may be part of the A exam so long as it fulfills one of the goals of the A exam.

The oral part of the A exam should be conducted no more than fifteen working days after the student submits his/her last response to the written questions. Graduate School rules require that the oral part of the A exam be open to all members of the Field.

**Judging the A Exam.** To pass the exam, the student must demonstrate a mastery of the material and the ability for independent thought. The members of the Special Committee will adjust their expectations for length, breadth, depth, and level of detail of the written responses based on the form of the exam given. The determination of whether the student passes or fails rests exclusively with the Special Committee, and all members of the committee must approve. If a student fails the examination, re-examination is allowed if the Special Committee grants approval. A re-examination may be given no earlier than three months after the failure.

2. **B Exam.** The final examination for Ph.D. candidates, otherwise known as the dissertation defense (B exam), will be an oral examination on the dissertation. The B exam is to be scheduled at least seven calendar days in advance (in compliance with Graduate School rules and procedures). During the examination, graduate faculty other than the Special Committee may question the candidate. Determination of whether the student passes or fails and provisions for re-examination are the same as for the A exam.

A student must earn two additional residence units between the A exam and the B exam; thus, the B exam will normally take place one to two years after the A exam. All requirements for the Ph.D. degree, including filing the dissertation, are expected to be completed within four years (if a student holds a Master’s
degree) or five years (if entering the program without a Master’s degree) after the student completes the required residence units, or seven years after the first registration in the Graduate School, whichever is sooner.

F. Dissertation
Candidates for the doctoral degree must complete a dissertation.

A Ph.D. student shall submit a dissertation proposal to his/her Special Committee. This proposal must be approved by the Special Committee after discussion at a committee meeting. The proposal will include no less than a statement of the research question or questions, a brief review of the relevant literature, and a plan of research for answering the research question. The Final Examination for the Doctor of Philosophy degree (B Exam) may not occur less than three months after the proposal has been approved by the Special Committee.

A complete draft of the dissertation should be given to each Special Committee member at least six weeks before the final examination. At least five business days prior to the examination, each member should receive a copy of the dissertation, to be retained until the examination. Normally, the student can expect to revise the dissertation after successful completion of the B Exam. The faculty requires publication of Ph.D. dissertations by abstract and UMI Dissertation Express.

1. Nature of dissertation
The dissertation represents an original research effort leading to new knowledge in communication; it deals with significant theoretical issues in the field. Typical dissertations develop new theories or methods in communication, explore new areas in communication research, or deal with communication as a social phenomenon. Other approaches are possible in consultation with the student’s Special Committee.

2. Finished dissertation
   a. With certain elaborations noted below, the finished dissertation must conform to the format requirements for a doctoral dissertation listed on the Graduate School’s website: http://www.gradschool.cornell.edu/thesis-and-dissertation. All dissertations are submitted online following the Graduate School’s protocols.

   b. All dissertations must have an abstract, using American Psychological Association style or another style approved by the Chair of the Special Committee.

   c. Citations and bibliographies must follow the Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association or a style manual approved by the Chair of the Special Committee.

G. Annual Review
Academic progress for all students will be reviewed each academic year by the Field Faculty sitting as a committee of the whole. Students will provide documentation suitable for the review. The results of this review will result in recommendations to the
Special Committee Chair. Students with cumulative grade point averages below 3.7 (on a 4.0 scale) should expect serious questions to be raised about their ability to complete the Ph.D. program. In addition to these reviews, the student’s Special Committee will meet at least annually between admission and the dissertation defense for an individual review of progress.

At the annual reviews by the Field, the progress and suitability of each student’s program will be evaluated. Input about the student’s academic progress (including examination results, teaching assistant evaluations, and general overall progress in the program) will be collected from faculty and other appropriate sources. Progress in the program is the subject of this review. The outcome of the review will be shared with the student and with the student’s Special Committee, which makes the final determination on whether the student is making satisfactory progress in the program.

V. ADDITIONAL INFORMATION FOR ALL DEGREE PROGRAMS

A. Grades

1. All required courses must be taken for letter grades, except for COMM 9900 (S/U only).

2. S/U or “Audit” grades may be used for undergraduate courses taken to provide basic background. Such courses do not count toward the required minimum credits.

B. Outside Concentrations

Students are encouraged to create a concentration outside of Communication with their electives. Students should be aware that other fields may have specific requirements for “minors” in their fields; students should consult the relevant Director of Graduate Studies for more information.

C. Recommended Methods and Statistics Courses

Methods

Methods courses are those in which the primary focus is on instruction in how to do research. A course should cover one or more methods which can be applied to communication research problems; it may focus in depth on a particular method. Such courses may focus on either quantitative or qualitative methods, but must be aimed at explaining techniques of rigorous social scientific information gathering and analyses.

Statistics

Statistics courses are those in which the primary focus of the course is on students’ learning to use descriptive and inferential statistics in doing research. Such courses will usually include descriptive statistics and inferential statistics through t-tests, analysis, variance, correlation and simple regression. Advanced courses are those that depend on a knowledge of these basic statistical techniques and that focuses on learning to use more advanced statistics.

D. Transfer Credit

1. As a doctoral candidate, you can petition to receive up to two Registration Units for Master’s work completed in a relevant non-Cornell program.
2. To accomplish this, you must meet with your Special Committee with your request, have them sign your completed “Request for Transfer of Registration Units” form found on www.gradschool.cornell.edu, then forward to the Director of Graduate Studies and the Graduate Field Coordinator for signature. They will then submit the form to the Graduate School for approval. You will be notified by the Graduate School if your request is approved or denied.

E. **Deadlines**
Students should be aware of the following requirements and deadlines for completing their projects or theses and preparing for graduation:

1. Final oral examinations need to be scheduled **at least seven calendar days** in advance using the Schedule of Examination form obtained from the Graduate School website. Follow the directions in filling out the form and obtain signatures and submit to the Graduate School.

2. The Graduate School will also need a Results of Examination Form denoting the outcome of the examinations. This should be signed by all of your special committee, noting their decision, the DGS, the GFA and returned **within three days** to the Graduate School.

3. Students submitting a dissertation should do so online at the Graduate School’s website and **follow all directions**. Submission and approvals are all electronically completed. [http://www.gradschool.cornell.edu/thesis-and-dissertation](http://www.gradschool.cornell.edu/thesis-and-dissertation)

4. Graduate School forms are available on the Graduate School’s website: [http://www.gradschool.cornell.edu/forms](http://www.gradschool.cornell.edu/forms). Copies of all forms should be turned into the Graduate Field Coordinator.

VI. **MINOR IN COMMUNICATION**
Students from outside the Field of Communication are welcome to pursue minors within the Field. A minimum of three courses for the M.S. degree and a minimum of four courses for the Ph.D. are expected for a minor. The Field expects students minoring in Communication to include a Field member on their Special Committee. Students should consult an appropriate Field member to develop an individual program.
Standards for Faculty/Graduate Student Relationships

Objectives. The purpose of this document is to specify our field standards of behavior for faculty and graduate student relationships. We recognize such relationships are only one facet of field climate, but in many ways they are fundamental to a healthy graduate program. We focus on four main types of faculty-graduate student relationships: 1) the relationship between advisors and their advisees; 2) the relationship between seminar instructors and course participants; 3) the relationship between course directors and teaching assistants; and 4) the relationship between faculty and graduate student researchers. For each type of relationship, we describe overarching goals of the relationship, norms of behavior for participants in the relationships, and situations that may signal a problem.

This document is intended to serve several functions. First, it is designed to clarify, reinforce, and promote healthy values and norms among current faculty and graduate students in the Graduate Field of Communication. Second, the document should be used to communicate our values and norms to new and visiting faculty, scholars and graduate students. Finally, this document is designed to serve as a vehicle for promoting continuing dialogue about faculty/graduate student relationships.

Value Statement. The Graduate Field of Communication seeks to promote the welfare and intellectual pursuits of faculty and graduate students. Toward this goal, we acknowledge that faculty and graduate students are both responsible for contributing to a supportive climate. We believe that faculty-student relationships should be characterized by the following:

- an appreciation of diverse values, goals, and perspectives
- consideration of one another’s welfare and interests
- negotiated expectations and decision-making
- honoring and upholding the boundaries of privacy
- mutual respect and trust

On the following pages, we provide more specific goals and expectations for the differing areas of activity in which graduate students and faculty typically interact. Graduate students and faculty are expected to familiarize themselves with these principles, and to strive to promote their successful realization.

Meet to Discuss. Each faculty member should meet with his or her advisees and carefully go over the expectations put forth in this document. For new graduate students, this meeting should occur within a few weeks of arrival and, if the student switches advisors, within one month of the switch a meeting should occur to go over this document with the new advisor. It is recommended that this document be included in graduate course syllabi, discussed with teaching assistants, and included in the training of research assistants.
Courses of Action. Should any student or faculty member feel that the expectations set out in this document have been violated, the first course of action should be to discuss the problem openly. When this is not possible, the Director of Graduate Studies or the Chair of the Special Committee should be contacted. If issues cannot be resolved there, or if either party does not feel comfortable discussing the problem with these individuals, the Chair of the Department should be informed. Of course, for certain problems, formal grievance procedures should be followed. These procedures can be found on the Graduate School website: http://www.gradschool.cornell.edu/policies-and-forms/grievance-procedures
Advising and Mentoring

The Relationship between Advisors/Mentors and their Advisees

The heart of our graduate education and training and research work is a healthy relationship between advisors and advisees. We see this ideally as a mentorship process with mutual obligations.

Goals:
- Professional academic training
- Socialization to the academic enterprise
- Pursuit of excellence in mutual projects
- Open dialogue regarding expectations of the relationship
- Support and compassion in the relationship
- Confidentiality and trust
- Recognition of each other's needs, goals, and time constraints

Norms:
- Advisors should:
  - discuss the objectives and expectations of the relationship
  - support student efforts to become involved in research projects immediately
  - recognize that they are role models for students
  - guide students rather than control them
  - be an advocate for their students
  - recognize students' particular goals and needs
  - have regular meetings every semester with students
  - give students regular and timely feedback on their work
  - monitor and assist students in making progress toward the degree
  - encourage students to express themselves in the relationship
  - be sensitive to the power differential in the relationship

- Advisees should:
  - discuss the objectives and expectations of the relationship
  - keep adviser up to date about their own progress
  - be motivated to become involved in research early and seek out opportunities pro-actively
  - recognize that adviser has many other professional commitments
  - seek mentoring and support from other faculty in addition to the adviser
  - recognize that academic commitment and hard work are fundamental to a positive advising relationship
  - feel comfortable changing advisors at any time
  - review advising options at the time of major benchmarks in the program (e.g. after A-exams)

Situations that May Signal a Problem:
- Participants perceiving that academic freedom and personal choice are limited in the advising relationship
• Participants experiencing retaliation in the advising relationship
• Participants feeling their privacy is invaded in the advising relationship
• Participants feeling frightened or threatened in the advising relationship
• Participants feeling like they are being taken advantage of in the advising relationship
• Participants having difficulty contacting and/or meeting with each other
• Participants allowing personal lives to overlap into and jeopardize professional relationship
• Advisors involving advisees in departmental conflicts
• Advisors using the allocation of resources to control advisees
Graduate Coursework

The Relationship between Seminar Instructors and Course Participants

Graduate classes and seminars offer an opportunity for constructive interaction between graduate students and instructors (faculty). We view graduate coursework as a valuable occasion for a mutual exchange and learning.

Goals:
- Free expression of ideas
- Mutual dialogue regarding course expectations and objectives
- Equal opportunity for learning
- Responsible behavior toward completing course objectives
- Objective evaluation of performance

Norms:
- Instructors should:
  - discuss the objectives and expectations they have regarding the course
  - provide a course syllabus at the start of the semester
  - clearly specify all course assignments
  - provide reading assignments at least a week before they are due
  - hold class sessions at their normally scheduled times
  - develop specific goals for each class
  - be prepared to lead discussions
  - return assignments in a timely manner that enables students to take advantage of feedback during the remainder of the course
  - return final assignments before the beginning of the next semester
  - make themselves available outside of the classroom for help and assistance
  - provide all advisees with the same opportunity to learn -- additional materials or Assistance provided to some should not be denied to others
  - provide and be willing to receive explicit and constructive feedback

- Advisees should:
  - discuss the objectives and expectations they have regarding the course
  - attend and be prepared to contribute to all class discussions
  - complete all assignments on time
  - take responsibility for seeking additional help when needed
  - provide and be willing to receive explicit and constructive feedback

Situations that May Signal a Problem:
- Participants being personally attacked for the expression of their ideas
- Participants engaging in behaviors (e.g., yelling, belittling, intimidating, etc.) that discourage others from participating in discussions
- Participants taking advantage of personal relationships to unfairly influence course related outcomes
- Instructors requiring students to make-up canceled class sessions outside of the normally scheduled time period
Teaching

The Relationship Between Course Directors and Teaching Assistants

The Department of Communication depends on both its faculty and graduate students to accomplish its undergraduate teaching mission. We view graduate students and faculty as members of a quality team.

Goals:
- Teaching Assistants receive valuable experience in both teaching and course development courses to undergraduate students
- Mutual feedback and adjustment of behaviors to benefit the course, undergraduate students, and the course team
- Both Teaching Assistants and Course Directors contributing to a quality teaching team which successfully delivers course materials to undergraduate students

Norms:
- Organizational meetings should occur sufficiently in advance of the commencement of the course to allow team members to begin the course prepared in their respective duties
- Team members for a course should plan consistent and regular course meetings
- Specific dialogue should occur between the team members concerning mutual expectations for the course and the team relationships
- Regular supportive feedback should be given among team members which is consistently designed to enhance course performance, self-esteem and professional development
- Teaching assistants should keep course directors informed as mistakes occur or problems arise with students or in sections
- There should be consistent maintenance of professional standards of timeliness, preparation, organization and accessibility to undergraduate students by all teaching team members
- All team members should be open to constructive critique
- All team members should contribute to the development and maintenance of an atmosphere which makes it apparent to undergraduate students that the team members respect and support one another
- Course directors will respect the hourly time commitment of the teaching assistants, which should not regularly require more than 20 hours per week.
- Team members’ relationships with undergraduate students should be professional at all times, both in class and outside of class
- Observation of sections should not be intrusive, the timing of observations should be mutually negotiated, and the resulting feedback should be delivered in a supportive, constructive manner
- An equal opportunity for learning and access to resources should be created across different sections for the same course

Situations that May Signal a Problem:
- Frequent or regular lecturing by the Teaching Assistant in the place of the Course Director
- Significant work added to the Teaching Assistant’s load which was not anticipated and
discussed at the commencement of the course

- Criticisms by teaching team members of each other, delivered to third persons before they are delivered to team members
- Criticisms by teaching team members of one another to or in presence of undergraduate students
- Unequal teaching loads for Teaching Assistants who are similarly situated
- Unequal access to resources and opportunities for learning given to different undergraduate students in the same course
- A feeling of fear on the part of any team member to perform or freely communicate in their professional capacity
The Department and Graduate Field of Communication are committed to research that advances our understanding and knowledge of the human communication processes. We view collaborative research between graduate students and faculty as a vital component of our research mission.

**Goals:**
- Quality research through an open exchange of ideas
- Supportive research mentoring
- Recognition of differing participant needs
- Equitable recognition of contribution
- Scholarship that enhances the understanding of human communication.

**Norms:**
- Participants should solicit each other’s ideas
- Participants should schedule regular research meetings to facilitate the project
- Participants should be willing to discuss ideas contrary to one’s own
- Participants should openly discuss the allocation of work
- Recognition should be negotiated on the basis of work allocated
- Faculty should provide instruction in the conduct and techniques of research
- Students should communicate the extent of their knowledge and experience
- Project expectations should be negotiated in advance
- Project expectations should be explicitly renegotiated as warranted
- Participants should follow through on negotiated deadlines
- Participants’ practices should meet or exceed basic ethical standards of research

**Situations that May Signal a Problem:**
- Participants feeling forced to do more work than they previously agreed
- Participants feeling like they are not getting the recognition they deserve
Graduate Field of Communication

*This is a credit model only; not requirements. Coursework and requirements should be

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It is suggested a minimum of the 3 research credits per year, but usually per semester.

According to New York State law, every full time student must be enrolled in 12 credit hours per semester. At this time, we suggest using COMM 7990 (pre-A exam) and COMM 9900 (post-A exam) to fill up this extra credits. GRAD 9001 is also available and there will be a COMM equivalent course coming Spring 2016.