



NORTHERN ARIZONA UNIVERSITY

HANDBOOK for GRADUATE STUDENTS
in the
MASTER of ARTS in APPLIED COMMUNICATION

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DESCRIPTION OF MASTER OF ARTS IN APPLIED COMMUNICATION PROGRAM

INTRODUCTION

The Master of Arts in Applied Communication (MAAC) is housed in the School of Communication, a unit within the College of Social and Behavioral Sciences at Northern Arizona University. The M.A. in Applied Communication is designed to provide students with advanced skills in communication analysis, problem solving, critical thinking, research, theoretical application, and written communication.

This handbook is intended as a description of graduate work in the program, as well as a guide to aid you in your progress through the program once you begin. This handbook is only suggestive and is not intended to represent all policies and procedures. Be aware that policies of NAU's Graduate College, Northern Arizona University, and the Arizona Board of Regents supercede any material found herein, although every effort is made to ensure that this handbook is consistent with university and state policies.

Please refer to NAU's Graduate College Policies (<http://home.nau.edu/gradcol/>) and the relevant NAU Catalog (<http://www4.nau.edu/aio/AcademicCatalog/academiccatalogs.htm>) for governing requirements and policies.

If you need further explanation of anything here, you should contact your graduate advisor or the MAAC Graduate Coordinator (comgrad@nau.edu).

GRADUATE STUDY IN COMMUNICATION

To study communication is to study a variety of forms of human symbolic behavior that occurs in interpersonal, small group, organizational, mediated, and public situations. Communication is central to forming relationships, organizing collective behaviors, maintaining and changing cultures, making sense of our social and natural worlds, and fostering understanding among people; it is a fundamental part of our human nature. The study of human communication is based on the assumption that our ability to communicate in an effective and ethical manner is vital to productive human interaction. Communication scholars are committed to the idea that exploration of diverse understandings of communicative behavior enriches our participation in an increasingly complex and interdependent global society.

As a student in the M.A. in Applied Communication program, you articulate and test your ideas, develop individual abilities, and gain competence in various communicative settings. You acquire knowledge and methods that apply to nearly every aspect of your private and public lives—in the classroom as well as outside it. In consultation with your advisor, you can design a program to meet your interests and needs. Graduate work in communication is rigorous and challenging. You are required to design, carry out, and present independent research. In doing so, you refine skills in writing, critical thinking

and reasoning, presentation and defense of ideas, application of theory to everyday situations, and research. An advanced degree is proof that you are capable of designing and following through on projects expected of communication experts.

Although the time involved will vary among individual students based on their existing skills, knowledge, and abilities, a typical three-credit graduate-level course offered in a standard sixteen-week format will generally require nine to twelve (9-12) hours of work each week (including in-class time or the online equivalent, reading, writing, outside research, preparation for in-class activities, et cetera). Summer courses generally involve twenty to thirty (20-30) hours of work each week depending on the length of the course. In addition, completion of a thesis or two projects should involve 270 hours (or more) of sustained work.

Students who graduate with an M.A. in Applied Communication from Northern Arizona University are fully prepared to enter a doctoral program (in communication or related fields) or to gain employment inside or outside higher education. Our graduate program is small enough to guarantee close contact between faculty and students and large enough to offer a wide variety of experiences for students, including the opportunity to teach, attend and present at professional conferences, and apply classroom knowledge to improve real-world situations.

As a graduate student, it is your responsibility to consult with your advisor to develop an appropriate plan of study. You must take the initiative in making sure that your plan meets the requirements of NAU's Graduate College and the M.A. in Applied Communication. However, this handbook should give you some direction, and remember—your advisor is available to help, as is the Graduate Coordinator for the M.A. in Applied Communication.

DEGREE REQUIREMENTS AND PROCEDURES

GENERAL DEGREE REQUIREMENTS

A minimum of thirty-six (36) credit hours is required for graduation with an M.A. in Applied Communication, at least fifteen (15) of which must be numbered 600 or above. All students must also complete at least twenty-four (24) credit hours of formal course work selected in consultation with their graduate advisor—that is, courses other than such individualized studies as independent studies, directed readings, research, thesis, and projects. All requirements for the master's degree must be completed within six years.

All students are required to take three courses comprising nine (9) credit hours:

- COM 600 (Communication Theory and Application),
- COM 601 (Research Methods in Communication), and
- COM 698 (Seminar in Communication Theory).

In addition, Graduate Teaching Assistants are required to take SC 503 (Classroom

Communication).

All students are required to complete twenty-one (21) credit hours of electives, which are selected in consultation with their advisor. Up to nine (9) credit hours outside of Communication (COM) and Speech Communication (SC) may be selected in consultation with a faculty advisor to use as electives in your degree program. In addition, the NAU Graduate College allows up to six (6) credits of 400-level courses to count toward completion of your program of study, with advisor approval (400-level courses are generally only allowed when a corresponding graduate-level course is not available during the course of your studies). Finally, students who have taken a specific 400-level course at NAU are generally not allowed to count that course's 500-level counterpart as part of their graduate degree program.

(If you have your advisor's approval to take a 400-level course, you and your advisor must complete the "Out of Career Enrollment Authorization" section of the "Override Authorization - Audit/Class Links/Out-of-Career" form and submit it to the Registrar after you have enrolled for the class and before you complete the class. This form can be obtained from the Registrar at <http://home.nau.edu/registrar/forms.asp>. Without completing this form, you will be allowed to enroll for the class and receive a grade, but the course will not count toward your graduate degree.)

All students must select a thesis or projects option (described later in this document). Six (6) credits of thesis (COM 699) or project (COM 690) are required, though you may end up registering for more than six of these credits (as explained later in this document).

In Appendix A of this handbook, we have provided a Graduate Program Worksheet for you to use to keep track of your progress and plan your upcoming course registration.

In Appendix E of this handbook you will find descriptions of the graduate-level courses we offer. Please be aware that our graduate courses are offered under two prefixes: COM (Communication) and SC (Speech Communication).

Part-time and Full-time Status

Students enrolled in the M.A. in Applied Communication have the option of attending full- or part-time. Full-time students normally take three or four classes per semester (9-12 credits) for up to four semesters. Part-time students generally take fewer credits, usually one or two classes (3-6 credits) each semester. If you are only taking courses via distance (online), then in most semesters you will only be able to register on a part-time basis. We do not guarantee sufficient course offerings for distance students to complete the program on a full-time basis.

The MAAC program is committed to offering a *minimum* of one web course and one "block" course (in which students meet once a week, face-to-face, seminar style) or web

hybrid course (in which online assignments replace some of the traditional classroom time) each semester. Generally the block and web hybrid courses are offered in the late afternoon or evening. Other courses are offered in a co-convened format, in which a 400-level (undergraduate) course and its 500-level (graduate) counterpart are taught together. In addition, graduate courses are typically offered during the summer term, usually by web delivery.

Normally, full-time students can expect to complete their graduate program in two years (four semesters), depending on the number of credits taken each semester and sufficient progress toward completion of a thesis or projects. Part-time students can expect to complete their course work in six to eight semesters (approximately three to four years) or more, again depending on the number of credits taken each semester and sufficient progress toward completion of a thesis or projects.

Continuous Enrollment Policies

You are expected to pursue your graduate degree with a minimum of interruption and maintain continuous enrollment. If you are in a master's degree program and do not enroll for three consecutive semesters (not including summer), you will be considered withdrawn from the university and must reapply for readmission to resume your degree program.

If you choose to take courses in some terms (semesters) but not others, you should familiarize yourself with NAU's policies regarding continuous enrollment. If you are currently enrolled at NAU or if you have previously attended and have been in attendance for one or more of the previous three fall or spring terms or any intervening summer or winter terms, NAU considers you a continuing student for course enrollment purposes. This means you need not apply for readmission to the university. As a continuing student, you may enroll during any of the published course enrollment periods. If you have not earned credits from NAU for more than three consecutive terms (excluding summer and winter terms), you must apply for readmission to NAU. If you attend NAU only during summer and/or winter terms, you are considered a continuing student if you attend at least one course in each successive (annual) summer and/or winter term from your point of admission.

Even after you have completed all formal courses required for your degree, you may need to use university facilities to carry out a required independent study, thesis research, and/or projects. For the protection of both you and the university, NAU requires that you be enrolled for credit during any term that you use university facilities or require the professional time of faculty members. This includes work on your thesis (COM 699) or projects (COM 690).

Continuous Enrollment Relating to Master's Theses (COM 699). When you begin working on a master's thesis (COM 699), the Graduate College expects you to enroll each semester from the time you begin this work until completion of your degree. You

must register for a minimum of one (1) credit each fall and spring semester. If you are using research or other university facilities, and/or the professional time of faculty members, you should enroll for at least three (3) units. During the term you complete and defend your thesis (even if this will be in the summer term), you must enroll for at least three (3) units to reflect the increased demands on the time of both faculty and the staff of the Graduate College.

If you do not maintain continuous enrollment after your work has begun on your master's thesis and you do not have an approved leave of absence on file with the Graduate College and wish to resume work, you must submit a new application for admission and register for additional credits of thesis (COM 699) in an amount equal to the number of such credits missed while not maintaining continuous enrollment.

To avoid having to sign up for additional credits after the term in which you defend, you must submit the final approved copies of your thesis to the Graduate College by the last day of the term in which you complete your defense. If you do not meet this deadline, you must enroll for three (3) credits of thesis (COM 699) credit each term after your defense until you submit your final copies to the Graduate College. For more information, see the Thesis Requirements in the Graduate Degree Requirements section of the NAU academic catalog.

Leave of Absence. In extenuating circumstances, you may petition for exception to the continuous enrollment policy. The petition form, which is available on the graduate college website (<http://home.nau.edu/gradcol/>), must be approved by your advisor and the MAAC Graduate Coordinator and sent to the Associate Dean of the Graduate College for final approval. Your request must be filed and approved before the anticipated absence.

Time Limits

You must complete all requirements for your master's degree within a six-year period. If you take courses from other institutions and transfer them to your program at NAU, they must also be taken within the six-year period. The six-year period begins at the start of the semester in which you take your first course (including transfer courses).

UNIVERSITY DEGREE REQUIREMENTS

Enrollment Status

NAU defines full-time enrollment for graduate students as nine (9) credits during fall and spring terms and the 10-week summer session. The minimum full-time course load is nine (9) credits during fall or spring term, and 16 credits is the maximum (12 credits for graduate assistants). You cannot take more than six (6) credits during any five-week summer session or more than three (3) credits during the pre-session.

You can only carry an overload (more than the maximum units as explained in the previous paragraph) with the approval of your advisor, the Director of the School of Communication, and the Associate Dean of the Graduate College. To enroll for an overload, you must submit the appropriate approval form when you enroll. This form is available from the Graduate College (<http://home.nau.edu/gradcol>).

Transfer Credit and Requirements

If you have been admitted to our graduate program and have earned resident graduate credit at another institution, you can petition the Graduate College to apply such credit toward your graduate degree. Only courses deemed by your advisor to be relevant to your program of study will be accepted.

Transferring credits to a graduate degree program is not done routinely. To be considered for transfer credit, NAU requires that your courses must:

- have been earned at a regionally accredited institution,
- have been earned with a grade of A or B (NAU will accept a pass grade if the course is graded only on a pass-fail basis),
- have been earned within the six-year period required for completing your master's degree at NAU,
- be applicable to a graduate degree at the institution where the credit was earned, and
- meet the Arizona Board of Regents' requirement for credit: A minimum of 45 hours of work is required for each unit of credit (see the Graduate College website <http://home.nau.edu/gradcol/> for specific definitions of "unit" and "contact hours").

Finally, the number of credits you transfer from other institutions cannot exceed twenty-five percent (9 credits) of the total minimum of credits (36 credits) required for your master's degree.

Master's students must complete the Petition for Transfer Credit form (available from the Graduate College web site: <http://home.nau.edu/gradcol/>). Be aware that the Graduate College has the authority to grant final approval for all transfer credits; the Graduate College may deny transfer credits even if your advisor approves of them.

Grade Point Average Requirements

If you are working toward a graduate degree, you must maintain a 3.0 grade point average for all courses taken and for all courses required in your plan. No more than six (6) credits of C grades can be counted in a master's degree. A grade below C does not earn graduate credit.

Admission to a program may be denied or revoked for any graduate student who receives unsatisfactory grades. If you have more than six credits of graduate work with

a grade of C or below, you cannot continue in your master's plan, regardless of your grade point average.

At the time of graduation, if you have earned a cumulative grade point average of at least 3.9 for all courses taken at NAU on your plan of study, you are recognized with the notation "with distinction" on your transcript.

In Progress

Courses that, by their content and requirements, normally require more time than the term or session for which you have enrolled, can be marked as IP. The following courses are eligible for an IP grade: independent study (697), independent research (685), or thesis (699).

Note that IP is not available for project credits (COM 690). If you do not complete your projects in the term for which you register for them, you will be given an incomplete (I), which must be completed within one calendar year from the end of the term in which you were registered for COM 690 credits or the grade will become a permanent incomplete (I). If you do not complete your projects within this time frame, you will have to register for additional COM 690 credits.

You must be making satisfactory progress in the course to receive a grade of IP. In addition, you must complete the work for an IP grade within two calendar years from the end of the term in which you take the course. If you do not complete the work by that time, the IP grade becomes permanent and may not be changed. Note that you may complete IP grades until the time limit on your academic plan expires.

Incomplete

If you are unable to complete course work in a scheduled course within the term in which you are enrolled, you may petition your instructor to receive a grade of I. If your instructor agrees to give you an incomplete, you and the instructor must complete a written agreement, a copy of which is held in your departmental file, indicating the exact work you need to do to finish the course.

This written agreement must also indicate the date by which you must complete this work, and that date cannot be longer than one calendar year from the end of the term in which you were enrolled in that course. By the end of the time agreed to in writing, your instructor must submit a grade for the course or the grade remains a permanent incomplete. Therefore, you must submit your work in enough time in advance of the one-year time limit in order to allow the instructor to evaluate your work as well as compute and submit your final grade. It is your responsibility, not the instructor's or your advisor's, to make sure you follow through and complete the required work within the specified time frame.

Note that instructors are not required to provide you with an incomplete, and incompletes are generally only provided when (1) there are compelling circumstances that prevent you from completing the required work within the allotted time and (2) you have already completed a substantial portion of the required work for the course. In addition, instructors are not required to give you the full year to complete the work.

Additional Policies and Information

For more information on the above policies as well as other policies governing your graduate study, please refer to the Graduate College Policies on the Graduate College web site (<http://home.nau.edu/gradcol/>).

SELECTING AN ADVISOR AND GRADUATE COMMITTEE

Temporary Advisor

You will be assigned a temporary advisor during your first semester of enrollment. Your temporary advisor will assist you with course selection and approvals and the selection of a permanent advisor. The MAAC Graduate Coordinator can also assist you with these processes.

In Appendix A of this handbook we have provided a Graduate Program Worksheet for you to use to keep track of your progress and plan your upcoming course registration. You will be provided this form in an electronic format so that you can fill it in as you complete your coursework. Please keep this electronic form updated and ready to send to your advisor in order to streamline the advising process and avoid unforeseen problems. This form will also be used in the annual review process (see relevant section below).

Selecting an Advisor

While you are welcome to seek advice from any member of the Graduate Faculty in Applied Communication, you should select a specific faculty member to be your permanent advisor—preferably by the time you complete 18 credits of course work (for full-time students, by the end of your second semester).

You will work closely with your advisor in designing and carrying out your plan of graduate study. You should meet with your advisor regularly. However, be aware that it is your responsibility to initiate contact with your advisor to address any problems, concerns, and questions, as well as to ensure you are making appropriate progress in your plan of study. Your advisor is there to assist you with course selection and approvals, choosing the thesis or projects option, forming your graduate committee, developing your prospectus (thesis) or proposals (projects), and completing your thesis/projects. Your advisor also serves as the chair of your thesis or projects committee.

Your advisor must be a member of the MAAC Graduate Faculty. Identify possible advisors based on compatibility in terms of both expertise (someone whose areas of expertise in terms of subject matter and/or methodology fits with your areas of interest and particularly the anticipated focus of your thesis or projects) and someone you believe you can work well with. It is not required that you have taken a course with this faculty member. In Appendix F of this handbook you will find a listing of Graduate Faculty for the M.A. in Applied Communication.

Once you have identified one or more possibilities for a permanent advisor, set up a meeting with the faculty member(s) to discuss the possibility of them being your advisor. Faculty may decline and/or recommend other possibilities. Once a faculty member has agreed to serve, remind her or him to inform the Graduate Coordinator that he or she is your new advisor.

You are not obligated to keep the same advisor for both your course work and your projects/thesis. In general, however, most students try to select the same advisor for both. Advisors may be changed, at either the advisor's or the student's initiative, when necessary or appropriate (e.g., due to a change in focus of the student's thesis/projects or the lack of availability of the faculty member).

In some situations it may be possible to have a faculty member who is not a member of the MAAC Graduate Faculty serve as the chair of your thesis or projects committee (see below for more about this exception). In these instances, your second committee member (see below) should be your permanent advisor for the purpose of supervising your overall academic progress through the MA in Applied Communication.

Selecting a Graduate Committee

Your master's degree project/thesis committee must be composed of three faculty members:

- your graduate advisor (who must be a member of the Applied Communication Graduate Faculty), who serves as the chair of the committee;
- a second member from the MAAC Graduate Faculty; and
- a third faculty member who may come from within or outside the MAAC Graduate Faculty (including faculty inside and outside of the School of Communication).
- In some circumstances, a fourth member may be appropriate.

You should have your graduate committee in place by the time you begin working with your advisor on your thesis prospectus or projects proposals (no later than the beginning of the semester in which you will graduate, but preferably earlier).

Your second and third members should be selected based on their areas of expertise, though the match need not be as strong as with your chair/advisor. Both the second and third faculty members must be selected in consultation with your graduate advisor. Work with your advisor to identify two or more options acceptable to both of you.

Set up meetings with the potential members to discuss the possibility of them being on your graduate committee. Your advisor may wish to approach potential members before you set up these meetings; clarify the exact procedure with your advisor before proceeding. Faculty may decline and/or recommend other possibilities.

Once you have finalized your graduate committee, your advisor is to notify the Director of the School of Communication of the proposed committee and receive approval. The MAAC Graduate Coordinator should be copied on this correspondence.

In some instances, an NAU faculty member who is not a member of the MAAC Graduate Faculty may be approved to serve as the chair of your thesis or project committee. Such exceptions are most appropriate when the outside faculty member possesses the expertise, experience, or research specialization to direct a particular thesis or project. If you, in consultation with a MAAC Graduate Faculty advisor, conclude that an outside faculty member is best suited to serve as the chair of your thesis or projects committee, you must obtain an exception. The outside faculty member generally must hold a terminal degree (e.g., PhD) and have a research record relevant to your thesis or project. To explore pursuing such an exception, you must first consult with the MAAC Graduate Coordinator. If the Graduate Coordinator determines an exception may be possible, you will need to determine if this outside faculty member is willing to serve. To formally request an exception, provide the Graduate Coordinator with a detailed written rationale for your preference for the outside faculty member. The Graduate Faculty will review your written request for an exception and the Graduate Coordinator will inform you of the decision. If an exception is approved, the outside faculty member will direct your thesis or project, and your second committee member will generally serve as your permanent advisor for the purpose of supervising your overall academic progress through the MA in Applied Communication.

Working with Your Advisor and Committee in the Summer

Be aware that faculty members are not on contract over the summer (i.e., they are technically not employed by the university). Even if they are teaching, they are only contracted to teach one or more specific courses and are not expected to engage in other activities. It is up to individual advisors as to whether they are willing and able to work with you on your projects or thesis over the summer. Additionally, it is up to individual committee members as to whether they are willing and able to read and/or attend prospectus/proposal meetings or thesis/projects defense meetings over the summer. If working with your advisor on your thesis/projects and/or completing your thesis/projects over the summer is important to you, be sure to address these issues with your advisor and/or committee members well in advance.

DEGREE OPTIONS

Graduate students in the Applied Communication program may select one of two options for completing their degree: the thesis option or the projects option. You can

register for project (COM 690) or thesis (COM 699) credit during any fall or spring semester after receiving permission from your graduate advisor (summer enrollments may be possible—see above section regarding summer work on theses/projects). Completion of the M.A. in Applied Communication requires a minimum of six (6) credits of project or thesis credits.

The purpose of preparing a master's thesis or master's projects is to give you experience in carrying out the kind of research you can expect to do throughout your professional career. Through this process, we expect you to demonstrate your ability to work independently on a problem and to document your familiarity with the literature in your field, your command of the techniques and principles of research, and your ability to form valid conclusions from the data and literature you use.

Be aware that both the thesis and projects options represent extensive work in terms of both time and skills. Since each option represents a minimum of six (6) units of graduate credit, they should involve a total of at least 270 hours of work—the equivalent of all the work and time involved in taking two three-credit graduate-level courses. In addition, both options are the culmination of your graduate work, and should demonstrate the skills and abilities fostered in 30 credits of graduate-level course work. Due to the nature of both options, however, there is often time, energy, skills, and knowledge involved in addition to your prior course work and the 270 hour estimate stated above.

Projects and theses often involve unexpected turns of events, unforeseen problems, or additional but necessary work. While working closely with your advisor can help to minimize delays or additional work, the nature of graduate-level research is that it is somewhat unpredictable.

Choosing Projects or a Thesis

A thesis must be an original research project that both builds on and adds to the existing body of knowledge in the discipline. Projects, generally, apply existing knowledge to address a problem, situation, or need. This distinction is not mutually exclusive—a thesis can involve application and projects can make contributions to the existing body of knowledge.

The thesis option involves one extended research project. The projects option involves two somewhat smaller and generally (but not necessarily) related projects.

The projects category is broader and more flexible than the thesis option. Each project could be a research project similar to but narrower in scope than a thesis. Each project could be oriented toward the production of some product (e.g., a promotional campaign, communication plan, educational curriculum, workshop, web site, video, pamphlet), though you are also expected to produce a written component accompanying this product that explains and justifies the product by using existing research and/or

theories. Each product could be a communication analysis of an existing situation, organization, potential audience, et cetera.

A thesis usually involves the use of one or more specific research methods (qualitative, quantitative, or critical) involving the collection and analysis of a body of data of some kind. A thesis is grounded in existing literature (research and/or theories), but by definition goes beyond that literature in some way. Most theses could be turned into a research paper to be submitted to an academic journal; this may be the case with projects but is less likely.

In immediate, practical terms, once you have registered for thesis credits you must continue to register (and pay) for at least one (1) thesis credit (COM 699) in each fall and spring semester until you are finished. If you do not complete your thesis within the semester for which you enroll for at least three (3) thesis credits, you will have to enroll for three (3) additional credits in the semester in which you complete the thesis and at least one (1) credit in each intervening fall and spring semester. For projects, you have to register (and pay) for a total of six (6) projects credits (COM 690), but you might not have to register for additional credits as long as you complete the projects within one year from the end of the semester in which you registered for projects credits.

Theses are published and made available in perpetuity through NAU's Cline Library, the School of Communication "library," and other repositories. This means that a thesis involves additional time, procedures (conforming to the Graduate College's requirements for theses), and expenses (making multiple copies on archival paper and paying to have the copies bound). Projects have a more limited distribution (the School of Communication "library") and the costs and time involved in document preparation, reproduction, and binding are generally less than with a thesis.

Finally, in deciding on the thesis versus projects option, you should consider (and discuss with your advisor) your future educational and/or career plans. If you plan to pursue doctoral study in communication or another discipline (or want to keep that open as an option), it is generally advisable to complete a thesis. If you have no plans or desires to pursue doctoral-level education and/or if you see yourself as more of a practitioner than scholar/researcher, the projects option may be more appropriate. However, someone who completes the projects option is still qualified to apply for admission into a doctoral program and some professionals/practitioners may find the thesis option more consistent with their plans or interests.

All other things being equal, the projects option is less costly and involves fewer institutional requirements and deadlines.

Projects Option

Typically, the project option involves two three-credit projects, for a total of six (6) credits of COM 690. Generally, the two projects are closely related to each other, but

they need not be. Projects can be completed sequentially, but it is more common to propose and defend both projects together.

You must complete a minimum of twenty-four (24) graduate credits before enrolling in project credits (COM 690) and can do so in one or more semesters. To enroll, you must have a graduate advisor, and that advisor must agree that you are ready to enroll for project credits. Work closely with your advisor to determine the appropriate number of project credits to enroll for in any given semester.

If you continue to work on your projects beyond the semester in which you enroll for any of your six credits, those COM 690 credits will carry a grade of "I" (incomplete), which must be completed within one year of the end of the semester for which you are enrolled or you will have to enroll for additional credits.

Projects must be grounded in scholarship and must have a written component. Projects are research-based, but tend to focus on the application of existing knowledge (research, theories) to specific problems or situations more than contributing to the existing body of knowledge. Projects may include such types as the creation of a workshop, development of a campaign, design of a message source (website, brochure, et cetera), or designing and implementing applied research for an organization, or each project may take the form of an extended scholarly paper that is appropriate for conference and/or journal submission.

While two separate projects are required, it is often beneficial for the two projects to be related. For example, if your projects will focus on addressing a problem faced by a particular organization, your first project may involve researching and analyzing the problem, while the second develops and proposes a particular plan or solution that is grounded in both the first project's findings and existing theories and research.

You should contact your graduate advisor and discuss possible topics for two projects. When you and your advisor agree on two projects, work with your advisor to prepare two proposals that detail each project's focus, purpose, goals, justification, use of existing theories or research, the product(s) to be produced, the process for doing so, and timelines. Prior to preparing your proposals, you and your advisor should determine an appropriate style guide to follow (e.g., MLA or APA) as well as the content, format, and length of your proposals.

See Appendix B for suggestions on preparing a project proposal. However, due the variety of types of projects appropriate for this degree, you must work closely with your advisor regarding the content, format, and length of your proposals, as well as whether to have two separate or one combined proposal for your two projects.

At this point, if you do not already have a complete graduate committee, you and your advisor should work immediately to assemble a complete committee. While you are developing your proposals, you may also wish to consult with your other committee

members or your advisor may direct you to do so. Always be sure to keep your advisor “in the loop” as you seek advice or input from your other committee members or other individuals.

The use of human subjects in your project research (interviews, questionnaires, et cetera) may require approval from the Institutional Review Board (IRB)—work closely with your advisor to determine if IRB approval is necessary, and if so prepare the necessary materials and adjust your timeline if necessary.

Once your advisor approves the proposals for the two projects, those drafts will be distributed to the entire project committee for review and a project proposal meeting will be scheduled. Note that committee members should be given the proposals two weeks in advance of the meeting; each committee member has the right to require this two-week review period, regardless of the implications for the student (e.g., delaying graduation, requiring registration for additional credits).

Project proposal meetings are generally scheduled for two hours, though the full time may not be needed. Generally, both project proposals are addressed in a single meeting. Generally, you will be asked to give a formal presentation of your proposals, followed by questions from your committee members and a discussion between you and your committee members. Be sure to discuss the specific format of this meeting with your advisor well in advance of the meeting itself. Project proposal meetings can generally be held via a conference call if travel to Flagstaff would represent excessive hardship for the student.

Your advisor will seek feedback at this meeting from your committee and formally endorse each project proposal if acceptable to the entire committee. It is common that the outcome of this meeting includes minor or major alterations to your proposed projects. If the required changes are substantial, your proposals may need to be revised and another proposal meeting may be required.

Although not typical, in some circumstances two separate project committees (and two separate proposal meetings) may be appropriate.

After committee approval of the project proposals, continue to work closely with your advisor throughout the development and execution of each project, as well as the production of the written component for each project.

Once the projects are completed and final drafts of the project papers have been approved by your advisor, all committee members will be provided with these drafts. With the approval of all committee members, a final project presentation and defense will be scheduled. Note that committee members should be given the approved drafts of the projects two weeks in advance of the meeting; each committee member has the right to require this two-week review period, regardless of the implications for the student (e.g., delaying graduation, requiring registration for additional credits). In addition, defenses are not to be held during reading week or final exam week unless

there are compelling circumstances and all committee members consent.

Projects must be presented in a public forum during a regular academic term (fall, spring, summer) for successful completion. The public will be invited to attend and the presentation may be recorded for future reference. Students are required to present their final projects in person on the NAU campus in Flagstaff or some other public location that is acceptable to both the student and the entire projects committee. Students may not present and defend their final projects via conference call or video conference.

Please note that the nature of each project and the relationship between the two projects may allow for both projects to be presented and defended at a single meeting; however, some projects may require (or allow for) two separate presentation/defense meetings. The appropriate fusion or separation of your project defenses and other details of the format and timing of your presentation and defense will be determined by your graduate advisor in consultation with your project committee(s).

Project presentation and defense meetings are generally scheduled for two hours. You will be asked to prepare an approximately thirty-minute presentation. Work closely with your advisor about the requirements for, length of, and other details regarding this presentation. In addition, be sure to discuss the specific format of this meeting with your advisor well in advance of the meeting itself, as what follows is a general description from which there may be variations.

The final project presentation and defense meeting typically begins with a private session in which the committee members consult with each other about the drafts of your projects (you and the public may be asked to leave the room for this portion of the meeting). Then you will provide your formal presentation of the projects. Time for questions from the public may then be available, at your advisor's discretion. After the presentation (and any questions from the public), the public will be asked to leave the room.

The acceptability of your master's projects will be determined by a project defense immediately following the public presentation. The project defense is a meeting (normally attended by only the student and the committee) to discuss possible revisions, additions, and/or edits needed for the final draft. The student's graduate committee will assess the projects and be asked to determine satisfactory completion or any changes required for satisfactory completion.

In the defense portion of the meeting, the committee will present questions, concerns, et cetera for the student's response. After this discussion, the student is asked to leave the room while the committee discusses and evaluates the projects and defense. Finally, the student is informed of the outcome: pass with no revisions, pass with minor or major revisions (the most common outcome), or fail. See "Levels of Evaluation" section below for more details.

After the defense, work with your advisor to make the necessary changes and submit completed, bound copies to your advisor. You are to provide, at a minimum, one bound copy of each project to be housed in the School of Communication “library” and one for your advisor; you should also ask your other two committee members if they wish to have bound copies. In addition, you are to provide an electronic copy (in PDF format) of each project to your advisor and to the MAAC Graduate Coordinator via email (comgrad@nau.edu). Your advisor will not give you a “P” (pass) on your project credits (COM 690) until all of these final copies are submitted in a format acceptable to your advisor, even if this delays your graduation until the subsequent semester.

The Graduate College does not provide guidelines for project papers, but in general you should follow the thesis guidelines where possible. See the Graduate College website for documents related to proper thesis format (<http://home.nau.edu/gradcol/thesis.asp>). The written components of each project should include a title page (adapted from the thesis title page format—see Appendix D in this handbook), abstract, and references/works cited section. The written components of your projects are to be prepared using 12-point font in a type style such as Times New Roman or Arial. A script type style is unacceptable. Margins, pagination, and other aspects of the document format and style should be in accordance with the style guide identified by your advisor (e.g., MLA or APA). It is important that the left margin be one and one-half inches wide in order to allow for binding. Work with your advisor to determine an appropriate binding and cover for your projects. The responsibility to produce a document that conforms to your chosen style guide and proper usage (grammar, spelling, punctuation, et cetera) is ultimately yours; depending on your capacities, hiring a copy editor may be necessary.

Thesis Option

A thesis is an original research project that both builds on and adds to the existing body of knowledge in the discipline. A thesis usually involves the use of one or more specific research methods (qualitative, quantitative, or critical) involving the collection and analysis of a body of data of some kind. A thesis is grounded in existing literature, but by definition goes beyond that literature (existing research and/or theories) in some way.

You must complete a minimum of twenty-four (24) graduate credits before enrolling for thesis credits (COM 699) and can do so in one or more semesters. To enroll, you must have a graduate advisor, and that advisor must agree that you are ready to enroll for thesis credits. Work closely with your advisor to determine the appropriate number of thesis credits to enroll for in any given semester.

If you continue to work on your thesis beyond the semester in which you enroll for any of your six credits, those COM 699 credits carry a grade of “IP” (in progress). These credits will continue to carry the “IP” designation until you have successfully defended your thesis and submitted all final copies to the Graduate College in the approved

format. You are required to register for at least one (1) credit of COM 699 in each fall and spring semester until you are finished, and you must enroll for at least three (3) credits of COM 699 in the semester in which you will graduate (i.e., the semester in which you will submit all final copies of your thesis to the Graduate College in the approved format), including summer.

Download the “Checklist for Master’s Students in Thesis Programs” document from the Graduate College website and use it throughout the process outlined below (<http://home.nau.edu/gradcol/thesis.asp>). Early in the semester in which you plan to graduate, review all Graduate College deadlines for submission of theses (<http://home.nau.edu/gradcol/>).

Begin by contacting your graduate advisor to discuss possible topics for your thesis. During these preliminary conferences with your graduate advisor, you should select a suitable area for research. Several factors help determine the appropriateness of a research topic, such as whether you can readily obtain essential data, whether critical library references and/or technical or specialized equipment are available, whether you can attain significant results within a reasonable time, and whether faculty members with appropriate specialties are available to provide you with proper guidance.

When you and your advisor agree on the topic and focus for your thesis, work with your advisor to prepare a prospectus (a thesis proposal) that outlines the topic, focus, purpose, justification, relevant literature (existing theories and research), your proposed methodology (involving data collection and analysis), and timelines. Prior to preparing your prospectus, you and your advisor should determine an appropriate style guide to follow (e.g., MLA or APA).

See Appendix C for suggestions on preparing a prospectus. However, due to the variety of types of research projects appropriate in the discipline, you must work closely with your advisor regarding the content, format, and length of your prospectus. A prospectus often constitutes what will become the first and second chapters of your thesis, and is therefore typically 15-30 pages in length.

At this point, if you do not already have a complete graduate committee, you and your advisor should work immediately to assemble a complete committee. While you are developing your prospectus, you may also wish to consult with your other committee members or your advisor may direct you to do so. Always be sure to keep your advisor “in the loop” as you seek advice or input from your other committee members or other individuals.

The use of human subjects in thesis research (interviews, questionnaires, et cetera) will most likely require approval from the Institutional Review Board (IRB)—work closely with your advisor to determine if IRB approval is necessary, and if so prepare the necessary materials and adjust, if necessary, your timeline.

Once a final draft of the prospectus is approved by your advisor, the draft will be distributed to the entire thesis committee for review and, with the approval of all committee members, a prospectus meeting will be scheduled. Note that committee members should be given the prospectus two weeks in advance of the meeting; each committee member has the right to require this two-week review period, regardless of the implications for the student (e.g., delaying graduation, requiring registration for additional credits). This meeting should occur no later than the first half of the penultimate semester of your intended graduation (preferably much earlier; depending on the nature of your thesis research, it may need to occur the semester before you plan to graduate).

Prospectus meetings are generally scheduled for two hours, though the full time may not be needed. Generally, you will be asked to give a formal presentation of your proposals, followed by questions from your committee members and a discussion between you and your committee members. Be sure to discuss the specific format of this meeting with your advisor well in advance of the meeting itself. Prospectus meetings can generally be held via a conference call if travel to Flagstaff would represent excessive hardship for the student.

Your advisor will seek feedback at this meeting from the committee and formally endorse the prospectus if acceptable to the entire committee. It is common that the outcome of this meeting includes minor or major alterations to your proposed research. In the required changes are substantial, your prospectus may need to be revised and another prospectus meeting may be required.

After committee approval of the prospectus, continue to work closely with your graduate advisor throughout the development and execution of the thesis.

Once the research and writing of the thesis are completed to the satisfaction of the student's graduate advisor, all committee members will be provided with a draft of the thesis. With the approval of all committee members, a final thesis defense will be scheduled. Note that committee members should be given the approved draft of the thesis two weeks in advance of the meeting; each committee member has the right to require this two-week review period, regardless of the implications for the student (e.g., delaying graduation, requiring registration for additional credits). In addition, defenses are not to be held during reading week or final exam week unless there are compelling circumstances and all committee members consent.

At this time, you should submit the draft of your thesis in approved format to the Graduate College for format review. See the Graduate College website for documents related to proper thesis format (<http://home.nau.edu/gradcol/thesis.asp>). Expect the format review to take at least a week. Be aware that the thesis coordinator does not review theses during the last two weeks of each semester or during the period between semesters.

The thesis presentation and defense constitutes the second required meeting concerning the thesis, although you and your advisor may schedule more meetings if necessary or appropriate. The acceptability of the thesis shall be determined in a final oral defense administered by the student's graduate committee.

Theses must be presented in a public forum during a regular academic term for successful completion. The public will be invited to attend and the presentation may be recorded for future reference. Students are required to present their theses in person on the NAU campus in Flagstaff or some other public location that is acceptable to both the student and the entire projects committee. Students may not present and defend their theses via conference call or video conference.

Thesis presentation and defense meetings are generally scheduled for two hours. You will be asked to prepare an approximately thirty-minute presentation. Work closely with your advisor about the requirements for, length of, and other details regarding this presentation. In addition, be sure to discuss the specific format of this meeting with your advisor well in advance of the meeting itself, as what follows is a general description from which there may be variations.

The thesis presentation and defense meeting typically begins with a private session in which the committee members consult with each other about the draft of your thesis (you and the public may be asked to leave the room for this portion of the meeting). Then you will provide your formal presentation of your thesis. Time for questions from the public may then be available, at your advisor's discretion. After the presentation (and any questions from the public), the public will be asked to leave the room.

The acceptability of your master's thesis will be determined by a thesis defense immediately following the public presentation. The thesis defense is an oral examination (normally attended by only the student and the committee) to discuss possible revisions, additions, and/or edits needed for the final draft. Your graduate committee will assess the thesis and be asked to determine satisfactory completion or any changes required for satisfactory completion.

In the defense (oral examination) portion of the meeting, the committee will present questions, concerns, et cetera for your response. After this discussion, you will be asked to leave the room while the committee discusses and evaluates the thesis and your defense thereof. Finally, you will be informed of the outcome: pass with no revisions, pass with minor or major revisions (the most common outcome), or fail. See "Levels of Evaluation" section below for more details.

At the end of the defense, the "Report on Final Oral Examination for Master's Degree" form (available from the Graduate College website: <http://home.nau.edu/gradcol/>) is completed. Make sure either you or your advisor is bringing this form to the defense.

In addition, it is your responsibility to bring the required number of copies of your thesis

signature page on the proper paper to the defense (this). If you have passed, some or all of your committee members may sign this page at the conclusion of the defense (avoiding the need to track them down later for signatures). These signatures must be in blue ink, so bring a blue pen. Depending on the degree of revisions and edits, all of your committee members may withhold their signatures until they see the final revisions, your second and third members may sign but your advisor will withhold her or his signature until he or she approves the revisions, or all three may sign if the thesis is ready to go the Graduate College as is. See the document “Turning in Final Thesis Copies” available on the Graduate College website for details (<http://home.nau.edu/gradcol/thesis.asp>).

After the defense, work with your advisor to make the necessary changes and edits. The responsibility to produce a document that conforms to your chosen style guide and proper usage (grammar, spelling, punctuation, et cetera) is ultimately yours; depending on your capacities, hiring a copy editor may be necessary. Also work with the Graduate College to conform to all requirements for the content and formatting of your thesis (see <http://home.nau.edu/gradcol/thesis.asp> for details). In addition, you are to provide a single electronic file (in PDF format) of your thesis to your advisor and to the MAAC Graduate Coordinator via email (comgrad@nau.edu) before receiving approval from your advisor to submit your final copies to the Graduate College.

When your advisor gives you final approval and you have the signed signature pages, submit the final copies of your thesis to the Graduate College (see <http://home.nau.edu/gradcol/thesis.asp> for details). Make sure you pay all the required fees (e.g., the binding fee) and plan for these costs as well as those related to having your thesis copies printed on an approved paper.

You have six (6) months from the time of your defense to turn in your final copies for binding. You will be required to repeat your defense if you fail to turn in your copies after the 6 month period. To avoid registering for additional credits, you should plan to have your final copies turned in within days or weeks, not months.

The copies of thesis are bound, with copies going to the Library, the Graduate College, and the School of Communication. You may arrange with the Graduate College for additional bound copies for yourself or others (at an additional expense). The Graduate College will not give you a “P” (pass) on your thesis credits (COM 699) until the final copies are submitted in an acceptable format.

Levels of Evaluation

There are three levels of evaluation for the defense of the thesis and project options. “Pass without revisions” means that there are no final revisions needed for the written thesis or project. “Pass with revisions” means that the committee expects either a significant or small amount of revisions to be made to the project or thesis. The committee will determine whether these revisions can be overseen and approved by

your graduate advisor alone, or whether other committee members will also review and approve these changes. “Fail” means that the committee finds that substantial work needs to be completed in order for the thesis or project to be accepted or that the student did not follow the requirements for the assignment. If the outcome of the defense is “fail,” another defense will have to be held once the student has revised her or his project(s) or thesis in a satisfactory manner.

Each Spring semester, the MAAC Graduate Faculty will conduct a review of all students in the program. For this review, each student is to submit a form outlining her/his activities for the previous year as well as an updated Graduate Program Worksheet. After meeting to discuss each student’s progress, the faculty will provide feedback to each student. This is an opportunity for the faculty to congratulate students for their accomplishments, identify strengths, point out areas for improvement, and/or highlight potential problems (e.g., low grades, excessive incompletes, failure to maintain continuous enrollment). The intent is to assist students in their personal and academic development and to identify problems so that they can be addressed in a timely and productive manner.

ANNUAL GRADUATE STUDENT REVIEW

Each spring semester, the MAAC Graduate Faculty will conduct a review of all students in the program. For this review, each student is to submit a form outlining activities for the previous year relevant to her/his academic progress as well as an updated Graduate Program Worksheet. The Graduate Faculty will meet to discuss the progress of all students in the program and then provide feedback to each student. This is an opportunity for the faculty to congratulate students for their accomplishments, identify strengths, point out areas for improvement, and/or highlight potential problems (e.g., low grades, excessive incompletes, failure to maintain continuous enrollment). The intent is to assist students in their academic development and to identify problems so that they can be addressed in a timely and productive manner.

APPLICATION FOR A DEGREE AND GRADUATION

Within the first two weeks of the semester or summer session in which you expect to complete work for the degree, you must file an application for graduation. The *Application for Graduation – Master’s or Doctorate* form and additional information are available from the Graduate College (<http://home.nau.edu/gradcol/graduation.asp>). If you miss the deadline for submitting your graduation application, your name will not appear in the commencement program but you can still graduate.

Make use of the checklists provided by the Graduate College:

- Checklist for master’s students in a nonthesis (project) track:
<http://www.nau.edu/gradcol/NonthesisChecklist.pdf>
- Checklist for master’s students in a thesis track:
<http://www.nau.edu/gradcol/thesischecklist.pdf>

In preparing to complete the Application for Graduation, you and your advisor should use the *Graduate Program Worksheet* for the M.A. in Applied Communication that is found in Appendix A of this handbook. Prepare the following three documents:

1. *Application for Graduation – Master’s or Doctorate*. Available on the Graduate College website, this is the official application for graduation.
2. *Graduate Application Worksheet*. Available in this handbook and on the M.A. in Applied Communication web site.
3. An unofficial copy of your NAU transcripts. These can be printed from LOUIE.

After you and your advisor complete and sign the documents, all three documents should be submitted to the School of Communication office (Room 301) to be signed by the Director. After signing, the documents will be forwarded to the Graduate College by the School of Communication staff. A confirmation e-mail will be sent once your application has been approved by the Graduate College. A copy of your approved application will be mailed to you.

If you wish to attend commencement (the official graduation ceremony), be aware of the following:

- You may participate in commencement ceremonies for the fall or spring term if you anticipate that you will graduate in that term. If you anticipate graduating in the summer term, you are welcome to participate in the May commencement (before you will graduate) or the December commencement (after you have graduated). In addition, if you anticipate graduating in the fall or spring term and have made the necessary arrangements to participate in that commencement but then determine that you will not actually graduate until a subsequent term, you may still participate in the commencement ceremony as planned or you may delay your participation until the next commencement.
- You will need to obtain the appropriate gown, cap, tassel, and hood for the ceremony.
- As a masters’ graduate, you will be “hooded” as part of the commencement ceremony. Typically, your advisor hoods you. You should notify your advisor of your intent to participate in commencement, and determine if he or she will be able to be present. If not, contact the MAAC Graduate Coordinator to make alternative arrangements for your hooding.
- Refer to the detailed information about graduation available at <http://www.nau.edu/registrar/graduation/>

APPEALS AND GRIEVANCES

The following appeal and grievance procedures are available for you to use if the need arises.

ACADEMIC APPEALS

You can petition to have a course grade reviewed, beginning with your instructor. Refer to the Student Handbook for complete policies and procedures for grade appeals (<http://www4.nau.edu/stulife/handbookappeals.htm>).

The Graduate College has a process pertaining to appeals of academic matters other than grade appeals. This Academic Appeals Process is available on the Graduate College web site (<http://home.nau.edu/gradcol/>).

APPEALS OF GRADUATE REGULATIONS

You can petition for an exception to any policy, procedure, or regulation of the Graduate College, in writing, to the Associate Dean of the Graduate College. Your petition should be endorsed by your advisor and the Director of the School of Communication.

GRIEVANCES

For other disagreements, complaints, misunderstandings and grievances at Northern Arizona University, please refer to the Student Grievance Policy in the Student Handbook: <http://www4.nau.edu/stulife/handbookgrievance.htm>.

SAFE WORKING AND LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

The official policy of Northern Arizona University is to prohibit discrimination, to inform individuals of their right to be free from such behaviors, and to promote the safety of all individuals at university sites and activities. For more information, please read the Safe Working and Learning Environment policy at <http://home.nau.edu/diversity/swale.asp>.

STUDENT ANTI-RETALIATION POLICY

Students have the right to be free from retaliation. Threats or other forms of intimidation or retribution against a student who files a complaint or grievance, requests an administrative remedy, participates in an investigation, appears as a witness at an administrative hearing, or opposes an unlawful act, discriminatory practice, or policy are prohibited and subject to university disciplinary procedures. If you have a complaint of retaliation, you should use the procedures available under the University Code of Conduct, the Student Code of Conduct, the Student Employee Grievance Procedure, the Sexual Harassment Policy, nondiscrimination policies, or other available administrative procedures as appropriate.

For additional assistance with any appeals or grievance procedures, contact the MAAC Graduate Coordinator, the Director of the School of Communication, the Dean of the College of Social and Behavioral Sciences, the Associate Dean of the Graduate College, and/or the Dean of Students.

GRADUATE ASSISTANTSHIPS, SCHOLARSHIPS, AND TRAVEL AWARDS

Several sources of funding are available to graduate students in Applied Communication at NAU.

Teaching Assistantships. Currently, the School of Communication has five teaching assistantships (Graduate Teaching Assistantship or GTA) it can award each semester. Each carries with it a stipend of approximately \$10,000 for a nine-month period and a partial waiver of tuition and fees for the academic year. Students who are awarded a GTA are expected to teach two courses each semester (three credits each). For four of the GTA positions, this means two sections of SC 111, Fundamentals of Public Speaking. For the fifth, it involves assisting a full-time faculty member with a large lecture section of COM 101, Communication Analysis. The school provides orientation and guidance for graduate teachers. Additionally, GTAs are bound to the guidelines established by the Graduate College and published in the *Graduate Assistantship Policy Handbook* (<http://home.nau.edu/gradcol/graduateAssistants.asp>).

Teaching assistants are required to be enrolled in no fewer than 9 and no more than 12 credit hours per semester. While an assistantship is generally awarded for a full academic year, occasionally one will be available at mid-year. Continuation of an assistantship from one semester to the next is contingent on satisfactory progress toward the degree, satisfactory teaching performance, and maintenance of a 3.0 GPA. Satisfactory progress toward the degree is defined by the Graduate College as including grades of 'B' or higher in each class as well as no incompletes. Additional information is available from the Graduate College as well as from the MAAC Graduate Coordinator.

Other Assistantships. Other types of Graduate Assistantships (GAs) may also be available in the School of Communication or elsewhere in the university. Contact the MAAC Graduate Coordinator for further information regarding Graduate Assistantships and check the Graduate College web site for available GA positions on campus (<http://home.nau.edu/gradcol/financialresources.asp>).

Scholarships. The University has scholarships available for graduate students. You should contact the Office of Financial Aid and the NAU Graduate College for information on such scholarships (<http://home.nau.edu/gradcol/financialresources.asp>).

Departmental Scholarships. The School of Communication has a limited number of scholarships, some of which are available to graduate students (in competition with undergraduate students). You may contact the Graduate Coordinator for information about these scholarships, as well as the Chair of the School of Communication

Scholarship Committee. Applications are generally due around February 1 of each year for scholarships for the following academic year.

Travel Awards. Some funding may be available to support your travel to professional conferences to present your research. Links to information about these funding sources are available from the Graduate College web site (<http://home.nau.edu/gradcol/financialresources.asp>).

APPENDIX A GRADUATE PROGRAM WORKSHEET

Master of Arts in Applied Communication
School of Communication - College of Social & Behavioral Sciences - Northern Arizona University

Name _____ Student ID Num. _____

Term of Admission _____
(Semester/Year)

<u>Required (15 credits)</u>	<u>Credits</u>	<u>Term</u>	<u>Grade</u>
COM 600, Comm Theory	3	_____	_____
COM 601, Intro to Grad Research	3	_____	_____
COM 698, Seminar in Communication	3	_____	_____
COM 690, Degree Project	6	(3) _____	_____
		(3) _____	_____
OR			
COM 699, Thesis	6	_____	_____

<u>Electives (21 credits)</u>			<u>Credits</u>	<u>Term</u>	<u>Grade</u>
<u>Prefix</u>	<u>Course No.</u>	<u>Title</u>			
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____

Total credits (36 required): _____

600-level credits (15 required): _____

Credits other than COM/SC (9 maximum): _____

400-level credits (6 maximum): _____

Advisor/Graduate Committee Chair (Graduate Faculty):

Second Committee Member (Graduate Faculty):

Third Committee Member:

Thesis Topic:

Degree Project One Topic:

Degree Project Two Topic:

Prospectus/Proposals Meeting Date:

Project/Thesis Defense/Presentation Date(s):

Recommendation (pass/pass with revisions/no pass):

APPENDIX B

Suggestions for Preparing a Project Proposal

A project proposal is a detailed description of what you will do in your project. Because there is a wide range of types of projects that are appropriate for this degree, the content and structure of your proposals will vary widely. Work with your advisor to develop specific parameters for your proposals. In many cases the information in Appendix C regarding preparation of a prospectus will be relevant, so review those guidelines as well.

Detail the project's focus, purpose/goals, justification, use of existing theories or research, the product(s) to be produced, the process for doing so, and timelines.

Focus

- What is the project about? What is the case or situation to be addressed?
- What communication issues, topics, areas of study, research programs, et cetera will the project involve?

Purpose/Goals

- What is the purpose of the project? What motivates the project?
- What is the desired outcome of the project? What is the product intended to accomplish?

Justification/Significance/Value

- Why is this a valuable project to do? Who could benefit from it and how?
- Will the project demonstrate the applicability of existing research and/or theories? Will the project add to the existing literature in some way? Is the project's contribution more in the realm of theory/research or application?

Use of Existing Theories or Research

- What specific concepts or theories are relevant to your project?
- What existing research will you use in the project? In what way?

Process/Methodology

- Demonstrate how the project will be developed through a systematic, analytic process. What processes and methods will you use to enact your project?
- What primary research methods, if any, will you use (e.g., surveys, audits, textual analyses)?
- Will the project involved the application of existing research? If so, to what and how?

Product(s)

- Is the written component of the project the product, or is there a distinct product or products (e.g., a workshop, communication campaign, or web site) that will be accompanied by a written explanation grounded in communication literature?

APPENDIX C

Suggestions for Preparing a Prospectus

A prospectus provides a detailed outline of the topic, focus, purpose, justification, relevant literature (existing theories and research), proposed methodology (involving data collection and analysis), and timelines for your proposed thesis research. Because of the wide variety of research methods and purposes in the discipline, there is no single model for all types of research. Consult with your advisor and refer to the following two sets of guidelines.

Guide #1

Topic/Focus/Scope

- What are the general topics and specific concepts, behaviors, texts, issues, et cetera to be covered by your research?

Literature Review

- Begin your literature review with a clear preview of the bodies of literature you will review or the main topics that will structure your review.
- Include theories and concepts of relevance to your study.
- Include specific studies of relevance to your own.
- Work to identify the scope, strengths, and weaknesses of the existing research in order to identify any gaps or limitations that your research will somehow fill in or improve upon.

Research Questions or Purpose Statement

- Develop specific questions to be addressed by your research (for quantitative or qualitative research) or a clear purpose statement (for qualitative or critical research). Be as specific as possible in developing your questions or purpose statement, both for the purposes of clarity and in order to develop a manageable focus for your proposed research.
- Use existing research and theories to help guide and justify the development of your questions/purpose.
- Be sure to clearly define the key terms in your research questions (rely on existing definitions whenever possible, or explain why you are redefining key terms).
- Critical/textual studies most often utilize a purpose statement as opposed to research questions per se, as do some qualitative studies.
- Quantitative studies include hypotheses if there is sufficient existing research.

Methodology

- What type(s) of method(s) will you use (quantitative, qualitative, critical)? Why?
- What specific methodology will you use to collect your data? Will you use survey questionnaires, interviews, naturalistic observation, participant-observation, experiments, et cetera? How? Why? Give specific examples related to your chosen methodology: for example, what existing measures will you use, what kinds of questions will you use on a questionnaire or in interviews, what kind of role will you adopt as a participant-observer, what procedures will you follow, in what settings will you observe, how will you design your experiment, how will you recruit/select your sample, how will you choose the text(s) you will analyze?
- What specific methodology will you use to analyze your data? For qualitative

studies, will you use an etic or emic framework for coding qualitative data? For critical studies, what specific critical methodology (method of textual analysis) will you use for analyzing your text(s)?

- How will these methods help answer your research questions or address your purpose statement? Justify your choice of method.
- What limitations to your proposed study do you anticipate given your methods?
- If your proposed research involves human subjects, will you need to obtain explicit informed consent? Why or why not? What risks, if any, might be present for subjects as a result of their participation in your study?

Justification

- Why is the proposed research important and/or valuable?
- How will your research add to the existing body of knowledge on this topic?
- How is this research different (in focus, methodology, assumptions, et cetera) than previous research? If not, why not?

Guide #2

According to Dr. J. Jeffery Auer, Professor Emeritus of Speech Communication at Indiana University, a prospectus "is a document that answers a lot of questions about a research project. For the *researcher* it serves as a guide for future action. For *anyone else* it provides a comprehensive picture of what the research is about." He suggests some specific questions to be answered *by* and *in* the prospectus:

Topic:	What is its title—or working title? What is the problem?
Purpose:	What is the problem, and how will the research resolve it? How will you define it?
Significance:	Why bother? Who cares?
Expectations:	What is the expected end-product? Any idea of ways it may turn out?
Relationships:	With what other problem(s) is it associated? How is it distinguished from related problems? What are its parameters (which is to say, what are its boundaries that set it apart)?
Status:	Has anyone else focused on the problem? What has been found out so far? Has there been research in closely related areas that will be helpful to know about when undertaking this research? Can you summarize—or make an abstract of—each previous and related study?
Method:	What method—or general approach—seems most promising in attacking this problem? Is there an already extant methodology (perhaps from a standard collection, or as used in a previous and similar study)? Or is there at least an organizing metaphor that may help develop an approach?
Resources:	What do you need to do the research: ability to read Spanish? Use of a computer? Library resources? Money? (assuming, of course: motivation).
Design:	What is your overall, complete, sequential, plan of attack? How will you design—plan—your procedure from beginning to completed project?

APPENDIX D
Format for Project Title Page

TITLE OF PROJECT:

SUBTITLE OF PROJECT IF ANY

By Chris O. Student

A Project

Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree of

Master of Arts

in Applied Communication

Northern Arizona University

August 2009

Project Supervisory Committee:

Richard A. Rogers, Ph.D., Chair

Laura Umphrey, Ph.D.

Janna Jones, Ph.D.

APPENDIX E

Graduate Course Descriptions

600-level courses are for graduate students only. Some 500-level courses are sometimes co-convened with 400-level undergraduate courses, and here are designated with a “g”. Graduate students in co-convened courses are expected to complete work beyond what undergraduates complete, as detailed in the syllabus.

Some of these courses are individual/directed studies that require the prior consent of a faculty member, and are here designated with an “i” (no more than 12 credits of these courses can be applied toward the 36-credit hour requirement for the degree).

- SC 503 *Classroom Communication*. 3 credits. Current communication practices, issues, and trends confronting classroom teachers of communication. Oral communication skill development is emphasized.
- SC 524g *Gender and Communication*. 3 credits. Surveys communication theories related to the construction of gender, the relationship between gender and contemporary social issues, and research on gender differences in various communication contexts.
- SC 560g *Rhetorical Theory*. 3 credits. Traditional and contemporary theories about public communication. Emphasizes evolution and critical analysis of theories.
- SC 565g *American Political Communication*. 3 credits. Historical and critical study of the role communication has played in American history.
- SC 568 *Communication, Technology, and Society*. 3 credits. Examination of the social implications of communication technologies historically and in the context of contemporary social issues.
- SC 572g *Organizational Communication*. 3 credits. Explores theoretical and practical foundations of organizational communication including culture, networks, ethics, and crisis communication.
- SC 575g *Health Communication*. 3 credits. Theoretical and practical study of communication strategies used to influence individuals and communities. Focuses on physician-patient communication, health campaigns, risk communication, health in media, and telemedicine.
- SC 577g *Mediation and Conflict Management*. 3 credits. Communication strategies in the theory and practice of alternative dispute resolution, including interpersonal conflict, mediation, and negotiation.

- SC 599g *Contemporary Developments*. 3 credits. Variable/special topics course. Examples: Documentary Film and Social Change, Intercultural Communication.
- SC 685i *Graduate Research*. 1-6 credits. Design and completion of original research under the direction of a graduate advisor.
- SC 697i *Independent Study*. 1-3 credits. Individualized directed study on selected topics.
- COM 599g *Contemporary Developments*. 3 credits. Variable/special topics course. Examples: Quantitative Methods, Mass Communication and Human Behavior, Life in the Public Eye: An Introduction to Public Culture, Performance Studies: Field Research and Interpretation.
- COM 600 *Communication Theory and Application*. 3 credits. Reviews the nature, history and types of communication theory with emphasis upon the use of theory in analysis and problem-solving.
- COM 601 *Research Methods in Communication*. 3 credits. Focuses on role and development of research in communication studies, including history and status of contemporary scholarship.
- COM 685i *Graduate Research*. 1-6 credits. Design and completion of original research under the direction of a graduate advisor.
- COM 690i *Communication Project*. 3 credits (two projects must be completed for a total of 6 credits for the projects option). Application of research design and critical inquiry in order to solve a communication problem.
- COM 697i *Independent Study*. 1-3 credits. Individualized directed study on selected topics.
- COM 698 *Seminar in Communication Theory*. 3 credits. May be repeated with permission of instructor and graduate advisor. Reading and discussion on selected advanced topics in communication theory. Topics vary each semester. Examples: Environmental Rhetoric, Rhetorical Criticism, Representations and Appropriations of Native American Cultures.
- COM 699i *Thesis*. 1-6 credits (a minimum of 6 credits must be completed for the thesis option).

APPENDIX F
Graduate Faculty in the MA in Applied Communication

- Hardy-Short, Dayle C.* Professor of Speech Communication.
B.A., University of Montana.
M.A., University of New Mexico.
Ph.D., Speech Communication, Indiana University, 1988.
- Research interests include American political communication, argumentation and debate, communication education, environmental communication, gender and feminist studies, rhetorical theory and criticism.
- Jones, Janna* Associate Professor of Communication.
B.A., Iowa State University.
M.Ed, Ph.D., Communication, University of South Florida, 1998.
- Research interests include cultural and media studies, cultural and critical theory, cultural preservation and the archive, qualitative research methods.
- Lancaster, Kurt* Assistant Professor of Digital Media.
B.A., Principia College.
M.A., University of Maine, Orono.
Ph.D., Performance Studies, New York University, 1999.
- Research and creative interests include digital filmmaking (documentary and short fiction), digital storytelling, online journalism, performance studies.
- Medoff, Norman J.* Professor of Electronic Media and Film.
B.S., University of Illinois.
M.A., Michigan State University.
Ph.D., Mass Communication, Indiana University, 1979.
- Research interests include mass media effects, new technologies in mass media, and electronic media pedagogy.
- Neumann, Mark* Professor of Communication.
B.A., Central Connecticut State University.
M.A., Ph.D., Communication, University of Utah, 1991.
- Research interests include cultural and media studies, documentary studies, qualitative research methods, amateur film, tourism.

- Parker, Richard A. "Tony"* Professor of Speech Communication.
B.A., M.A., University of Houston.
Ph.D., Speech Communication, University of Pittsburgh, 1981.
- Research interests include argumentation and legal communication, communication theory, communication law, freedom of expression.
- Rogers, Richard A.* Professor of Speech Communication.
B.A., Humboldt State University.
M.S., Ph.D., Communication, University of Utah, 1994.
- Research interests include cultural studies, critical rhetorical studies, environmental communication, gender and feminist studies, intercultural communication, media criticism.
- Short, C. Brant* Professor of Speech Communication.
B.A., M.A., Idaho State University.
Ph.D., Speech Communication, Indiana University, 1985.
- Research interests include American political communication, conflict management and mediation, environmental communication, organizational communication, rhetorical criticism, rhetoric of history.
- Swanson, Kristen* Professor of Merchandising.
B.S., M.S., Colorado State University.
Ph.D., Texas Tech University, 1994.
- Research interests include tourism retailing and souvenirs, and merchandising promotion and retail entertainment.
- Torn, Jon Leon* Assistant Professor of Electronic Media and Film.
B.S., University of Texas at Austin.
M.A., California State University.
Ph.D., Rhetoric and Public Culture, Northwestern University, 2008.
- Research interests include media theory and practice, rhetoric and public culture.
- Umphrey, Laura* Associate Professor of Speech Communication.
B.A., M.A., University of Maine.
Ph.D., Communication Studies, University of Arizona, 2001.
- Research interests include communication theory, health communication, persuasion, quantitative methods.

Additional information regarding the above faculty members, as well as other faculty in the School of Communication, can be found at <http://www.nau.edu/sbs/communication/>.