

PROCEDURES AND GUIDELINES FOR  
COMPLETING THE M.A. DEGREE

DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNICATION STUDIES  
THE UNIVERSITY OF MONTANA-MISSOULA

Updated August, 2009

**Procedures for Completing the M. A. Degree**  
**Department of Communication Studies**  
**University of Montana**

**General Requirements**

Students enrolled in the Master's program can select from one of two options: Take fewer courses and write a thesis, or take more coursework and write a professional paper. Regardless of the option chosen, all students must meet the requirements outlined below.

1. Students must complete three required courses:
  - COMM 460: Communication Research Methods (offered every semester)
  - COMM 461: Research Seminar (offered every semester - 1 credit course to be taken at the same time as 460)
  - COMM 561: Qualitative Methods
2. Students must enroll in *at least one* of the following three courses:
  - COMM 555: Rhetorical Criticism and Theory
  - COMM 520: Survey of Organizational Communication
  - COMM 511: Survey of Interpersonal Communication
3. Other course requirements include:
  - In addition to the above courses, students must enroll for a minimum of 9 hours in other COMM courses at either the 400 or 500 level.
  - TA's and those wishing to teach are strongly encouraged to take COMM 540, Seminar in Instructional Communication.
  - Attendance in COMM 594, Proseminar, is expected of all graduate students, particularly in the first year.
4. An undergraduate statistics course is required.
  - Students are encouraged to take a statistics course prior to entering graduate school.
  - Those without an undergraduate statistics course will be required to enroll in one during their first year of graduate study, and preferably prior to enrolling in COMM 460/461.
5. Students without undergraduate majors in communication may have additional requirements.
  - Some students may be required to take more than the minimum number of hours required for a Master's degree to ensure a sufficient background in the discipline is attained.

- A minimum of 20 hours of COMM credits will be required for students without a strong background in communication studies.
6. Co-curricular courses are available.
- Independent study credits are available to students working on specialized projects with faculty members or participating in internships. Independent Study (COMM 596) is offered for traditional grade or CR/NCR and is repeatable for a maximum of 6 credits, including a graduate-level internship (optional). Students enrolling in COMM 596 are expected to do graduate-level work.
  - Students also have the option of enrolling in COMM 541 (Teaching the Basic Course) to meet the Graduate School requirement of 9 semester hours. You may take as many credits of COMM 541 during your residency as necessary, but these credits may not be applied toward your M.A. degree. This course is also CR/NCR only.
7. Students should keep in mind the Graduate School requirements, which are in addition to departmental requirements (for detailed information see the UM Graduate School):
- A full 50% or more of the student's required course work (excluding research and thesis credits) must be at the 500-600 level.
  - To maintain continuous registration, students must be enrolled in at least 3 credits per semester.
  - To be considered full time, graduate students must enroll in 9 credits per semester.
  - At least 20 semester credits (including thesis or professional paper credits) must be taken in Communication Studies.
8. Upon completion of 18 credits, students must choose a permanent advisor and select the thesis or no-thesis option.
- To begin this process, students must prepare an Academic and Professional Identity Statement. This requirement is to aid you in examining your own interests as well as in making career plans. This one-to-three page statement will serve as the cover letter for your Program of Study (see appendix) and should contain the following elements:
    - A statement of your primary scholarly interest (e.g., conflict), any secondary areas (e.g., feminist rhetoric, family communication), and an explanation of how the various areas cohere as a set;
    - A brief description of your anticipated professional paper or thesis project, including theoretical and methodological approaches;

- An explanation of how your proposed program of study provides the best possible preparation for you to pursue your interests and your project/thesis, with special attention to any anomalies or unusual pursuits (e.g., why you are not taking a directly related course or why you did take a course that, at first glance, does not seem to fit).
  - A statement of your career goals insofar as you know them, professional or personal experiences that have shaped those goals, and a discussion of how your scholarly interests and practical projects relate to your future plans.
  - Your plan for making the best use of the summer of your first year; perhaps by doing a graduate internship or independent study (if relevant), supplementing your coursework here with classes at other institutions (if needed), doing bibliographic work on topics of interest, gathering preliminary data for a thesis prospectus or professional paper proposal (if called for), or drafting a prospectus/proposal.
  - Your choice of culminating project. You can complete your degree by doing either a Thesis or Professional Paper. Each option has specific requirements.
9. Toward the end of the thesis or professional paper, each student will present his or her work to the department in a 20-40 minute presentation. Ideally, this will occur after the student has collected and analyzed meaningful data for the project.

**Thesis Option=24 Course Credit Hours + 9 Credits of Thesis (COMM 599)**

1. During your first semester of residence, you will be assigned a temporary faculty advisor. This relationship does not have to be maintained, but it is established to get you off to a good start. You will also be assigned a graduate student peer mentor, or "buddy."
2. Sometime before the end of the second semester, you should approach a faculty member and request that she/he become your permanent thesis advisor. If your chosen area of research is in a given faculty member's area of expertise, that faculty member should normally be your thesis advisor. You may change advisors at any time, but you should always have one.
3. Prepare three copies of the Departmental Program of Study in consultation with your advisor before the end of your second semester of course work. For example, if you began your graduate work during Fall Semester, 2006 complete your Program of Study and have it approved by the end of Spring Semester, 2007. Your advisor then will present your Program of Study to the Director of Graduate Studies and your other departmental committee member for approval.

4. You and your graduate advisor will determine your thesis examining committee, which is composed of your advisor, at least one other COMM faculty member, and at least one member from another department. You will then submit the names of your committee members to Jan who will forward them (electronically) to the Graduate school for appointment.
  - You must submit the “Application for Graduation: Graduate Degrees” form (from the Graduate School) at least one semester before you plan to graduate.

#### 5. Preparing your Prospectus

- Under the guidance of your advisor, you will prepare a prospectus--your formal proposal for the thesis. This is usually completed by the beginning of your third semester of course work.
- You will present and defend your prospectus before your examining committee. Your prospectus meeting usually lasts two hours. In preparation for this meeting you must:
  - Determine a date and time suitable for all members of your committee.
  - Schedule LA 339B or another room for the meeting;
  - Submit a copy of your prospectus to each member of your committee at least 5 working days prior to the meeting;
  - Submit a copy of your Prospectus to the Departmental Main Office (301) at least 5 working days prior to the meeting;
  - Send a short e-mail memo to all COMM faculty and graduate students inviting them to attend the meeting, mentioning: (1) the title of the proposed project; (2) the thesis advisor and committee; (3) the date, time, and place of the meeting; and (4) that a copy of your prospectus is on file in the office for their perusal.
- Finally, you should consult with your advisor about how to prepare for the actual presentation and defense of your prospectus.
- After your defense and extended discussion, you will be excused from the meeting and the committee will vote on the acceptability of the proposal. The vote must be unanimous. If important changes are recommended by the committee, you may be required to submit a revised prospectus to the committee. Another meeting may be desirable, but not mandatory.
- When the committee has accepted your proposal, it is your insurance policy that you have begun a worthwhile project. Should members of your committee leave the University or otherwise not be available, a new committee member will not require you to redo the entire project.
- If you use human subjects (participants), your prospectus must also be approved by the Institutional Review Board Institutional Review Board (IRB). This must be done before you begin collecting data. A full set of procedures can be found in the IRB website.

- FINALLY, PLEASE NOTE; IT IS ORDINARILY NOT APPROPRIATE TO BEGIN COLLECTING DATA FOR YOUR THESIS UNTIL YOUR PROSPECTUS IS APPROVED BY YOUR COMMITTEE!

## 6. Writing and Completing your Thesis

- Each faculty member has a somewhat different approach to advising graduate students, so be sure to talk with your advisor about her or his expectations. However, the following procedures are applicable to all:
- Your advisor will act as the first reader of your thesis. You should plan on revising your thesis a number of times before your advisor determines that it is ready for distribution to the rest of your committee. Plan on giving your advisor 5 working days to read each draft you submit to her/him.
- Once your advisor has determined that your thesis is ready for distribution to the rest of your committee, you must set a date for the oral defense of your thesis. The oral defense normally lasts two hours. In preparation for the defense you must:
  - Determine a date and time suitable for all members of your committee. Note--your defense should be no later than 3 weeks before the end of the semester you plan to graduate (Graduate School rule).
  - Schedule LA 339B for the defense.
  - Submit a copy of your thesis to each member of your committee at least 7 working days prior to the defense. Your chair must have an electronic copy to submit to the graduate school.
  - When your committee has determined that your thesis is ready for defense, your committee chair will forward the electronic copy of the thesis to the Graduate School. The draft must be forwarded at least one week before your scheduled defense (Graduate School rule – please remind your advisor).
  - Submit a copy of your approved committee draft to the Departmental Office at least 3 working days prior to your defense.
  - Send a short e-mail memo to all COMM faculty and graduate students inviting them to read your approved committee draft and attend your defense. Follow the same procedures used to announce your Prospectus meeting.
- After your thesis defense, your committee will meet privately and vote on the acceptability of your completed thesis. The thesis must receive a unanimous vote from your committee members. Your committee may decide to pass your thesis contingent upon minor changes. Any required changes will be decided by the committee and relayed to you either in the oral defense or via your advisor.
- If the vote is not unanimous, your committee will determine a strategy for addressing the situation and inform you of their decision.

- Upon a successful defense, and upon completion of any necessary revisions to thesis, your advisor will forward your final draft to the graduate school – you may find it useful to remind him or her of that responsibility.
- Once your advisor has sent the electronic copy of your final version to the graduate school, you must bring the graduate school a hard copy for approval. The deadline for submitting your thesis to the Graduate School varies by semester and year. See the Graduate School website for the deadline specific to you.
- Please note that your thesis must be prepared in accordance with Graduate School Rules. Please see up-to-date guidelines posted on the Graduate School website.
- It is a professional courtesy to present a final bound copy of your thesis to your advisor.
- Near the completion of your thesis, you will give an oral presentation open to all interested persons. This is generally done during our Proseminar meeting time, and is a thorough public presentation of about 30 minutes.

**Professional Paper Option= 30 Course Credit Hours + 3 Credits of Professional Paper (COMM 593)**

The Professional Paper is an in-depth applied project, and is described in detail under #5, below.

1. During your first semester of residence, you will be assigned a temporary faculty advisor—largely on the basis of common interests. This relationship does not have to be maintained, but it is established to get you off to a good start. You will also be assigned a graduate student peer mentor, or "buddy."
2. Sometime during your second semester you should approach a faculty member and request that she/he become your advisor. If your area of interest is in a given faculty member's area of expertise, that faculty member should normally be your advisor. You may change advisors at any time, but you should always have one.
3. Prepare three copies of the Departmental Program of Study in consultation with your advisor by the end of your second semester of course work. For example, if you began your graduate work during Fall Semester, 2008, you should complete your Program of Study and have it approved by the end of Spring Semester, 2009. Your advisor then will present your Program of Study to the Director of Graduate Studies and your other departmental committee member for approval.
4. You and your graduate advisor will determine your professional paper committee, composed of your advisor, at least one other member from our faculty, and at least one member from another department. You will then submit the names of your committee members to Jan who will forward them (electronically) to the Graduate School for appointment.

- You must submit the “Application for Graduation: Graduate Degrees” form (from the Graduate School) at least one semester before you plan to graduate.

## 5. Your Professional Paper

The Professional Paper is normally shorter than a thesis, less focused on theory and research (while still drawing upon both), and is often directed at non-academic audiences. For example, an “annotated” training manual can be an acceptable professional paper. A thesis can still be applied in nature, as opposed to emphasizing basic and at least somewhat original research. However, a thesis is normally written with the academy in mind as at least one target audience. Another way to think about the outcomes of these two options is to distinguish between the possible publishable products (or by-products) of the projects: a thesis could result in an article in a scholarly journal, while a professional paper might lead to an article in a more professional or popular outlet (such as a magazine).

Said differently, the Professional Paper is an application of communication knowledge and research methods to a professional setting. Normally, it will take the form of applied research or training/consulting which has a direct intended benefit for some group or agency. For example, the project could involve organizational consulting or training, design of a communication curriculum in education, assessment of persuasive strategies in fund raising or lobbying efforts, assessment of implementation of a public information campaign, evaluation of organizational practices and communication culture, assessment of the informational needs and opinions of specialized audiences, a survey of clientele for a particular agency or organization, or a case study of a major communication event.

The Professional Paper also may be an extensive "state of the art" literature review or a literature review coupled with creative application of the content area (e.g., the development of a training program). However, Professional Papers that are primarily literature reviews, critiques, or novel theoretical extensions of an area should be extremely thorough and demonstrate a sophisticated understanding of the area. Normally, when the primary focus of the paper is the development of a training program or other specialized application of communication literature, the project should involve applied research during the development of the application (e.g. through surveys or interviews) and/or implementation of the application.

Unlike an M. A. Thesis, the Professional Paper should be feasible to complete (under normal circumstances) within one semester of concentrated work. However, you are strongly encouraged to do advance work on the project (e.g., establishing contact with an appropriate agency, developing the initial proposal) early in your second year of graduate study. In some cases, you can help to set up a Professional Paper project by first establishing an internship (under COMM 596--Independent Study) with an appropriate group or agency in order to later carry out the Professional Paper project with this organization.

- Your advisor will be the first reader of your Professional Paper.

- The other two committee members will also read and approve the final document, though there does not need to be a formal oral defense.

## 6. Preparing your Proposal

- Under the guidance of your advisor, you will prepare a proposal for the professional paper. This is usually completed by the beginning of your third semester of course work.
- You will present and defend your proposal before your examining committee. Your proposal meeting usually lasts two hours. In preparation for this meeting you must:
  - Determine a date and time suitable for all members of your committee.
  - Schedule LA 339B or another room for the meeting.
  - Submit a copy of your proposal to each member of your committee at least 5 working days prior to the meeting (your chair will need an electronic copy to submit to the graduate school).
  - Submit a copy of your proposal to the Departmental Main Office (301) at least 5 working days prior to the meeting.
  - Send a short e-mail memo to all COMM faculty and graduate students inviting them to attend the meeting, mentioning: (1) the title of the proposed project; (2) the professional paper advisor and committee; (3) the date, time, and place of the meeting; and (4) that a copy of your proposal is on file in the office for their perusal.
  - Finally, you should consult with your advisor about how to prepare for the actual presentation and defense of your proposal.
- After your defense and extended discussion, you will be excused from the meeting and the committee will vote on the acceptability of the proposal. The vote must be unanimous. If important changes are recommended by the committee, you may be required to submit a revised proposal to the committee. Another meeting may be desirable, but not mandatory.
- When the committee has accepted your proposal, it is your insurance policy that you have begun a worthwhile project. Should members of your committee leave the University or otherwise not be available, a new committee member will not require you to redo the entire project.
- If you use human subjects (participants), your proposal must also be approved by the Institutional Review Board (IRB). This must be done before you begin collecting data. A full set of guidelines and procedures is available on the IRB website.
- **FINALLY, PLEASE NOTE; IT IS ORDINARILY NOT APPROPRIATE TO BEGIN COLLECTING DATA FOR YOUR PROFESSIONAL PAPER UNTIL YOUR PROPOSAL IS APPROVED BY YOUR COMMITTEE!!**

## 7. Completing Your Professional Paper

- Near the completion of your professional paper you will give an oral presentation during our departmental Proseminar. This is a fairly thorough public presentation of about 30 minutes. Be sure to invite your committee members to your presentation. You also should extend a formal invitation to all COMM department faculty and graduate students.
- After your committee has approved the final document, send your advisor an electronic copy (formatted according to graduate school rules), and have him/her send it to the graduate school. This final draft must be forwarded by your advisor at least two weeks before the deadline for graduation (Graduate School rule). You might find it useful to remind your advisor of this responsibility. The deadline for graduation varies by semester and year.
- The graduate school requires a hard copy of your professional paper along with the electronic version sent by your advisor.
- Please note that your professional paper must be prepared in accordance with graduate school rules. See up-to-date guidelines posted on the Graduate School website.
- It is a professional courtesy to present a bound copy of the paper to your advisor.

**In summary, you MUST do the following to graduate:**

1. Meet all deadlines and other graduate school requirements. Each semester the Graduate School publishes a list of the specific deadlines summarized above publishes it on its website. Please check this regularly.
2. Satisfy advisors and committees regarding the competence of your work.
3. Have your Program of Study approved by the Department.
4. Submit your Application for Graduation: Graduate Degrees to the Graduate School approximately at least one semester before you plan to graduate (see graduate school deadlines).
5. Complete your degree within 5 years from beginning it. Those students who exceed the statute of limitations and wish to finish their degrees must reapply for admittance. Re admittance decisions will be based on a number of criteria, including but not limited to 1) the length of time that has elapsed since the student last took courses; 2) the progress made toward completion of the thesis or professional paper; and 3) the level of achievement displayed while in the program. Applications for re admittance will be considered on a case-by-case basis. Upon re admittance students may be required to retake courses or pass an examination that demonstrates currency in course content.
6. Be on Full Status (not Provisional Status) with the Graduate School.

7. Complete one-half of your credits, exclusive of thesis and professional paper credits, at the 500 level or above.
8. You must be registered each fall and spring semester you are working toward your degree (at least 3 credits per semester). To maintain continuous enrollment, you may register for three thesis, professional paper, or COMM 541 (Teaching the Basic Course) credits (enroll in whichever best describes your situation). Any student working as a teaching assistant must be enrolled full time (9 credits), however.
  - If for some reason you do not plan to register any semester prior to graduation, you must fill out a one-semester Leave of Absence form. Students who take an unauthorized leave may, on the recommendation of the Graduate School and based on discussions within the department, be required to register for 4 terminal credits for not meeting the continuous registration requirement.
  - Students who step out of their programs without an approved Leave of Absence for one semester will be dropped from the Communication Studies program roster and will need to petition the department and the Graduate School for readmission.
  - The petition for readmission will require an evaluation of the student's progress and a plan with a timetable for completing the degree. Not all petitions are approved by the Graduate School.

### **Responsibilities of a Graduate Student**

Working toward a graduate degree in communication is an exciting and intellectually challenging endeavor. Being a graduate student is also quite different from being an undergraduate. As a graduate student, you will learn to become an independent researcher. Emphasis is placed less on the memorization of other people's ideas and more on the critique of other's ideas as well as the generation of your own. As you engage in this process you will work closely with faculty and your graduate student peers.

To this end, feel free to approach faculty with your ideas and insights. Faculty enjoy this kind of intellectual bantering--in fact, this is why most of us are in the field. However, also recognize that your faculty have other professional obligations. Please respect our need to work unimpeded by numerous interruptions. Expect to talk to your faculty, but be sensitive to our schedules, too.

When you are ready to start writing your thesis or professional paper, check out copies of previous COMM theses and professional papers from the Library (also see the grad office shelves) to assist you in getting a notion of the requirements. Sometimes, faculty will have theses or professional papers from previous advisees that you might ask to see to get an idea of what a particular faculty member believes is an excellent project.

Once you have completed your coursework and have defended your prospectus, you may feel strongly tempted to walk through graduation ceremonies. This is understandable because graduation ceremonies only happen in the spring, and you may have plans to

finish your degree in the following summer or fall. However, because graduation ceremonies are rituals traditionally reserved for celebrating full culmination, and because participating in such rituals can in some cases work against your motivation to continue working toward your degree, we prefer that you wait until you have defended your completed thesis or professional project before participating in graduation ceremonies.

Above all else, remember that things take more time than you think they do. This means that you should be sure to leave plenty of time in your schedule for working on your coursework and culminating project. We recommend that you read is "How to Complete and Survive the Doctoral Dissertation" by Sternberg (St. Martins Press). The UC Bookstore has copies.

One final note: Graduation ceremonies occur each spring. Typically, students should have completed the majority of their thesis or professional paper (i.e., have analyzed data and at least begun preparing a final draft of their project) prior to "walking" through graduation.

### **Guidelines for Selecting Teaching Assistants**

First-year students who presently hold a T.A. and have taught only one year have priority. Selections are determined based on progress made toward the degree and student evaluations of teaching effectiveness. If progress is made and student evaluations are good, first-year students who hold a T.A. will likely get a second year of support.

First-year students who do not hold a T.A., full-time students who matriculated mid-year who do not currently hold a T.A. and new applicants are second in line, and are put in a pool together. Selections are determined based on application and, for first- and mid-year students, progress made toward the degree. First- year students applying for a T.A. in their second year (and students who matriculated mid-year and are applying for T.A.'s) may or may not get T.A.'s-- depending upon the strength of the applicant pool.

Second-year students who presently hold a T.A. and have taught only one year are third in line. Selections are determined based on progress made toward the degree and student evaluations of teaching effectiveness. As we strongly discourage three-year programs, chances of receiving a T.A. in your third year in residence are low.

Students who presently hold a T.A. and have taught for two years are fourth in line. This is a rare appointment. Selections are determined based on progress made toward the degree and student evaluations of teaching effectiveness. As we strongly discourage three-year programs, chances of receiving a T.A. in your third year are very unlikely.

Typically T.A. appointments will not be made mid-year, as the expectation is that if you receive a T.A. that you will teach for an entire academic year. If you accept a T.A. appointment, you must commit to a full year (e.g., two semesters) of teaching unless other arrangements are made in advance and with faculty approval.

We reserve the right to make exceptions to the above in order to meet instructional needs and in accord with practical contingencies that may arise.

### **Procedures for Selecting Summer and Winter Session T.A.'s and Making Other Special/Occasional Teaching Assignments**

While there are no guarantees of either supplemental or special teaching opportunities and there has not been consistency in funding from year to year, the Department is granted occasional non-regular teaching positions—some of which become available to graduate students. These include teaching slots during summer and (January) Winter Session breaks and teaching at the College of Technology (COT). As these opportunities become known—sometimes with very little notice—the Department attempts to make teaching assignments in the fairest manner possible, considering these factors:

- The progress and “good standing” of graduate students who seek such positions;
- The prior classroom or other relevant teaching experiences of graduate students under consideration for the positions;
- The equitable distribution of teaching opportunities across the graduate student body;
- Instructional needs; and
- Scheduling and other practical contingencies.

### **Suggested Timeline for Completing M.A. Theses: (Social Scientific Version)**

*Beginning of second semester, first year (February):* Choose your advisor, draft an Academic and Professional Identity statement, fill out the form for your program of study, have it approved by the faculty, and begin narrowing down a thesis topic.

*April:* In consultation with your advisor, continue narrowing your thesis topic.

*Summer:* Review the literature for your thesis topic and write tentative rationale and literature review sections of your thesis.

*Early Fall Semester:* Choose other committee members, have your thesis proposal meeting, and (when approved) submit materials to the Institutional Review Board.

*Later Fall Semester:* When IRB approval is received, begin gathering data or doing analyses, and continue writing up analyses as you go along.

*Early Spring Semester:* Continue writing analyses, conclusions, and pulling complete thesis together. Check in with advisor frequently to see if you are on track.

*April (before planning to graduate):* Get final draft to committee members, schedule a date for the defense, schedule colloquium, have defense, do final revisions.

*May:* Finish your course work. Enjoy Graduation!

### **Suggested Timeline for Completing M.A. Theses: (Humanistic/Rhetorical Version)**

*Beginning of second semester, first year (February):* Choose your advisor, draft an Academic and Professional Identity statement, fill out the form for your program of study, have it approved by the faculty, and begin narrowing down a thesis topic.

*April:* In consultation with your advisor, continue narrowing your thesis topic. This includes: choosing the artifact(s) for analysis; choosing the theoretical lens through which the artifact(s) will be studied; determining theoretical questions to be explored.

*Summer:* Begin writing your prospectus. Your prospectus will include: an overview of the artifact(s) to be studied; a rationale for studying this/these artifact(s); a review of relevant literature (theoretical and contextual); an outline of your methodology; and a preview of the theoretical and practical contributions your study will make.

*Early Fall, Second Year:* Choose other committee members, have your thesis prospectus meeting. Once your prospectus has been approved, you will begin writing the body of your thesis.

*Winter Break:* Continue writing analyses.

*Early Spring Semester:* Continue writing analyses, conclusions, and pulling complete thesis together. Check with advisor frequently to see if you are on track.

*April (before planning to graduate):* Get final draft to committee members, schedule a date for the defense, schedule colloquium, have defense, do final revisions.

*May:* Finish your coursework, enjoy graduation!

### **Suggested Timeline for Completing Professional Papers**

*April, first year:* Choose your advisor, draft an Academic and Professional Identity Statement, fill out the form for your program of study, have it approved by the faculty, and choose a professional paper topic (in consultation with your advisor). If you have a rhetorical emphasis for your paper you will need to choose both the artifact(s) for analysis and the theoretical lens through which the artifact(s) will be studied.

*Summer:* Review the literature for your professional paper topic and begin writing the first chapter. This will include: an overview of the artifact(s) to be studied; a rationale for studying this/these artifact(s); a review of the relevant literature (theoretical and

contextual). For a non-rhetorical thesis, you should include an overview, a rationale, and review of the relevant literature.

*Beginning of Fall Semester, Second Year:* Give advisor a copy of first chapter, discuss timeline for finishing project, and begin conducting internal or descriptive analysis of artifact. Together with your advisor, choose other committee members.

*Winter Break:* Continue conducting/writing up analyses for professional paper.

*Early Spring Semester:* Continue work on professional paper, including writing up analyses and conclusions. Check with advisor frequently to see if you are on track.

*April (before planning to graduate):* Get final draft to advisor and other committee members, schedule colloquium, do final revisions.

*May:* Finish your coursework, enjoy graduation!

# Appendix



COMM 593	Professional Paper (R-3)	3	
COMM 599	Thesis (R-6)	9	

TOTAL HOURS OF COURSE WORK: \_\_\_\_\_

+ = Required for Teaching Assistants

~ = One of these three is required (Delete from this page any courses you did *not* take)

\* = Required for all students

Approvals:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Candidate Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Major Advisor Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Director of Graduate Studies Date