



UNIVERSITY OF CENTRAL FLORIDA

# Graduate Program Handbook - 2024/2025

*Communication Master's Program*

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Reference this handbook to learn about the unique policies, requirements, procedures, resources, and norms for graduate students in the *Communication MA program*.

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Updated Fall 2024 • Nicholson School of Communication and Media



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# Navigating Policy and Resources at the University of Central Florida

This handbook is one of many sources to consult as you become familiar with the policies, procedures, requirements, resources, and norms of graduate education at the University of Central Florida.


## ACADEMIC CATALOGS

These online catalogs can help you quickly locate and save details about our undergraduate and graduate programs. Whether you are a prospective student or already enrolled, you can easily see what the University of Central Florida has to offer!




Current Undergraduate Offerings

VISIT CATALOG




Latest Graduate Programs

VISIT CATALOG



Prior Years' Catalogs

VISIT ARCHIVES



## THE GOLDEN RULE STUDENT HANDBOOK

## STUDENT LIFE

ORLANDO, FL | 73°F

### Student Handbook



### Knight Life at UCF

Don't just go to college — get the most out of it. At UCF, you'll have many ways to get involved inside and outside of the classroom. From application to graduation, you'll be inspired to do amazing things. So whether you prefer academics and research or campus activities and athletics, we'll provide you with the tools and support you need to find your place and foster your purpose.

Discover your next adventure at UCF.

### GRADUATE STUDENT HANDBOOK

[Student Handbook Intro](#)  
[Financial Matters](#)  
[Role of the College of Graduate Studies](#)

### Understanding Your Graduate Experience

## UCF Regulations



HOME NOTICE ARCHIVES SUBSCRIBE TO NOTIFICATIONS UCF POLICIES

## Pathways to Success

Personal and Professional Development Opportunities



## Chapter 5: Students

## How to Use This Handbook

Please refer to the Table of Contents to seek answers to specific inquiries. The information provided here will be reviewed in orientations, but it is ultimately your responsibility to be aware of the relevant policies and procedures.

## Who to Contact for Questions

Many of your questions about how to meet expectations and thrive as a graduate student will be answered by the various sources of policies, procedures, requirements, resources, and norms listed in this document. The following campus resources are a great place to go for answers to any additional questions you might have.

### **Graduate Program Staff**

The Graduate Student Services Coordinator at Nicholson School of Communication and Media is a staff person who serves as a point person for program policy and procedures. They are well versed in most elements of graduate education that extend beyond academic instruction in your program and will likely be your first stop for questions related to anything in this handbook.

The current Graduate Student Services Coordinator associated with this program is Michael Haney and can be reached by email at [nicholsongrad@ucf.edu](mailto:nicholsongrad@ucf.edu) or by phone at 407-235-3576.

### **Graduate Coordinators**

Each graduate program has one faculty member designated to direct its educational vision and structure.

Name and contact information of your Graduate Program Coordinator can be found on your program's page in the [Graduate Catalog](#). Simply navigate to the Programs tab in the catalog and then navigate to the program name.

The Graduate Coordinator In the Communication area is Dr. Ann Miller. You can contact her at [ann.miller@ucf.edu](mailto:ann.miller@ucf.edu).

### **Graduate School Services**

For general graduate inquiries and graduate student services from the Graduate School, please review the [College of Graduate Studies](#) website as an additional resource.

## Onboarding

We encourage students to stay in contact with their Graduate Coordinator throughout the summer before you begin the program to have current information about orientation and onboarding.



## Introduction/Overview Section

### Complete Name of Degree

Master of Arts in Communication

### College

College of Science

### Department

Nicholson School of Communication and Media

### Program Type

Master of Arts

### Program Website

<https://communication.ucf.edu/degree/communication/>

### Program Overview Narrative

#### Mission Statement

The Communication MA Program at the Nicholson School of Communication and Media (NSCM) is dedicated to serving its students, faculty, the central Florida community, and the professions associated with the field of communication. The mission of the program is to offer high-quality, academically challenging graduate education in Communication; to mentor students in the conduct of research and creative activities; to provide the students with the educational development that will enhance the intellectual, cultural, environmental, and economic development of the metropolitan region; to develop students' academic and professional competencies; to establish UCF as a major presence in local and global communication related professional and academic communities; and to support the mission and vision of the University of Central Florida as a whole.

## Program Accreditation/Certification

N/A

## Student Learning Outcomes/Competencies

Communication is a broad area of research, with room for areas of expertise in any number of sub-disciplines. That said, there are four overarching program-level learning outcomes for the MA in Communication.

- Improve written, academic communication skills.
- Develop a basic understanding of theory in communication including techniques of theory building, theory testing, and the milestone theories in the field.
- Develop a basic understanding of research methodologies used in communication, with more advanced understanding and expertise in either qualitative or quantitative methods.
- Cultivate an understanding of the basic concepts, research, and ways of knowing in the communication discipline.

## Program Professional Conduct/Ethics Statement

All Communication MA students are expected to represent the Nicholson School of Communication and Media with the highest standards of ethics and integrity. We encourage students to read the National Communication Association [Credo for Ethical Communication](#) for more detail.

## Professional Development

All Communication MA students will begin with COM 6008 Pro-Seminar in Communication, which introduces you to the field, professional organizations, program expectations, and essential skills. We highly encourage students to take full advantage of the many additional learning opportunities through the College of Graduate Studies [Pathways to Success](#) program.

## Advising/Mentoring

Advising relationships are a central part of academia, important to both the experience and development of students and faculty members alike.

Your advisor has two main roles: 1) To assist you in acquiring the highest possible level of knowledge and competence in the field, and 2) to chair the committee that will determine whether you have performed at an acceptable level in each of your degree milestones. Other roles of your advisor may include tracking your progress in completing your degree, assisting with course selection and planning your academic path, and helping you identify possible research mentors, committee members, and research opportunities.

All incoming students will work with a temporary advisor before they choose a permanent advisor. Temporary advisors will be assigned at the end of the first semester. Absent a temporary advisor, students should seek out the Graduate Coordinator for advising.

Both the student and advisor are responsible for making their expectations clear to each other. Students are responsible for submitting all required forms to NSCM and College of Graduate Studies, as outlined for them in several available documents. These documents and necessary forms are available for all students to review on the Communication MA WebCourses page, to which all new students are added to prior to their first semester.

We expect students to have a completed Plan of Study by the 18<sup>th</sup> credit hour of their course work. This can be completed under the supervision of one's temporary or permanent advisor.

## Finding & Selecting an Advisor

Students are responsible for selecting a permanent advisor (who may be the assigned temporary advisor). A permanent advisor sees a student through assembling a committee and completing a culminating experience. They should be selected with their content and methodological areas of expertise in mind. Advisors can be changed through the submission of a Graduate Plan of Study, Culminating Experience Declaration Form, or by notifying the Graduate Student Services Coordinator.

Your advisor should be a faculty member in the program whose expertise and project/research interests match closely with those that you intend to acquire. To learn more about the faculty in your program, consider consulting the following sources:

- Courses and seminars you attend
- Our program website (<https://communication.ucf.edu/degree/communication/>)

- Faculty publications
- Students currently in a prospective advisor's group/lab

Below are some questions to consider asking a prospective advisor, although it is not a complete list. You should spend some time identifying what is most important to you in your graduate training and ask questions accordingly.

### **Questions to Ask of Prospective Advisors**

- What thesis projects would be available to me if I were to join your group?
- Would these projects expose me to a variety of different approaches?
- In general, how available will you be to answer questions I might have?
- What is your philosophy regarding the amount of guidance the advisor should provide to a student during preparation of the thesis proposal, literature seminars, thesis writing, etc.?
- What are your expectations for the amount of time I should spend each day/week in your group/lab?
- What regularly scheduled activities (e.g., group meetings, joint group meetings, research clubs) does your group participate in that provide an opportunity to get outside input on my research project and to hear about the work of other students and postdocs?
- Do you encourage your students to attend seminars and journal clubs, including those that may be outside of their narrow field of interest/research?
- Do students in your group/lab have the opportunity to attend professional meetings where they can interact with colleagues/researchers from other institutions?
- Do you include your graduate students in professional activities that will familiarize them with their field of interest/research, such as reviewing manuscripts and meeting with visiting speakers?
- How long do you think it should take me to get my degree?
- What are your former graduate students (if any) doing now?
- What is your general philosophy of graduate training and what goals do you have for your graduate students?

No faculty member is obligated to accept a student's request to serve as advisor, though invitations are often accepted unless the faculty member judges that a different advisor would serve your needs better.

After you have located your permanent advisor, be sure to talk through with them about your values, goals, and responsibilities; expectations about how you will

meet and maintain contact; and how regular reviews and evaluation of progress will be structured. Should problems arise in the advisor-student relationship, students and/ or faculty should consult with the Graduate Program Coordinator.

## Changing Your Advisor

As the advisor-student relationship is one of mutual agreement, it may be terminated by either party. If you decide that you would prefer working with a different advisor, discuss this with your prospective advisor to seek the change.

In order to change advisors, simply complete an updated Program of Study Form with the new advisor's name and signature.

## Program Costs and Fees

Full-time students in the Communication M.A. program pay a \$16 equipment fee each semester that they are enrolled. Part-time students pay \$8 per semester.

## Program Assessment

Annual program assessment is conducted by the faculty coordinator, and data are collected continuously. These data include faculty assessing student work on pre-determined rubrics, and students' data from annual reports, submitted online, which are examined in the aggregate at the program level.

## How to Get Involved

As a graduate student at UCF, you have a multitude of opportunities to become involved on campus and in your academic discipline. This involvement often enhances your academic, professional, and personal growth through developing advanced leadership, communication, and collaboration skills. It also provides opportunity for professional networking.

## Involvement in Our Discipline

This can be partnering with community liaisons to complete internships or applied research projects (a culminating experience option). It can also be conducting and submitting original research to conferences and academic publications.

There are many regional, national, and international organizations that will be important to your development as a master's student. While you should work closely with your advisor to select the most salient opportunities the following organizations are valuable places to start:

- [National Communication Association \(NCA\)](#)
- [International Communication Association \(ICA\)](#)
- [Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication \(AEJMC\)](#)
- Join the [COMMNotes listserve](#) from NCA

## Involvement in Our Program/Department

Any opportunities for graduate students to participate in committees or other specific initiatives in NSCM will be published on the Communication MA Webcourse.

## Involvement on Campus & in the Community

UCF believes education should influence and improve people's lives beyond the university classroom. Since its inception, the university has been guided by this conviction.

Students are encouraged to participate in the school or college [Graduate Student Advisory Council](#) and connect with [Downtown Student Engagement](#)

# Curriculum Section

## Admission Requirements

Applicants should adhere to the application requirements outlined below. An application will not be reviewed for admission until it is verified as complete by the UCF College of Graduate Studies.

In addition to the general UCF graduate application requirements, applicants to this program must provide:

- Official transcripts
- Résumé or CV
- Statement of Purpose: This 1-2 page document should introduce you to the admissions committee. It should discuss your academic and professional interests and experience, and explain how the program is related to your previous work and studies, and how it will ultimately help you reach your professional goals.
- Writing Sample: Please submit ONE academic or professional writing sample, preferably an example of your empirical research.
- Two letters of recommendation in which your referees explain why they believe you would be successful in graduate school.
- Applicants applying to this program who have attended a college/university outside the United States must provide a course-by-course credential evaluation with GPA calculation. Credential evaluations are accepted from [World Education Services \(WES\)](#) or [Josef Silny and Associates, Inc.](#) only.

Meeting minimum UCF admission criteria does not guarantee program admission. Final admission is based on an evaluation of the applicant's abilities, past performance, recommendations, match of this program and faculty expertise to the applicant's career/academic goals, and the applicant's potential for completing the degree.

The following information is required for those who wish to be considered for funding initiated by the Nicholson School of Communication and Media, but is recommended for all applicants:

- Additional letter of recommendation (total of three)

## Degree Requirements

### ***Required Courses – 9 Credit Hours***

- [COM5312](#) - Introduction of Communication Research (3)
- [COM6008](#) - Proseminar in Communication (3)
- [COM6401](#) - Communication Theory (3)
- 

### ***Research Methods Concentration – 3 Credit Hours***

Complete at least one of the following

- [COM6303](#) - Qualitative Research Methods in Communication (3)
- [COM6304](#) - Quantitative Research Methods in Communication (3)

### ***Elective Courses – 18 Credit Hours***

Choose from NSCM graduate courses below. In addition to the courses listed below, special topics courses, study abroad courses, independent study, directed research, internship, and graduate-level courses taken outside the Nicholson School of Communication and Media may be counted as restricted electives, pending approval by the program coordinator, for up to 6 credit hours total.

- [ADV6209](#) - Advertising and Society (3)
- [COM5932](#) - Topics in Communication Theory and Research (3)
- [COM6046](#) - Interpersonal Communication (3)
- [COM6048](#) - Communication in Close Relationships (3)
- [COM6121](#) - Communication Management (3)
- [COM6145](#) - Organizational Communication (3)
- [COM6463](#) - Studies in Intercultural Communication (3)
- [COM6467](#) - Studies in Persuasion (3)
- [COM6468](#) - Communication and Conflict (3)
- [COM6535](#) - Communication Campaigns (3)
- [COM6525](#) - Communication Strategy and Planning (3)
- [MMC6202](#) - Legal and Ethical Issues for Communication (3)
- [MMC6307](#) - International Communication (3)
- [MMC6567](#) - New Media (3)
- [MMC6600](#) - Media Effects and Audience Analysis (3)
- [MMC6612](#) - Communication and Government (3)
- [MMC6735](#) - Social Media as Mass Communication (3)
- [PUR6005](#) - Theories of Public Relations (3)
- [PUR6215](#) - Communicating Corporate Social Responsibility (3)
- [PUR6403](#) - Crisis Public Relations (3)



- [PUR6405](#) - Communication and Public Relations in Politics and Government (3)
- [SPC6340](#) - Teaching Communication (3)

### ***Thesis and non-Thesis Options – 3 Credit Hours***

In addition to this course work, a culminating experience (3 credit hours – of thesis, applied project, or an additional elective in the cases of comprehensive exams) is also required, details below.

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University of Illinois

## Independent Study/ Internship/Practicum/Clinical Experience

### **Independent Learning**

0 Total Credits

- Students who elect the thesis option engage in independent learning through the design and implementation of original research in the thesis process. Students who pursue the comprehensive examination option experience independent learning through their individual preparation for each of four comprehensive examinations. Students who pursue the applied project option engage in applied, original communication research in an applied setting. All students engage in independent learning in every Communication core course. A research paper or project is required in each of these classes. The papers and projects provide independent learning by requiring students to design and carry out research projects and develop analytical papers, some of which are submitted to conferences and/or journals for peer review. Internships and independent studies are also common opportunities for independent learning in the Communication MA program.

•

## **Culminating/Capstone Experience**

### **Thesis/Nonthesis Options**

3 Total Credits

- Complete all of the following
  - Thesis Option
  - Earn at least 3 credits from the following types of courses:

COM 6971 Thesis (minimum of 3 credit hours, can be taken individually) The thesis option requires a minimum of 3 hours of thesis credit and a successful defense of a thesis. Students may enroll in thesis hours after they have successfully completed the three core courses and their thesis committee has been approved by the department, college, and Graduate Studies. The student's permanent faculty advisor will chair their committee, which also will include two additional graduate faculty members in the Nicholson School of Communication and Media. One additional member, who is also a graduate faculty member, may be added from outside the NSCM. All members of the thesis committee are selected in consultation with the student's permanent faculty advisor. When a topic has been selected, students, in conjunction with their permanent advisor, will develop a thesis proposal. Copies of the proposal will be routed to members to their thesis committee and a proposal hearing scheduled. All students must pass a proposal hearing as well as a final oral defense of their thesis. Students who elect to write a thesis should become familiar with the university's requirements and deadlines for organizing and submitting the thesis.

#### Nonthesis Options

- Complete 1 of the following
  - Students who decide not to complete a thesis may choose to complete either the comprehensive examination nonthesis option OR an applied professional project nonthesis option.

#### Nonthesis Option 1: Comprehensive Examination

- Complete all of the following
  - The nonthesis comprehensive examination option is a four-examination requirement that assesses students' coursework competency. Students who choose the comprehensive examination option must take one additional elective course (three credit hours) and successfully complete the comprehensive examinations. Upon completing their 18th hour in the program, students must select a permanent advisor and form a comprehensive exam committee. The examinations will cover research methods, communication theory, and elective areas selected together by the student with his or her comprehensive examination committee. In order to fulfill the comprehensive exam requirement, the student must earn a passing grade on all exams. If a student fails to pass any of the comprehensive exam area questions, they are allowed two additional attempts to satisfy the comprehensive exam requirement. Once an exam in an area is passed, the student does not have to sit for that exam area again. Students are allowed three attempts to satisfy the comprehensive exam requirement. Students are expected to refer to the Communication MA Graduate Program Handbook for the comprehensive examination protocol.

- Earn at least 3 credits from the following types of courses:

#### Additional Elective

#### Nonthesis Option 2: Applied Professional Project

- Complete all of the following
  - The nonthesis applied project option requires students to demonstrate their ability to apply the knowledge and skills learned in the graduate program to a problem/topic that integrates the range of communication theory, practice, and research presented throughout the program. Upon completing their 18th hours in the program, each student must select a permanent advisor and form an applied project committee. The student will work directly with a faculty advisor to develop a project and the advisor will supervise the project. Students and faculty advisors are encouraged to meet with committee members at the proposal and final defense stages. The grading system for the project is Pass/No Pass. Students who receive a grade of Pass will be allowed to graduate assuming all other requirements are met.
  - Earn at least 3 credits from the following:
    - [COM6909](#) - Research Report (1 - 99)

## Certificate Program Linkages

The communication Master's program can be completed concurrently with the graduate certificate in Corporate Communication. For more certificate information, see: <https://communication.ucf.edu/degree/corporate-communication/> This graduate certificate offers a specialization in corporate communication that focus on public relations and crisis and risk communication.

Classes completed for the MA also count toward the certificate, such that the 18 credit hours the certificate requires can be taken and completed at the same time as the MA.

## Other Program Requirements

[There are programs that may have Degree requirements that are outside the spectrum of the sections provided on this program handbook template. This field is for a description of those requirements. If not, this section can be left as is.]

## Sample Plan of Study/Course Sequence/Completion Timeline

*Below are SAMPLE timelines for completion of program, based on FALL*

admission. Please note that, with the exception of a student's first semester, this is a suggested timeline. Students are expected to develop their own timeline in consultation with their faculty advisor.

<b>Full-time enrollment (SAMPLE)</b>	
<b>Fall</b>	<b>Spring</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• COM 6008 Proseminar in Communication(3 credits)</li> <li>• COM 5312 Introduction to CommunicationResearch (3 credits)</li> <li>• Elective (3 credits)</li> <li>• Draft Plan of Study</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• COM 6401 Communication Theory (3 credits)</li> <li>• COM 6303 Qualitative Research Methods or Elective (3credits)*</li> <li>• Elective (3 credits)</li> <li>• Complete Plan of Study with faculty advisor</li> <li>• Select Culminating Experience and choose permanentfaculty advisor</li> </ul>
<b>Fall</b>	<b>Spring</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• COM 6304 Quantitative Research Methods or Elective (3 credits)*</li> <li>• Elective (3 credits)</li> <li>• Elective or Culminating Experience (3credits)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Elective or Culminating Experience (3 credits)</li> <li>• File intent to graduate</li> </ul>

*\*Students select COM 6303 or COM 6304, both are not required.*

<b>Part-time enrollment (SAMPLE)</b>	
<b>Fall</b>	<b>Spring</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• COM 6008 Proseminar in Communication (3credits)</li> <li>• COM 5312 Introduction to CommunicationResearch (3 credits)</li> <li>• Draft Plan of Study</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• COM 6401 Communication Theory (3 credits)</li> <li>• COM 6303 Qualitative Research Methods or Elective(3 credits)*</li> </ul>
<b>Fall</b>	<b>Spring</b>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• COM 6304 Quantitative Research Methods <i>or</i> Elective (3 credits)*</li> <li>• Elective (3 credits)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Elective (3 credits)</li> <li>• Elective (3 credits)</li> <li>• Select Culminating Experience and choose permanent faculty advisor</li> </ul>
<b>Fall</b>	<b>Spring</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Elective <i>or</i> Culminating Experience (3 credits)</li> <li>• Elective (3 credits)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Elective <i>or</i> Culminating Experience (3 credits)</li> <li>• File intent to graduate</li> </ul>

*\*Students select COM 6303 or COM 6304, both are not required.*

# Comprehensive Examinations Section

## Exam Introduction

Each student who selects the Comprehensive Examination non-thesis option will select a permanent advisor and will work with his or her advisor to appoint two additional committee members (NSCM graduate faculty) to the comprehensive examination committee. Students will usually answer four questions (two hours each). Committee will determine the exam time/location. Students can take one exam questions per day over a four-day period or take two exam questions over a two-day period. It is recommended that students follow the thesis defense deadlines set by the College of Graduate Studies of UCF which can be found at <https://calendar.ucf.edu/> . The comprehensive exams are typically closed-book.

The three-person committee will compile the questions based on the student's content area specialization and grade the questions. The advisor will determine the outcome of the comprehensive exam based on input from the committee. Students may ultimately be graded in one of three ways:

**Pass:** All committee members were satisfied with the written responses. No more action is required.

**Conditional Pass:** If there is some concern about the student's response to one or more questions, the committee can elect to evaluate the student with a conditional pass. In this case, the advisor (as advised by the committee members or together with the committee members) will schedule and participate in an oral defense in which the student will present a revision of the answer. The committee will then vote to pass or fail the student's revised response.

**Fail:** Students who fail a question (or more) must retake the comprehensive exams the following semester. Students will have an opportunity to retake the exam twice (which is status quo procedure).

A student must be enrolled in order to take comprehensive exams.

Students who fail one or more of their comprehensive exams are encouraged to review the failed exams with their faculty advisor before retaking the exams. Advisors who return an exam with a grade of FAIL are required to meet with the student if the student makes such a request. The advisor should provide detailed feedback that explains the basis for the failing grade. Faculty are strongly encouraged to use a detailed rubric when grading comprehensive exams to help identify weaknesses and strengths in students' comprehensive exam responses.

Students who fail to satisfy the comprehensive exam requirement after taking the

exams three times will be reviewed by the NSCM Graduate Committee. The committee will consult the student's comprehensive examination committee and will determine a course of action for the student. This may include additional coursework designed to strengthen the student's knowledge and proficiency in areas where the comprehensive exam performance is deficient. The student will not be allowed to retake the exams again until s/he has complied with the committee's recommendations.

## Scheduling of Exams

Scheduling of exams is to be jointly determined by the student and their advisor.

# Thesis and Applied Project Section

## Master's Thesis - Overview

A student may choose to complete his/her program by writing comprehensive examinations or by writing a thesis. Check the website of College of Graduate Studies <https://graduate.ucf.edu/thesis-and-dissertation/> for requirements and check UCF Academic Calendar for important dates and deadlines.

Students who select the thesis option must defend a proposal for their thesis orally with their thesis committee members. The thesis proposal must be completed in a different semester than the final defense. Students should not begin collecting data for their thesis until they have passed their proposal defense.

The following requirements must be met by thesis students:

- Submit a properly formatted file for initial format review by the format review deadline
- Submit the Thesis and Dissertation Release Option form well before the defense
- Defend by the defense deadline
- Receive format approval (if not granted upon initial review)
- Submit signed approval form by final submission deadline
- Submit final thesis document by final submission deadline

The Master's thesis is the capstone of a student's graduate training. Although some students have a thesis topic in mind early in their graduate career, other students develop ideas as they progress through their classes. It is always a good idea to discuss ideas early with the faculty who have expertise in that area. Under the supervision of the thesis chair, the student prepares a formal thesis proposal that includes an abstract, introduction, review of relevant literature, proposed research methodology, data analysis plan, and a complete list of references and supporting literature. This proposal is shared with committee members, and a face-to-face or virtual meeting to defend the proposal is held with the student, committee chair, and committee members in attendance.

In conjunction with the chair of the thesis advisory committee, the student will identify a minimum of two other faculty members to serve on the thesis evaluation committee. The thesis committee makes all final decisions regarding the thesis project.



Projects what involve human subjects should be approved by IRB before data collection.  
(<http://www.research.ucf.edu/Compliance/irb.html>)

## Master's Thesis – Committees

The student should first find a faculty advisor to chair the thesis committee. (See information above about selecting an advisor.) The committee chair and at least one member must be members of the NSCM Graduate Faculty. The other committee member can be a UCF graduatefaculty outside of NSCM.

Under the supervision of their advisor, the student prepares a thesis proposal that includes a clear plan of how the research is to be completed. This includes reviewing relevant information and previously conducted research on the topic or problem to be solved, as well as details on the research method. This proposal is shared with committee members, and typically a face-to-face meeting or virtual meeting to discuss the proposal is held with the student, thesis advisor, and all committee members. If students want to publish the research in the future, they need to complete the IRB review at UCF before data collection.  
(<http://www.research.ucf.edu/Compliance/irb.html>)

A meeting reviewing the thesis proposal is typically done the semester prior to the completion of the thesis, but may be completed very early in the same term.

## Master's Thesis – Defense

After the student has completed the work agreed upon at the proposal meeting, and after the thesis advisory chair agrees that the student is ready to defend, a thesis defense meeting may be scheduled. The entire committee must receive a copy of the penultimate draft of the thesis at least ONE week prior to the scheduled meeting. All committee members are obligated to read the thesis before the meeting occurs and prepare questions for the student. At this time, the student should request the Defense Approval Form through the College of Graduate Studies. The thesis defense meeting represents an opportunity for the intellectual exchange of ideas as well as an evaluation of the worthiness of the research report. The thesis defense meeting should be scheduled for approximately 1.5 hours. The format of the meeting includes an oral presentation of the research, a question and answer session, and a closed executive session attended only by the thesis committee members.

The oral defense usually begins with an oral presentation of the research project. The presentation is followed by a question and answer session in which each committee member will be expected to ask questions regarding the student's thesis project. Finally, the student will be excused from the room and a closed session will be conducted. In the closed session the committee chair shares results of the

iThenticate.com originality report with the committee followed by the committee's discussion of the merits of the project and a vote on the acceptability of the thesis. A majority of committee members must vote in favor of a passing grade on the project for the student to qualify for graduation. The committee may decide to accept the thesis as is, accept the thesis with minor revisions (requiring no rescheduled meeting), or in the event that a majority of committee members do not vote to pass the project, the student will be asked to make major revisions to the thesis (requiring that a new thesis defense meeting be rescheduled after revisions are completed). Once the committee has decided on a result, the student will be invited back into the room and the adjudication by the committee will be shared with the student.

The student is expected to acquire the additional signatures for the Defense Approval form, which includes the Graduate Program Coordinator, the Director of the Nicholson School of Communication and Media, and the Dean of the College of Sciences. Thesis committee members must sign the form in person, or through an online authenticated signature.

Gifts for the thesis advisory chair and committee members with any kind of intrinsic value are highly discouraged. This would include gift cards with a monetary value, a bottle of wine, gift baskets, and so forth. The advisory chair and committee members are paid by the state of Florida for the time and effort they put into to a candidate's thesis project so they are not owed any sort of valuable consideration from the candidate. Additionally, receiving a gift with intrinsic value constitutes a conflict of interest for the committee members and advisor as they are responsible for assigning a grade to the student's academic work. Gifts with only sentimental value, such as a framed photograph, a handwritten thank you note on nice stationery, a flower arrangement, and so forth are not considered gifts of intrinsic value so they are not covered by this rule. Students should also be discouraged from providing food or drink at proposal defense and final defense meetings.

## Thesis Enrollment Requirement

To be considered full-time after completion of coursework, students must be continuously enrolled in three hours of thesis research (COM 6971) every semester (including summers) until successful defense and graduation. This enrollment each semester reflects the expenditure of university resources. Students who wish to enroll in part-time hours must enroll for a minimum of one credit hour of thesis research (COM 6971) every semester after the initial three hours (including summers), until successful defense and graduation.

## Master's Applied Project - Overview

The applied project option requires students to demonstrate their ability to apply the knowledge and skills learned in the graduate program to a problem/topic related to

the area of communication. The applied project is an applied research work—such as a case-study, sample corporate communication strategy, crisis communication plan, a project serving the communicative needs of a corporate or organizational client, or a communication project which combines scholarship with extensive experiences in a non-academic workplace that integrates the range of communication theory, practice, and research presented throughout the program.

Students are required to articulate a problem/topic, design an argument, and complete a plan for investigating the problem/topic. The project should be designed for a professional audience. The finished product must be composed in a manner worthy of presentation either to a professional organization or decision-makers in the area of study. The major components of the applied professional project include enrollment in and successful completion of applied project hours, and completion of the project, which includes a reflective write-up and an oral presentation of their work. Students with a cumulative grade point average of 3.0 or higher are eligible for this option.

Students are required to fill out a registration form to enroll in applied professional project hours (COM 6909). At least THREE applied professional project hours are required.

Students may opt to enroll in 1 to 3 hours of applied professional project in a given semester but must be enrolled in at least 1 hour in the semester s/he graduates. Any student who has not completed an applied professional project after three hours of applied professional project enrollment must enroll in one hour of continuing professional credit each semester after the semester where the third hour of applied professional project credit was attempted. Evidence of project progress must be submitted with a new enrollment request form.

## Master's Applied Project – Committees

A Culminating Experience Declaration form needs to be completed first. Students need to secure an advisor, or project chair, and at least one additional committee member from the NSCM graduate faculty. A third committee member is optional. A third committee member can be a community member with professional experience in the area upon which the project is based.

Under the supervision of the project advisor, the student prepares a project proposal that includes a clear plan of how the project is to be completed. This includes reviewing relevant information and previously conducted research on the topic or problem to be solved, as well as details on the research method and/ plan for creating the final deliverable project. This proposal is shared with committee members, and typically a face-to-face meeting or virtual meeting to discuss the proposal is held with the student, project advisor, and all committee members. If students want to publish the project in the future, they need to complete the IRB review at UCF before data collection.

<http://www.research.ucf.edu/Compliance/irb.html>)

This proposal should be approved by any community partners prior to carrying out the research/ implementing the communication deliverable. A meeting reviewing the study proposal is typically done the semester prior to the completion of the project, but may be completed in the same term.

## Master's Applied Project – Defense

An oral defense of the project is needed once the project is fully completed. The procedure is the same as the thesis defense meeting. An Applied Professional Project Approval Form needs to be turned in after the oral defense meeting.

It is recommended that students follow the thesis defense deadlines set by the College of Graduate Studies of UCF which can be found at <https://calendar.ucf.edu/>. All general rules and expectations from the committee should be discussed and shared with students before a project starts.

If a student fails the written part of the project, he or she will immediately set up a meeting with the Graduate Program Coordinator to enter the comprehensive examination process.

# Program and Institutional Policies

## Absences

Students who anticipate that they may not be able to enroll continuously due to external circumstances should apply for [Special Leave of Absence](#). Specifically, students who are taking courses should apply for a Special Leave of Absence when they cannot enroll in more than two consecutive semesters. Students who are in thesis/dissertation hours should apply for a Special Leave of Absence when they cannot enroll in every semester (including summer).

To qualify for a Special Leave of Absence, the student must demonstrate good cause (e.g., illness, family issues, financial difficulties, personal circumstances, recent maternity/paternity, employment issues). The specific reason for the Leave of Absence request must be indicated by the student on the [Leave of Absence Form](#). Due to current U.S. government regulations, international students must be enrolled every fall and spring semester. For students in this category, a Special Leave of Absence is only available for documented medical reasons.

## Academic Standards/Conduct/Integrity

UCF has three fundamental responsibilities with regard to graduate student research. They are to:

- 1) support an academic environment that stimulates the spirit of inquiry
- 2) develop the intellectual property stemming from research
- 3) disseminate the intellectual property to the general public

UCF's Office of Research & Commercialization ensures the UCF community complies with local, state and federal regulations that relate to research. For policies including required Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval when conducting research involving human subjects (e.g. surveys), animal research, conflict of interest, and general responsible conduct of research, please see their website: <http://www.research.ucf.edu/compliance/irb.html>

## Accommodations

UCF admits a diverse graduate student population. Some of those students may need an (or a variety) of accommodations to help them be successful in the program.

Students can find more information about formal accommodation from the Student Accessibility Services office: <https://sas.sdes.ucf.edu/accommodations/>

## Annual Review

Annual reviews are required for all Master's students in order to assess how students are doing academically as well as tracking progress toward milestones in the program. The annual review is an important opportunity to reflect on your own goals and discuss any areas of improvement with your temporary or permanent advisor. Students complete the review via Qualtrics survey at the end of each spring semester.

## Appeals/Grievances

In situations where students do not agree with an assessment or believe they have been treated unfairly they should refer to the [Academic Grievance Procedure](#) from the graduate catalog. We encourage students to meet with their advisor and the program coordinator if appropriate as well.

## Communication

### **Student Responsibility for University Communication**

UCF uses email as the official means of notifying students of important university business and academic information concerning registration, deadlines, financial assistance, scholarships, student accounts (including tuition and fees), academic progress and problems, and many other critical items for satisfactory completion of a UCF degree program. The university sends all business-related and academic messages to a student's Knights Email address to ensure that there is one repository for that information. Every student must register for, and maintain a Knights Email account at <https://extranet.cst.ucf.edu/kmailselfsvc> and check it regularly to avoid missing important and critical information from the university. Any difficulty with establishing an account or with accessing an established account must be resolved through the [UCF Computer Services Service Desk](#) so that a student receives all important messages. Additionally, each student must have an up-to-date emergency e-mail address and cell phone number by which to be reached in case of a crisis on campus. This emergency contact information will be used only for emergency purposes. Also, both permanent and local mailing addresses must be on the record, so that any physical documents that must be mailed can be delivered.

It is critical that students maintain and regularly check their Knights Email account for official announcements and notifications. Communications sent to the Knights Email

address on record will be deemed adequate notice for all university communication, include issues related to academics, finances, registration, parking, and all other matters. The University does not accept responsibility if official communication fails to reach a student who has not registered for, or maintained and checked on a regular basis, their Knights Email account. Please ensure that this information is current and that any changes in contact information are made online through the myUCF portal at <https://my.ucf.edu/>.

## Continuous Enrollment

All graduate students are required to enroll in at least one class over the span of the Academic year. Failure to enroll in 3 consecutive terms results in dismissal from the program. After candidacy exam is passed for doctoral students, they are required to enroll in dissertation hours every semester until graduation. The institutional policy from the graduate catalog around continuous enrollment could be provided in this section. [Continuous Enrollment](#) and [Continuous Enrollment and Active Students](#).

## Disability Statement

### **ACCESS matters.**

**Purpose:** We envision UCF to be a fully accessible campus and inclusive environment for people with disabilities. We do this by:

- **A**cknowledging disability as an aspect of human diversity;
- **C**ultivating awareness of the environment's disabling barriers;
- **C**ollaborating on and proactively facilitating accessible environments and experiences;
- **E**ducating faculty and staff to create and maintain access in their spheres of influence;
- **S**hifting to an inclusive-minded attitude;
- **S**upplementing with reasonable accommodations as a last resort measure to ensure access.

## Dismissal/Discipline

If a student is not able to remain in good academic standing or meet the program standards they may be subject to discipline and/or dismissal from the program. Any formal action will be considered by the program coordinator in consultation with the doctoral faculty and NSCM Director.

## Diversity Statement

### *Nicholson School of Communication and Media Anti-Racism Statement*

The Nicholson School of Communication and Media takes seriously the role of education in eradicating hate and discrimination in our communities. We also acknowledge that institutions of higher learning have perpetuated the status quo, supporting systemic inequities and harmful norms for centuries. Scholarship in communication and media studies recognize the power that words and images hold to lift up and also harm. However, rhetoric is never enough in the fight for humane and equitable working and learning spaces. Our commitment to a culture of inclusion and belonging is centered on the belief in human dignity and the recognition that many members of our communities, most notably Indigenous, and Black and African American people, have not been afforded that dignity in the United States and specifically in higher education. We know that our structures, policies, curricula, and culture require deep examination and ongoing evaluation in order to respond to injustices in our sphere. More specifically we commit to:

- Auditing curricula for inclusion of work from scholars of color and providing resources for faculty to increase representation in their courses and research.
- Holding ourselves and others accountable for bigoted, racist, and discriminatory behaviors.
- Creating more opportunities for feedback and to actively listen to the concerns, needs, and calls for action from our minoritized communities.

### *Nicholson School of Communication and Media Commitment to Inclusive Culture*

At the Nicholson School of Communication and Media we are committed to creating and maintaining inclusive learning and working environments. We strive to honor diversity in all its forms and want staff, students, and faculty to feel respected and valued in our school. We aim to apply an equity lens to the many activities that are encapsulated in the work at the Nicholson School. The development of an inclusive culture necessarily centers effort to ensure a sense of belonging for minoritized populations in our school. In order to achieve these goals, a variety of resources are required to support the dynamic and ongoing engagement. By embracing and celebrating differences in NSCM, members of our diverse communities can thrive in larger industry, local, national, and global contexts.

The University of Central Florida considers the diversity of its students, faculty, and staff to be a strength and critical to its educational mission. UCF expects every member of the university community to contribute to an inclusive and respectful culture for all in its classrooms, work environments, and at campus events. Dimensions of diversity can include sex, race, age, national origin, ethnicity, gender identity and expression, intellectual and physical ability, sexual orientation, income, faith and non-faith perspectives, socio-economic class, political ideology, education, primary language,



family status, military experience, cognitive style, and communication style. The individual intersection of these experiences and characteristics must be valued in our community.

Title IX prohibits sex discrimination, including sexual misconduct, sexual violence, sexual harassment, and retaliation. If you or someone you know has been harassed or assaulted, you can find resources available to support the victim, including confidential resources and information concerning reporting options at <https://letsbeclear.ucf.edu> and <http://cares.sdes.ucf.edu/>.

If there are aspects of the design, instruction, and/or experiences within this course that result in barriers to your inclusion or accurate assessment of achievement, please notify the instructor as soon as possible and/or contact [Student Accessibility Services](#).

For more information on diversity and inclusion, Title IX, accessibility, or UCF's complaint processes contact:

- Title IX – OIE <http://oie.ucf.edu/> & [askanadvocate@ucf.edu](mailto:askanadvocate@ucf.edu)
- Disability Accommodation – Student Accessibility Services – <http://sas.sdes.ucf.edu/> & [sas@ucf.edu](mailto:sas@ucf.edu)
- Diversity and Inclusion Training and Events – [www.diversity.ucf.edu](http://www.diversity.ucf.edu)
- Student Bias Grievances – Just Knights response team – <http://jkrt.sdes.ucf.edu/>
- UCF Compliance and Ethics Office – <http://compliance.ucf.edu/> & [complianceandethics@ucf.edu](mailto:complianceandethics@ucf.edu)
- Ombuds Office – <http://www.ombuds.ucf.edu>

## Dress Code

[Certain programs have requirements for how their students are to dress while in program or during certain components of the degree. This field can be used to describe those requirements and the relevant expectations. If not, leave this section as is.]

## Eligibility for Certification and Licensure

[There are both online and campus-based programs that have professional certification and/or licensure associated with degree completion. Programs can provide details related to this element of their program. The following link from Academic Program Quality can be provided: <https://apq.ucf.edu/licensure-programs/> ]

## Enrollment in Thesis/Dissertation Hours

The university requires all doctoral students to take a minimum of 15 credit hours of doctoral dissertation hours; however, specific programs may require more than this minimum. Dissertation research is considered to be a full-time effort, and post-candidacy enrollment in at least three doctoral dissertations (XXX 7980) credit hours constitutes full-time graduate status. Doctoral students who have passed candidacy and have begun taking doctoral dissertation hours (XXX 7980) must enroll in at least three dissertation hours each semester (including summers, without skipping a semester) and continue doing so until they complete and successfully defend the dissertation. Students wishing to enroll in fewer than 3 credit hours must have approval from their advisor. Students who need to interrupt their dissertation work for extenuating circumstances must submit a [Leave of Absence Form](#) to the College of Graduate Studies. Submission and approval of the form must be obtained prior to the first day of classes for the term of non-enrollment.

## Golden Rule

The Golden Rule is the university's policy regarding non-academic discipline of students and limited academic grievance procedures for graduate (grade appeals in individual courses, not including thesis and dissertation courses) and undergraduate students. Information concerning The Golden Rule can be found at [www.goldenrule.sdes.ucf.edu/](http://www.goldenrule.sdes.ucf.edu/). Section 11, Student Academic Behavior, addresses appeals of graduate program actions or decisions.

## Grading and Grading Procedures

Faculty will determine and provide their grading schemes for each course. In general the university uses a standard alphabetic system (i.e., A-F). Other university designations may include the following:

N%	Nhtr ucjyj%
S%	Stalwfijwjutwji%~mj%xywzhytw%
X%	Xfyxkfhwtw-%  n%nwjiny.4Xfyxkfhwtw-%Uw%lwjxx% -Wjxjfwhm%Wmjxx%Uw%lxjwfyts.%
Z%	Zsxfyxkfhwtw-%st%nwjiny.%
\ %	\ nmiwf   s%
\ K%	\ nmiwf   s%Kfmsl%
\ M%	Mjfqm%Ktwr %\ nmiwf   f%
\ R %	R jinhf% \ nmiwf   f%
\ U%	\ nmiwf   s%Ufxxsl%
] %	Fziny%st%nwjiny.%

The designation of "N" will be temporarily assigned by the Registrar's Office only in the case when a grade has not been submitted by the faculty by the grades due deadline. The designator will be replaced by the earned letter grade at the earliest opportunity in the semester that immediately follows. The "N" designator may not be assigned by faculty.

Grade changes other than medical withdrawals will be considered only during the semester immediately following the one in which the grade was assigned, except that grades assigned during the spring semester may be changed during either the following summer term or fall semester. A change in grade must be approved by the dean of the college or school. If an academic action such as dismissal or probation has been taken by the university before a grade change, the action will remain in effect regardless of the grade change. A grade will not be changed after a degree has been conferred.

## Harassment

The University of Central Florida values diversity in the campus community. Accordingly, discrimination on the basis of race, sex, national origin, religion, age, disability, marital status, parental status, veterans status, sexual orientation, or genetic information is prohibited.

Sexual harassment, a form of sex discrimination, is defined as unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, or verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature including any of these three situations.

1. Submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of an individual's employment or enrollment.
2. Submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used as the basis for employment or enrollment decisions affecting such individual.
3. Such conduct has the purpose or effect of substantially interfering with an individual's work performance or enrollment, or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working or academic environment.

Sexual harassment is strictly prohibited. Occurrences will be dealt with in accordance with the guidelines above and university rules. Employees, students, or applicants for employment or admission may obtain further information on this policy, including grievance procedures, from the OIE Coordinator. The Director of the Office of Institutional Equity Programs is the campus Equity Coordinator responsible for concerns in all areas of discrimination. The office is located on the main campus, in Barbara Ying CMMS Building 81, Suite 101. The phone number is (407) 823-1336. Policies and guidelines are available online at <http://www.eeo.ucf.edu>.

## International Students

The Nicholson School of Communication and Media welcomes international students in our graduate programs. There is often additional paperwork and processes that are specific to students from other countries. The program coordinator will work closely with students to navigate those realities. International students should also see [UCF Global](#) for additional information about living and studying in the United States and at UCF.

## Plagiarism

Graduate students are responsible for understanding plagiarism and abiding by the expectations of academic integrity in our program and field. If this information is new to you we encourage students to participate in the College of Graduate Studies programming about plagiarism in the Pathways to Success Program.

Plagiarism is the act of taking someone else's work and presenting it as your own. Any ideas, data, text, media or materials taken from another source (either written or verbal) must be fully acknowledged. a) A student must not adopt or reproduce ideas, opinions, theories, formulas, graphics, or pictures of another person without acknowledgment. b) A student must give credit to the originality of others whenever:

1. Directly quoting another person's actual words, whether oral or written;
2. Using another person's ideas, opinions, or theories;
3. Paraphrasing the words, ideas, opinions, or theories of others, whether oral or written;
4. Borrowing facts, statistics, or illustrative material; or
5. Offering materials assembled or collected by others in the form of projects or collections without acknowledgment.

When using the ideas, opinions, theories, formulas, graphics, or pictures of another, students must give credit to the original source at the location or place in the document where that source's material is found as well as provide bibliographic information at the end of the document. When students are verbally discussing the ideas, opinions, theories, formulas, graphics, or pictures of another, they must give credit to the original source at the time they speak about that source. In this manner, students must make clear (so there is no doubt) within their written or verbal materials, which parts are gained from other sources, and which are their own original ideas, theories, formulas, graphics, and pictures. The Office of Student Conduct has a set of criteria that determines if students are in violation of plagiarism. This set of criteria may be set to a higher standard in graduate programs. Therefore, a student may not be found in violation of plagiarism by the Office of Student Conduct, but a professor or program requiring higher standards of attribution and citation may find a student in violation of plagiarism and administer program level sanctions. The standard in doctoral programs should be the highest as students earning these degrees are expected to be experts in their fields and producing independent work that contributes knowledge to their discipline.

## Probation

If a student is not meeting program and institutional expectations for maintaining good academic standing they may face probation or dismissal. Students should become familiar with information on [Academic Progress and Performance](#) to understand GPA and other requirements for maintaining good standing.

## Time Limits to Degree Completion

A student has seven years from the date of admission to the Master's program to earn a degree.

Extenuating circumstances may arise that hinder a student's progress towards program completion and the ability to maintain continuous enrollment. If such a need arises, the student may petition for a Special Leave of Absence. Leaves are considered for medical (e.g., illness, injury) or non-medical (e.g., family needs, military deployment).

Students should be proactive in maintaining accurate records with the university and petition for a Special Leave of Absence prior to the need. When this is not possible, students should do so promptly after the need arises. Students are required to complete and submit the Leave of Absence form with all relevant supporting documents. See the [Graduate Catalog](#) for more information.

## Transfer Credit

Students should see the [Graduate Catalog](#) for information about University limits to Transfer Credit. All transfer credits will need approval from the faculty coordinator.

## iThenticate

The university requires all students submitting a thesis or dissertation as part of their graduate degree requirements to first have their electronic documents submitted through iThenticate for advisement purposes and for review of originality. The thesis or dissertation chair is responsible for scheduling this submission to iThenticate and for reviewing the results from iThenticate with the student's advisory committee. The advisory committee uses the results appropriately to assist the student in the preparation of their dissertation.

Before the student may be approved for final submission to the university, the dissertation chair must indicate completion of the Review for Original Work through iThenticate by signing the [Dissertation Approval Form](#).

## Additional Program Details

### Financial Aid Funding

The Nicholson School of Communication and Media is given a set number of tuition waivers each year. Distribution of the tuition waivers is based on fellowship/scholarship, the match between special skills of the student and the needs of the NSCM. The Nicholson School offers a number of Graduate Teaching Assistantships (GTAs) each year (the number offered will vary depending on the budget situation of the department). Graduate Research Assistantships (GRAs) may also be offered through faculty members' grants.

For more information about Graduate Education Funding, visit <https://graduate.ucf.edu/funding/>

### Graduate Assistantship Details

To be employed and to maintain employment in a graduate assistantship, the student must be enrolled [full-time](#) and meet all of the training requirements and/or conditions of employment noted within the [current graduate catalog](#). Additionally, students on a graduate teaching assistantship are required to participate in training seminars hosted by the Nicholson School of Communication and Media. These seminars are detailed when the GTA is presented with his/her contract.

The NSCM will communicate training requirements to students at the time of hire, but the onus to fulfill all requirements by university deadlines is solely the student's responsibility. A failure to meet the requirements will result in the loss of an assistantship and all corresponding tuition waiver funds. Failure to maintain satisfactory academic progress can also result in the loss of financial support. Although GTA funding depends on the annual budget of the graduate program, assistantships are usually awarded for a two-year period. All employment of graduate teaching assistants is overseen by the Director of the NSCM.

At the completion of each semester, GTAs (graders, assistants and associates) are required to be evaluated by the Associate Director of Communication. The Associate Director, or Chair, will consult with faculty to whom the student was assigned. If the student is serving as the instructor of record, the Associate Director will review Student Perceptions of Instruction and be involved in the assessment process. These assessments will be used to review strengths and weaknesses in the student's performance in preparation for future employment. Multiple negative evaluations may cause the student to lose future assistantships. Additionally, a failure to submit an annual performance evaluation will also result in a loss of future assistantships.

## Professional Membership

Graduate students in the Nicholson School of Communication and Media are welcome to pursue membership in any NSCM-endorsed student organization and events. Some of these include: Radio-TV Digital News Association(RTDNA), WNSC, Lambda Pi Eta, Quotes, and Debate and Speech teams.

The NSCM is proud to host the International Crisis and Risk Communication (ICRC) professional conference each March. A number of graduate students are sponsored by NSCM to attend the conference at no cost to themselves. The opportunity is announced in mid-February.

Graduate students are encouraged to present their research at different UCF, local, regional, and national, and international conferences.

## Graduation Requirements

Please refer to [Commencement](#) details for official procedures, forms, and timelines.

In order to graduate, you must have successfully completed coursework, including no less than B- in any core course, and overall must have 3.0 GPA. A culminating experience, as described above, must be complete and updated on a student's Program of Study.

## Job Search and Career Pathways

[Understanding the professional opportunities and benefits associated with completing a degree at UCF is very important for graduate students. In this section, programs can provide such information as:

- A description of potential careers related to your degree
- Data on employability in those fields
- Details on companies/industries that have hired graduates from your program
- For programs that have students who wish to become academics, information related to becoming a professor would be helpful
- Information on [UCF's Pathways to Success Program](#) can be provided
- Other career pathways information as relevant]

## Student Associations

There are many ways to be involved on campus. Please refer to this website to get started. [Student Involvement. Other opportunities will be made available on the Communication MA WebCourses page.](#)

## Graduate Student Center

UCF is fortunate to have its own Graduate Student Center. It is a great place to relax, practice a presentation in one of our conference rooms, have your lunch, and to meet other graduate students. For more information: [Graduate Student Center](#)

## Student Research Week/Student Scholar Symposium

The College of Graduate Studies hosts an annual Student Scholar Symposium to provide a conference setting for our own students to showcase their work either with poster presentations or a face-to-face presentation. This is a great opportunity to get valuable feedback and practice for larger national or international conferences. See [Student Research Week](#) for more information.

## 3 Minute Thesis (3MT)

The College of Graduate Studies also hosts a [3MT](#) competition for graduate students in both the Fall and Spring Semesters. Doctoral research is presented in a novel and exciting way at UCF's Three Minute Thesis (3MT) competition. Graduate students communicate their research in just three short minutes and with only one PowerPoint slide to non-expert judges while competing to win scholarship awards.

## Forms

There are many different forms associated with being in your program and a graduate student at UCF. This is the administrative side of completing a degree. Essential forms will be available in your Strategic Communication Ph.D. webcourse. Additionally, you can find many forms from the College of Graduate Studies at this link: [Forms](#)

## Useful Links/Resources

There are a variety of events, resources, and field of study information may want to be aware of. Here are several links:

- [Bookstore](#)
- [Campus Map](#)
- [Graduate Catalog](#)
- [Library](#)
- [Parking Services](#)
- [Shuttles](#)
- [Recreation Center](#)



- [Housing](#)
- [Counseling Center](#)
- [Writing Center](#)
- [Academic Calendar](#)]

## Graduate Faculty

### **Dr. Rufus Barfield, Associate Professor**

Research interests: Health disparities, technology in health intervention, group communication, mixed methods

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### **Brown, Tim, Associate Professor**

Disciplinary affiliations: Film & Mass Media

Research interests: Media and Society, New Media in Journalism, New Media in Education, Industry/Academy Relationship

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### **Dodd, Melissa, Associate Professor**

Disciplinary affiliations: Communication

Research interests: Activism, Corporate Communication, Public Relations, Corporate Social Responsibility, Social Media, Social Capital

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### **Hanlon, Christine, Senior Lecturer**

Disciplinary affiliations: Communication

Research interests: Advertising, Gender, LGBTQ+, Military Recruitment and Integration

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### **Hastings, Sally, Associate Professor**

Disciplinary affiliations: Communication

Research interests: Communication and Bereavement, Communication and Marginalization, Intercultural, Interpersonal

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### **Kight, Erica, Associate Lecturer**

Disciplinary affiliations: Film and Mass Media

Research interests: Hispanic Media, Spanish-language Media, Hispanic/LatinX audiences, Diversity in Media, Representation of People of Color in Media

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**Kim, Jihyun, Associate Professor**

Disciplinary affiliations: Communication

Research interests: Communication and Technology, New Technology, Quantitative Methods

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**Kinnally, William, Associate Professor**

Disciplinary affiliations: Film and Mass Media

Research interests: Mass Media Effects, Effects and News Content, Social Judgement, Media Enjoyment

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**Kolodziej-Smith, Renata, Associate Lecturer**

Disciplinary affiliations: Communication

Research interests: Organizational and Intercultural Communication

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[Lin, Xialing, Assistant Professor](#)

[Disciplinary affiliations: Communication](#)

[Research interests:](#) Intersections of risk, crisis communication, and communication technology.

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**Littlefield, Robert (School Director)**

Disciplinary affiliations: Communication

Research interests: Intercultural, Risk/Crisis, Forensic Pedagogy

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**McCafferty, James, Lecturer**

Disciplinary affiliations: Communication

Research interests: Conflict Management, Negotiation, Management-Labor Relations, Grounded Theory Method

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**Miller, Ann, Professor**

Disciplinary affiliations: Communication

Research interests: Intercultural Communication, Health Communication, Instructional Communication

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**Musambira, George, Associate Professor**

Disciplinary affiliations: Communication

Research interests: Bereavement and Communication, International and Intercultural Communication, Non-Government Organizations, Communication and Development in African Countries

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**Parrish, Adam, Lecturer**

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Research interests: Health Communication, Interpersonal Communication, Persuasion, Risk and Crisis Communication

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**Rubenking, Bridget, Associate Professor**

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Research interests: Media Processing and Effects, New Media, Entertainment, Quantitative Methods

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**Sandoval, Jennifer, Associate Professor**

Disciplinary affiliations: Communication

Research interests: Identity, Intercultural Communication, Health Policy, Sexual and Reproductive Health

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Research interests: New Technology, Risk and Crisis Communication

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Research interests: Instructional Communication, Organizational Communication, Educational Development

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**Voss, Kimberly, Professor**

College: Nicholson School  
Disciplinary affiliations: Communication and Mass Media

Research interests: Women's Studies, Women and the Media, Journalism History, Food History, Media Law, Social Media

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**Weger, Harry, Professor**

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Research interests: Interpersonal, Family Communication, Persuasion, Nonverbal Communication

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**Yu, Nan, Professor**

Disciplinary affiliations: Communication

Research interests: New Media, Health Communication, Science Communication,  
Quantitative Methods

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