SJMC MA Program in Mass Communication Handbook
2018 – 2019

Texas State University
School of Journalism and Mass Communication
Old Main 102, 601 University Drive
San Marcos, Texas 78666

http://www.gradcollege.txstate.edu/programs/mass-comm.html
Welcome to the School of Journalism and Mass Communication at Texas State University. You are entering an exciting “community of scholars” who are eager to discover, think, and challenge. Graduate studies are quite different from undergraduate studies. You must read more, write more and be prepared to participate in active small group seminar discussions. You will also be expected to think critically and work independently.

You may be pursuing graduate studies after being away from school for many years. You may have just finished your undergraduate degree and decided to immediately continue your studies at the graduate level. You may have extensive professional experience or very little. Our program was designed at the outset to be flexible to accommodate people with a variety of educational goals and scheduling constraints. Some of our students pursue their studies full-time. Others take one or two courses a semester. Our courses are offered face-to-face in the evenings, online or hybrid formats.

This handbook has been designed to assist you with your program planning. We hope that you will take the time to go over the handbook carefully.

Good luck with your studies. We look forward to having you as a graduate student.

Dr. Judy Oskam  
Professor and Director  
School of Journalism and Mass Communication
Important Graduate College Resources

Online orientation
http://www.gradcollege.txstate.edu/events/orientation.html
This website contains information on getting started, general policy information, healthcare and wellness. There is also information on library resources, technology services, transportation and other student services.

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Shop Talks: Free Professional Development Workshops
http://www.gradcollege.txstate.edu/events/shoptalks.html
Workshops on various aspects of degree success, research development and career preparation are offered to support you during the course of your degree progress.

GradBulletin
http://www.gradcollege.txstate.edu/students/gradbulletin.html
Every Friday, all enrolled graduate students will receive a copy of the GradBulletin via email. The GradBulletin contains useful information on various deadlines pertaining to your degree completion. It also carries information on workshop, funding and other opportunities. We strongly recommend that you remain subscribed to the GradBulletin and regularly read it.

Graduate Catalog
http://www.gradcollege.txstate.edu/students/catalog.html

Graduate College Scholarships and Fellowships
http://www.gradcollege.txstate.edu/funding/scholarships.html
SJMC MA Overview

The graduate program in Journalism and Mass Communication started in 1997. The goal of the program is to offer an excellent education in mass communication with cutting edge curriculum relevant to today’s diverse, complex global and digital environment, synthesizing theory, research, multimedia and strategic communication skills. Students' analytical, ethical and critical thinking abilities are strengthened. The mission of the MA program is to prepare students for careers in mass communication by educating them in the theoretical foundations, research, analytical and digital concepts needed to succeed in a changing media industry. The program promotes diversity, scholarly integrity and creativity to produce the next generation of industry leaders.

The Master of Arts in Mass Communication, with concentrations in Strategic Communication, Digital Media and Global Media, is attracting some of the best and brightest students from Texas, other U.S. states and countries from around the globe.

The graduate program offers many opportunities for media professionals, educators and recent graduates to expand their education and training within the mass communication field. The program offers a wide range of courses that cultivate research and analytical skills. Students broaden their understanding of communication theories, critical thinking abilities and practical skills that will enable them to take up media-related positions in the community. The program allows students whose undergraduate major may not have been mass communication to gain skills and a theory base for potential mass communication careers.

Courses offered in the program address a variety of current topics such as the digital and social media, multimedia design/production and web design, as well as core classes such as mass communication theory and research methods. Students may choose the thesis track that requires 33 hours, or the professional project track that requires 36 hours.

Learning Outcomes
There are twelve program-related learning outcomes measured in the Master’s in Mass Communication. They are as follows:

- Understand and apply the principles and laws of freedom of speech and press, understand the range of systems of freedom of expression around the world, including the right to dissent, to monitor and criticize power, and to assemble and petition for redress of grievances;
- Demonstrate an understanding of the history and role of professionals and institutions in shaping communications;
- Demonstrate an understanding of gender, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation and, as appropriate, other forms of diversity in domestic society in relation to mass communications.
• Demonstrate an understanding of the diversity of peoples and cultures and of the significance and impact of mass communications in a global society.
• Understand concepts and apply theories in the use and presentation of images and information;
• Demonstrate an understanding of professional ethical principles and work ethically in pursuit of truth, accuracy, fairness and diversity;
• Think critically, creatively and independently;
• Conduct research and evaluate information by methods appropriate to the communications professions in which they work;
• Write correctly and clearly in forms and styles appropriate for the communications professions, audiences and purposes they serve;
• Critically evaluate their own work and that of others for accuracy and fairness, clarity, appropriate style and grammatical correctness;
• Apply basic numerical and statistical concepts;
• Apply tools and technologies appropriate for the communications professions in which they work.
Degree Requirements

Mass Communication, Master of Arts
The mass communication graduate program offers its students the option of pursuing either a professional project or a thesis track. In general, it is possible for full-time students taking nine hours a semester to complete the program in four regular semesters. Part-time students taking fewer than nine hours a semester will take longer to complete the program. A student can change degree tracks (professional project/thesis, change concentrations, or declare a concentration) by visiting with the Graduate Advisor. The Graduate Advisor will petition the Graduate College to update the degree plan.

Degree Requirements
All students are required to take the following core courses and maintain at least a “B” average.

Core Courses:
- MC5302 Research Methods in Mass Communication
- MC5303 Theories of Mass Communication
- MC5316 Digital Media Issues

Thesis Track:
The 33-hour thesis track requires students to take:
- Core – 9 hours
- MC Electives – 18 hours
- Thesis – 6 hours

Those with a concentration and writing a thesis would take:
- Core – 9 hours
- MC Electives – 9 hours
- Concentration courses – 9 hours
- Thesis – 6 hours

Professional Project Track
The 36-hour professional project track requires students to take:
- Core – 9 hours
- MC Electives – 24 hours
- Project – 3 hours

Those with a concentration and producing a professional project would take:
- Core – 9 hours
- MC Electives – 15 hours
- Concentration courses – 9 hours
- Project – 3 hours
Concentrations

Students may take courses from across the offerings and not declare a concentration. Students also have the option of declaring a concentration in the areas of Strategic Communication, Digital Media and Global Media.

Strategic Communication
Students in the Strategic Communication (advertising/public relations/media management) concentration will gain skills in the areas such as advertising and public relations, strategic communication campaigns and media management. Typically, these students are trained to function in a global market and seek positions such as strategic communication directors, managers in media organizations or public relations officers in companies.

Take at least one of the following courses:
(1) MC5308 – Seminar in Ad & PR Issues
(2) MC5322 – International Ad and PR Issues
(3) MC5326 – Strategic Communication Campaigns (Prerequisite~MC5308)

In addition, take at least one of the following courses:
(1) MC5314 – Strategies in Media Management
(2) MC5315 – Creative Problem Solving
(3) MC5324 – Media Writing
(4) MC5310 – International Communication
(5) MC5304T – Health Communication Campaigns
(6) MC5327 – Visual Communication
(7) MC5319 – Mass Media and Politics
(8) MC5329 – Media Systems in Latin America

Digital Media
Students taking the Digital Media concentration focus on acquiring online media skills. They learn how to apply digital media theories in strategically communicating via new media such as the Internet and mobile devices. Students have the opportunity to participate in the interactive segment of the SXSW conference and provide their own take on this award-winning web site: SXTXState.com.

Take the following course:
(1) MC5312 – Online Media Design

Take any two of the following courses:
(1) MC5317 – Advanced Online Media
(2) MC5324 – Media Writing
(3) MC5328 – Digital Video Production
(4) MC5304W – Web Content Management Systems
(5) MC5304Z – SXTXState Project
Global Media
Students in the Global Media concentration focus on gaining knowledge in the area of global media and communication that will enable them to effectively function in a complex global society. Whether students work in organizations right here in Central Texas or work outside the state/country they are in a global environment that requires communicating with audiences worldwide.

Take the following course:
(1) MC5310 – International Communication Issues

Take any two of the following courses:
(1) MC5329 – Media Systems in Latin America
(2) MC5322 – International Ad and PR Issues
(3) MC5301 – Mass Media and Society
(4) MC5330 – Internship in an international/multinational company in the US or in a company abroad (consent of Graduate Advisor needed)
(5) Study Abroad (consent of Graduate Advisor needed)
(6) One graduate-level, three-hour course with international content outside the department (consent of Graduate Advisor needed)

*Students may declare only one concentration.
* Students do not have to declare a concentration if they do not wish to.
* Some courses may also be offered at the Round Rock campus.
* Students must plan their program in consultation with the Graduate Advisor.

Project or Thesis

Professional Project Track
The 36-hour professional project track includes the core of nine hours, three hours of project and 24 hours of mass communication electives. If a student opts for a concentration, he or she will take nine (9) hours of core classes, nine (9) hours in the area of concentration, three (3) hours of project and 15 hours of mass communication electives.

Students also have the option of taking six (6) hours of electives from graduate courses outside the school with the consent of the Graduate Advisor. The electives may allow students to select courses in areas that support their special research or career-related needs and interests. The electives allow students to select courses in areas that support their special research or job-related needs and interests. The non-thesis option requires three more credit hours than the thesis option.

Thesis Track
The 33-hour thesis track includes the core of nine hours (9), six hours of thesis (6) and 18 hours of mass communication electives. If a student opts for a concentration, he or she will take nine (9) hours of core classes, nine (9) hours in the area of concentration, six (6) hours of thesis and nine (9) hours of mass communication electives.
Students also have the option of taking six (6) hours of electives from graduate courses outside
the school with the consent of the Graduate Advisor. The electives may allow students to select
courses in areas that support their special research or career-related needs and interests. The
electives allow students to select courses in areas that support their special research or job-related
needs and interests. The non-thesis option requires three more credit hours than the thesis option.

**Thesis or Project: Things to Think About**
An MA student’s graduate program culminates in the completion of a master’s thesis or project
and passing the oral Master’s Comprehensive Exam. A thesis or project require similar
workloads, concentration of study and time commitments. The choice of thesis or project should
depend primarily on what the student is interested in and what kinds of questions or problems
he/she wishes to consider.

**MA Thesis Goals:**
a. To develop and test theories, models, concepts and principles of communication for the
   purpose of answering questions.
b. To provide general descriptions, explanations and evaluations of communication phenomena
   within a subfield of study.
c. To bring the theoretical and methodological skills of the student to bear on the task of
   providing plausible answers to specific questions in the field of communication.

**MA Project Goals:**
a. To identify and apply theories, models, concepts and principles of communication for the
   purpose of solving problems.
b. To assess the extent to which theories, models, concepts and principles of communication may
   provide solutions to an existing situation.
c. By bringing the theoretical and methodological skills of the student to bear on the task of
   providing potential solutions to problems that exist within an agency, group or organization.

**Project/Thesis Committees**
A faculty committee will advise, guide and mentor a graduate student through his
or her thesis/professional project. The student can select his or her committee members. It is
sometimes necessary to change the composition of a committee because of faculty leaves or a
major shift in the direction of the thesis/project; however, changes should be made with great
care and with the full advice and consent of the thesis/project chair. Thesis committees can be
changed after the thesis proposal has been approved by filling out the paperwork available on the
Graduate College website. If the Graduate Advisor is serving as thesis/project chair and the
student wishes to switch to another chair, this can be done by visiting with the School’s director
and filling out the Graduate College form. There is no required paperwork to change the
committee for those on the professional project track.
When selecting committee members, a student should:
• Select faculty who can assist in developing the thesis/professional project. Faculty expertise in a research area or professional subject will benefit the student.

• Select faculty who get along with each other. Students should not be subjected to faculty infighting.

• Select faculty with whom the student knows and respects. Class is where students can learn about faculty work expectations and cooperation.

• Select a project/thesis chair who is engaged and interested in the student’s work.

• Consider faculty with different expertise. For a thesis, for instance, consider a theory expert, a methods expert and perhaps a data expert.

• Ask about availability. Will faculty members be available? A student needs to know beforehand.

• Choose wisely. Students should vet faculty before asking them to serve on the committee.

The committee chair will address conflicts among students and faculty committee members. The chair is the liaison between the student and the committee and is expected to guide the student to a successful comprehensive oral exam of the project/thesis.

A thesis/project committee consisting of three members will assist each MA student. All three can be SJMC faculty or, if desired, one member can be outside of SJMC if he or she provides expertise and experience regarding the student’s project or thesis topic. The outside member must be approved by the Graduate Advisor and the outside member’s home department chair prior to him/her serving on the committee. A SJMC faculty member serves as the chair of the committee. The advisor and committee should be selected by the end of the first year in the program. The committee helps students determine if the thesis or project is appropriate and helps them design and carry out the work.

Please refer to the Thesis/Project Guidelines in Appendix A/Appendix B.

Graduate College Thesis Research Support Fellowship
http://www.gradcollege.txstate.edu/funding/scholarships.html
The Graduate College provides Thesis Research Support Fellowships to support graduate student research at the master’s level. Each award of up to $2,000 is to be used to cover expenses directly related to conducting thesis research. There are two rounds of funding applications each year. The thesis proposal has to be approved prior to the fellowship deadline.
Assistantships

There are two types of assistantships available: Graduate Instructional Assistantships and Graduate Teaching Assistantships. Students who have been accepted to the SJMC MA program should complete the paperwork as soon as possible if they are eligible to apply. Students who are admitted with conditions may not apply until the conditions of their admission have been satisfied. To be eligible for assistantships, students must have regular admission status, be enrolled in at least nine graduate credit hours and have a 3.0 GPA. All International students must be in possession of the appropriate lawful visas such as an F-1 or a J-1 in order to participate in graduate assistantships.

Assistantship positions may be open both for the fall and spring semesters. Assistantships are renewable generally for a total of four long semesters; if students are favorably reviewed by their faculty supervisors at the end of each semester. Instructional assistants are expected to behave professionally by meeting all deadlines and attending to all duties as they would in a professional setting. All assignments and reappointments are made by the Graduate Assistant Coordinator in consultation with the School's Director. Student assistants are evaluated every semester.

More information regarding graduate assistantships can be found at:
http://www.masscomm.txstate.edu/degrees-programs/graduate/assistantship.html
http://www.gradcollege.txstate.edu/funding/assistantships.html

Graduate Instructional Assistantships
Graduate instructional assistantships with competitive stipends and waiver of out-of-state tuition are available to qualified applicants. Assistantship responsibilities include assisting with lab sections of the undergraduate courses “Fundamentals of Digital and Online Media” and “Writing for the Mass Media,” and assisting faculty with their classes. Most assistantships are assigned in spring for the fall semester, but assistantships may be available for students who wish to begin the graduate program in the spring. A few assistantships may also be available during summer terms.

To be appointed to a graduate assistantship, students must apply to the Graduate Assistant Coordinator, School of Journalism and Mass Communication. Preference is given to students with experience in mass communication and to those with high grades and test scores. Students must be employed for at least 20 hours per week to receive the out-of-state tuition waiver.

Graduate Teaching Assistantships
Students with 18 hours of graduate work may be appointed as teaching assistants with responsibility as teacher of record.

Salaries and Benefits
Salaries and benefits information is available at:
http://www.hr.txstate.edu/univpayplan/student.html.
Research and Other Support

The School of Journalism and Mass Communication is also committed to supporting graduate student research activities and involvement in professional organizations. Limited travel funds may be awarded to students who present papers at or attend conferences. Travel funds are also available from the Graduate College for making presentations or presenting papers at professional meetings.

Academic Honesty

The School of Journalism and Mass Communication commits itself to the preparation of ethical mass media professionals and scholars. Such a mission demands the highest standard of academic honesty and integrity. Violations of academic honesty, including but not limited to plagiarism, unauthorized collaboration, collusion, deception, conflict of interest and theft, are not tolerated and can lead to severe penalties. Disciplinary actions for violations of the standards for academic honesty are outlined in the Texas State Academic Honesty Statement. Policies and procedures pertaining to the Texas State University are available at the following website: http://www.txstate.edu/effective/upps/upps-07-10-01.html

Please review the information provided on the following website of the Writing Center: http://www.writingcenter.txstate.edu/Student/Plagiarism.html

The Honor Code – http://www.txstate.edu/honorcodecouncil/Academic-Integrity.html


Leave of Absence Policy

Continuous Enrollment Expectations and Requirements*
Once a student has been admitted to and begun his/her graduate program, he/she is expected to enroll each long semester (fall and spring term; summer is optional) in order to make progress toward degree. However, one may need to interrupt progress toward degree by not enrolling, or "stopping out," for a short period of time due to personal or family exigency.

While there is an expectation of enrollment each semester in order to make progress toward degree, there is no specific continuous enrollment requirement. For that reason, The Graduate College does not require notification if one decides not to enroll in a given semester. However, a student should inform the Graduate Advisor he/she is stopping out for a period of time. Complete the Leave of Absence Form for Master’s Degree, Specialist Degree, and Pre-Candidacy
Doctoral Degree Students form and provide it to the Graduate Advisor. The program should then provide the form to The Graduate College to expedite readmission.

If it has been less than a year since last enrollment, the update application form may be used to update records rather than a new application and fee through ApplyTexas. If one does not enroll within a one-year period after initial enrollment, he/she will be required to submit a new application and application fee.

*Adopted from the Graduate College Handbook.

Graduate Faculty

**Baldwin, Patricia,** Lecturer. B.J., M.S., The University of Texas at Austin; Ph.D., University of North Texas. (p_b58@txstate.edu)

**Carter, Daniel,** Assistant Professor. B.A., University of Texas at Austin; M.A., The Ohio State University; Ph.D., The University of Texas at Austin. (dwx59@txstate.edu)

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**Devlin, Michael,** Assistant Professor. B.A., Texas Tech University; M.A., Texas Tech University; Ph.D., University of Alabama. (mdevlin@txstate.edu).

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**England, M. Timothy,** Associate Professor. B.A., Western Kentucky University; M.A., Indiana University; Ph.D., University of Tennessee. (england@txstate.edu)

**Fox, Kymberly,** Associate Professor of Practice. B.S., Arizona State University; M.A., University of Incarnate Word. (kfox@txstate.edu).

**Fluker, Laurie H,** Associate Professor and Associate Dean of the College of Fine Arts and Communications. B.A., Wiley College; M.F.A., Southern Methodist University; Ph.D., The University of Texas at Austin.

**Grimes, Tom,** Professor. B.A., University of Arkansas; M.S., Columbia University; Ph.D., Indiana University at Bloomington. (grimes@tstate.edu)

**Haigh, Michel M.,** Professor. B.S., South Dakota State University; B.S. South Dakota State University; M.S. Texas Tech University; Ph.D., University of Oklahoma. (mmh204@txstate.edu).

**Higgins Joyce, Vanessa D.,** Assistant Professor. B.S., Pontifícia Universidade Católica; M.A., Ph.D, The University of Texas at Austin. (vhjoyceel@txstate.edu)
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Nolan, David, Associate Professor of Practice. B.A.A.S, Southwest Texas State University; M.A., Texas State University; Ph.D., Texas State University. (dnolan@txstate.edu)

Oskam, Judith B., Professor and Director. B.A., The University of North Texas; M.S., Ed.D., Oklahoma State University. (oskam@txstate.edu)

Peirce-Burleson, Kate, Professor. B.A., M.S., Florida State University; Ph.D., The University of Texas at Austin. (kp02@txstate.edu)

Rao, Sandhya, Professor. B.A., Mount Carmel College, (Bangalore, India), B.S., M.S., Bangalore University (India); Ph.D., Bowling Green State University. (sr02@txstate.edu)

Royal, Cindy L., Professor. B.S., University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill; M.B.A., University of Richmond; Ph.D., The University of Texas at Austin.

Weill, Susan M., Associate Professor. B.A., Millsaps College; M.S., Jackson State University; Ph.D., University of Southern Mississippi. (sw27@txstate.edu)
Courses Offered

***Some of these courses listed may not be offered during your time in the program due to course rotation and student interest.

Required of, and open only to, graduate teaching and instructional assistants as a condition of employment. This course provides training and planned periodic evaluations of instructional responsibilities. This course does not earn graduate degree credit.

MC 5199B. Thesis.
This course represents a student’s continuing thesis enrollment. The student continues to enroll in this course until the thesis is submitted for binding. Prerequisite: MC 5399A and completed course work.

MC 5255. Teaching Techniques in Mass Communication.
Required of, and open only to, graduate teaching and instructional assistants as a condition of employment. This course provides training and planned periodic evaluations of instructional responsibilities. This course does not earn graduate degree credit.

MC 5299B. Thesis.
This course represents a student’s continuing thesis enrollment. The student continues to enroll in this course until the thesis is submitted for binding. Prerequisite: MC 5399A and completed course work.

MC 5301. Mass Media and Society.
A seminar devoted to analysis and discussion of significant contemporary issues in mass communication, including a study of the history of the development of mass communication media.

Investigation of the tools and techniques of both qualitative and quantitative research methods used in the study of mass communication, including surveys, content analysis, experimental designs and case studies.

MC 5303. Theories of Mass Communication.
Examination of the literature of mass communication theory and discussion of theoretical approaches and models.

MC 5304T. Health Communication Campaigns.
Provides an overview of the theory and practice of designing, producing and evaluating health-communication campaigns. Examines persuasive approaches to behavioral change as well as audience, message and channel factors in health-campaign development. Emphasizes communication approaches, including mass media, social networking and new media.
MC 5304W. **Web Content Management Systems.**
Web Content Management Systems. (0-3) Students in this class will develop advanced Web building skills. Specifically, students will be introduced to various Web Content Management Systems and taught how to use these applications to manage content and build Web sites efficiently. Prerequisite or corequisite: MC 5312 with a grade of "D" or better or consent of instructor.

MC 5304Y. **Feature Writing.**
This course provides an in-depth understanding of the technical expertise, research methods, interviewing skills and narrative techniques pertinent to feature writing. The course also explores how to target a feature story to a specific audience and how to submit feature stories for publication to newspapers and magazines, print and online.

MC 5306B. **The Psychology of Social Media.**
This course reviews social cognitive theories and research about the way social media users both produce and consume social media messages. It will examine clinical psychological and psychiatric effects that take place among social media users who do not have a clinical diagnosis.

MC 5306F. **Content Analysis.**
Content analysis is a systematic way to analyze the content of documented communications, whether they are written, audio/visual or digital. This course will examine the methodological steps involved in conducting a quantitative content analysis, design and execute a content analysis study.

MC 5306G. **Crisis Communication Theory and Tactics for the field of Strategic Communication.**
The purpose of this course is to examine strategic communication practices throughout the three stages of a crisis event. Special emphasis is placed on crisis planning, media relationships, image restoration, ethical responses, and organizational learning. Corequisites: MC 5302 or MC 5303.

MC 5306H. **Foundations for Mass Communication Graduate Studies.**
This course will familiarize students with the structure of the mass communication discipline, prominent theorists and historical developments, as well as expose them to the process of research and writing in the discipline of mass communication. Corequisites: MC 5302 or MC 5303.

MC 5306I. **Collecting, Analyzing and Presenting Data.**
This course will introduce students to skills for working with data as well as perspectives from which to think critically about the use of data in contemporary society. It will focus on three stages of working with data: collection, analysis and presentation. Corequisite: MC 5302 and MC 5303.

MC 5306L. **Refugees, Nonprofit Organizations and Strategic Communication.**
This course analyzes strategic communication of nonprofit organizations serving refugees and asylum seekers. Students are introduced to organizations that serve these marginalized populations in Texas and to the problems, challenges and opportunities these organizations face.
Students will conduct research and produce a project on an issue related to this topic. Corequisite: MC 5302 and MC 5303.

MC 5306M. Social Media Strategies, Campaigns and Analytics.
This course will expose students to the principles and strategies behind social media campaigns. It will discuss the interactions, channels, SEO, and social media metrics used to gauge the success of a social media campaign. Students will also examine successful social media case studies. Corequisite: MC 5302 or MC 5303.

MC 5307. Project.
A major communication effort, the purpose of which is to demonstrate command of the skills necessary to work at advanced levels in mass communication. For example, it may be broadcast documentary, advertising or public relations campaign, or a newspaper series. Prerequisite: Consent of graduate advisor. [Paperwork on the SJMC MA website required]

MC 5308. Seminar in Advertising and Public Relations.
This course analyzes advertising and public relations issues using an integrated communication framework. Students are introduced to the advertising and public relations decision-making process, learn what problems real organizations experience and evaluate how they resolve issues in such areas as client-agency relationships, strategic planning/management, globalization, channel integration, cyber marketing, evaluation, etc.

MC 5309. Gender, Race, and Class and the Media.
This course takes a theoretical approach to the study of representations of gender, race, and class in the mass media and the lives of the media professionals who belong to marginalized groups. A historical overview will be followed by an in-depth look at current conditions. (MULT).

This course examines the media systems worldwide in different socioeconomic contexts and studies the patterns of international information flow. The course includes theories governing international communication. Students learn how and why communication takes place between different nations and the impact of this communication on individual nations. (MULT).

MC 5311. Independent Study.
Study of a special interest that offers academic or professional improvement and growth in the field of Mass Communication. May be repeated once with different emphasis for additional credit. [Paperwork on the SJMC MA website required]

MC 5312. Online Media Design.
This course will instruct students in Web development and design and address the appropriate usage of text, graphics, sound and video on mass communication sites. The class will also address social and theoretical implications of technology, such as the digital divide, cyberlaw, e-commerce, and Web credibility and accessibility.
MC 5313. Media Law.
Study of laws and regulations as they pertain to media operations and the internal and external codes that guide media behavior.

MC 5314. Strategies in Media Management.
This course offers an analysis and discussion of issues involved in digital and other media ownership and operation, including monopoly and competition, labor relations, human resource management and staffing, the politics of workplace supervision and market relations.

This class examines the psychology of creativity and its application in mass communication to media management, broadcasting, advertising, and public relations. Students learn a variety of ideation techniques and structured creative problem-solving methods to better understand their own creative thinking process, and how to facilitate creative thinking in groups.

MC 5316. Digital Media Issues.
This course will examine the role of digital media, including the Internet, Web and mobile technologies. Issues discussed will include social media and cyberculture research, technology diffusion, data journalism and the effects of digital technologies on society and culture.

MC 5317. Advanced Online Media.
Students will gain advanced skills in multimedia layout and design. Techniques include audio/video editing, Flash development, and database management as practiced in the communication disciplines. Theoretical and practical considerations of emerging technologies to the media industry will be integrated with production techniques. Prerequisite: MC 5312 with a grade of "B" or better or consent of instructor.

MC 5318. Media Ethics.
The study of freedom and responsibilities of mass media practitioners and institutions, explored within the framework of ethical theories. Students will learn philosophical constructs as well as contemporary ethicists. Consideration of values, codes of ethics, moral development, professionalism, and institutional constraints as applied to media of information, persuasion, and entertainment.

MC 5319. Mass Media and Politics.
The class will review key literature in the area of mass media and politics and engage in original research related to mass media and statewide, congressional and/or presidential elections. Class focus may vary by professor, e.g. Latinos in the United States.

MC 5321. Latinos and Media.
An immersion into the study of Latinos, their representations in media, and media oriented to Latinos. The course will require students to engage in in-depth research about Latinos and media issues.
This course examines multinational advertising and public relations organizations and how they
function in a global marketplace. Students learn how these organizations serve specific client
needs in increasingly complex societies and cultures.

This course examines current theoretical and professional issues in mass communication. This
course may be repeated once with a different emphasis for credit.

MC 5324. Media Writing.
This course is designed to impart media writing skills. Students will learn information gathering
and interviewing skills, and narrative techniques pertinent to different mass media. Emphasis
may vary. This course may be repeated with different emphasis.

MC 5326. Strategic Communication Campaigns.
A comprehensive study of strategic communication campaign planning with emphasis on public
relations and advertising. Students will combine theory and practice to develop, coordinate and
evaluate advertising/public relations campaigns for key audiences. Prerequisite: MC 5308 with a
grade of "C" or better or consent of instructor.

This course examines the principles, theories, and language of visual communication,
emphasizing the evaluation and use of images in digital mass media. Students will learn about
media influences on their perceptions of reality and their behavior, the elements of visual
literacy, and multicultural and global perspectives in visual media.

MC 5328. Digital Video Production.
This course involves discussion, development and analysis of documentary video and digital
media. Students will explore digital media techniques used in writing and producing features,
documentaries, and related programming. It is designed for the novice student with emphasis on
pre- and post-production activities from research to final project.

MC 5329. Media Systems in Latin America.
Students will analyze media systems Latin America within their historical, cultural and political
contexts. The course provides a comparative perspective of the role of the media within the
region, their national markets and international Latino market. Students will ground these
investigations with theories of international communication and information flow.

MC 5330. Internship in Mass Communication.
Students acquire on-the-job experience in an off-campus media setting where they can apply the
skills and knowledge acquired through mass communication graduate course work. Requires 180
hours of work off-campus, a written report, and portfolio of work product. Prerequisite: Consent
of the graduate advisor and internship coordinator. [Paperwork on the SJMC MA website
required]
MC 5332. SXTXState Project.
This course involves attendance at and coverage of the South By Southwest Interactive Conference. Students will prepare for the event, attend panels, interview participants and produce digital content about the experience.

MC 5333. Digital Media Entrepreneurship.
This course explores innovation and creativity associated with digital entrepreneurship. Through instruction and a speaker series, students will be introduced to important concepts and ideas from thought leaders and innovators at the intersection of media and technology. Students will research and develop their own digital media products.

MC 5335. Code Camp I.
Students are immersed in programming concepts relevant to communicators. Students will practice document object model manipulation using appropriate software to create interactive Web projects. Prerequisite: MC 5312; A minimum grade of "B" is required in all prerequisites. Corequisite: MC 5336; A minimum grade of "B" is required in all prerequisites.

MC 5336. Code Camp II.
Students are immersed in data and visualization concepts relevant to communicators. Students will create interactive data visualization projects. Prerequisite: MC5312; A minimum grade of "B" is required in all prerequisites. Corequisite: MC 5335.

MC 5399A. Thesis.
A scholarly study of communication behavior, the purpose of which is to broaden understanding of what mass media do, how they do it, and with what effects. It may be quantitative, historical or rely upon another appropriate methodology. No thesis credit is awarded until student has completed the thesis in MC 5399B. Prerequisite: Completed course work. [Paperwork on the SJMC MA website required]

MC 5399B. Thesis.
This course represents a student’s continuing thesis enrollment. The student continues to enroll in this course until the thesis is submitted for binding. Prerequisite: MC 5399A and completed course work. [Paperwork on the SJMC MA website required]

MC 5599B. Thesis.
This course represents a student’s continuing thesis enrollment. The student continues to enroll in this course until the thesis is submitted for binding. Prerequisite: MC 5399A and completed course work.

MC 5999B. Thesis.
This course represents a student’s continuing thesis enrollment. The student continues to enroll in this course until the thesis is submitted for binding. Prerequisite: MC 5399A and completed course work.
Courses Requiring SJMC Paperwork

There are a few courses that require paperwork before students can enroll. The paperwork is a contract between the student and the supervising professor. The Graduate Advisor sets deadlines for this paperwork to be processed for students to enroll in the following semester. Courses that require special internal paperwork are: Thesis A, Thesis B, Independent Study, Project and Internship courses. The paperwork can be downloaded from the SJMC MA website. The Graduate Advisor will set the deadlines and inform the graduate students via the News & Notes emails. See the sample paperwork in Appendix C.
Appendix A: SJMC Thesis Guidelines

Thesis Guidelines for the School of Journalism and Mass Communication

A thesis consists of original research that contributes to the body of knowledge in mass communication. It is a scholarly study of communication behavior, the purpose of which is to broaden understanding of what mass media communicators do through what media channels, how they do it and with what effects. It may be quantitative (experimental design, content analysis, survey data) or it may be qualitative (interviews or focus groups).

Students are expected to demonstrate a commitment toward pursuit of the thesis, which will take at least two long semesters. Students interested in the thesis option are encouraged to develop their research ideas in the various classes. Students must have a clearly articulated research question. This option is recommended for those who may continue their education beyond the master’s degree.

In order to be approved to take the thesis option, students, in consultation with the Graduate Advisor, should identify a member of the mass communication graduate faculty with expertise in the research area who is willing to direct the thesis.

**Enrollment in Thesis.** Students must enroll for a minimum of two semesters of thesis credit, MC 5399A (Thesis A) and MC 5399B (Thesis B). Thesis credit is typically taken during the last two semesters before a student graduates. For example, a student graduating in the spring semester would take MC 5399A in the fall and MC 5399B in the spring semester. If the thesis is not complete after completion of MC 5399B, students must continue to register for this course (MC 5399B) each term. However, the maximum thesis credits they will earn is six (6) credits. The Graduate College expects the student to be enrolled in the correct number of hours. For example, if the student is not going to complete 120 hours of work (3 credits), the student should enroll in fewer credits.

**Enrollment in Thesis During Summer Session:** Students may not enroll in Thesis A or Thesis B credits during the summer. However, students who defended their thesis during the spring semester that did not get their changes made by the Graduate College deadline will be allowed/required to enroll in one (1) credit of thesis until it is completed and approved by the Graduate College.

**Thesis Chair and Thesis Committee.** The thesis committee will consist of three members of the Texas State graduate faculty. Students will consult with their thesis chair to select the other members of the committee. At least two members of the thesis committee must be members of the School of Journalism and Mass Communication. One member may be a graduate faculty from another department if that faculty’s expertise directly contributes toward the student’s research. The Graduate Advisor and the outside-faculty member’s department chair must approve the outside committee member. The thesis advisor and thesis committee should be selected prior to enrolling in Thesis A credits. [See Committee Section of the SJMC Handbook]
**Role of Thesis Chair:** The thesis chair will be responsible for working with the student one-on-one to develop a complete thesis proposal. This means the thesis chair should be willing to read multiple drafts of the thesis and return them in a timely manner. The thesis chair should share a common theory/method background as the student. The thesis chair will make sure to work with the student to identify other committee members. The thesis chair will email committee members to set up the thesis proposal defense, send out the final thesis proposal document, the final thesis document and prepare all the paperwork needed for the proposal and defense meetings (the student should not do this). The thesis chair will meet the internal thesis guidelines set by the SJMC Graduate Advisor at the start of each semester.

**Role of Committee Members:** The committee should be made up of a “theory” expert or a “method expert” to help guide the student’s research. The committee members may share expertise with the thesis chair, but the committee should complement each other. The committee members should provide feedback and answer questions prior to the thesis proposal meeting. The thesis chair may ask the student to meet with the committee members for advice/feedback while the proposal is being developed. The thesis committee members will be provided feedback on the final thesis proposal as well as the final thesis.

**Thesis Process and Proposal Meeting.** The student will complete multiple drafts of the introductory chapters of the thesis. The student will work on writing an introductory chapter that introduces the problem and the purpose statement. They will then provide a detailed literature review discussing the theory being applied. Students will work with their thesis chair to determine if a separate chapter is needed to posit the hypotheses and research questions, or if the arguments are easily made in a new section at the end of the literature review. The student will then write the methodology chapter. This chapter should be specific as possible about the participants and procedures.

Once the thesis chair is satisfied with the content of the thesis proposal (roughly 20-30 pages), the chair will set up a thesis proposal meeting with the other members of the thesis committee.

The students will provide committee members the complete thesis prospectus no less than two weeks prior to the thesis proposal meeting. At least two of the three members must be present at the thesis proposal meeting. The other member can participate remotely. *The student should make sure to take the Thesis Proposal Form to the thesis proposal meeting (available on the Graduate College Website).* The student and the thesis chair will need to make sure the Thesis Proposal Form is returned to the Graduate College immediately following the meeting. Thesis A credits are earned for the prospectus work. Students cannot enroll in Thesis B credits until the Graduate College has processed and approved the Thesis Proposal Form. The thesis proposal has to be approved by the Dean/Associate Dean of the Graduate College.

**Completion of the thesis.** Once the thesis proposal has been approved and the Thesis Proposal Form sent to the Graduate School, the student will work on carrying out the thesis work (collecting quantitative or qualitative data and writing the results and discussion chapters). The student is enrolled in Thesis B credits when completing this work. The thesis chair will once again read multiple drafts of the student’s work. Once the quality of the material meets expectations, the thesis chair will schedule the thesis oral defense and send the thesis to the other
committee members. The thesis chair and the student should allow committee members at least two weeks to read the thesis. For the final thesis defense, only one committee member can participate remotely. The other two faculty members should be physically present at the defense.

The student and thesis chair will need to make sure the oral defense of the thesis and thesis are sent to the Graduate College by the Graduate College deadline. **The student and faculty advisor will make sure the Thesis Submission Form (available on the Graduate College Website) is signed by the needed parties at the thesis defense and sent to the Graduate College by the deadline. Committee members may ask the student to make additional changes to the thesis. They may defer to the chair to sign off on the thesis changes, or they may ask to see the thesis again.**

**Master’s Thesis Format.** A master’s thesis is original research, which contributes to knowledge in the field of communication. In general, a master’s thesis is between 40 to 80 pages in length.

**Style:** Use APA style ([http://guides.library.txstate.edu/writing-citation-style-guide/apa](http://guides.library.txstate.edu/writing-citation-style-guide/apa)) throughout the thesis.

**Format:** The final thesis is **regimentally** formatted by the University. Please consult with the [Graduate College guide](http://gradcollege.txstate.edu/guidelines/thesis) on preparing, formatting and submitting a thesis for precise, required details on the front matter, appendices and references page. **The thesis proposal will not be approved by the Graduate Advisor unless the proposal adheres to the Graduate College thesis format.**

Following is a suggested guideline:

**Chapter I: Introduction**
- Title and Introduction (title can evolve and change)
- Introduce the topic and the problem and provide a context.
  - Why is it important? What are the broad research questions? Provide relevant support (may include cites from industry/trade or news sources and not just academic sources).
  - State the significance of the thesis project and its purpose.
- It should refine, revise or extend existing knowledge.
- It should also include purpose statement clearly articulating goal of the thesis
- Provide support for the importance of this project and unique addition to the field
- Reference theory and how it is going to be used.

**Chapter II: Theoretical Background and Literature Review**
Theoretical background should include information about the appropriate theory that will provide the framework for your study.
- The literature review should include seminal and relevant past research on the theory; focus on what the researchers found.
- Theoretical rationale for study based on previous research
- Integrate evolution of the theory being used (origin to current day)
- Weave previous research together to support the arguments, should not read as an annotated bib.
• Incorporate findings from previous research to support the arguments and help direct the creation of directional hypotheses and research questions.
• Use subheads to create a clear flow.

Chapter III: Methodology
What research methodology will be used to research the topic and to collect data? Describe the design (i.e. experiment, survey, content analysis, focus groups). Provide details of all the steps of the research. For example, describe the sample (i.e. five local newspapers, 300 college students); describe when, where and how the research will be conducted.
• IRB application started but will not be turned in until after the proposal meeting.
• Explanation of why method is appropriate
• Description of sample (who is the sample and why; sample size (quantitative or qualitative); recruitment procedure; funding if applicable);
• Identification of all variables (IV and DV) and justification for these scales (list all questions and where they came from – never develop measurement questions – use established scale measures)
• List types of interview questions used for interviews/focus groups
• Proposed data analysis for each research question and hypothesis (will remove for final thesis)

This section should be as complete as possible so the committee knows exactly what will be done for the study.

****Chapters 1-3 will be needed for the proposal meeting.

Chapter IV: Results
This section usually starts by restating the purpose of the study. Then each hypothesis or research question will be addressed in order, in its own paragraph. State the statistical test used to test/answer the hypothesis or research question. Report the findings and move on to the next hypothesis or research question. Include statistical analysis and supporting tables or illustrations (in APA format) if appropriate. Findings need to be clearly stated for each research questions and/or hypotheses.

Chapter V: Discussion and Conclusion
Presentation and analysis of results: This is the “how and why” section.
• Provide a brief introduction to this section and briefly revisit findings.
• Expound on how the results relate to the literature review: Were the results similar to those found in past research or were they different? Did the work build on a theory, a model, a research method? Explain the results – good and bad?
• Discuss implications of your findings, for your population and beyond. What is the impact of the research on the field and on the industry? (For example, can results be used in the industry to improve strategic communication?)
• Note the limitations of the research (e.g., did enough people participate? Would a change in method help?)
• Make recommendations for future research.
Appendices
Include any “instruments” involved in the research, including surveys, experimental interventions, focus group or interview questionnaires, content-analysis codebooks, etc.

References
Include sources and material cited (APA Style)

The Thesis Checklist

✔ Meet with mass communication Graduate Advisor to seek approval to pursue this option. Obtain a copy of the Graduate Thesis Handbook from the Graduate College website.

✔ Preferably one semester before registering for MC 5399A, with the assistance of the Graduate Advisor, identify a member of the mass communication graduate faculty with expertise in the research area who is willing to direct the thesis and be the supervisor.

✔ Consult with the thesis supervisor to select the other two graduate faculty members of the committee.

✔ Develop a thesis proposal along with a timeline with the help of the thesis chair.

✔ Complete the SJMC Thesis A paperwork to register for MC 5399A.

✔ Work with thesis chair by sending multiple drafts of thesis proposal before it goes to committee. Complete the thesis proposal. Send to committee two weeks before meeting. The thesis chair should send the proposal and schedule the proposal meeting on behalf of the student.

✔ At the thesis proposal meeting, complete the Graduate College thesis proposal form. The proposal meeting is a formal meeting. The student should give a 5 to 10-minute presentation about the project and then take questions from the thesis committee. The student should prepare a PowerPoint or visual aid for the presentation.

✔ Submit the proposal paperwork along with the completed forms signed by appropriate faculty to the Graduate College.

✔ Complete the SJMC Thesis B paperwork.

✔ Gather and analyze the data and compile the results.

✔ Work with thesis chair on multiple drafts of the final thesis. The chair will work with members of the committee to set the oral defense and send a final copy of the thesis document two weeks prior to the defense.

✔ After successfully completing the oral defense, get signatures of the thesis committee members on the Thesis Committee Approval form and the Comprehensive Examination
Report form. Submit the forms to The Graduate College.

✓ The student will make any final changes requested by the thesis committee before submitting the final version of the thesis to the Graduate College.

✓ Meet all requirements for format and style as published in the Graduate College Guide to Preparing and Submitting a Thesis or Dissertation.
Appendix B: Project Guidelines

Project Guidelines for the School of Journalism and Mass Communication

A project must be a substantial and original body of work on a significant topic that demonstrates a student’s competence as a mass communication graduate student. Key skills include gathering, synthesizing, analyzing and presenting information to an audience in an ethical manner. Work may be produced in any mass communication medium or combination of media: print, still photography, video, audio, documentary film, online or multimedia. If the student has declared a concentration, the project should focus on applying the material learned in the concentration courses.

A project involves the completion of a professional creative product. Applied research to address practical questions (i.e. how to carry out a digital advertising campaign) may be involved. A project contributes to the professions via applied research and/or creative accomplishment. The project is the culmination of a student’s studies here and should reflect what he/she has learned in the program. A project is much more than a class assignment and requires as much research as a thesis. A project may take many forms, though all projects must be noteworthy for substance and professional quality. A written proposal is also required for a project and must be approved by the committee before beginning the final project.

Projects completed by students have included: documentary films and videos, photo essays, feature or investigative article series, handbooks for professionals (e.g., the result of synthesizing and translating scholarly research) or advanced digital projects.

While projects do not always constitute original research, they nonetheless require research — i.e., research that contributes to content substance and delineates the project’s unique contribution to the professions. This research, as well as the project work itself, certainly involves methodologies — e.g., of interviewing, of library research, of examining similar projects and of carrying out the project. Therefore, each project must be accompanied by a written report that describes or documents the research involved, the methodological procedures used and lessons learned in the process.

Preparation for Project/Enrollment in Project. During the fall or spring semester prior to a student’s last semester of enrollment, a student should work with a project chair to develop the project and create the project proposal. The student will not enroll in MC 5307 until his/her last semester, but the project proposal work should be conducted the semester before.

Enrollment in Project During Summer Session: Students may not enroll in MC 5307 during the summer. However, a student may work on project proposal if the project chair has agreed to mentor the student during the summer months. No official committee meetings will take place during the summer session.

Project Chair and Project Committee. The project committee will consist of three members of the Texas State graduate faculty. Students will consult with their project chair to select the other members of the committee. The project chair should be a faculty member teaching in the
concentration area if the student has a concentration. At least two members of the project committee must be members of the School of Journalism and Mass Communication. One member may be a graduate faculty from another department if that faculty’s expertise directly contributes toward the student’s research. The Graduate Advisor and the outside-faculty member’s department chair must approve the outside committee member. The project advisor and committee should be selected prior to completing the project proposal. [See Committee Section of the SJMC Handbook]

**Role of Project Chair:** The project chair will be responsible for working with the student one-on-one to develop the project proposal and oversee the final project. This means the project chair should be willing to read multiple drafts of the proposal as well as visit and mentor a student through project ideas. The project chair will make sure to work with the student to identify other committee members. The project chair will email committee members to set up the project proposal meeting, update the committee on the project’s progression, set the meeting time for the final project comprehensive exam and prepare all the paperwork needed for the proposal and defense meetings (the student should not do this). The project chair will meet the internal project guidelines set by the SJMC Graduate Advisor at the start of each semester.

**Role of Committee Members:** The committee members may share expertise with the project chair, but the committee members should complement each other. The committee members should provide feedback and answer questions prior to the project proposal meeting. The project chair may ask the student to meet with the committee members for advice/feedback while the proposal is being developed as well as the final project.

**Beginning A Project.** The topic is a student’s choice. Students may develop ideas through courses, conversations with faculty, their own interests, etc. Talk with faculty and other students to determine whether the idea is feasible. Students should have a working idea by the start of the term preceding the term a student enrolls in project. Students will work with their project chair to write their proposal.

**The Project Proposal.** Before beginning the project, a detailed, written proposal must be submitted, defended, and approved by the project committee. The proposal should specify the objective(s) one will address and how the research requirements will be met. The proposal will be shared with the committee members at least two weeks prior to the proposal meeting. The project chair will distribute copies of the proposal to the other members of the committee and set a meeting time to discuss the proposal. At this meeting, the internal SJMC proposal agreement will be completed. For the proposal meeting, only one committee member can participate remotely. The other two faculty members should be physically present at the proposal meeting. If a student’s project includes human subjects, he/she will obtain IRB approval after the proposal meeting has been held.

**Project Proposal Guidelines.** Generally, students will include what they want to study or the problem to be addressed, how to approach it and why it should be studied. A hypothesis may be stated and/or goals, review relevant literature and contextual information, explain methodologies or procedures to be followed and describe what the final product will look like. Proposals vary in length and will contribute to the content of the finished project.
Project Proposal Structure
The organization of a project proposal typically parallels that of a thesis proposal, including the following:

I. Introduction. This is where problems or issues in the professional field are discussed and the rationale for the project is established. Apply the theories and concepts learned in core graduate classes to a professional problem, issue or challenge. The introduction should clearly state the professional objectives of the project. A page or two should be sufficient.

II. Approach. Describe and explain the approach and timeline for completion. This should include at least the following elements:

- A detailed description of the work to be done for the project, including location where the project will be carried out. The area of specialty or emphasis for the project.
- The specific beginning and ending dates of the project.
- An explanation of the timeline/work schedule of the project. Plan to devote the equivalent of one semester of full-time academic work to complete the project.
- How the project could be published, disseminated or delivered to its intended audience. Publication is not a requirement but is a desired outcome.
- Identify the potential client, organization or established media outlet that would consider publishing, distributing or broadcasting the work.
- Specify the material that will be included in the final project report that demonstrates physical evidence that the project was completed (e.g., websites, published or unpublished articles, videos, handbooks, etc.).

III. Methodology or Procedures. Describe the procedural decisions and plans that will enable one to carry out the project. Obviously, different types of projects will require very different kinds of procedures. A student doing applied research (e.g., for an advertising or public relations campaign) may use essentially the same methods as a student carrying out a social scientific thesis. Creative projects will involve completely different types of procedures and methodologies depending on the project. The methodological decisions involved in planning and writing a work of literary nonfiction, for instance, will be very different than for making a video documentary. This section of the proposal should include the following:

- Clear statement of the subject (which institution, individual or issue will be the topic?) and what questions the project intends to explore or answer.
- How these questions are relevant to the project and will contribute to the professional field.
- Procedural decisions and plans to carry out the project.
- A statement of how the project will be formally assessed. This could be a professional in the discipline, a client, a professional organization, etc. This will be in addition to the assessment of the project committee.

IV. Description of the Completed Project. Describe what the completed project will look like.
Format for proposal: Use APA style ([http://guides.library.txstate.edu/writing-citation-style-guide/apa](http://guides.library.txstate.edu/writing-citation-style-guide/apa)) throughout the proposal.

Final Semester Enroll in MC 5307 Project
Students will research, create, write and revise the professional project during the semester with advice and direction from the project committee. Students must meet and report on their progress as directed by the project chair (at least every two weeks). All formal feedback is funneled through the project chair to ensure consistency. Make sure to provide copies of the final draft of the professional project and written report to the project chair for comments throughout the semester. Once the project is complete and the project chair and student think it is ready to defend, the project chair will distribute the project to the other members of the committee at least two weeks prior to the scheduled comprehensive exam defense. The project chair will also set the meeting time. For the project defense, only one committee member can participate remotely. The other two faculty members should be physically present at the defense.

Project Report. Before the comprehensive exam defense is scheduled, students must write a final report that incorporates all the elements of the project proposal, as well as significant documentation of the project itself and a contextual essay evaluating the outcomes and or success of the project objectives. The report should contain:

- Title page.
- Table of contents.
- Introduction.
- Elements from your original project proposal (with description of any changes from original).
- IRB application/approval (if necessary).
- The professional project (chronological description).
- Evidence of the project (such as articles, URLs, printouts, DVDs, query letters, correspondence with clients, etc.).
- Discussion and conclusions.
- Contextual essay evaluating the outcomes of the project objectives.
- What did you learn from the project?
- What worked in the project and what didn’t?
- Suggestions for changes in the future; e.g., what would you do differently?
- Attach any materials that you cite in the body of the report as appendices.

The report should be sent to the committee with the final project at least two weeks before the scheduled oral defense.

After the Comprehensive Exam Defense. Students need to make corrections and resubmit their final projects and reports to their project chair for approval. Committee members can either sign the Master’s Comprehensive Exam paperwork at the oral defense, or they can wait until the requested changes have been made. That’s the committee’s discretion as long as they adhere to the deadlines set for fall/spring graduation. Students will submit their finished projects and reports with a signed approval to the Graduate Advisor. Projects are not subject to Graduate College approval.
Steps in the Professional Project Process:

Semester Before Project Begins (no credit):

**Ideas.** Student forms a general idea for professional project.

**Concept.** Based on research and coursework conducted during the first two semesters, student develops the idea into a concept for a professional project proposal.

**Chair.** Student seeks out graduate faculty member whose area of expertise is most closely related to the potential proposal (should be in the area of the concentration if a student has a concentration). Student requests the faculty member to chair professional project.

**Proposal Development.** Student develops and writes the proposal. Chair provides guidance and supervision as required to help the student develop the full proposal.

**Committee.** Student, with guidance of the Chair, selects committee members. Student discusses project proposal prior to it being finalized.

Project Semester:

**Proposal.** Proposal meets the guidelines as defined by the committee and student. All committee members must agree that the proposal is ready to defend.

**Proposal Defense.** Chair coordinates with the committee members to establish a date/time to meet for the student’s proposal defense.

**Professional Project.** Student researches, writes, and revises the professional project and report as directed by the Chair and with suggestions from the committee members.

**Professional Project Finalized.** Student provides copies of final draft of the professional project and project report to the Chair for comments and ultimate distribution to the committee members at least two weeks before a scheduled defense date.

**Defense Date.** Chair establishes a date and time for the final defense. This date should be at least two weeks after the project has been distributed to the committee.

**Professional Project Defense.** Student defends the professional project to the committee. Committee approves, approves with corrections, or (in extremely rare cases) denies the project.

**Corrections.** Student makes any corrections and submits final to the Chair for approval. Committee members sign the Master’s Comprehensive Exam Form if it was not signed at the defense.

**Publishing.** Student submits project to the School of Journalism and Mass Communication graduate advisor and provides committee chair with one copy of the professional project.
Appendix C: SJMC Internal Paperwork for Special Courses

Application for Independent Study

Independent Study should not be used for thesis research and writing. In consultation with the proposed faculty mentor, prepare the following information:

*Main topic to be investigated through readings
*Relevant research to be reviewed (include a reference list of possible readings)
*Explain the primary objective of the course and how it relates to your overall program of study
*Explain the nature of the scholarly work you will produce (e.g., will there be a literature review, a paper, will you be collecting/examining data, will a website be produced, a campaign completed?)
*How will the work be assessed?
*How many hours will be spent on this? (remember that each credit hour is roughly 40 hours of work)

Students must receive approval from the faculty mentor and the Graduate Advisor before you can enroll in these credits.

Student’s Name:_________________________________________
Student Tx State ID Number: _______________________________________
Semester: ___________  Number of Credits: _____________
Name of Faculty Supervisor: __________________________
Faculty Supervisor Signature:__________________________

Please attach this form with the question write up and email it to the Graduate Advisor (mmh204@txstate.edu). Dan Seed (dfs16@txstate.edu) will email you when you can enroll in the course.
Application for Project MC 5307

The project course is only for students on the professional project track. In consultation with the project chair, the student should provide the following information:

*Main topic to be investigated
*Relevant research to be reviewed (include a reference list of possible readings)
*Explain the primary objective of the course and how it relates to your overall program of study
*Explain the nature of the scholarly work you will produce (e.g., will there be a literature review, a paper, will you be collecting/examining data, what will be the end project?)
*How will your work be assessed?
*How many hours are you willing to spend on this? (remember that each credit hour is roughly 40 hours of work)

Students must receive approval from the faculty mentor and the Graduate Advisor before you can enroll in these credits.

Student’s Name:_________________________________________

Student Tx State ID Number: _______________________________________

Semester: ___________  Number of Credits: _____________

Name of Faculty Supervisor: __________________________

Faculty Supervisor Signature:__________________________

Please attach this form with the question write up and email it to the Graduate Advisor (mmh204@txstate.edu). Dan Seed (dfs16@txstate.edu) will email you when you can enroll in the course.
SJMC Application for Thesis A

Thesis credits should be earned in two semesters. A student enrolls in Thesis A credits to work in close consultation with his/her thesis supervisor to prepare and defend the thesis proposal.

Please provide the following information to justify enrolling in Thesis A:
* List the thesis supervisor and members of the committee
* Explain the mass communication problem/issue/area to be examined
* Provide a list of the relevant research to be reviewed (include a reference list of possible readings)
* Explain the nature of the thesis (what will you be studying, what theory will you apply, what method may be used)
* How many hours are you willing to spend on this? (remember that each credit hour is roughly 40 hours of work).
* Provide a timeline to indicate the proposal will be sent to the committee and defended by the SJMC internal deadline.

Successful completion of Thesis A credits will result in the Thesis Proposal Form being turned in to the Graduate College prior to the end of the semester the student is earning these credits. The Graduate College will approve the thesis proposal prior to a student enrolling in Thesis B.

Student’s Name:_________________________________________

Student Tx State ID Number: _______________________________________

Semester: ___________  Number of Credits: _____________

Name of Faculty Supervisor: __________________________

Faculty Supervisor Signature:__________________________

Please attach this form with the question write up and email it to the Graduate Advisor (mmh204@txstate.edu). Dan Seed (dfs16@txstate.edu) will email you when you can enroll in the course.
SJMC Application for Thesis B

Thesis credits should be earned in two semesters. A student enrolls in Thesis B credits after the Graduate College has approved his/her thesis proposal and Thesis Proposal Form. Please provide the following information to justify enrolling in Thesis B:
* A copy of the completed proposal
* Explain the timeline for collecting/analyzing data
* How many hours are you willing to spend on this? (remember that each credit hour is roughly 40 hours of work).
* Provide a timeline to indicate the proposal will be sent to the committee and defended by the SJMC internal thesis defense deadline.

You will not be able to enroll in Thesis B credits until the Graduate College has approved the thesis proposal and the Thesis Proposal form. Once the Graduate College has signed off, a student can then send the form during drop/add to be enrolled in Thesis B credits. The timing of enrollment depends on when the student provided the prospectus to the Graduate College.

Student’s Name: __________________________________________

Student Tx State ID Number: _______________________________

Semester: ___________ Number of Credits: _____________

Name of Faculty Supervisor: __________________________

Faculty Supervisor Signature: _________________________

Please attach this form with the question write up and email it to the Graduate Advisor (mnh204@txstate.edu). Dan Seed (dfs16@txstate.edu) will email you when you can enroll in the course.
For more information please contact:

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Telephone: 512.245.2656