

SOUTHERN UTAH UNIVERSITY
DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNICATION
GRADUATE HANDBOOK

MASTER OF ARTS IN PROFESSIONAL COMMUNICATION

Because there has been planted in us the power to persuade each other and to make clear to each other whatever we desire, we have not only escaped the life of wild beasts, but we have made laws and invented arts....Isocrates

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... [T]he teaching of communication will always be with us ... for the most fundamental of reasons: Freedom goes to the articulate.
Rod Hart

GRADUATE MISSION STATEMENT

The Southern Utah University Master's degree in Professional Communication prepares students as developers and creators of knowledge and information, both theoretical and applied. In doing so, the program fosters ethical behavior, superior critical thinking, research and writing skills.

INTRODUCTION

The Master of Arts in Professional Communication program was approved by the Board of Regents in 2004, making it the first graduate program in SUU's College of Humanities and Social Science.

This handbook is designed to be an introduction and a guide for students who are interested in graduate study in Professional Communication. This booklet also details the requirements for the Masters of Arts in Professional Communication.

Information is accurate to the extent that it reflects policies and procedures in effect as of August 2009. Because policies and requirements are subject to continuous review and periodic revision, the material contained in this handbook should be confirmed with the departmental graduate office to ensure that it has not been superseded by more recent faculty action.

The degree responds to a very strong and well documented market demand for applied programs of advanced study for communication practitioners. Students who enroll in the program will be able to study with an emphasis in

advertising/public relations, interpersonal/corporate communication, or mass communication.

The handbook also lays out admission procedures and standards, program procedures, and requirements for graduation. All of these procedures are carefully fashioned to meet or exceed accreditation requirements for graduate programs specified by the Northwest Association of Colleges and Schools.

Finally, the handbook describes current graduate faculty and resources of the program.

This handbook is valid as of 08/01/2009 for more up to date information and online access to forms please refer to <http://www.suu.edu/hss/comm/masters/>

GENERAL INFORMATION

Department Of Communication Graduate Committee

The Communication Graduate Faculty Council creates policies and regulations pertaining to the graduate program under the direction of the Graduate Director. This Council reviews applications and determines whether or not a person is admitted to the program. The Council also determines the awarding of assistantships or scholarships. In addition to policy formation and review of the program, the Graduate Council also serves as an appellate body for students and faculty and acts of requests of variance.

Graduate Directors are formally appointed by the dean every three years to serve as chair of the Graduate Council. The Graduate Director handles most of the technical questions regarding the program and its requirements. Also, they maintain all graduate student records; serves as dissertation, thesis, and project librarian; and facilitates the work of the Graduate Committee.

Accreditation

Recommendations were obtained from professional accrediting organizations and from the feedback of graduates who are in the workforce in the process of creating this degree. Students may be assured that general standards for accrediting graduate programs published by the Northwest Association of Colleges and Schools, College Division, section 2 D: Graduate Program, E: Graduate Faculty and Related Resources, and F: Graduate Records and Academic Credit, have been reviewed and those requirements are met by Southern Utah University's degree in Professional Communication.

The SUU Program

This course of study focuses on career competencies and applied research

capabilities beyond the baccalaureate in broadcasting, advertising and public relations and interpersonal and corporate communication. It also provides general preparation for advanced career placement in communication, education, human resources, communication management, social services, and public affairs.

In many ways, SUU's program is unique from others in the country.

- The program is sufficiently broad-based to span a variety of professions.
- The program focuses on career competencies and applied research capabilities.
- The program combines interest in knowledge that places the student on the cutting edge of the discipline with a constant desire to improve the craft of the communication professional.
- The faculty teaching in the program have substantial academic and professional experience.
- The students work closely with a faculty mentor and committee in designing a program that meets their individual needs.

Course descriptions are found on page 273 of the 2009-2011 General Catalog and on online at <http://www.suu.edu/academics/catalog/2009/descriptions.pdf> (page 18).

The program consists of 36 semester hours of graduate coursework which includes six credit hours of a graduate project, internship or thesis.

Thesis

Students choosing the thesis option will complete 30 hours of coursework with 6 credit hours added for the thesis. A sample thesis may be found online at <http://www.suu.edu/hss/pdf/Thesis.pdf>. [See Appendix A for more detailed information]

Project

Students choosing the graduate project option will complete 30 hours of coursework with 6 credit hours added for the project. Graduate projects represent significant demonstrations of creative ability that include appropriate research, development and planning and a comprehensive report. [See Appendix B for more detailed information]

Internship

Students choosing the graduate internship option will complete 30 hours of coursework with 6 credit hours added for the internship. Internships require faculty supervision of the equivalent of a semester in the workplace and the presentation of a formal portfolio of work including applied research designed and executed by the

candidate and examples of a variety of communication activities completed. [See Appendix C for more detailed information.]

ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS

An online application is found <http://www.suu.edu/prostu/apply.html#> In addition to the general requirements for admission to the University, students applying for admission to the Master of Arts in Professional Communication program must complete the additional requirements found online at: <http://www.suu.edu/hss/comm/masters/apply.html>

Applications are accepted year-round according to the schedule below:

- July 15 for fall semester
- October 15 for spring semester
- February 15 for summer semester
- March 1 for assistantship decisions

Students with a minimum GPA of 2.7 to 3.0 on the last 65 hours of undergraduate work and a minimum GRE score of 750 may apply to be admitted conditional status, but will not be eligible for graduate assistantships. Students who have been out of school five or more years or who have the necessary test scores but not grades (or vice versa) may be given special consideration for conditional admission.

Students must achieve at least a graduate GPA of 3.00 in their first semester (first 9 hours) in order to be fully matriculated. All admission decisions may be appealed for special considerations. The department Graduate Council will make all admission decisions.

FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

Application for financial assistance should be sent to the Graduate Director. These requests will not be considered until admission has been awarded so students desiring assistance should be certain that all parts of the application for admission are complete. Consideration of requests for assistance will begin March 1 and will continue until all the positions are filled.

There are three different types of financial assistance available to graduate students:

1. Assistantships
 - a. Maximum of \$5,000 per year.
 - b. Require teaching a section of COMM 1010 each semester that the assistantship is received.
2. Research
 - a. Maximum of \$1,000 per year

- b. Require assignments, options include teaching, TV and Radio production, research, or paper grading.
 - c. Research jobs differ significantly in work responsibility and time required and no effort is made to equalize them.
3. Tuition waivers
- a. Set at the instate tuition cost.
 - b. Tuition Waivers require no work.

GRADUATE STUDENT ORIENTATION

An orientation meeting is scheduled for all incoming communication graduate students prior to the beginning of Fall Semester. The purpose of this meeting is to introduce graduate students and faculty members, review departmental policies and requirements, and provide information about matters of specific concern to new graduate students. Students are further encouraged to meet individually with members of the faculty throughout the first semester of residency in order to discover mutual interests and to discuss individual goals and objectives.

GRADUATE STUDENT ASSOCIATION (GSA)

All actively enrolled communication graduate students are automatically members of the Graduate Student Association (GSA). This association exists to assist fellow students with social and professional matters related to graduate student life. Generally, GSA leaders are elected during the spring semester of each year, in order to enable their active involvement in planning fall orientation sessions and other activities for the following academic year. GSA also allows for application to SUUSA funds for research and/or travel.

COMMUNICATION GRADUATE FACULTY

The graduate faculty of the Communication Department hold terminal research degrees from various distinguished universities around the country including Florida, Missouri, Nebraska, Ohio, Oregon, Purdue, Tennessee, Nebraska, UNLV, and Washington State.

Advisor

After admission to graduate study and attendance at the orientation, each student will be advised by the Graduate Director or delegated to the appropriate member of the Graduate Council from the student's focus area until the candidate selects a supervisory committee and Advisory Chair. The Advisory Chair of this committee then becomes the student's formal advisor. Supervisory committees are formally appointed by the Graduate Director; however, each student participates fully in the selection of the committee. Moreover, each student is responsible for initiating the selection of his or her supervisory committee and may change committee members when appropriate.

Selection of the Supervisory Committee

The committee selection process generally begins during the second semester of graduate study by making arrangements with a faculty member to serve as Advisory Chair of the supervisory committee. The supervisory committee members (1) should hold a relevant, terminal degree, (2) should have demonstrated within the last five years proficiency in the primary research area selected by the student, and (3) must be a SUU Tenure Track faculty member in good standing as a graduate faculty member. M.A. students who elect a project option should request a faculty member to serve as chairperson who has demonstrated proficiency in the general area of interest through creative production or other recognized activities.

The committee, normally consisting of three to five appointed members of SUU graduate faculty, should be appointed no later than the end of the second semester of graduate work (18 credit hours). Minority membership may be appropriately credentialed outside participants. All participants, internal or external to SUU, must have SUU Graduate faculty status. Exceptions to the eligibility requirements may be petitioned to the Graduate Director, Dean of the College of Humanities and Social Sciences and the Dean of the Graduate School. All committee members are formally asked to serve by the Graduate Director but students will determine the graduate faculty's willingness to serve on a committee. Once this informal process has been completed, the student initiates a Capstone Approval form which is submitted to the department's Director of Graduate Studies for approval (See Appendix B). This form is available on the Graduate School website. When approval is granted, the form is forwarded to the Graduate School by the department graduate office for final action by the Dean of the Graduate School.

The student should sit down with their Advisory Chair and committee and plan a course program including courses and a final thesis, project, or internship. A Plan of Study Form (<http://www.suu.edu/hss/comm/masters/pdf/coursesrequired.pdf>) should be completed and placed in your department file in the communication office. Completion of the form indicates preliminary approval of a program. Students can make changes to their proposed program with the approval of their committee chair. The plan of study should be approved by the student's committee and filed with the Graduate Director's office no later than the time of completion 24 credit hours.

Because students' interests change throughout their graduate programs and faculty members may accept other positions or be absent from campus for extended periods, it is often necessary to request a change in supervisory committee membership. The Director of Graduate Studies is responsible to assist in these negotiations as requested by the student or faculty. After informally discussing the change with the committee members involved, a new Capstone Approval form must be initiated and prepared by the student and is submitted to the department's

Director of Graduate Studies for approval (See Appendix F). Only the Capstone Approval form will be accepted by the Graduate Records Office, and names of committee members listed on the approved form must correspond with all signatures on official candidacy forms, examination reports, and the thesis or dissertation final Approval Page.

Complete records of major professor and committee assignments, Plans of Study and completion of requirements for degree will be kept for every student by the graduate secretary under the direction of the Graduate Director. Signatures on the [Graduation Worksheet](http://www.suu.edu/hss/comm/masters/forms.html) (<http://www.suu.edu/hss/comm/masters/forms.html>) will indicate necessary approvals. Candidates should periodically check over this record with the secretary to maintain its accuracy.

Committee Responsibilities and Procedures

The importance of the supervisory committee to a student's graduate program cannot be emphasized too strongly. It is the supervisory committee which has responsibility for approving the student's academic program,, approving the thesis or dissertation prospectus and the thesis or dissertation itself, and administering and judging the final defense. Decisions concerning program requirements, examination, and the thesis/dissertation are made by majority vote of the supervisory committee. It is expected that all members of the supervisory committee will be present in order to hold any formal meeting which may result in an official supervisory committee action. Circumstances can exist, however, that make this expectation an unreasonable burden on the candidate or committee. In those cases, the supervisory committee Advisory Chair will consult with the Graduate Director to arrange an alternative that still provides for full participation by the majority of the committee.

CAPSTONE EXPERIENCES

The Master of Arts in Professional Communication program expects that each student will select an appropriate culminating experience with the assistance of her/his Advisory Chair and committee. That experience should be directly focused in the student's area of interest. We recommend that students not wait until the final semester to start their capstone. They should complete a prospectus/proposal for the capstone experience during their second to the last semester in order to finish on time. All capstone material must be completed by April 20th in order to provide sufficient time for faculty to read the material. All defenses must be scheduled before the last day of instruction during the semester. Capstone defenses are open to the public. [Appendix A-C describes each of the capstone procedures]

APPLICATION FOR GRADUATION

All students must apply for graduation. The communication department secretary

has the documents that require appropriate signatures. The material includes a diploma card and [Graduation Worksheet](#) indicating the program plan of the student and also requires the signature of the Dean of the college. The material must be filed with the Registrar's Office including a fee by October 15th for spring graduation. If students plan on attending graduation, they must also contact the alumni office to purchase the appropriate regalia for the ceremony by February 1. There is also a regalia fee.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

All programs and all projects that are any part of completion of any degree in the Department of Communication are expected to operate at the highest levels of academic integrity and honesty. Data that is made-up or manipulated, production projects that assert information not demonstrated, manipulated or manufactured contents of reports or journals, using ghostwriters to complete work presented as her/his own and plagiarism are all serious violations of this code. Violations of the code in individual courses are subject to the regulation of the professor but individual professors may choose to make violations the business of the department at any time. No more than one departmental warning will ever be given prior to dismissal. The discovery of any of these violations, especially plagiarism in any of its forms, in the execution or presentation of a capstone thesis, project, or intern report constitutes grounds for immediate and irrevocable dismissal from the program. While the Graduate Council is the graduate ethics committee for the program and all violations of academic integrity are adjudicated by them, the sole determiners of violation are the student's committee reading the work.

TIME LIMIT

Provisions for the Grade of Incomplete

The grade of "Incomplete" is given when 75% of the course work is completed but special circumstances intervene to prevent the timely completion of the remaining 25% of the course work. The work should be completed as expeditiously as possible, no later than one year after the course was taken. Students who have two or more "Incompletes" on their record in any semester should supply a plan for the timely completion of that course work to their Advisory Chair and the Graduate Director.

Provisions for completion of master's degree

All work for the Master's degree must be completed within six consecutive calendar years. In rare cases, a student's supervisory committee can petition the Graduate Director for an extension. However, students taking longer than the five-year period may be required to take additional course work. Petitions for time extensions are initiated by the students and must be accompanied by written support of members of the supervisory committee. Petition must contain (1) a rationale for the time extension, (2) an explanation of what requirements need to be completed, including

any additional measure for evaluating student performance, and (3) a descriptive timeline and final date for degree completion.

Continual Registration

A student must register continually until the degree is finished. There is no requirement that students attend summer school. If a student fails to complete the capstone experience by the deadline they will be required to register for one credit of capstone credit until the capstone is completed.

CONTACT US

Master's Program Coordinator

Dr. Suzanne Larson

Phone: (435) 865-8105

Fax: (435) 865-8352

Office: CN 213K

E-Mail: larson_s@suu.edu

You can also contact or visit with the members of the Graduate Committee, Professors Matt Barton, Stan Gwin, Art Challis, Brian Heuett, and Paul Husslebee

APPENDIX A

COMMUNICATION 6900

Master's Thesis Capstone

With the approval of the Graduate Director and the student's committee and upon the presentation of a formal research prospectus, the student will select an area for the completion of original research that contributes significantly to our knowledge of the field of Communication.

1. The prospectus will include a full review of the relevant literature for the topic and demonstration that the project has not been done in that exact form before or that the repeating of previous research is necessary as well as making apparent that the work is important and contributes significantly.
2. The Student's committee Advisory Chair will monitor the work through regular meetings with the student.
3. The thesis will be read by the Advisory Chair and the committee and signed upon completion of the capstone defense of thesis. The signatures on the Approval Page attest to the editorial quality of the writing.
4. A formal capstone defense of the thesis will be scheduled at the very end of the student's program. All members of the committee are present and the graduate faculty of the Department of Communication, the Dean, the Provost, and the graduate faculty of the University are invited.
5. When the thesis Approval Page is signed, the candidate is considered, from that moment, to have completed the degree and to hold the benefits thereof.
6. An electronic copy will be sent to the SUU library, (http://lib.li.suu.edu/library/Policies/thesis_permission_form.pdf) to the Committee Advisory Chair, and to the Graduate Secretary for the graduate library.

APPENDIX B

COMMUNICATION 6910

Graduate Capstone Project

With approval of the Graduate Director and the student's Graduate Committee, the student may elect to complete the capstone requirement for the Master's degree with a successful research based production project. Such projects might include documentary films and/or television productions, TV or Radio series, extended applied public relations campaigns, photographic productions, etc. The following requirements apply to the use of project to successfully complete the degree.

1. While the graduate project credit is 6 hours, project developers will be expected to create and document applied research based productions that meet very high standards applied by the student's committee. Such projects as Dr. Jon Smith's "Miracle at Kap Yong," with research documented in electronic format is anticipated.
2. The project will have an applied research component as well as communication production requirements.
3. The Advisory Chair will have communication production credentials and will agree to regular meetings with and guidance for the student.
4. A comprehensive prospectus for the project will be filed with and approved by the student's committee prior to beginning the project.
5. Substantial effort will be made to get outside funding to support the project and the Department of Communication will assist this effort in every way, but the Department will not be expected to underwrite such projects financially.
6. A formal portfolio will be created and bound for the Departmental Graduate library representing the entirety of the student's work during the project including:
 - A. Reports from all applied research activities that have been part of his/her project.
 - B. Completed production samples from all film, broadcast productions, advertising campaigns, promotional campaigns, special event promotions, crisis communication responses, organizational development activities or research, etc. that the candidate has been involved in during the project will be detailed in the formal portfolio.
 - C. A copy of the final project production.
 - D. A comprehensive plan and summary report written by the student that describes and analyzes the work experience of the project.
7. A formal capstone defense responding to the portfolio and the production as presented in its final form will be held at the end of the program. The examination will be conducted by the student's chair and include all of the graduate committee. If a professional supervisor is involved, he/she will also

- be invited.
8. When the bound copies and Approval Page are signed by the committee after the successful defense, the candidate is considered to have completed the degree and hold the benefits thereof.

APPENDIX C

COMMUNICATION 6920

Graduate Internship Capstone

With approval of the Graduate Director and the student's Graduate Committee, the student may elect to complete the capstone requirement for the Master's degree with an internship. The following requirements apply to the use of internship to successfully complete the degree.

1. While the internship credit is 6 hours, normal graduate interns will work at a full-time job for an entire academic semester of full-time work.
2. The job will have a research component.
3. The job supervisor will usually have communication professional credentials and will agree to regular meetings with the student and the academic adviser.
4. Regular meetings will occur (at least 2 per semester) at the work site with the professional supervisor and the academic director. The student's employer will pay any necessary travel expenses for the professor's visits as a part of the internship contract.
5. A formal portfolio will be created in electronic format for the Departmental capstone library representing the entirety of the student's work during the internship including:
 - A. Research reports from all applied research activities that have been part of the job.
 - B. Completed production samples from all film, broadcast productions, advertising campaigns, promotional campaigns, special event promotions, crisis communication responses, organizational development activities or research, etc. that the candidate has been involved in during the intern year will be detailed in the formal portfolio.
 - C. A summary report written by the student that describes and analyzes the work experience of the internship.
6. A formal capstone defense responding to the portfolio as presented in its final form will be held at the end of the program. The defense will be conducted by the student's Advisory Chair and include all of the graduate committee. The professional intern supervisor will also be invited to the final examination.
7. When the Approval Page is signed by the committee after the successful defense, the candidate is considered, from the moment, to have completed the degree and hold the benefits thereof.
8. Internship forms are found online at <http://www.suu.edu/hss/comm/masters/pdf/Package.pdf>

APPENDIX D

PROQuest Company

Authorization to Apply for Registration of My Claim to Copyright

Has registration for your published dissertation or thesis, or for an earlier version of the manuscript, been made with the Copyright Office?

Yes

No

If yes, by whom was the registration made? _____

Previous registration number _____

Year of registration _____

I authorize ProQuest Information and Learning (PQIL) to file, in my behalf, an application for registration of a claim of U.S. copyright, in my name, for my dissertation/thesis. PQIL agrees to complete the application form, and to file it, together with the registration fee and required deposit copy(ies) of my dissertation/thesis, with the Copyright Office. I represent to PQIL that the information I have provided PQIL on the accompanying Publishing Agreement Form is accurate.

My certified check or money order to PQIL for \$65.00 is enclosed, unless I have paid the fee to my institution for forwarding to PQIL. I understand that I will receive the registration form from the Copyright Office.

Author's Name _____

Please Print

Author's Signature _____

Copyright Authorization

Date _____

ProQuest Information and Learning
789 E. Eisenhower Pkwy
Ann Arbor, MI 48108-3218
800.521.0600
www.umi.com

APPENDIX E

Digitalization Permission Form

Upon final approval of your thesis, you'll need to submit your electronic version of your master's project to the library.

First, fill out a permission form on their website:

http://lib.li.suu.edu/library/Policies/thesis_permission_form.pdf

You will find all the information you need there.

APPENDIX F

Forms

Plan of Study

<http://www.suu.edu/hss/comm/masters/pdf/coursesrequired.pdf>

Internship Packet

<http://www.suu.edu/hss/comm/masters/pdf/Packet.pdf>

Capstone Approval – this is the form to use when forming your committee

Approval Page – this is the form to use for the capstone defense

<http://www.suu.edu/hss/comm/masters/pdf/approvalpage.pdf>

[Graduation Worksheets](http://www.suu.edu/hss/comm/masters/forms.html) - Degree Audits

<http://www.suu.edu/hss/comm/masters/forms.html>

Application for Graduation

<http://www.suu.edu/hss/comm/masters/pdf/ApplicationforGraduation.pdf>

Exit Survey

<http://www.suu.edu/hss/comm/masters/pdf/ExitInterview.pdf>

APPENDIX G

Timeline

1. Application deadline:
 - o Fall Semester - July 15th
 - o Spring Semester - October 15th
 - o Summer Semester - February 15th
2. Plan Of Study
3. Choose Committee Chair/Advisor: (during the first semester or before 9 hours completed).
4. Choose Committee members and have them approved by Graduate Director: (during the second semester or before 18 hours completed)
5. Committee approved plan of study: (during third semester of before 24 hours completed)
6. October 15th: Students must file graduation papers with the registrar’s office and pay a graduation fee.
 - a. (Packets can be picked up in the Communication Office.)
 - b. (Students must contact the alumni office and pay for regalia for commencement by February 1)
7. Prospectus Meeting set
8. Completion Date of capstone
9. Completion Date of oral defense
10. Final oral examination:
 - a. Defense of the capstone project.
 - b. Capstone title page signed by advisor and committee members

Progress Checklist

- ___ 1. Advisory Chair chosen prior to end of second semester (before 9 hours completed).
Name and date _____
- ___ 2. Committee members approved (before 18 hours completed).
Names and date _____
- ___ 3. Committee approved plan of study before 24 hours completed.
Date approved _____
- ___ 4. October 15th Students must file graduation papers with the registrar’s office and pay the graduation fee.
- ___ 5. February 1st Students must contact the alumni office and pay for regalia.
- ___ 6. Date of completion of comprehensive examinations and oral defense _____
- ___ 7. Completion of capstone and oral defense _____
- ___ 8. Final oral examination: Defense of the capstone project. (capstone title page signed by advisor and committee members) Date _____