

GRADUATE STUDENT HANDBOOK

2015-2016

Department of Communication

University of California, Davis

<http://communication.ucdavis.edu/>





The University of California, in accordance with applicable Federal and State law and University policy, does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, religion, sex, gender identity, pregnancy (including pregnancy, childbirth, and related medical conditions), disability, age, medical condition (cancer-related), ancestry, marital status, citizenship, sexual orientation, or status as a Vietnam-era veteran or special disabled veteran. The University also prohibits sexual harassment. This nondiscrimination policy covers admission, access, and treatment in University programs and activities.

Information about these policies can be found in the **UC Davis Policy & Procedures Manual** (<http://manuals.ucdavis.edu/ppm/280/280-05.pdf>).

TABLE OF CONTENTS

OUR PERSPECTIVE.....	5
Our Vision	5
Mission Statement	5
THE UNIVERSITY.....	7
Why UC Davis?	7
Principles of Community	7
Graduate Student Guide	8
PEOPLE	8
Program Administrative Personnel	8
Program Faculty	8
Mentoring	9
FUNDING YOUR EDUCATION.....	11
Department Financial Support	11
Teaching Assistantships.....	11
Readerships	11
Conference Travel Support	11
Small Grants Awards	12
Dissertation Research.....	12
Funding Through Faculty Grants	12
Graduate Studies Financial Support	12
Graduate Fellowships.....	12
UC Davis Graduate Student Travel Awards	12
Financial Aid Office.....	13
Planned Educational Leave Program (PELP)	13
PH.D. PROGRAM	13
Admissions Requirements	13
Remedial Work Requirements	14
Full-Time Status.....	14
Normative Time to Degree	14

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Course Requirements	15
Teaching Requirement	16
Qualifying Examination.....	16
Overview	16
Written Examination	16
Oral Examination.....	16
Advancement to Candidacy	17
Dissertation and Final Oral Examination	17
The Dissertation	17
The Final Oral Examination	18
Advising.....	18
Progress Toward Degree.....	18
M.A. PROGRAM	19
Admissions Requirements	19
Remedial Work Requirements	19
Full-Time Status.....	19
Normative Time to Degree.....	19
Advising.....	20
M.A. Committee	20
Degree Requirements	20
Required Courses (Plans 1 and 2).....	20
Thesis Option (Plan 1)	21
Non-thesis Option (Plan 2)	22
Written Comprehensive Examination.....	22
Oral Comprehensive Examination	22
Exam Scheduling	23
GRADUATE COURSES IN COMMUNICATION	23

OUR PERSPECTIVE

The graduate program in Communication at the University of California, Davis is distinguished by the excellence of our faculty and the clarity of our vision. We do not attempt to be all things to all people. Rather, our objective is to offer a program of distinction that focuses on the quantitative study of mediated communication in the increasingly digitized society in which we live.

OUR VISION

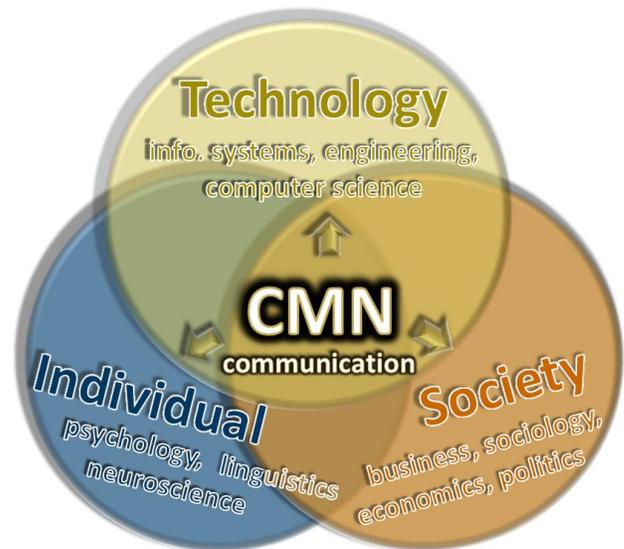
We consider communication to be the thread that holds the social quilt together. Bottom-up, communication is what converts collections of individuals into communities and societies, constructs societies' collective identities, and facilitates social evolution. Top-down, communication is what primes people's perception of reality, their social context, and their personal evolution. As communication scholars, we examine the production, distribution, processing, and impact of messages from a bottom-up (micro) and a top-down (macro) perspective in a multidisciplinary context.

The ongoing digital revolution has intensified the role of technology in communication. Digitalization is so powerful that technological systems now for the first time mediate the majority of human communication. We spend 8 of our 11 hours of daily net communication time communicating with or via some kind of technology. The outcome is the global socio-technological ecosystem that constitutes the current driving force of social evolution.

As a result, we see communication to be at the center among the individual, technology, and society. The communicated message itself is at the center of our approach to understand reality. From here, communication informs diverse disciplines by contributing a distinctive focus on the messages that link social structures as diverse as interpersonal relationships, businesses, conversations, citizenries, communities, social networks, entertainment audiences, and political systems. As such, our approach is naturally interdisciplinary and especially relevant during the current times of intense technological changes that affect how people and social systems communicate.

MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of our graduate program is to promote research and understanding of human communication and to train qualified students to pursue careers in research and teaching within and beyond higher education. It is through communication that individuals become groups, organizations, communities, and societies. As individuals, communication forms the basis of our perceptions of the physical and social world and allows us to develop personally. As members of collectives, communication cultivates shared identities, is used to make decisions and coordinate actions, and enables social evolution. Our graduate



program offers students the opportunity to understand communication through multiple levels of analysis. We offer coursework that examines the production, distribution, processing, and impact of messages from a bottom-up (micro) and a top-down (macro) perspective.

Our program's main focus is on the study of mediated communication and digital society. The digital revolution has transformed the nature of communication. Increasingly, we interact with others through the mediation of technology. We maintain many of our friendships through social media and a growing number of us find our lifelong mate using online dating tools. We can now watch our favorite news channel on television or any of a number of mobile devices. We can even have breaking news on selected topics "pushed" to us through alerts that appear on these devices. We can view our favorite movies whenever and wherever we want through streaming. Most of us will work at some point in geographically dispersed workgroups, with members spread across the nation or even the globe; online collaborative technologies make this possible. On a daily basis we influence (and are influenced) through persuasive technologies, including educational games, blogs, smartphone applications, and database-driven message-tailoring platforms. Digital communication systems now mediate the majority of human communication. The resulting global socio-technological ecosystem constitutes the primary driving force of social, political and economic evolution today.

Our graduate program emphasizes the social scientific study of human communication using quantitative methods. Our students receive training in the traditional methods of social research, including experimental methods, survey research, and content analysis. In addition, we require our students to complete a sequence of courses in statistics, which can be taken in Psychology, Political Science, or Sociology. In the near future, we will be providing advanced training in emerging methods in computational social sciences, including "big data" analytical methods, modeling, and simulations. It is important to note that we do not object to qualitative and humanistic methodological orientations, but we do not attempt to be all things to all students. Our program best serves students who wish to understand human communication through the prism of quantitative approaches.

We believe that students can learn about research in classes but can only truly learn how to do research through collaborative projects with their professors and other students. For this reason, all of our graduate students are expected to engage in collaborative projects from their very first quarter of academic studies. Our students take an increasingly independent role in these projects as they gain experience in research and complete their coursework in methods and statistics. We help our students develop their presentation skills by providing them with opportunities to present their research findings in the Department's weekly colloquia and offering them travel support to attend national and international conferences.

Although most of the students in our graduate program intend to pursue positions as teachers and researchers in academia, we anticipate that a growing number of students will seek research positions in industry and government in the future. The training we provide will enable them to pursue such opportunities, and we intend to cultivate strong program-industry collaborations in the near term that could provide students with research internships in information and communication technology.

Our ultimate objective is to produce well-rounded scholars who are effective in both research and teaching. Most of our students obtain teaching experience in one or both of our two basic communication classes during the regular academic year and summer sessions. As students master their substantive area

of emphasis (e.g., political communication, social media, health communication, computer-mediated communication), we try to give them the opportunity to teach one or more upper division undergraduate courses in their area of specialization. We also offer ongoing instruction in pedagogy, as well as classroom visits by an experienced teacher, leading to personalized coaching. We believe that such skills are invaluable to all of our students, even those who do not intend to pursue an academic career.

THE UNIVERSITY

WHY UC DAVIS?

Student admitted to our graduate program have a wealth of intellectual resources to draw upon that extend far beyond our program and faculty. The University of California, Davis is an amazing place, ranked by *U.S. News and World Report* as a top-10 public university. We are proud to be a part of the world's most renowned institution of higher education, The University of California, which is home to five of America's top 10 public universities!

Here are a few other highlights:

- UC Davis is tied for 1st place among research universities for the honor of top producer of U.S. Fulbright Scholars.
- We are ranked as the top program in the world with regard to life and earth sciences research impact.
- *Sierra* magazine ranks as the 2nd "coolest" university for its environmental concern.
- We are a top-10 center for biomedical research.

For more highlights about our University and the accomplishments of its faculty and students, please visit this webpage:

<http://ucdavis.edu/about/facts/rankings/reputation-value.html>

PRINCIPLES OF COMMUNITY

Upon admission to the program, our graduate students become a member of the larger UC Davis community and are expected to live up to the principles of our community. These principles can be downloaded from the university's website (<http://occr.ucdavis.edu/poc/pocreaffirmed042015.pdf>). The history of the development of these principles is described on the Office of Campus Community Relations website (<http://occr.ucdavis.edu/poc/what-are-the-principles.html>). The core idea behind these principles is that we must always strive to interact with each other in a spirit of mutual respect and caring.

US News and World Report's Ranking of America's Top National Universities

#1	UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, BERKELEY
#2 (TIE)	UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, LOS ANGELES
#2 (TIE)	UNIVERSITY OF VIRGINIA
#4	UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN ANN ARBOR
#5	UNIVERSITY OF NORTH CAROLINA, CHAPEL HILL
#6	COLLEGE OF WILLIAM AND MARY
#7	GEORGIA INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY
#8	UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, SAN DIEGO
#9	UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, DAVIS
#10	UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, SANTA BARBARA

GRADUATE STUDENT GUIDE

The Graduate School has produced an excellent *Graduate Student Guide* that covers most issues a graduate student might face. This guide covers such important issues as the campus policy on sexual harassment, diversity, registration and enrollment, tuition and fees, financial aid, the policies and procedures of the Graduate School, physical and mental health resources, and the city of Davis.

Rather than duplicating the information in this guide, we ask that all graduate students in Communication download and read it. For your convenience we have placed it on the Department's website. Download the *Graduate Student Guide* from this webpage:

<http://communication.ucdavis.edu/graduate/graduate-schools-graduate-student-guide>

People

PROGRAM ADMINISTRATIVE PERSONNEL

Department and Program Chair.....	Robert A. Bell
Graduate Advisor	Bo Feng
Executive Committee	Bo Feng (Chair), Cuihua "Cindy" Shen, Laramie Taylor
Graduate Program Coordinator	Cat Huff
Department Chief Administrative Officer	Cindy Simmons

PROGRAM FACULTY

GEORGE A. BARNETT, Distinguished Professor (Ph.D., Michigan State University, 1976)

Communication networks, social and semantic network analysis, and global telecommunication networks; organizational communication; diffusion of innovations.

ROBERT A. BELL, Professor and Chair (Ph.D., University of Texas at Austin, 1984)

Health communication, including physician-patient communication, patient online information seeking, language and health messaging, media and health, and direct-to-consumer advertising of pharmaceuticals.

JAEHO CHO, Associate Professor (Ph.D., University of Wisconsin—Madison, 2005)

Political communication, focusing on how people process campaign messages and under what conditions information and communication contribute to an informed citizenry and a vibrant democracy.

BO FENG, Associate Professor & Graduate Adviser (Ph.D., Purdue University, 2006)

Supportive communication in face-to-face and virtual environments, physician-patient communication, cross-cultural communication.

MARTIN HILBERT, Assistant Professor (Ph.D., University of Southern California, 2012; Ph.D., FAU, 2006)

Complex social systems and networks in the digital age; digital communication and international development; social evolution and information theory; big data and computational social science.

NICHOLAS A. PALOMARES, Associate Professor (Ph.D. University of California, Santa Barbara, 2005)

Message production and processing as they pertain to language and conversation, with particular emphases on goal pursuit, goal understanding, and language and gender.

JORGE PEÑA, Associate Professor (Ph.D., Cornell University, 2007)

Computer-mediated communication, cognition and behavior in video games and virtual worlds, online impression formation, content and automated linguistic analysis.

CUIHUA (CINDY) SHEN, Assistant Professor (Ph.D., University of Southern California, 2010)

The structure, evolution and impact of social networks in virtual worlds and online communities. Digital social research using behavioral log data ("big data") along with survey and experimental data.

LARAMIE D. TAYLOR, Associate Professor (Ph.D., University of Michigan, 2005)

Media processes and effects, particularly those pertaining to social interaction, including aggression, sexual and romantic relationships, and fanship for fictional texts.

NARINE S. YEGIYAN, Associate Professor (Ph.D., Indiana University, 2008)

Neurobiological foundation of mediated message processing; cognition and emotion interactions; encoding and retrieval of central and peripheral details of mediated messages.

MENTORING

Graduate students develop into productive scholars in the context of mentoring relationships with their faculty. Mentoring is not something that the faculty member does for the student. It is a collaboration that places responsibility on both the faculty member and the student. We have adopted the mentoring policy of the University of California, Davis as our Department's statement on this important issue:

Graduate Council recognizes that the mentoring of graduate students by faculty is an integral part of the graduate experience for both. Faculty mentoring is broader than advising a student as to the program of study to fulfill coursework requirements and is distinct from formal instruction in a given discipline.

Mentoring encompasses more than serving as a role model. Because of the uncertainty as to the nature of mentoring, the UC-Davis Graduate Council has outlined the following mentoring roles to guide the relationship between faculty and graduate students. Faculty and graduate students must realize that, while the major professor will be the primary mentor during a student's career at UCD, many of the mentoring "functions" defined below may be performed by program faculty other than the major professor. An important corollary to this recognition is that faculty members must realize that much of their interaction with all students has an important mentoring component to it.

Graduate students also have responsibilities to insure successful mentoring and these are also indicated below.

Faculty have a responsibility to mentor graduate students. Mentoring has been defined as:

- I. Guiding students through degree requirements. This means:
 1. Providing a clear map of program requirements from the beginning, making clear the nature of the coursework requirements and qualifying examination, and defining a timeline for their completion.
 2. Providing clear guidelines for starting and finishing dissertation or thesis work, including encouraging the timely initiation of the dissertation or thesis research.
- II. Guiding students through thesis or dissertation research. This means:
 1. Evaluating clearly the strengths and weaknesses of the student's research.
 2. Encouraging an open exchange of ideas, including pursuit of the student's ideas.
 3. Checking regularly on progress.
 4. Critiquing written work.
 5. Providing and discussing clear criteria for authorship of collaborative research.
 6. Assisting in finding sources to support dissertation research; such as, teaching assistantships, research assistantships, fellowships, etc.
 7. Being aware of student's research needs and providing assistance in obtaining required resources. For example, serve as the student's advocate for necessary desk and/or laboratory space.
- III. Guiding students through professional development. This means:
 1. Providing guidance and serving as a role model for upholding the highest ethical standards.
 2. Treating students respectfully.
 3. Encouraging and critiquing oral and written presentations.
 4. Encouraging participation in professional meetings of regional groups as well as of learned societies.
 5. Facilitating interactions with other scholars, on campus and in the wider professional community.
 6. Assistance with applications for research funding, fellowship applications, and other applications as appropriate for the respective discipline.
 7. Being the student's advocate in academic and professional communities.
 8. Providing career guidance, specifically assistance in preparation of CV and job interviews, and writing letters of recommendation in a timely manner.
 9. Recognizing and giving value to the idea that there are a variety of career options available to the student in her/his/your field of interest and accepting that the student's choice of career options is worthy of your support. For example, guiding the student to teaching opportunities when appropriate for the student's goals.

As partners in the mentoring relationship, graduate students have responsibilities. As mentees, students should:

- I. Be aware of their own mentoring needs and how they change through their graduate tenure. Graduate students should discuss these changing needs with their mentors.
- II. Recognize that one faculty member may not be able to satisfy all of a student's mentoring needs. Seek assistance from multiple individuals/organizations to fulfill the mentoring roles described above.
- III. Recognize that their mentoring needs must respect their mentor's other responsibilities and time commitments.
- IV. Maintain and seek regular communication with their mentors, especially their major professor.

While we have tried to provide examples of what mentoring means, we recognize that each discipline will provide its own special set of mentoring needs and challenges. We recommend that each graduate program meet to define what "good mentoring" means to and for its faculty and graduate students.

**Approved by UC Davis Graduate Council
June 24, 1999**

FUNDING YOUR EDUCATION

DEPARTMENT FINANCIAL SUPPORT

Teaching Assistantships

We are fortunate to be able to fund most of our doctoral students through teaching assistantships. Teaching assistants typically lead discussion sections in one of our two lower-division basic communication classes (CMN 1 and CMN 3). As our students gain experience in teaching, they may be assigned to upper-division classes. We are sometimes able to give our most skilled and advanced students the opportunity to teach their own standalone upper-division class.

Teaching assistantships are awarded on the basis of promise (in the case of new students) and performance as a student and teacher (in the case of our continuing students). A teaching assistantship will NOT be renewed in any of the following conditions: (a) the student's GPA has fallen below 3.4; (b) the student has eight or more units of incomplete grades outstanding; (c) the student is not making normal progress toward the degree; (d) the student has performed unsatisfactorily in teaching-related assignments; (e) a financial exigency occurs, making funds unavailable.

Readerships

"Readers" are students who receive an hourly wage to grade assignments and examinations in undergraduate classes. Readers may not be paid for time spent attending lectures. Readers are never used to evaluate the work of other graduate students. Nor can a student be a reader in a class in which he or she is enrolled.

Conference Travel Support

The Department funds graduate student conference travel when it has the resources to do so. At present, graduate students are given \$500 for domestic conference travel and \$1000 for travel to an international conference. Support is capped at two trips per academic year and a total of \$1500. The student must be

an author or co-author on a paper or poster to receive travel support. This policy is reviewed each year by the Department Chair and the Department's Chief Administrative Officer and changes are made based on the availability of funds.

Small Grants Awards

M.A. and Ph.D. students in Communication who have not yet advanced to candidacy may apply for up to \$500 in funding for research in the 2015-2016 academic year. Students who have advanced to candidacy are not eligible because their dissertation research is supported through a different mechanism. These funds are meant to support a specific research project under the supervision of (or in collaboration with) a member of the graduate program faculty. These grants will typically be used to fund supplies, materials, software, photocopying, and/or online respondent samples (e.g., Mturk). Conference travel is not funded by this grant. The application form can be found in the GRADUATE section of the Department's website.

Dissertation Research

In recent years the Department has been able to provide students who have advanced to candidacy support for their dissertation research through funds provided by the Division of Social Sciences. These awards have been in excess of \$1000 per student. Although there are no guarantees, we are optimistic that these funds will be available in the future.

Funding Through Faculty Grants

Members of the faculty often obtain funds for research through extramural grants from the National Institutes of Health, the National Science Foundation, private foundations, and other sources. These grants sometimes include funds for graduate student research assistants. The faculty member with such resources typically selects a graduate student to receive these resources based on the particular requirements of the funded project and the skills and training of the student.

GRADUATE STUDIES FINANCIAL SUPPORT

Graduate Fellowships

The Graduate Studies Office offers a variety of fellowships of varying amounts. Information about these fellowships can be found on the Graduate Studies fellowship webpage:

<https://gradstudies.ucdavis.edu/current-students/financial-support/internal-fellowships/about>

UC Davis Graduate Student Travel Awards

The Graduate Studies office accepts applications for grants in support of graduate student travel to professional meetings. There are application deadlines for fall and spring. Consult the Travel Awards website for details:

<https://gradstudies.ucdavis.edu/current-students/financial-support/internal-fellowships/travel-awards>

Financial Aid Office

The Financial Aid Office at UC Davis has an Emergency and Short-Term Loans program for graduate students. Their office is 1100 Dutton Hall.

<http://financialaid.ucdavis.edu/graduate/apply.html>

PLANNED EDUCATIONAL LEAVE PROGRAM (PELP)

Life happens. Student and their loved ones get sick or injured. The University's Planned Educational Leave Program (PELP) allows students to temporarily suspend their student activities at UC Davis for up to one year with guaranteed readmission. Application for the program is made through the Department. The Graduate Advisor and Graduate Coordinator can provide more information about this program. For more information, including deadlines and the application process, visit the PELP website at this location:

<https://registrar.ucdavis.edu/registration/leave/pelp.cfm>

If you are an International Student with F-1 or J-1 status, your immigration status may be adversely affected by a planned educational leave. You should obtain guidance from the Services for International Students & Scholars (SISS) office before submitting a PELP application.

PH.D. PROGRAM

ADMISSIONS REQUIREMENTS

Admission into the Ph.D. program is highly competitive. Decisions are based on a review of each applicant's preparation and past academic records. Applications are submitted online through the Office of Graduate Studies:

<https://gradstudies.ucdavis.edu/prospective-students/apply-online>

Students may apply to the doctoral program without a Master's degree. The students we admit to the doctoral program will typically petition for the M.A. degree once all requirements of the Master's program have been satisfied.

When reviewing applications, we consider the following factors:

- Grade Point Average (GPA).
 - UC Davis requires a minimum GPA of 3.0. The grade point average of the students we admit has been considerably higher than this minimum requirement, however.
 - We consider the GPA of any graduate-level work that a student has undertaken.
- Graduate Record Examination Scores (general test). The Department expects applicants to score at least in the 50th percentile in both Verbal and Quantitative portions of the GRE.
- Three letters of recommendation, which should be submitted online during the application process.
- Samples of written work (at least one original essay).
- A personal statement that includes:

- An applicant's description of her or his background and why she or he wishes to pursue advanced studies in Communication.
- A description of why the applicant wishes to study Communication in our program.
- A description of the kinds of issues the applicant wishes to explore (or, at minimum, the area upon which she or he would like to focus). Where possible, applicants are asked to identify the specific faculty member(s) whose work comes closest to their interests.
- Students will sometimes be asked to have a phone or Skype interview with a member of the faculty when we feel we need more information about the student's interests or background.
- All international students who do not speak English as their first language must submit an official TOEFL score. The university standard for a minimum acceptable TOEFL score is 550 (paper-based exam), 213 (computer-based exam), or 80 (Internet-based test). Communication, however, requires higher scores 100 (Internet-based test) because communication skills (reading, writing, listening and speaking) are an essential component of our program. International students must have a minimum of 26 on their TOEFL speaking test in order to qualify for employment as a TA. If admitted, an international student will also be required by the University to complete an English proficiency examination upon arrival at the university; and as a result of this exam, may be required to take additional courses in the English language.

Remedial Work Requirements

Applicants' transcripts will be reviewed by the Program's Executive Committee to identify any deficiencies in training. If admitted, the student will be notified of any remedial coursework that must be taken during the course of his or her first year of study. Accomplished students who did not major in Communication as an undergraduate are strongly encouraged to apply, but may be required to take undergraduate courses at Davis prior to enrolling in our graduate courses.

Please note that all students are expected to have completed an undergraduate course in inferential statistics prior to enrolling in the program's required graduate-level methodology courses. Students who did not complete such a course as an undergraduate will be expected to correct this deficiency in the first quarter of residency.

On occasion, a deficiency may be identified after the student has begun the program. An example would be the case of an international student in need of additional ESL instruction. The program will work with students in these kinds of situations to develop a strategy to address such issues.

Full-Time Status

Success in graduate school is a full-time endeavor. We do not usually admit part-time students into the program. Full-time status requires continuous enrollment in no less than 12 units of coursework a quarter.

NORMATIVE TIME TO DEGREE

The normative time from matriculation to degree is four years of full-time study. Students who enter with deficiencies that need to be remediated may need more time to complete the program's requirements.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Communication Theory Requirements (16 Units)

All students must complete the following communication theory courses:

CMN 201	Communication Theory (4)
CMN 202	Theory Development in Communication Inquiry (4)
CMN 230	Social Interaction Theory and Research (4)
CMN 240	Mediated Communication Theory and Research (4)

Research Methods (20 Units)

All students must complete the following communication research methodology courses:

CMN 210	Experimental Methods (4)
CMN 211	Survey Methods (4)

In addition, all students must complete one of the following 12-unit statistics sequences, earning no less than the grade of B in each course:

Option A:

POL 211	Research Methods in Political Science (4)
POL 212	Quantitative Analysis in Political Science (4)
POL 213	Quantitative Analysis in Political Science (4)

Option B:

PSC 204A	Statistical Analysis of Psychological Experiments (4)
PSC 204B	Causal Modeling of Correlational Data (4)
PSC 204C	Applied Psychometrics and Measurement Theory (4)

Option C:

SOC 206	Quantitative Analysis in Sociology (4)
SOC 207A-B	Methods of Quantitative Research (4, 4)

Emphasis Electives (12 Units)

Students must select 12 units of coursework (typically 3 courses) in their area of emphasis, in consultation with their major professor.

General Electives (8 Units)

Students must take an additional 8 units of elective course work from within or outside the Department of Communication, selected in consultation with their major professor and with the approval of the Graduate Advisor.

Teaching Requirement

All students assigned to a teaching role must complete CMN 396 (Teaching Assistant Training Practicum) (1-4 Units). Units earned in this course may not be counted toward the satisfaction of degree unit requirements.

QUALIFYING EXAMINATION

Overview

The qualifying examination will consist of a written examination followed by an oral examination. The examining committee will evaluate the written examination before the oral examination takes place; however, the student will receive an evaluation of the qualifying examination only after completing the oral examination. The oral examination will serve two purposes. First, the student will be given the opportunity to clarify any answers deemed to be problematic on the written examination. Second, the student will be required to expand answers given to the written questions.

Written Examination

The written examination will be conducted in two primary areas: (1) general theory and research methods, and (2) the student's area of specialization, social interaction or mediated communication. Questions asked in the general theory and methods examination will assay the degree to which the student is conversant with significant theories across the communication discipline and the extent to which the student is able to design research to test these theories. Questions posed in the student's area of specialization will assess the students' command of both theory and bodies of research germane to that area. Consistent with UC Davis Graduate Council Policy (Revised 1 February 2006), a qualifying examination committee consisting of five (5) members, at least three (3) of whom will be members of the student's graduate program and at least one (1) of whom will be external to the student's program, will devise the questions. Students will be given 48 hours to complete each area examination. The two area examinations should be taken during successive weeks. Before undertaking the written examinations, the student will be told the general areas in which the questions will be asked.

Oral Examination

The oral examination will take place within one month after written examinations are completed. The same committee members who read the written examination responses will conduct the oral examination. At the conclusion of the oral examination, the committee may elect one of three outcomes: Pass, Not Pass, or Fail.

- Those receiving a *Pass* can be admitted to candidacy.
- Those receiving a *Not Pass* will be given the opportunity to retake all or part of the examination and complete any additional requirements. An exact timetable for completing these tasks will be stipulated. If the retake is satisfactorily completed, the student can be admitted to candidacy.
- If the retake is judged to be unsatisfactory, the student will receive a *Fail* for the entire examination. Students will be permitted to retake the examination only once. A student who receives a Fail on either the first administration of the qualifying examination or in response to

the retake as part of the Not Pass option will be awarded a terminal M.A. in Communication, provided all requirements for the M. A. degree have been satisfactorily completed.

Advancement to Candidacy

The student must file for advancement to candidacy for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy immediately after passing the qualifying examination. Filing for candidacy should take place no later than the end of the student's third year of study. At this point, the student and his or her major professor will submit the membership of the student's dissertation committee to the Graduate Advisor for approval. Upon approval, the Graduate Advisor will forward the committee nomination to the Dean of Graduate Studies for final approval.

DISSERTATION AND FINAL ORAL EXAMINATION

The Ph.D. in Communication is a "Plan C" degree. This plan requires a written dissertation and a final oral examination. These requirements are overseen by a dissertation committee composed of no less than three faculty members. The Graduate Council describes Plan C as follows:

Plan C. The Graduate Council shall appoint a committee of a minimum of 3 members, including its Chair. This committee will be designated as the Dissertation and Final Examination Committee and the chair of this committee will be the candidate's major professor. This Committee shall determine whether the candidate has met the requirements for the degree, in accordance with the following procedure:

- (a) The committee members shall guide the candidate in his or her research and shall pass upon the merits of the dissertation. The committee and the candidate shall arrange for such conferences as may be necessary for the complete elucidation of the subject treated in the dissertation.
- (b) A final oral examination, as described below in section (E), shall be required.
- (c) There is no exit seminar requirement for this plan.

The Dissertation

A dissertation is a research project that can consist of a single, major study or a programmatic series of smaller studies. Given our program's focus on quantitative communication research methods, our students' dissertation research typically employs experimental procedures, survey research methods, content analysis (manual or computer-assisted), network analysis, and/or an emerging method from the computational social sciences. It is not uncommon for a dissertation to be comprised of multiple studies that rely upon different but compatible methods. Whether the dissertation is based on one investigation or several, the research must be founded upon a clear line of thought that addresses an important question or tests a specific thesis.

Your dissertation must be prepared following the principles and standards of academic writing, as well as a widely accepted style; most dissertations in our program are written in accordance with the APA style manual (<http://www.apastyle.org/>).

The dissertation will typically be divided into chapters. For example, a dissertation based on a single investigation will usually consist of four chapters, titled *Introduction*, *Methods*, *Results*, and *Discussion*. A dissertation that reports three smaller studies might be divided into five chapters, titled *Introduction*, *Study 1*, *Study 2*, *Study 3*, *General Discussion*. The Dissertation and Final Oral Examination Committee will work with the student to identify the structure that best satisfies the student's specific project.

The Final Oral Examination

Procedures for the Final Oral Examination are established by the Graduate Council as reported verbatim here:

- (1) All members of the Dissertation and Final Examination Committee shall conduct a final oral examination of the candidate. This examination shall be held after oral presentation of the dissertation to the Dissertation Committee but before final action has been taken on it. The final oral examination shall consist primarily of questions arising out of the relationship of the dissertation to the general field of study in which the subject of the dissertation lies.
- (2) Admission to the final oral examination may be restricted, wholly or in part, at the discretion of the Graduate Program. If admission is restricted, it shall include all members of the Dissertation and Final Examination Committee and may include other members of the Academic Senate and/or guests of equivalent rank at other institutions.

ADVISING

Advising is provided by the student's major professor and committee, as well as by the program's Graduate Advisor. Guidance on administrative procedures can also be obtained from the program's Graduate Coordinator.

Each student is assigned a temporary academic advisor upon admission into the program. This appointment is made by the program's Graduate Advisor in consultation with the student. An effort is made to match each student with the faculty members whose interests best converge with the student's goals and objectives. A permanent academic advisor (major professor) must be selected by the student no later than the end of the fall quarter of his or her first year of study.

The major professor assists the student with a plan of study and supervises the student's research and progress toward satisfying degree requirements. The major professor also serves as Chair of the student's Dissertation and Final Oral Examination Committee.

It is not unusual for a student's interests to evolve, even after a permanent advisor has been selected, such that a change in advisors is indicated. A change can be made with the approval of the program's Graduate Advisor.

PROGRESS TOWARD DEGREE

Students should normally complete the degree in four academic years of full-time study. To be making adequate progress toward the degree, the following should be completed:

- By the end of the first quarter in the program, select a major professor.

- By the beginning of the fourth quarter in the program, select your Committee.
- By the beginning of the fourth quarter in the program, create a Plan of Study outlining the program of graduate study.
- By the end of the 8th quarter in the program, pass the qualifying examinations and advance to candidacy.

M.A. PROGRAM

ADMISSIONS REQUIREMENTS

The admissions requirements into the MA program are similar to those for the Ph.D. program. Favorable consideration in admission and funding decisions will be given to MA applicants who demonstrate potential and intention to further pursue a Ph.D. degree either within this program or at a different institution.

Remedial Work Requirements

Applicants' transcripts will be reviewed by the Program's Executive Committee to identify any deficiencies in training. If admitted, the student will be notified of any remedial coursework that must be taken during the course of his or her first year of study. Accomplished students who did not major in Communication as an undergraduate are strongly encouraged to apply but may be required to take undergraduate courses at Davis prior to enrolling in our graduate courses.

Please note that all students are expected to have completed an undergraduate course in inferential statistics prior to enrolling in the program's required graduate-level methodology courses. Students who did not complete such a course as an undergraduate will be expected to correct this deficiency in the first quarter of residency.

Full-Time Status

Success in graduate school is a full-time endeavor. We do not usually admit part-time students into the program. Full-time status requires continuous enrollment in no less than 12 units of coursework a quarter.

NORMATIVE TIME TO DEGREE

Students are generally expected to complete the M.A. degree in two years (6 quarters). Students will be allowed to extend their studies into the third year only in the most exceptional of circumstances. Such an extension requires the written approval of the student's M.A. advisor and the program's Graduate Advisor.

If you are considering making a request for an exception to the normative time policy, please keep in mind that most members of the faculty are not under contract with the University during the summer months and are often out of town or unavailable during the summer months.

ADVISING

Advising is provided by the student's advisor and committee, as well as by the program's Graduate Advisor. Guidance on administrative procedures can also be obtained from the program's Graduate Coordinator.

Each student is assigned a temporary academic advisor upon admission into the program. This appointment is made by the program's Graduate Advisor in consultation with the student. An effort is made to match each student with the faculty members whose interests best converge with the student's goals and objectives. A permanent academic advisor must be selected by the student no later than the end of the fall quarter of his or her first year of study.

The M.A. advisor assists the student with a plan of study and supervises the student's research and progress toward satisfying degree requirements. The M.A. advisor also serves as Chair of the student's M.A. committee.

It is not unusual for a student's interests to evolve, even after a permanent advisor has been selected, such that a change in advisors is indicated. A change can be made with the approval of the program's Graduate Advisor.

M.A. COMMITTEE

Each student has her or his own M.A. Committee, typically composed of program faculty members with expertise that closely converges with the student's interests. The M.A. Committee generally consists of the student's M.A. advisor and two other members of the Program's ladder faculty. With the approval of the student's advisor, the student's committee may include one member who is not a member of the program's faculty, provide that this fourth member holds a professorial or adjunct professorial title at UC Davis. Lecturers who are members of the UC Davis Academic Senate may serve on the student's committee (i.e., Lecturer PSOE or Lecturer SOE).

DEGREE REQUIREMENTS

The program offers two tracks toward the M.A. degree: thesis (Plan 1) and non-thesis (Plan II). Both plans require two years of study. Most students will be earning the M.A. en route to the Ph.D. and will thus be strongly encouraged to pursue Plan 1, which requires thesis research. Students who decide that doctoral studies are not for them are strongly encouraged to opt for Plan II, which is often – although certainly not always – the preferred option for students who anticipate a career in business or government.

Required Courses (Plans 1 and 2)

Required courses are the same for Plan 1 and Plan 2. Both plans specify that the student take 12 units of electives (typically three courses) from within the graduate course offerings of Communication. The one difference is that Plan 2 students will take an additional 8 units of graduate-level electives from within or beyond the Department in lieu of writing a thesis. Please note that CMN 299, 299R and 396 do not satisfy program coursework requirements.

The two plans are compared in the table below.

Course Requirement	Plan 1 (Thesis)	Plan 2 (Non-thesis)
Required: CMN 201, 210, 211, 220.....	16 Units	16 Units
Communication Electives	12 Units	12 Units
General Electives	4 Units	12 Units
Total:	32 Units	40 Units

Thesis Option (Plan 1)

Students selecting the thesis option complete 32 units of course work (usually 8 courses) and prepare a thesis. The thesis is a written report of an empirical research project that addresses an important issue in communication. Theses within the program are generally expected to be data-based and theory-driven projects. Data may be generated by the student using one or more of the traditional or emerging methods of the social sciences (survey research, experimental methods, content analysis, computational research). Alternatively, students may opt to take advantage of an existing data source (secondary data analysis). The thesis is often a collaboration between the student's Advisor and the student, with the student being primarily responsible for executing the study and writing the thesis report.

The department does not have a required format for the thesis proposal, as research methods and approaches are too varied for a standardized requirement. However, the typical proposal, which must be submitted to the M.A. Committee for approval before data collection is initiated, will include the following sections:

- Review of relevant research, including a theoretical rationale for the proposed study.
- Hypotheses or research questions.
- A description of the methods and instruments to be employed.
- A description of the statistical methods to be used to test the hypotheses.

Plan 1 students are encouraged to think about the scope and topic of their thesis early in their program. Keep in mind as well that thesis research involving human subjects will require review and approval by the University's Institutional Review Board (IRB). Approval by the IRB can take several weeks to obtain.

There is no required length for a thesis; your major professor and committee will provide guidance on what should be included. The thesis must conform to the University's formatting requirements, a copy of which is available from the Graduate Coordinator.

The thesis will be defended by the student before the M.A. Committee in a thesis defense meeting. The best way to ensure a successful outcome is to interact often and in detail with all members of the committee throughout the thesis research endeavor. The committee has the option of accepting the thesis, accepting it with revision, or rejecting it.

Non-thesis Option (Plan 2)

Students on the non-thesis option must complete 40 units of coursework (typically 10 courses) and pass a comprehensive examination which includes written and oral components.

Responsibility for preparing and evaluating a student's comprehensive examination is assumed by the student's M.A. Advisor and Committee. At the discretion of the Advisor, questions may be solicited and evaluated by other members of the program faculty. As students' programs of study differ, so too will the scope and nature of their comprehensive examination.

Students on Plan 2 should meet with their M.A. Committees in the Spring Quarter of their first year of study to discuss the nature of their examination and develop a study plan for preparing for it. Students are reminded that they will be enrolled in directed study (CMN 299) throughout the duration of their studies to provide ample opportunity for preparation for the examination. Comprehensive examinations in the program consist of two components: a written examination (essay) and an oral examination.

Written Comprehensive Examination

The format for the written examination can include a "sit down" essay examination, a "take home" essay assignment, or some combination of each format. The student's Advisor and M.A. Committee, in consultation with the student, will determine the most appropriate format. At minimum, every student's written examination will cover the core theories and methodologies that define the subdisciplines of social interaction and mediated communication. These theories and methodologies are covered in the core classes and other coursework. It must be stressed, however, that the examinations will go beyond the scope of these courses to address topics that any "master" of communication should reasonably be expected to know. Students will surely be tested, for example, on current trends and controversies in the field. These examinations often ask the student to integrate issues covered across courses and apply theories and principles to new situations. Each examination will also address the student's primary interest area. Evaluation of the written component of the examination will be the responsibility of the student's M.A. Advisor and M.A. Committee. All written components of the examination must be acceptable to the Committee. The student's M.A. Committee has the option of requiring a rewrite of unacceptable work. Only one revision of written work is permitted. If the student's revised written work is judged to be unacceptable by the M.A. Committee, the student is dropped from the program.

Oral Comprehensive Examination

The student advances to the oral comprehensive examination only after all written work is judged by his or her M.A. Committee to be of acceptable quality. The oral examination has the format of a cross-examination, in which students are asked to defend or expand upon their written examination answers. Students will also be asked questions about issues about which any "master" of communication should reasonably be expected to have knowledge. These examinations are open to all members of the Program's faculty and student body. At the conclusion of the cross-examination, the student and others in attendance will be asked to leave the room. The Committee will then confer and make a determination of whether the student has passed or failed the oral examination. Once a decision has been made, the student will be called back into the room and told of the Committee's evaluation by the M.A. Advisor. At the sole discretion of the student's M.A. Committee, a second oral examination may be scheduled if a student fails on the first attempt. If the student's performance is unacceptable for a second time, the student will be dropped from the program.

Exam Scheduling

The written component of the comprehensive examination must be administered no later than the last weekday of the month of April of the student's second year of study. Oral examinations must be scheduled no later than the last weekday of the month of May of the student's second year of study.

Graduate Courses in Communication

What follows is a list of graduate courses in communication currently in the curriculum of the Department of Communication. We offer no guarantees that the courses listed below will necessarily be offered during your residence at UC Davis. Courses are scheduled based on student demand, the availability of faculty, and Department resources.

201. Theoretical Perspectives on Strategic Communication (4)

Seminar—4 hours. Prerequisite: graduate standing; consent of instructor. Explores the intentional use of discourse and nonverbal behavior to reach goals. Explores theories and models that elucidate the processes that enable the realization of intentions in message plans and discourse.

202. Communication Theory Construction (4)

Seminar—4 hours. Prerequisite: consent of instructor; graduate standing. Alternative meta-theoretical perspectives for theory generation in communication inquiry. Processes of construct explication, operationalization and theory construction. Emphasis on the critique of extant communication theories and the development of theory construction skills. Offered irregularly.

203. Scientific Methods for Communication (4)

Seminar—3 hours; term paper. Prerequisite: 201, 202, Psychology 204A, 204B or equivalent. Social scientific research methods commonly employed in Communication. Topics include research design measurement sampling questionnaire construction survey research experimental design evaluation research content analysis and qualitative field methods.

210. Experimental Methods and Analysis in Communication (4)

Lecture—4 hours. Prerequisite: graduate standing; one course in inferential statistics; consent of instructor. Experimental designs in communication. Topics include: causation; threats to validity; conceptualization, operationalization, and measurement; hypothesis testing; ethics; data analysis software focusing on the analysis of variance and planned contrasts; and the practical and effective implementation and writing of experiments.

211. Survey Research Methods in Communication (4)

Seminar—4 hours. Prerequisite: graduate standing; one course in inferential statistics; consent of instructor. Methods for designing personal interview, phone, mail, and web-based surveys in communication. Topics include: sampling strategies, sources of error and bias in survey designs, questionnaire construction, cognitive interviewing, interviewer behavior, and analysis of complex survey data using standard software packages.

220. Persuasion Theories and Message Design (4)

Seminar—4 hours. Prerequisite: graduate standing; consent of instructor. Major social scientific theories and perspectives on attitude change and persuasion. Application of persuasion theories and principles to persuasive message design in applied contexts.

221. Communication and Cognition (4)

Seminar—4 hours. Prerequisite: graduate standing; consent of instructor. Explores the cognitive structures and processes that enable the production, comprehension and interpretation of messages in face-to-face and mediated communication contexts. Explores the communication outcomes associated with these processes. Offered in alternate years.

222. Risk Communication (4)

Seminar—4 hours. Prerequisite: graduate standing; consent of instructor. Theories and models of individual risk information processing. Media depictions of threats and risk-related information and their potential effects on audiences. Implications for the design and implementation of messages concerning threat and risk. Offered irregularly.

230. Social Interaction Theory and Research (4)

Seminar—4 hours. Prerequisite: graduate standing; consent of instructor. Survey of theories and research on social interaction and interpersonal communication. Covers communication codes, individual differences in communication, communication and relationship development, family communication, conflict, cognitive and emotional processes underlying social interaction, social influence, intercultural communication, and nonverbal behavior.

231. Tactics of Interpersonal Influence (4)

Seminar—4 hours. Prerequisite: graduate standing; consent of instructor. Achievement of interpersonal goals in social interaction. Topics include message production; tactics, strategies and planning; anticipating potential obstacles; resisting and thwarting goals; plan recognition; and goal detection. Examined goals include compliance gaining, attitude change, ingratiation, information seeking, comforting, and deception. Offered in alternate years.

232. Health Communication (4)

Seminar—3 hours; term paper. Prerequisite: graduate standing or consent of instructor. Health communication theories and research traditions. Topics include consumer health information seeking; physician-patient interaction; information, social marketing, “edutainment,” and media advocacy campaigns; social networks and coping; media influences on health; and new communication technologies in health promotion and healthcare delivery. (Same course as Pubic Health Science 232.) Offered in alternate years.

233. Communication in Medicine (4)

Seminar—3 hours; term paper. Restricted to graduate standing. Survey of research on communication between patients and health care providers. Topics include verbal and nonverbal behavior, power and influence, empathy and support, and conflict management. Cultural, social, organizational, and technological influences on communication are examined. Offered in alternate years.

234. Intercultural Communication (4)

Seminar—3 hours; term paper. Restricted to graduate standing. Theories and research on intercultural communication. Topics include national, racial, and ethnic similarities and differences in communication practices; cultural beliefs and values; identity and conflict; and technological influences on intercultural communication. Methodological issues in intercultural communication research are also examined.

243. Media and Health (4)

Seminar—3 hours; term paper. Restricted to graduate standing. Survey of research on media and health. Topics include health news coverage; depictions of health, illness and disability in entertainment; health campaigns; advertising of health products and services; and the influence of gaming and other new media on health behaviors. Offered irregularly.

244. Organizational Communication (4)

Seminar—4 hours. Prerequisite: graduate standing and consent of instructor. Theory and research on communication processes in organizations.

250. Mediated Communication Theory and Research (4)

Seminar—4 hours. Prerequisite: graduate standing; consent of instructor. Survey of major theories on the intended and unintended effects of mediated communication. Topics include media's effects on learning, political behavior, interpersonal violence, sexual socialization, consumer behavior, race relations, gender socialization, and cultural processes.

251. Digital Technology and Social Change (4)

Seminar—4 hours. Conceptual, theoretical, and international consideration of how digital communication technologies transform social organization and development. Topics include social media, big data, political revolutions, e-democracy, digital divide, e-education, e-health, entrepreneurship, public policies, poverty reduction, technological innovations, microfinance, and entertainment.

252. Computer-Mediated Communication (4)

Seminar—4 hours. Prerequisite: graduate standing; consent of instructor. The effects of computer-mediated communication on the ways in which people express themselves, form impressions about strangers, develop and maintain relationships, collaborate on group work, and expand social network, especially in comparison to face-to-face communication. Offered in alternate years.

254. Communication Campaigns (4)

Seminar—4 hours. Prerequisite: graduate standing; consent of instructor. Strategic uses of media and interpersonal channels to promote social change through social marketing, information, and media advocacy campaigns. Focus on theory-based interventions in a variety of applied contexts. Offered in alternate years.

255. Social Media (4)

Seminar—3 hours; TMP. Theoretical, conceptual and analytic issues pertaining to social media research. Topics include motivation, participation, virality, and social-technical capital. Examination of social media in various contexts. Introduction to online behavioral data collection and analysis methods.

256. Communication Perspective on Video Games (4)

Seminar—3 hours; TMP. Review of theory and research on the uses and effects of video games and virtual environments developed for entertainment and education. Study of the research methods available for documenting and measuring game use and effects on behavior.

259. Cognitive Approaches to Media (4)

Seminar—3 hours; TMP. Interdisciplinary examination of cognitive approaches to mediated communication. Application of studies on mediated message processing, cognitive and emotional information processing, psychophysiology, and neuroscience to mass communication. Review of media research and methods on attention, memory, motivation, and limited capacity

270. Diffusion of Innovations (4)

Seminar—3 hours; TMP. Communication processes by which information and innovations spread through social systems. Models of diffusion, including spatial, network, time dependent, semantic and cognitive frameworks. Impact of communication technologies on diffusion. Practical application of diffusion models in a variety of contexts.

271. Communication Networks (4)

Seminar—3 hours; TMP. Theoretical, conceptual, and analytic issues pertaining to network perspectives on communicating and organizing. Consideration of both structural and dynamic features of communication networks. Examination of the impact of emerging technologies on communication networks. Introduction to network analysis software.

280. Special Topics in Social Interaction (4)

Seminar—4 hours. Prerequisite: graduate standing; consent of instructor. Reading, discussion, research, and writing on a selected topic in the specialty of social interaction. May be repeated for credit when topic differs. Offered irregularly.

281. Special Topics in Mediated Communication (4)

Seminar—4 hours. Prerequisite: graduate standing; consent of instructor. Reading, discussion, research, and writing on a selected topic in the specialty of mediated communication. May be repeated for credit when topic differs. Offered irregularly.

282. Special Topics in Health Communication (4)

Seminar—4 hours. Prerequisite: graduate standing; consent of instructor. Reading, discussion, research and writing on a focused topic in health communication. May be repeated for credit when topic differs. (Same course as Epidemiology and Preventive Medicine 282). Offered irregularly.

283. Special Topics in Organizational Communication (4)

Seminar—4 hours. Prerequisite: graduate standing; consent of instructor. Reading, discussion, research, and writing on a selected topic in the specialty of organizational communication. May be repeated for credit when topic differs. Offered irregularly.

298. Group Study (1-5)

Lecture—3 hours. (S/U grading only.)

299. Individual Study (1-12)

(S/U grading only.)

299R. Thesis Research (1-12)

Independent study—3-36 hours. Prerequisite: graduate standing in Communication. (S/U grading only.)

396. Teaching Assistant Training Practicum (1-4)

Prerequisite: graduate standing. May be repeated for credit. (S/U grading only.)