



**NORTHERN ARIZONA UNIVERSITY**

***MASTER of ARTS in APPLIED COMMUNICATION***

**GUIDELINES for GRADUATE STUDENTS**

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## DESCRIPTION OF GRADUATE PROGRAM

### *INTRODUCTION*

The Master of Arts in Applied Communication (MAAC) is managed by the Speech Communication program at Northern Arizona University. The M.A. in Applied Communication and the Speech Communication program are housed in the School of Communication, a unit within the College of Social and Behavioral Sciences at Northern Arizona University. The M.A. in Applied Communication is designed to provide students with advanced skills in communication analysis, problem solving, critical thinking, research, and written and oral communication.

This handbook is intended as a description of graduate work in the program, as well as a guide to aid you in your progress through the program once you begin. This handbook is only suggestive and is not intended to represent all policies and procedures. Be aware that policies of NAU's Graduate College (see <http://home.nau.edu/gradcol/> for additional information), Northern Arizona University, and the Arizona Board of Regents supercede any material found herein, although every effort is made to insure that this handbook is consistent with university and state policies.

If you need further explanation of anything here, you should contact your graduate advisor or the MAAC Director of Graduate Studies ([comgrad@nau.edu](mailto:comgrad@nau.edu)).

### *GRADUATE STUDY IN COMMUNICATION*

To study communication is to study a variety of forms of human symbolic behavior that occurs in interpersonal, small group, organizational, mediated, and public situations. Communication is central to forming relationships, organizing collective behaviors, maintaining and changing cultures, making sense of our social and natural worlds, and fostering understanding among people; it is a fundamental part of our human nature. The study of human communication is based on the assumption that our ability to communicate in an effective and ethical manner is vital to productive human interaction. Scholars in the discipline of Communication are committed to the idea that exploration of diverse understandings of communicative behavior enriches our participation in an increasingly complex and interdependent global society.

As a student in the M.A. in Applied Communication program, you articulate and test your ideas, develop individual abilities, and gain competence in various communicative settings. You acquire knowledge and methods that apply to nearly every aspect of your private and public lives—in the classroom as well as outside it. In consultation with your advisor, you can design a program to meet your interests and needs. Graduate work in communication is rigorous and challenging. You are required to design, carry out, and present independent research. In doing so, you refine skills in writing, critical thinking

and reasoning, presentation and defense of ideas, application of theory to everyday situations, and research. An advanced degree is proof that you are capable of designing and following through on projects expected of communication experts.

Students who graduate with an M.A. in Applied Communication from Northern Arizona University are fully prepared to enter a doctoral program (in communication or related fields) or to gain employment inside or outside higher education. Our graduate program is small enough to guarantee close contact between faculty and students and large enough to offer a wide variety of experiences for students, including the opportunity to teach, attend and present at professional conferences, and apply classroom knowledge to improve real world situations. The faculty is committed to working closely with you on your graduate projects and assisting you as appropriate to find and qualify for appropriate employment or to select a doctoral program.

As a graduate student, it is your responsibility to consult with your advisor and then plan an appropriate plan of study. You must take the initiative in making sure that your plan meets the requirements of NAU's Graduate College. However, this brochure should give you some direction, and remember—your advisor is available to help, as is the Director of Graduate Studies for the M.A. in Applied Communication.

## **DEGREE REQUIREMENTS AND PROCEDURES**

### *ADMISSION AND ENROLLMENT*

It is not necessary that your undergraduate degree be in communication to be admitted to the M.A. in Applied Communication. Nearly all undergraduate majors are compatible with graduate study in Communication. However, in order to insure appropriate preparation for graduate work, your advisor may require that you take any undergraduate course normally required of undergraduate majors in the field. NAU allows you to take up to two 400-level courses as part of your master's program with prior approval by your program committee. If you have questions, consult with your advisor or the MAAC Director of Graduate Studies.

You should refer to the Graduate College for official information on application and admission procedures (<http://home.nau.edu/gradcol/apply.asp>). In brief, the following are required:

1. An *application form* obtained from Graduate College. When completed, this form must be returned to the Graduate College.
2. Applicants applying as degree-seeking students must request all institutions at which they have taken any post-secondary work to submit an *official transcript* directly to the Graduate College.
3. In addition to the basic application requirements of NAU's Graduate College, the

M.A. in Applied Communication program requires the following items for application:

- An updated *resumé*.
  - A personal *statement of interest* in this degree program (generally 2-3 pages).
  - Three *letters of reference* from individuals who are familiar with your educational, professional, or other experiences, training, and background, and who are in a position to comment upon your preparation and/or suitability for graduate study.
4. If you wish to apply for a *Graduate Teaching Assistantship (GTA)*, your three letters of reference should be from persons familiar with your academic performance. At least two of these letters must be from faculty members and should address your suitability for a teaching assistantship in addition to your suitability for graduate study in communication. In addition, applicants for a teaching assistantship should submit a *writing sample* and a *statement of teaching interest* (generally 1-2 pages). Applicants for Graduate Teaching Assistantships are encouraged to work closely with the MAAC Director of Graduate Studies as they prepare their application materials.
  5. For the M.A. in Applied Communication, you may submit your application materials in hard copy or you may elect to use the Graduate College's online admissions process. Applicants are encouraged to use the online application system when feasible. When it is necessary to submit materials in hard copy, submit the application materials required by the M.A. in Applied Communication directly to the MAAC Director of Graduate Studies.
  6. *Minimum requirement of 3.00 GPA* during your undergraduate work from an accredited university. Students with lower GPAs may be admitted on a conditional basis at departmental discretion.

### **GENERAL DEGREE REQUIREMENTS**

A minimum of thirty-six (36) credit hours is required for graduation with an M.A. in Applied Communication, at least fifteen (15) of which must be in courses numbered 600 or above. To earn a master's degree at NAU, you must complete at least twenty-four (24) credit hours of formal course work selected in consultation with your graduate advisor—that is, courses other than such individualized studies as independent studies, directed readings, and research. Up to nine (9) credit hours of course work outside of Communication (COM) and Speech Communication (SC) may be selected in consultation with your graduate advisor to use in your degree program.

All students are required to take three courses: COM 600 (Communication Theory), COM 601 (Research Methods in Communication), and COM 698 (Seminar in Communication Theory). In addition, Graduate Teaching Assistants are required to

take SC 503 (Classroom Communication). Students must select a thesis or project option (described later in this document). All requirements for the master's degree must be completed within six years.

### *Part-time and Full-time Status*

Students enrolled in the master's program in Applied Communication have the option of attending full- or part-time. Full-time students normally take three or four classes per semester (9-12 credits) for up to four semesters. Part-time students generally take fewer credits, usually one or two classes (3-6 credits) each semester. The School of Communication at NAU is committed to offering a minimum of one web course and one "block" course (in which students meet once a week, seminar style) or web hybrid course (in which online assignments replace some of the traditional classroom time) each semester. Generally the block and web hybrid courses are offered in the late afternoon or evening. In addition, graduate courses are typically offered during the summers, usually by web delivery.

Normally, students who are attending full-time can expect to complete their graduate program in two years, either three or four semesters, depending on the number of credits taken each semester. Part-time students can expect to complete their course work in six to eight semesters (approximately three to four years), again depending on the number of credits taken each semester. Occasionally, with careful planning, a student can complete the program in two summers and two regular semesters.

### *Continuous Enrollment*

Even after you have completed all course requirements for your degree, you may need to use university facilities to carry out a required independent study or research project. For your protection as well as the university's, NAU requires that you be enrolled for credit during any term that you use university facilities or require the professional time of faculty members. Generally, the Graduate College recommends that if you are in residence and using lab or other research facilities and are interacting with your faculty advisor on a regular basis, you should enroll for at least three (3) credits. If you are not on campus but are corresponding with your advisor as you work on your thesis or graduate project, you should enroll for at least one (1) credit. During the term that you complete and defend your thesis or projects, you should enroll for at least three (3) credits to reflect your demands on faculty time.

To avoid having to sign up for additional credits after the term in which you defend, you must submit the final approved copies of your thesis to the Graduate College by the last day of the term in which you complete your defense. If you do not meet this deadline, you must enroll for three (3) credits of thesis (COM 699) credit each term after your defense until you submit your final copies to the Graduate College. For more information, see the Thesis Requirements in the Graduate Degree Requirements section of the NAU academic catalog.

In addition, if you choose to take courses in some terms (semesters) but not others, you should familiarize yourself with NAU's policies regarding continuous enrollment. If you are currently enrolled at NAU or if you have previously attended and have been in attendance for one or more of the previous three fall or spring terms or any intervening summer or winter terms, NAU considers you a continuing student for course enrollment purposes. This means you need not apply for readmission to the university. As a continuing student, you may enroll during any of the published course enrollment periods. If you have not earned credits from NAU for more than three consecutive terms (excluding summer and winter terms), you must apply for readmission to NAU.

If you attend NAU only during summer and/or winter terms, you are considered a continuing student if you attend at least one course in each successive (annual) summer and/or winter term from your point of admission.

### *Time Limits*

You must complete all requirements for your master's degree within a six-year period. If you take courses from other institutions and transfer them to your program at NAU, they must also be taken within the six-year period.

## **UNIVERSITY DEGREE REQUIREMENTS**

### *Enrollment Status*

NAU defines full-time enrollment for graduate students as nine (9) credits during fall and spring terms and the 10-week summer session. The minimum full-time course load is nine (9) credits during fall or spring term, and 16 credits is the maximum (12 credits for graduate assistants). You cannot take more than six (6) credits during any five-week summer session or more than three (3) credits during the pre-session.

You can only carry an overload (more than the maximum units as explained in the previous paragraph) with the approval of your advisor, the Director of the School of Communication, and the Associate Dean of the Graduate College. To enroll for an overload, you must submit the appropriate approval form when you enroll. This form is available from the Graduate College.

### *Transfer Credit and Requirements*

If you have been admitted to our graduate program and have earned resident graduate credit at another institution, you can petition the Graduate College to apply such credit toward your graduate degree.

Transferring credits to a graduate degree program is not done routinely. To be considered for transfer credit, NAU requires that your courses must:

- have been earned at a regionally accredited institution,
- have been earned with a grade of A or B (NAU will accept a pass grade if the course is graded only on a pass-fail basis),
- have been earned within the six-year period required for completing your master's degree at NAU,
- be applicable to a graduate degree at the institution where the credit was earned, and
- meet the Arizona Board of Regents' requirement for credit: A minimum of 45 hours of work is required for each unit of credit (see the Graduate College website [www.nau.edu/gradcol](http://www.nau.edu/gradcol) for specific definitions of "unit" and "contact hours").

Finally, the number of credits you transfer from other institutions cannot exceed twenty-five percent (9 credits) of the total minimum of credits (36 credits) required for your master's degree.

Master's students must complete the Petition for Transfer Credit form. The Graduate College will finalize the transfer credit at the time of admission to candidacy.

### *Grade Point Average Requirements*

If you are working toward a degree, you must maintain a 3.0 grade point average for all courses taken and for all courses required in your plan. No more than six credits of C grades can be counted in a master's degree. A grade below C does not earn graduate credit.

Admission to a program may be denied or revoked for any graduate student who receives unsatisfactory grades. If you have more than six credits of graduate work with a grade of C or below, you cannot continue in your master's plan, regardless of your grade point average.

At the time of graduation, if you have earned a cumulative grade point average of at least 3.9 for all courses taken at NAU on your plan of study, you are recognized with the notation "with distinction" on your transcript.

### *In Progress*

Courses that, by their content and requirements, normally require more time than the term or session for which you have enrolled, can be marked as IP. The following courses are appropriate for the IP grade: independent study (697), independent research (685), project (690), or thesis (699).

You must be making satisfactory progress in the course to receive a grade of IP. In addition, you must complete the work for an IP grade within two calendar years from the end of the term in which you take the course. If you don't complete the work by that



time, the IP grade becomes permanent and may not be changed. Note that you may complete IP grades in thesis (699) until the time limit on your academic plan expires.

### *Incomplete*

If you are unable to complete course work in a scheduled course within the term in which you are enrolled, you may petition your instructor to receive a grade of I. If your instructor agrees to give you an incomplete, you and the instructor must complete a written agreement, a copy of which is held in your departmental file, indicating the exact work you need to do to finish the course.

This written agreement must also indicate the date by which you must complete this work, and that date cannot be longer than one calendar year from the end of the term in which you were enrolled in that course. By the end of the time agreed to in writing, your instructor must submit a grade for the course or the grade remains a permanent incomplete.

### *SELECTING AN ADVISOR AND GRADUATE COMMITTEE*

You will be assigned a temporary advisor during your first semester of enrollment. While you are welcome to seek advice from any member of the Graduate Faculty in Applied Communication, you should select a specific faculty member with whom to work closely in designing and carrying out your plan of graduate study—preferably by the end of your first semester (for full-time students) or by the end of your first year (for part-time students). Select someone whose research interest is in your general area of emphasis as well as someone with whom you feel comfortable. You are not obligated to keep the same advisor for both your course work and your projects/thesis. In general, however, most students try to select the same advisor for both.

Your master's degree project/thesis committee will include at least your graduate advisor (who must be a member of the Applied Communication Graduate Faculty), a second member from the Applied Communication Graduate Faculty, and a third faculty member who may come from within or outside the Applied Communication Graduate Faculty (including faculty both inside and outside of the School of Communication). Both the second and third faculty members must be selected in consultation with your graduate advisor. You should meet with your advisor regularly to discuss your progress and concerns. For the purposes of your thesis or project committee, your graduate advisor fills the role of “chair” of that committee.

### *DEGREE OPTIONS*

Graduate students in the Applied Communication program may select one of two options for completing their degree: the thesis option or the degree projects option. You can register for project (COM 690) or thesis (COM 699) credit during any fall or spring

semester or summer session after receiving permission from your graduate advisor. Completion of the M.A. in Applied Communication requires a minimum of six (6) credits of project or thesis credits.

### *Projects Option*

Students must complete a minimum of twenty-four (24) graduate credits before enrolling in Communication Project (COM 690) and can do so in one semester or in two different semesters. Typically, the project option involves two (2) three (3) credit projects.

Projects must be grounded in scholarship and must have a written component. Projects may include such types as the creation of a workshop, development of a campaign, design of a message source (website, brochure, etc.), or designing and implementing applied research for an organization, or they may take the form of an extended scholarly paper that is appropriate for conference and/or journal submission. In contrast to the thesis option (see below), projects typically focus on the application of existing knowledge from the communication discipline to a specific problem, situation, message, et cetera.

The student should contact his/her graduate advisor and discuss possible topics for two separate communication projects. The advisor and student will agree on two projects and the student will prepare outlines (proposals) that detail the projects' timelines, goals, and outcomes. Note that while two separate projects are required, it is often beneficial for the two projects to be related.

Once the advisor approves the proposals for the two projects, those drafts will be distributed to the entire project committee for review and a project proposal defense meeting will be scheduled. The advisor will seek feedback at this meeting from the student's committee and formally endorse each project proposal if acceptable to the entire committee. Although not typical, in some circumstances two separate project committees may be appropriate.

After committee approval of the project proposals, the student continues to work closely with her/his graduate advisor throughout the development and execution of each project, as well as the production of the written component for each project. Once the projects are completed and final drafts of the project papers have been approved by the advisor, all committee members will be provided with these drafts. With the approval of all committee members, a final project defense will be scheduled.

Projects must be presented in a public forum during a regular academic term for successful completion. The public will be invited to attend and the presentation may be recorded for future reference. Members of the project committee may ask questions following the public presentation; opportunities for questions and comments from other audience members will depend on the time available. Students should confer with their graduate advisor about the timing, format, and nature of audience involvement in their

project presentation.

The acceptability of the master's projects shall be determined by a project defense immediately following the public presentation (see Levels of Evaluation below). The project defense is a meeting (normally attended by only the student and the committee) to discuss possible edits needed for the final draft. The student's graduate committee will assess the projects and be asked to determine satisfactory completion or any changes required for satisfactory completion.

Please note that the nature of each project and the relationship between the two projects may allow for both projects to be presented and defended at a single meeting; however, some projects may require (or allow for) two separate presentation/defense meetings. The appropriate fusion or separation of your project defenses and other details of the format and timing of your presentation and defense will be determined by your graduate advisor in consultation with your project committee.

### *Thesis Option*

Students must complete a minimum of twenty-four (24) graduate credits before enrolling in thesis credit (COM 699). To enroll, a student must have a graduate advisor, and that advisor must agree that the student is ready to enroll for thesis credit. Under the thesis option, master's degree students must submit a thesis describing the results of an original research investigation.

The student should contact his/her graduate advisor and discuss possible topics for the thesis. The student then works closely with her/his advisor to prepare a prospectus (a proposal for the thesis; see Appendix A for suggestions on preparing a prospectus).

Once a final draft of the prospectus is approved by the advisor, all committee members will be provided a draft of the prospectus. After the committee is provided with the draft, with the approval of all committee members, a prospectus meeting will be scheduled. This meeting should occur no later than the first half of the penultimate semester of your intended graduation. In this meeting, the prospectus will be discussed, any concerns or necessary revisions to the proposal will be addressed, and, with the consent of the committee, permission to proceed with the thesis will be granted.

After committee approval of the prospectus, the student continues to work closely with her/his graduate advisor throughout the development and execution of the thesis. Once the research and writing of the thesis are completed to the satisfaction of the student's graduate advisor, all committee members will be provided with a draft of the thesis. With the approval of all committee members, a final thesis defense will be scheduled.

The thesis defense constitutes the second required meeting concerning the thesis, although you and your advisor may schedule more meetings if necessary or appropriate. The acceptability of the thesis shall be determined in a final oral defense

administered by the student's graduate committee.

This oral defense will include a public presentation that describes the results of the thesis research. A summary of the student's thesis research must be presented in a public forum during a regular academic term for successful completion. The public will be invited to attend and the presentation may be recorded for future reference.

Members of the graduate committee may ask questions following the public presentation; opportunities for questions and comments from other audience members will depend on the time available. Students should confer with their graduate advisor about the timing, format, and nature of audience involvement in their thesis defense.

Immediately following the public presentation and defense, a private meeting will normally be called for the purpose of further questioning of the candidate by his/her thesis committee, and/or to discuss any concerns and possible revisions or edits to the final draft of the thesis.

### *Levels of Evaluation*

There are three levels of evaluation for the defense of the thesis and project options. "Pass without revisions" means that there are no final revisions needed for the written thesis or project. "Pass with revisions" means that the committee expects either a significant or small amount of revisions to be made to the project or thesis. The committee will determine whether these revisions can be overseen and approved by your graduate advisor alone, or whether other committee members will also review and approve these changes. "Fail" means that the committee finds that substantial work needs to be completed in order for the thesis or project to be accepted or that the student did not follow the requirements for the assignment.

## **FINANCIAL AID, ASSISTANTSHIPS, AND SCHOLARSHIPS**

Several sources of funding are available to graduate students in Applied Communication at NAU.

1. Teaching Assistantships: The School of Communication has four teaching assistantships (Graduate Teaching Assistantship or GTA) it can award each semester. Each carries with it a stipend of approximately \$11,000 for a nine-month period and a partial waiver of tuition and fees for the academic year. Students who are awarded a GTA are expected to teach two courses each semester (three credits each). Generally, this means two sections of SC 111, Fundamentals of Public Speaking. The Department provides orientation and guidance for graduate teachers. Additionally, GTAs are bound to the guidelines established by the Graduate College and published in the *Graduate Assistantship Policy Handbook* (<http://home.nau.edu/gradcol/publications.asp>).

Teaching assistants are required to be enrolled in no fewer than 9 and no more

than 12 credit hours per semester. An application for a teaching assistantship should include a writing sample and a statement of interest in teaching. While an assistantship is generally awarded for a full academic year, occasionally one will be available at mid-year. Continuation of an assistantship from one semester to the next is contingent on satisfactory progress toward the degree, satisfactory teaching performance, and maintenance of a 3.0 GPA. Satisfactory progress toward the degree is defined by the Graduate College as including grades of 'B' or higher in each class as well as no incompletes. Additional information is available from the Graduate College (<http://home.nau.edu/gradcol/finaidnau.asp>) as well as from the MAAC Director of Graduate Studies.

Other types of Graduate Assistantships, such as working in the School of Communication's Academic Services Center, may also be available. Contact the MAAC Director of Graduate Studies for further information regarding Graduate Assistantships.

2. Scholarships: The University has a number of scholarships available for graduate students, many of which have few applicants. You should contact the Office of Financial Aid for information on scholarships.
3. Departmental Scholarships: The School of Communication has a limited number of scholarships, some of which are available to graduate students (in competition with undergraduate students). You may contact the Director of Graduate Studies for information about these scholarships, as well as the Chair of the School of Communication Scholarship Committee. Applications are generally due around February 1 of each year for scholarships for the following academic year.

## **APPEALS**

The following appeal procedures are available for you to use if the need arises.

### *ACADEMIC APPEALS*

You can petition to have a course grade reviewed, beginning with your instructor. Refer to the Student Handbook, the Office of Student Life, and/or the Dean's office for complete policies and procedures.

We also have policies pertaining to appeals of academic matters other than grade appeals. For information about these policies, contact the Graduate College.

### *APPEALS OF GRADUATE REGULATIONS*

You can petition for an exception to any graduate regulation, in writing, to the Associate Dean of the Graduate College. Your letter should be endorsed by your advisor and the

Director of the School of Communication.

### *STUDENT ANTI-RETALIATION POLICY*

Students have the right to be free from retaliation. Threats or other forms of intimidation or retribution against a student who files a complaint or grievance; requests an administrative remedy; participates in an investigation; appears as a witness at an administrative hearing; or opposes an unlawful act, discriminatory practice or policy; are prohibited and subject to university disciplinary procedures. If you have a complaint of retaliation, you should use the procedures available under the University Code of Conduct, the Student Code of Conduct, the Student Employee Grievance Procedure, the Sexual Harassment Policy, nondiscrimination policies, or other available administrative procedures as appropriate.

For assistance with procedures, contact the Dean of the college if the circumstances are related to a course or academic evaluation or the Dean of Students for all other circumstances.

### **GRADUATE COURSE DESCRIPTIONS**

Note: Courses numbered 600 and above are for graduate students only. Some 500-level courses are (often but not always) co-convened with 400-level undergraduate courses, and here are designated with a “g”. Graduate students enrolled in co-convened courses are expected to complete additional work beyond what undergraduates complete, and this additional work is detailed in the course syllabus. *Credit by examination (course challenge) is not permitted in graduate programs.*

- SC 503      *Classroom Communication.* 3 credits.  
Current communication practices, issues, and trends confronting classroom teachers in grades K-12. Oral communication skill development is emphasized.
- SC 524g      *Gender and Communication.* 3 credits.  
Surveys communication theories related to the construction of gender, the relationship between gender and contemporary social issues, and research on gender difference in various communication contexts. Co-convenes with SC 424.
- SC 560g      *Rhetorical Theory.* 3 credits.  
Traditional and contemporary theories about public communication. Emphasizes evolution and critical analysis of theories. Co-convenes with SC 460.

- SC 565g *American Political Communication*. 3 credits.  
Historical and critical study of the role communication has played in American history. Co-convenes with SC 465.
- SC 568 *Communication and Contemporary Society*. 3 credits.  
Examination of communication in relation to natural and artificial/technological environments in the context of contemporary social issues.
- SC 572g *Organizational Communication*. 3 credits.  
Explores theoretical and practical foundations of organizational communication including culture, networks, ethics, and crisis communication. Co-convenes with SC 472.
- SC 575g *Health Communication*. 3 credits.  
Theoretical and practical study of communication strategies used to influence individuals and communities. Focuses on physician-patient communication, health campaigns, risk communication, health in media, and telemedicine. Co-convenes with SC 475.
- SC 577g *Mediation and Conflict Management*. 3 credits.  
Communication strategies in the theory and practice of alternative dispute resolution, including interpersonal conflict, mediation, and negotiation. Co-convenes with SC 477.
- SC 599 *Contemporary Developments*. 3 credits.  
Variable/special topics.
- SC 685 *Graduate Research*. 1-6 credits.  
Design and completion of original research under the direction of a graduate advisor.
- SC 697 *Independent Study*. 1-3 credits.  
Individualized directed study on selected topics.
- COM 599 *Contemporary Developments*. 3 credits.  
Variable/special topics.
- COM 600 *Communication Theory and Application*. 3 credits.  
Reviews the nature, history and types of communication theory with emphasis upon the use of theory in analysis and problem-solving.
- COM 601 *Research Methods in Communication*. 3 credits.  
Focuses on role and development of research in communication studies, including history and status of contemporary scholarship.

- COM 685 *Graduate Research.* 1-6 credits.  
Design and completion of original research under the direction of a graduate advisor.
- COM 690 *Communication Project.* 3 credits (two projects must be completed for a total of 6 credits).  
Application of research design and critical inquiry in order to solve a communication problem.
- COM 697 *Independent Study.* 1-3 credits.  
Individualized directed study on selected topics.
- COM 698 *Seminar in Communication Theory.* 3 credits. May be repeated once with permission of instructor and graduate advisor.  
Reading and discussion on selected advanced topics in communication theory. Topics vary each semester.
- COM 699 *Thesis.* 1-6 credits (a minimum of 6 credits must be completed).

### **GRADUATE FACULTY IN APPLIED COMMUNICATION**

- Hardy-Short, Dayle C.* Professor of Speech Communication.  
B.A., University of Montana.  
M.A., University of New Mexico.  
Ph.D., Speech Communication, Indiana University, 1988.
- Research interests include American political communication, argumentation and debate, communication education, environmental communication, gender and feminist studies, rhetorical theory and criticism.
- Jones, Janna* Associate Professor of Speech Communication.  
B.A., Iowa State University.  
M.Ed, Ph.D., Communication, University of South Florida, 1998.
- Research interests include cultural and media studies, cultural and critical theory, cultural preservation and the archive, qualitative research methods.
- Neumann, Mark* Professor of Communication.  
B.A., Central Connecticut State University.  
M.A., Ph.D., Communication Studies, University of Utah.



Research interests include cultural & media studies, documentary film studies, qualitative research methods.

*Parker, Richard A. "Tony"* Professor of Speech Communication.  
B.A., M.A., University of Houston.  
Ph.D., Speech Communication, University of Pittsburgh, 1981.

Research interests include argumentation and legal communication, communication law, freedom of speech, persuasion.

*Rogers, Richard A.* Associate Professor of Speech Communication.  
B.A., Humboldt State University.  
M.S., Ph.D., Communication Studies, University of Utah, 1994.

Research interests include cultural studies, critical rhetorical studies, environmental communication, gender and feminist studies, intercultural communication, media criticism.

*Short, C. Brant* Professor of Speech Communication.  
B.A., M.A., Idaho State University.  
Ph.D., Speech Communication, Indiana University, 1985.

Research interests include American political communication, conflict management and mediation, environmental communication, organizational communication, rhetorical criticism, rhetoric of history.

*Umphrey, Laura* Assistant Professor of Speech Communication.  
B.A., M.A., University of Maine.  
Ph.D., Communication Studies, University of Arizona, 2001.

Research interests include communication theory, health communication, persuasion.

Additional information regarding the above faculty members, as well as other faculty in the School of Communication, can be found at <http://www.nau.edu/sbs/communication/>.

## GRADUATION PROCEDURES

### *APPLICATION FOR A DEGREE AND GRADUATION*

Within the first two weeks of the semester or summer session in which you expect to complete work for the degree, you must file an application for graduation and pay the diploma fee. Forms are available from the Graduate School (<http://home.nau.edu/gradcol/graduation.asp>). Graduate students applying for graduation must register during the regular registration period.

In preparing to complete the Application for Graduation to the Graduate College, you and your advisor should use the Graduate Worksheet for the M.A. in Applied Communication that is found immediately following this section of this handbook.

### *ORAL EXAMINATION AND DEFENSE*

In your final semester of graduate work (generally prior to two weeks before the end of the semester), you will meet with your graduate committee in oral defense of your graduate projects or thesis. You and your advisor should consult with all members of the committee to schedule a convenient time and location. The thesis or project papers must be distributed to all committee members a minimum of two weeks before the defense is scheduled.

The purpose of preparing a master's thesis or master's project is to give you experience in carrying out the kind of research you can expect to do throughout your professional career. Through this process, we expect you to demonstrate your ability to work independently on a problem and to document your familiarity with the literature in your field, your command of the techniques and principles of research, and your ability to form valid generalizations from the data you use.

*While working on your thesis or project, keep in mind the following steps and requirements.*

During a preliminary conference with your graduate advisor, you should select a suitable area for research. Several factors help determine the appropriateness of a research topic, such as whether you can readily obtain essential data, whether critical library references and/or technical or specialized equipment are available, whether you can attain significant results within a reasonable time, and whether faculty members with appropriate specialties are available to provide you with proper guidance.

After you submit your research topic and plan to your advisor, you should select your thesis or project committee in consultation with your advisor. A committee must have at least three members and at least two of them must be from the Applied Communication Graduate Faculty. Submit your request, in writing, to the MAAC Director of Graduate Studies for approval. You should work closely with the members of your committee in

carrying out your program of research and writing your thesis or project papers.

Early in the semester in which you expect to graduate, you must submit an unbound copy of your thesis to the Graduate College's format editor, who will check it against that office's requirements pertaining primarily to the binding and microfilming processes. (To obtain the Binding and Microfilming Requirements, contact the Graduate College.) Be aware that the coordinator does not check documents during the last two weeks of each semester or between semesters. Although project papers are not required to be checked by the Graduate College, this handbook includes a recommended format.

When your thesis is in essentially final form and your committee agrees that you are ready, your defense should be scheduled. You should work closely with your advisor in scheduling your defense. Defenses may not be held during reading week or final exam week.

You may submit final copies of your thesis to the Graduate College as soon as your committee signs your title page and you make any corrections noted by the format editor—and no later than the last day of the semester or summer session in which you plan to graduate.

As your date of graduate approaches, be sure to work closely with your graduate advisor, the MAAC Director of Graduate Studies, and the Graduate College to make sure all required forms are completed in a timely fashion.

**GRADUATE PROGRAM WORKSHEET**  
 Master of Arts in Applied Communication  
 School of Communication/Speech Communication (College of Social & Behavioral Sciences)

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Student ID Num. \_\_\_\_\_

Admission \_\_\_\_\_  
 (Date)

<u>Required</u>	<u>Credits</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Grade</u>
Com 600, Comm Theory	3	_____	_____
Com 601, Intro to Grad Research	3	_____	_____
Com 698, Seminar in Communication	3	_____	_____
Com 690, Degree Project	6	_____	_____
	(3)	_____	_____
	(3)	_____	_____
<b>OR</b>			
Com 699, Thesis	6	_____	_____

Electives

<u>Dept.</u>	<u>Crs. No.</u>	<u>Title</u>	<u>Credits</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Grade</u>
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____

Total credits (36 required): \_\_\_\_\_

600-level credits (15 required): \_\_\_\_\_

Credits other than COM/SC (9 maximum): \_\_\_\_\_

Advisor/Graduate Committee Chair (Graduate Faculty):

Second Committee Member (Graduate Faculty):

Third Committee Member:

Thesis Topic:

Degree Project One Topic:

Degree Project Two Topic:

Prospectus Meeting Date:

Project/Thesis Defense/Presentation Date(s):

Recommendation (pass/no pass/revisions):

## RECOMMENDATIONS FOR PREPARING THESES AND PROJECT PAPERS

### ***Style Manual***

When you undertake to write a thesis or project papers you should study a specific style manual approved by the department and recommended by your advisor. The following manuals are recommended for work in Applied Communication:

American Psychological Association, *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association* (most recent edition).

Modern Language Association, *MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers* (most recent edition).

### ***Copy Authorization***

All theses submitted to NAU are made available to the public at the time they are shelved in the Library. Publication rights are reserved to the author subject to the provisions of research contracts, federal grant stipulations, or other agreements made by the author with the university. However, in addition to making theses available for public use, the library occasionally receives requests for permission to copy a thesis for scholarly purposes. Such permission to copy may be granted only by the author. Frequently, difficulties arise in locating the authors of theses in order to secure permission to copy. In the interest of making a student's research available to appropriate parties, all theses now include in the preliminary pages a copy authorization form. The form should be completed appropriately to indicate that permission to copy the thesis for scholarly purposes is either granted or denied.

### ***Thesis Abstract***

The student should prepare an abstract describing the essential content of the thesis in 300 words or less. The heading of the abstract should read as follows:

TITLE  
Author's Name  
Thesis Abstract - Northern Arizona University (200-)  
  
(Text)

### ***Format***

**Margins:** The margins should follow the guidelines given in the appropriate style manual approved by the department. It is important that the left margin be one and one-half inches wide in order to allow for binding.

**Thesis Order:** The thesis should be arranged in the following order: (1) copy authorization, (2) title page, (3) approval page, (4) optional acknowledgments page, (5) table of contents, (6) list of tables (if appropriate), (7) list of figures (if appropriate), (8) text of the thesis, (9) appendices, and (10) references. Samples of copy authorization, title page, and approval page are found in Appendix A.

**Pagination:** Preliminary pages are all numbered with lower case Roman numerals centered at the bottom of the page. The text, notes, appendices, and references are all numbered with Arabic numerals in the upper right hand corner of the page.

### ***Type Style and Corrections***

Theses are to be prepared using 12-point font in a type style such as Times New Roman or Arial. A script type style is unacceptable. No pencil or ink corrections are permitted on any copy of the thesis that is presented (corrections should be made and then the page should be reprinted).

### ***Format for Project Papers***

The Graduate School does not have guidelines for project papers, but in general you should follow the thesis guidelines where possible. Only your committee members and the department will receive copies of your papers—do not send them to the Graduate School or the Library. You might want to consider some sort of inexpensive binding such as that offered by such businesses as Kinko's, Office Max, or Staples in order to protect the individual papers. If you choose to do something like this, you should bind all papers together, along with an abstract of each paper. Paginate each paper separately, and be sure to allow a sufficient left-hand margin for the binding.

## APPENDIX A — Suggestions for Preparing a Prospectus

According to Dr. J. Jeffery Auer, Professor Emeritus of Speech Communication at Indiana University, a prospectus "is a document that answers a lot of questions about a research project. For the *researcher* it serves as a guide for future action. For *anyone else* it provides a comprehensive picture of what the research is about." He suggests some specific questions to be answered *by* and *in* the prospectus:

- Topic: What is its title—or working title? What is the problem?
- Purpose: What is the problem, and how will the research resolve it? How will you define it?
- Significance: Why bother? Who cares?
- Expectations: What is the expected end-product? Any idea of ways it may turn out?
- Relationships: With what other problem(s) is it associated? How is it distinguished from related problems? What are its parameters (which is to say, what are its boundaries that set it apart)?
- Status: Has anyone else focused on the problem? What has been found out so far? Has there been research in closely related areas that will be helpful to know about when undertaking this research? Can you summarize—or make an abstract of—each previous and related study?
- Method: What method—or general approach—seems most promising in attacking this problem? Is there an already extant methodology (perhaps from a standard collection, or as used in a previous and similar study)? Or is there at least an organizing metaphor that may help develop an approach?
- Resources: What do you need to do the research: ability to read Spanish? Use of a computer? Library resources? Money? (assuming, of course: motivation).
- Design: What is your overall, complete, sequential, plan of attack? How will you design—plan—your procedure from beginning to completed project?

Your thesis advisor, of course, will be able to offer specific suggestions as to how to answer these questions and how to proceed. These questions give you a guide to beginning your thesis, but you should work closely with your advisor, who is the final authority concerning your individual prospectus and thesis.

**APPENDIX B –Key pages in Thesis/Project Papers**

**(Sample Title Page)**

CAUGHT IN THE `50S:  
THE RHETORIC OF TAILFINS

by

Nermal Q. Sugwood

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the  
requirements for the degree of

MASTER OF ARTS

IN

APPLIED COMMUNICATION

NORTHERN ARIZONA UNIVERSITY  
2006



**(Permission to Copy Form Used in NAU Theses)**

In presenting this thesis in partial fulfillment of the requirements for an advanced degree at Northern Arizona University, I agree that the Library shall make it freely available for inspection. I further state that permission for extensive copying of my thesis for scholarly purposes may be granted by the Dean of the Graduate School, Dean of my academic division, or by the University Librarian. It is understood that any copying of publication of this thesis for financial gain shall not be allowed without my written permission.

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

**(Sample Approval Page)**

To the Graduate Faculty:

The members of the committee appointed to examine the thesis of NERMAL Q. SUGWOOD find it satisfactory and recommend that it be accepted.

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Graduate Advisor (Applied Communication)

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Graduate Faculty Member (Applied Communication)

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Faculty Member