

# Graduate Student Handbook

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This handbook provides registered students with detailed information on the department's Master of Arts in Communication degree. Included are important guidelines, policies, and requirements for successfully navigating and completing your degree in a timely manner. We hope you will find the information helpful. If you have any other questions not addressed here, please don't hesitate to contact the graduate program director.

## Program Overview

The Master's degree in Communication provides students with a comprehensive study of the theories, concepts, principles, and practices comprising the discipline of Communication.

Although the program enables students to take courses from across a range of areas across the discipline and does not require you to specialize in any one area. The following descriptions offer insight into the areas addressed by our faculty in their teaching and research and may be helpful for students wishing to tailor their program in a specific scholarly direction:

- **Culture and Communication**

Coursework investigates the intellectual, cultural, and historical forces that have shaped, and in turn have been shaped by, the critical study of communication. Students will explore the central role communication plays in the study of culture, the critique of society, and the active promotion of a democratic culture both in the public sphere and in everyday life. Inquiry in the area includes questions of ideology, discourse and power, meaning and identity, culture and community, the relationship between symbolic and material practices, and the political possibilities of social transformation through recognizing culture and communication as key sites of struggle in the 21st century.

- **Interpersonal Communication**

The area of Interpersonal Communication explores the role of communication in our everyday lives. A prominent feature of Interpersonal Communication is the study of interactions and the impact these have on relationships between members of dyads, families, groups, social networks, organizations, and communities. The curriculum in this area draws from traditions in social science and communication research. Courses focus on research, theory, and practice in interpersonal communication, family communication, organizational and instructional communication.

- **Media Studies**

Coursework explores the theoretical, historical, technological, industrial, cultural, and social aspects of media, with attention to interrelationships between aesthetics, industry, regulation, and the broader

culture in a range of national and international contexts. The program offers students a firm grounding in the historical development of media, a rich understanding of the rapid changes of the digital era, and a broad range of the theoretical and methodological approaches to the study of media. Students completing course work will be fully prepared to engage with the dynamic shifts in media practices in this age of digital convergence.

## New Students

Upon admission to the program, see checklist and registration guidelines for New Graduate Students at <https://www.oakland.edu/grad/new-graduate-students/>

## Financial Assistance, Awards and Scholarships

### *Graduate Education Financial Assistance*

Information about the full range of University-wide financial assistance options for graduate students is available on the Graduate Education website: <https://www.oakland.edu/grad/financial-assistance/>

### *Graduate Assistantships*

A limited number of graduate assistantships within the department are competitively awarded each academic semester to full-time students based on GPA, evidence of research, and recommendation letters. Assistantships include a stipend and a tuition reduction of 8 credits per fall and winter semesters. In return, graduate assistants work up to 20 hours per week assisting one or more faculty members in their research efforts. Eligible students should submit the Graduate Assistantship Form (available in the back of this handbook) to the Graduate Program Director by the appropriate deadline. Information regarding additional Graduate Assistantship opportunities outside the department is available on the Graduate Education Financial Assistance website: <https://www.oakland.edu/grad/financial-assistance/>

### *Provost's Graduate Student Research Award*

Competitive awards of up to \$2,000 for graduate student research and/or creative projects are available at the Office of the Provost & Vice President for Academic Affairs. For detailed award guidelines and how to apply, go to <https://oakland.edu/advance/awards/>

### *Fellowships*

The King-Chavez-Parks Future Faculty Fellowship Program (KCP) was established in 1986 by the Michigan State Legislature. The purpose of the program is to increase the pool of traditionally underrepresented candidates pursuing faculty teaching careers in postsecondary education. Preference will not be given to applicants on the basis of race, color, ethnicity, sex, or national origin. Applications from women, men, people with disabilities, and individuals from cultural, linguistic, geographic, and socio-economic backgrounds who would otherwise not adequately be represented in the graduate student and faculty populations are encouraged to apply. For more information, go to <https://www.oakland.edu/grad/financial-assistance/>

### *Student Financial Services Office*

Information on financial aid for graduate students, including scholarships, grants, loans, and payment plans is available at the Student Financial Services. To arrange a personal meeting with an adviser, call 248-370-2550 or email: [finservices@oakland.edu](mailto:finservices@oakland.edu). For additional information, visit <https://www.oakland.edu/financialservices/>

### *Cost of Graduate School*

You may calculate the cost of attending the program here: <https://oakland.edu/financialservices/costs/>

## Advising

Students admitted to the program will be advised by the Graduate Program Director. Students are strongly encouraged to meet with the Graduate Program Director by the end of their first year in the program

(full-time students) or the end of their second year in the program (part-time students) to help plan the course of study and ensure you are meeting all the requirements for completion. Use the program planner form at the back of this handbook to help lay out your path through the program. Additionally, you are also encouraged to check in with the adviser every semester before registering if you wish to make any changes in your program plan, or if you have any other questions or concerns.

Students interested in pursuing the Thesis or Creative Project exit option will need to identify a specific faculty member in their area of interest for advising prior to starting the project, and this person may also advise on general program issues. All full-time department faculty members with doctorates are qualified to serve as advisers. If you are unsure whom to select as an adviser, make a point of setting up a few meetings with different members of the faculty. Have coffee together. Attend some of the department events. These types of interactions can help you determine whom you would like to work with.

## Graduate Policies

### *Transfer of Credit Policy*

Students who are in good standing (not probationary or conditional) in a master's degree program and wish to transfer courses from other accredited U.S. colleges or universities must have such credit approved by the Graduate Program Director and the Office of Graduate Education. The credit must be earned at the graduate level (500 level and above) with a grade of at least 3.0 (or B) and not be graded pass/fail, satisfactory/unsatisfactory or credit/non-credit; it must be applicable to the student's program and may not have been previously used to satisfy degree requirements at this or another institution. In accordance with policies set by the Michigan Council of Graduate Deans, no more than one credit will be awarded, per week of instruction. Applications should be filed after the first semester is completed at Oakland and, in any event not later than the first week of the semester in which the student expects to graduate. It will be necessary to have official transcripts of the work on file in the Office of Graduate Study. Transfer of credit applications are available in the Office of Graduate Study.

A maximum of 9 semester hours of transfer credit is acceptable toward a graduate degree. Approved transfer credit will appear on the student's official transcript in the Office of the Registrar. Transfer credit earned more than six years before the degree is awarded will not be applied toward degree requirements. The transfer request form is available through the Office of Graduate Education: <https://www.oakland.edu/grad/current-graduate-students/masters/>

### *Incomplete Policy*

A student who wishes to receive an Incomplete (I) grade in a course must present a Student Request for Incomplete (I) Grade Contract to the instructor AFTER the cut-off date for awarding a "W" grade. The Incomplete (I) grade is offered entirely at the instructor's discretion as a temporary measure for extenuating circumstances beyond the control of the student. The request form is available through the Office of Graduate Education: <https://www.oakland.edu/grad/current-graduate-students/masters/>

### *Course Substitution Policy*

Students are expected to complete the program requirements according to the Oakland University Graduate Catalog. On occasion, a required course in a graduate program may not be available or may no longer be offered due to program changes. With advance approval from the Graduate Program Director and the Office of Graduate Education the student may request a course requirement be waived and another OU course substituted. The determination of courses suitable for substitution resides with the graduate program.

When there is just cause for the substitution, the student must submit a OU Course Waiver/Substitution petition form to the Graduate Program Director and obtain all approvals for the course substitution prior to enrolling in the proposed course. A course substitution is not a statement of equivalency between two courses; it is a singular substitution for one student. Approval of a course substitution does NOT override any other enrollment criteria such as prerequisites. The request form is available through the Office of Graduate Education: <https://www.oakland.edu/grad/current-graduate-students/masters/>

## Time Limit

Candidates for the Master's degree in Communication are expected to complete the requirements for the degree within six years from the time they begin their program of study, as measured from initial enrollment in course work credited toward the degree. Under special circumstances, a student may be allowed to extend beyond the time limit. Detailed guidelines and extension request form are available through the Office of Graduate Education: <https://www.oakland.edu/grad/current-graduate-students/masters/>

## Satisfactory Progress Toward Degree

At the end of any semester, a graduate student who earns an individual course grade below a B- (2.7) will be reviewed by the graduate program and subject to academic warning, probation or dismissal, according to published program requirements. Additionally, any course in which students earned below a B- (2.7) grade will not count for credit towards the degree. As work progresses, the following is grounds for dismissal from the program:

- Two grades below a B- (2.7)

## Periodic Review

Each year (at the end of the Winter Semester) the Graduate Committee meets and reviews the progress of all graduate students. Students who fail to meet the requirement for satisfactory progress toward the degree specified above will be evaluated and a decision will be made on whether or not, or under what conditions, they will be allowed to continue in the program.

## Degree Requirements

The Master of Arts in Communication degree is awarded upon satisfactory completion of 36 graduate credits in an approved program of study. The program begins with two core requirements (COM 5000 and COM 5001) intended to introduce all students to the field of communication and provide a philosophical grounding in the discipline. In addition, all students must take one Methods course (either COM 5100

or COM 5101). Students will complete the program by taking either five or six courses (depending on exit option) from the approved list of electives. The program culminates in one of three Exit Options: a Competency Examination, a Creative Project (COM 6993), or a Thesis (COM 6992).

## Summary of Coursework

General Core/Method Requirements: **12 credits (three courses)**

Elective Course Requirements : **20 credits (five courses)**

One of the following Exit Options:

Thesis/Creative Project: **4 credits** OR

Competency Exam: Adviser approved elective (**4 credits**) plus competency exam

Total: **36 credits**

### A. General Core Requirements (12 credits)

COM 5000 Introduction to Graduate Studies (4 credits)

COM 5001 Philosophy of Communication Scholarship (4 credits)

AND one of the following Methods courses:

COM 5100 Qualitative Methods in Communication (4 credits) OR

COM 5101 Quantitative Methods in Communication (4 credits)

**B. Elective Courses Requirements** (20 credits; students choosing the Competency Exam exit option must take an additional adviser approved elective for a total of 24 credits)

COM 5410 Advanced Interpersonal Communication (4 credits)

COM 5411 Family Communication (4 credits)

COM 5412 Advanced Interpersonal Communication (4 credits)

- COM 6210 Culture and Communication: Contexts and Issues (4 credits)
- COM 6211 Culture, Power, and Representation (4 credits)
- COM 6212 Communication and Cultural Citizenship (4 credits)
- COM 6310 Rhetoric of Popular Culture (4 credits)
- COM 6350 Feminist Rhetorical Theory (4 credits)
- COM 6450 Interpersonal Communication Theory (4 credits)
- COM 6411 Privacy and Disclosure (4 credits)
- COM 6610 Media and Globalization (4 credits)
- COM 6611 Media and Modernity (4 credits)
- COM 6650 Theorizing Media (4 credits)
- COM 6900 Special Topics in Critical Cultural Communication Studies (4 credits)
- COM 6901 Special Topics in Interpersonal Communication (4 credits)
- COM 6902 Special Topics in Media Studies (4 credits)

### **C. Exit requirement**

- Competency Exam (0 credits, students must take an additional adviser approved elective course)
- COM 6992 Thesis (4 credits)
- COM 6993 Creative Project (4 credits)

### **Exit Options**

In consultation with the Graduate Program Director or another adviser, students will elect one of three options—each the equivalent of the other in rigor and demand— as a requirement for completing the Masters Degree: the Competency Exam, or Creative Project or Thesis. Competency Exam option includes an additional adviser approved elective course. Creative Project and Thesis exit requirements will be reviewed by a committee of three faculty members (including the faculty adviser)

selected by the student. Students who fail either the Competency Exam or their Creative Project or Thesis defense, with the permission of their committee, may be allowed one additional opportunity to re-take the Exam or defend their Creative Project or Thesis.

### **Competency Exam**

#### **Adviser Approved Elective (4 credits) plus Final Competency Exam**

The Competency Exam option is appropriate for the following: students seeking to take the program as a terminal degree, those not wishing to pursue independent research, or those seeking the degree for professional enhancement. Students electing this option will meet the Graduate Program Director to select their final course needed to complete their course work and discuss the particulars of the final competency exam. The final competency exam will be adapted to reflect each individual student's course of study. The exams will consist of a six hour in-house exam. Students must receive a passing grade (P) in all questions to pass the exam.

### **Thesis**

#### **COM 6992 Thesis (4 credits)**

The Thesis option is appropriate for students interested in pursuing independent research, seeking to pursue further graduate work at the Ph.D. level, or interested in community college teaching. Students must have an overall GPA of B+ (3.4) or higher in the program in order to select the Thesis option and must choose a faculty adviser. Students should must submit an Exit Option Adviser Declaration form to the Graduate Program Director and will be required to register for COM 6992 Thesis with the faculty adviser as instructor of record. In addition, students will be required to participate in an hour long oral defense. All theses must conform to university standards and deadlines. Students opting for the thesis should follow carefully the "Thesis and Dissertation" detailed guidelines available at <https://www.oakland.edu/grad/current-graduate-students/masters/>

## Thesis Preparation

For students electing the thesis option, the process begins with the selection of an area of interest and development of a research question that will guide research. It is best that determination of an interest area begin early, preferably from the start of the student's program. Once the student has decided on a general subject area, he or she must choose a thesis adviser with expertise in the subject area as well as two other faculty readers to constitute the thesis committee. The student then works closely with the thesis adviser to develop a thesis proposal. Once the proposal is ready, the committee, in a scheduled proposal meeting, reviews the document and makes a recommendation either to proceed or to revise and resubmit. The student is allowed a one-time revision and resubmission. In some cases, based on assessment of the student's work on the proposal and overall record (course instructors may be consulted), the committee may recommend a different exit option that will better suit the student's strengths and orientation.

Upon approval, the student begins conducting research according to the procedures and methodology outlined in the proposal. Completed theses should include the following components (order may vary): a) background and rationale for the study; b) an explication of the research problem to be investigated; c) a review of the literature or debates on the subject with the goal of identifying gaps in research and/or theorizing; d) a clear and succinct statement of the problem or guiding hypothesis; e) a methodology section specifying the methods, data, and mode(s) of data analysis and interpretation to be used in researching the problem; f) a results section discussing the findings; g) analysis and conclusion, including implications and contributions of the study to the literature and/or recommendations for further study.

Once the thesis is completed and approved by the adviser, an oral defense is scheduled before the thesis committee. At the oral defense, the student is expected to present a brief summary of the study including key findings and conclusions, after which the committee members may ask questions on any part

or aspect of the study. At the conclusion of the defense, the student steps out of the room and the committee makes a determination either to approve the thesis with or without (major or minor) revisions or to reject the study as having failed to meet the standards for approval. For detailed procedures and guidelines in setting up the oral defense, formatting, and final submission of thesis document, as well as for help with formatting your thesis according to Graduate Education guidelines, visit the "Thesis documents & templates" section of the Graduate Education Master's Students information website: <https://www.oakland.edu/grad/current-graduate-students/masters/>

## Creative Project

### COM 6993 Creative Project (4 credits)

The Creative Project option is appropriate for students interested in production or creative work, or in pursuing further graduate work such as a Master of Fine Arts degree. Students must have an overall GPA of 3.5 or higher in the program in order to select the Creative Project option and must choose a faculty adviser. Students should submit an Exit Option Adviser Declaration form to the Graduate Program Director and will be required to register for COM 6993 Creative Project with the faculty adviser as instructor of record.

This option requires the completion of a creatively driven project that proposes new ideas and advances theoretical understanding of an issue. Possible formats for this option include film/video, audio, web, or other multi-media components. Similar to traditional theses, the project must demonstrate scholarly abilities, including solid conceptualization, analysis, and writing. The project is accompanied by a written component that includes a reflective and critical commentary on the process, methods, theories, history of the project, literatures or media reviewed, and any other conceptual areas deemed necessary by the student and the student's Project Committee. The project is defended in an oral examination. Students electing the Creative Project option will be required to register for COM 6993 Creative Project Completion.

## Creative Project Preparation

For students electing the creative project option, the process is similar to the thesis option's process. Students will begin with the selection of an area of interest and development of a research question that will guide research. It is best that determination of an interest area begin early, preferably from the start of the student's program. Once the student has decided on a general subject area, he or she must choose a project adviser with expertise in the subject area as well as two other faculty readers to constitute the project committee. The student then works closely with the project adviser to develop a proposal. Similar to the thesis option, project proposals should include the following components (order may vary): a) background and rationale for the study; b) an explication of the research problem to be investigated; c) a review of the literature or debates on the subject with the goal of identifying gaps in research and/or theorizing; d) a clear and succinct state of the problem or guiding hypothesis; and, e) a methodology section specifying the methods, data, and mode(s) of data analysis and interpretation to be used in researching the problem. In addition, students are required to explain their decision to explore this work through a creative outlet, clearly outline their plans regarding the creative process they will engage in, explain how they will complete the creative project (including a statement regarding the students' experience in the proposed medium, access to necessary materials, a time-frame for completion), and clearly outline the final format the project will take.

Once the proposal is ready, the committee, in a scheduled proposal meeting, reviews the document and makes a recommendation either to proceed or to revise and resubmit. The student is allowed a one-time revision and resubmission. In some cases, based on assessment of the student's work on the proposal and overall record (course instructors may be consulted), the committee may recommend a different exit option that will better suit the student's strengths and orientation.

Upon approval, the student begins conducting research according to the procedures and methodology outlined in the

proposal. When appropriate the student will also begin work on their final project. In addition to completing the project, students will complete a supplementary document that presents their literature review, research findings, and a reflection on the ways that the creative project speaks to the original research topic.

Once the project is completed and approved by the adviser, an oral defense is scheduled before the thesis committee. At the oral defense, the student is expected to present a brief summary of the project including key findings, aesthetic decisions, and conclusions. The committee members may ask questions on any part or aspect of the project. At the conclusion of the defense, the student steps out of the room and the committee makes a determination either to approve the project with or without (major or minor) revisions or to reject the study as having failed to meet the standards for approval.

## Odds & Ends: Helpful OU Information

### *GrizzCard*

Get one in the ID Card Office, off the Fireside Lounge in the Oakland Center. This card is your official university ID and library card. To learn more, call (248) 370-2291 or visit <https://oakland.edu/grizzcard/>

### *Main Campus Map*

Find maps of campus buildings and parking lots at <http://www.oakland.edu/map/>.

### *Academic Calendar*

Find it at <https://www.oakland.edu/registrar/important-dates/>

### *Registrar's Office*

Go to <https://www.oakland.edu/registrar/> or call (248) 370-3470

## Course Schedule

For information on current and future department course schedules, visit <http://www2.oakland.edu/misc/courseschedule.cfm?site=COMJRN>. Note that graduate courses will be listed at the bottom of the schedule. Be mindful that future schedules are labelled as tentative until the schedule is completely finalized.

## Campus Services

**Kresge Library** - Kresge is the main library of Oakland University, located on main campus. The library offers a variety of services, including reference and research help, interlibrary loans, and access to online databases. You can check out research materials for extended periods; pick up Interlibrary loans when available. For more information visit: <http://library.oakland.edu> or call (248) 370-4426.

**E-Learning and Instructional Support (E-LIS)** - Offers support to faculty, staff, and students in teaching and learning online. They offer training workshops and technical support for Moodle, OU's web-based course management system. For workshop schedules or to arrange for individual help visit: <http://www2.oakland.edu/elis/> or call (248) 370-4566.

**Rec Center** - Offers a variety of sports/health programming and facilities the campus community. To get information about scheduling, visit: <https://www.oakland.edu/recwell/> or call (248) 370-4REC (4732).

**Writing Center** - Located on the first floor of Kresge Library, the staff offers writing assistance to students at all academic levels and at any stage in the writing process. This is a valuable resource for helping you develop your writing skills during your graduate program. For more information visit: <http://www.oakland.edu/ouwc> or call (248) 370-3120.

**Graham Health Center** - Provides physical and mental health services to students. For more information, visit: <http://www.oakland.edu/ghc/> or call (248) 370-2341.

**University Technology Services** - The UTS Helpdesk offers assistance with any computer problems. They are located on the first floor of Kresge Library. Call (248) 370-HELP or email [helpdesk@oakland.edu](mailto:helpdesk@oakland.edu) or visit <https://oakland.edu/helpdesk/>

**Text Message Alerts** - Receive emergency notification messages (regarding things like snow days, certain campus crimes, potentially dangerous situations, etc.). More info and sign up at <https://oupolice.com/emergencies/alerts/>

## Other Important Contact Information

**Bookstore** <http://oakland.bncollege.com/> or (248) 370-2404

**Career Services** <https://www.oakland.edu/careerservices/> or (248) 370-3250

**SEHS Counseling Center, Personal and Career** <https://oakland.edu/counseling/sehs-cc/> or (248) 370-3465

**Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning** <https://oakland.edu/cetl/> or (248) 370-2466

**Campus Emergency - Campus Police** (248) 370-3331 or text OUPD + your message to 67283

**Communication and Journalism Department Chair** Dr. Jeff Youngquist, [younqui@oakland.edu](mailto:younqui@oakland.edu) or (248)370-4122

**Communication Graduate Program Director** Dr. Rebekkah Farrugia, [farrugia@oakland.edu](mailto:farrugia@oakland.edu) or (248) 370-2065

**Financial Services** <https://oakland.edu/financialservices/> or (248) 370-2550

**Office of Graduate Education** <https://oakland.edu/grad/>

Graduate Admissions (248) 370-3167

Graduate Records (248) 370-4156

**International Students and Scholars** <https://oakland.edu/isso/> or (248) 370-3358

## List of Communication Faculty

**Kathleen Battles** (Ph.D., University of Iowa), Associate Professor, specializes in media history and issues surrounding contemporary mediated representations of gays and lesbians. Her work focuses on the central role of media in the creation of cultural discourses and maintenance of cultural norms.

**Jacob Cayanus** (Ed.D., West Virginia University), Associate Professor, specializes in interpersonal communication. His current research focuses on issues of teacher self-disclosure in the classroom as well as dominance, equity, and jealousy in interpersonal relationships.

**Rose Cooper** (Ph.D., Wayne State University), Associate Professor, specializes in applied communication and focuses on projects that raise issues of well-being and dignity for the individual and ways to enhance society's awareness and acceptance of cultural diversity.

**Thomas Discenna** (Ph.D., Wayne State University), Professor, specializes in rhetorical theory (especially early Greek, Italian Humanist Giambattista Vico and critical discourse theory), philosophy of rhetoric, social movement theory (especially labor and the role of identity in movements) and the relationship between rhetoric and mediated communication.

**Rebekah Farrugia** (Ph.D., University of Iowa), Associate Professor, Director of Graduate Program, specializes in media studies and digital culture. Much of her work focuses on the interconnections between gender, technology, and popular music.

**Kellie Hay** (Ph.D., The Ohio State University), Associate Professor, specializes in critical communication theory, feminist cultural studies, multicultural communication (in particular within the context of Arab American cultural struggles), whiteness studies, poetics of ethnography, and performance, body and dance as ways of knowing.

**Jennifer Heisler** (Ph.D., Michigan State University), Associate Professor, specializes in interpersonal and family communication. Her current work examines how families discuss "difficult topics," such as sexuality, religion, and stress.

**Shea Howell** (Ph.D., Wayne State University), Professor, specializes in critical cultural studies with a focus on social movements, multicultural and political communication.

**Rebecca Mercado-Jones** (Ph.D., Ohio University), Assistant Professor, specializes in critical cultural communication. Her research interests are influenced by her desire to understand the way that social, economic, and political encroachments impact the way women narrate their lives and lifeworld.

**David Lau** (Ph.D., Southern Illinois University), Associate Professor, specializes in performance studies, gender communication, pedagogy, and poetic expression as communication.

**S. Lily Mendoza** (Ph.D., Arizona State University), Associate Professor, specializes in critical intercultural communication, theories of identity and subjectivity, cultural politics in national, post- and trans-national contexts, dynamics of cross-cultural theorizing, colonial and postcolonial discourse, and discourses of indigenization, race, and ethnicity.

**Erin A. Meyers** (Ph.D., University of Massachusetts, Amherst), Associate Professor, specializes in media and culture, including media and social identity and social control of mass media. Her research focuses on the role of celebrity culture in the creation and circulation of social norms and the ways in which audiences use new media technologies to consume, create and negotiate popular culture texts as a way to build connections with others.

**Valerie Palmer-Mehta** (Ph.D., Wayne State University), Professor, writes at the intersection of rhetorical theory and criticism, feminist theory, and media and cultural criticism. Her research investigates the representation and performance of gender, race, and sexuality, and the ways in which the media and public discourse construct notions of identity and difference.

**Robert Sidelinger** (Ed.D., West Virginia University), Associate Professor, specializes in interpersonal communication within the context of the classroom. His current research focuses on student involvement in the classroom and the role of anxiety, teasing, and partner value play in romantic relationships.

**Sam Srauy** (Ph.D., Temple University), Assistant Professor, specializes in the intersection of race, economics, and new media production. His work focuses on how economics and social norms intersect in the production of video game content. He is particularly interested in how these factors intersect to create environments that maintain inequality.

**Christine Stover** (M.A., Central Michigan University), Adjunct Faculty, specializes in how journalistic frameworks affect receivers' abilities to interpret and respond in times of crisis, the effectiveness of media health campaigns, agenda setting, and how media policies affect the flow of information across society.

**Beth Talbert** (M.A., Bowling Green State University), Special Instructor, specializes in leadership, persuasion and conflict, particularly as these relate to the construction of identity for women involved in politics and community advocacy.

**Jeffrey Youngquist** (Ph.D., Wayne State University), Associate Professor, and Department Chair, specializes in interpersonal communication within organizational settings. He studies issues of privacy, and control, power and dominance and how these dynamics are created and maintained through verbal and nonverbal communication.

## Course Offerings

**COM 5000 Introduction to Graduate Studies (4)** Provides an overview of the field of communication and develops the research, writing and professional skills necessary for the successful graduate student. Students will explore an extensive body of communication literature, develop a research proposal and learn the details of the academic writing.

**COM 5001 Philosophy of Communication Scholarship (4)** Examines the stakes involved in varying approaches to communication scholarship, focusing on the role of history, culture, ideology, and institutional/disciplinary authority in the production of knowledge. Provides a core philosophy of communication scholarship that recognizes the implications of knowledge claims on human life, civic engagement, and democracy.

**COM 5100 Qualitative Methods in Communication (4)** The study and application of qualitative methods in communication research with an emphasis on the use of critical methods.

**COM 5101 Quantitative Methods in Communication (4)** Provides graduate students with the principles and skills necessary to criticize quantitative research literature in communication. These include: developing proficiencies in structuring designs basic to descriptive and experimental studies such as data collection, analysis and presentation techniques in communication research.

**COM 5410 Advanced Interpersonal Communication (4)** Promotes understanding of the roles and drives behind our relationships. Exam-

ines the application of models, theories and research to interpersonal interactions.

**COM 5411 Family Communication (4)** Explores theory and current academic research involving the family. Students will understand how, through communication, we develop, maintain, enhance, or disturb family relationships.

**COM 6210 Culture and Communication: Contexts and Issues (4)** Examines the global context of intercultural encounters with emphasis on mapping the deep historical roots of inequality that structure relations within and between nations and peoples. Articulates an ethic of co-existence premised on reciprocity and acceptance of difference without colonial violence, racial hostility, and gendered coercion.

**COM 6211 Culture, Power, and Representation (4)** Examines the various theories of representation, the ethnic, racial and gendered production of difference, the relation between discourse and subjectivity, and more generally, the poetics and politics of representation.

**COM 6212 Communication and Cultural Citizenship (4)** Foregrounds the relationship between discourse, citizenship, and social change by examining the role that communication plays in cultural articulations of citizenship. Scrutinizes arguments, policies, methods, and artifacts advanced in communication research on citizenship, from its performance in popular culture to its legal, social, and political manifestations.

**COM 6310 Rhetoric of Popular Culture (4)** Examines the rhetorical and ideological dimensions of popular culture. Students will gain a detailed analysis of the multiple sites where everyday cultural practices, relations of power and domination, political economy, and texts converge, engendering meanings that have material consequences for human life and the environment.

**COM 6350 Feminist Rhetorical Theory (4)** Examines the intellectual debates and developments that inform research in feminist rhetorical theory and criticism. Provides a survey of feminist rhetorical theories, including traditional, critical-cultural, postmodern, and postcolonial approaches.

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including traditional, critical-cultural, postmodern, and postcolonial approaches.

**COM 6411 Privacy and Disclosure (4)** Investigates the role that communication plays in privacy and disclosure. Explores prominent theories and fundamental concepts that are germane to privacy and disclosure.

**COM 6610 Media and Globalization (4)** Examines issues surrounding international media, including globalization theory, comparative media systems, cultural imperialism, and cultural information flows.

**COM 6650 Theorizing Media (4)** Examines the key theoretical issues in the field of media studies as related to the historical development of mass communication. Students will gain firm grounding in the central assumptions, approaches and schools of thought that have shaped our understanding of media.

**COM 6611 Media and Modernity (4)** Examines the place of media communication within the broader processes of modernity from the mid 19th through the early 21st century.

**COM 6900 Special Topics in Critical Cultural Communication Studies (4)** Special topics in critical cultural communication offered by the department or as selected by assigned faculty.

**COM 6901 Special Topics in Interpersonal Communication (4)** Special topics in interpersonal communication offered by the department or as selected by assigned faculty.

**COM 6902 Special Topics in Media Studies (4)** Examines topics related to the development of media in relationship to US culture, including programming, technology and industry. Introduces students to central issues in media historiography and considers key issues in the field of media studies.

**COM 6996 Creative Project (4)** Completion of a creative project by a degree candidate with approval of his/her project committee.

**COM 6998 Thesis (4)** Completion of a research project by a degree candidate with approval of his/her thesis committee.

## Graduate Program Forms

The following forms are included at the end of this handbook. You may tear them out to take to advising meetings and/or submit to the Graduate Program Director. Additional copies are available from the Graduate Program Director:

**Graduate Assistantship Application**

**Program Planner**

## Communication Graduate Assistantship Available

### **ELIGIBILITY**

If not yet enrolled in the M.A. program in Communication:

An undergraduate degree in Communication or a related discipline (before the assistantship would begin)

and

A completed application to the M.A. program in Communication

and

An excellent academic record

If currently enrolled in the M.A. program in Communication:

No more than 20 hours of graduate credit in Communication (at the time the assistantship would begin for a full time position) and 28 hours of graduate credit in Communication (at the time the assistantship would begin for a half time position)

and

An excellent academic record

\* The deadline for application is March 1 for the fall semester. In the event that a GA opportunity is available for the winter semester applications will be due on November 1.

### **GENERAL TERMS**

As a Graduate Assistant you may be asked to assist the department with the undergraduate forensics team, assisting with research related tasks and/or leading discussions and delivering occasional lectures. A full time assistantship involves 20 hours of work each week during the semester. A half time assistantship requires 10 hours of work each week during the semester.

While you hold the assistantship, you must also be enrolled in eight hours of graduate credit each Fall and Winter semester. You are expected to complete your degree in two years.

The assistantship normally is awarded on a semester by semester basis and may be renewable. It carries a stipend and includes some tuition remission. Graduate Assistants will be reviewed each semester to determine if the assistantship will be maintained.

Applications and/or questions should be directed to:

Rebekah Farrugia, Chair  
Graduate Program Committee  
farrugia@oakland.edu  
Department of Communication and Journalism  
Oakland University  
Rochester, Michigan 48349

(see over for further application details)

## **INFORMATION FOR APPLICANTS FOR GRADUATE ASSISTANTSHIPS**

### **THE GRADUATE ASSISTANT**

The Graduate Assistant is a candidate for an advanced degree in Communication, during his/her time between eight credits for course work and twenty hours a week of supervised pre-professional activity if on a full time assistantship and 10 hours a week for half time assistantships. S/he is assigned each semester to one or more faculty members and the duties may include any activities relevant to the teaching and scholarship of the supervising professor and to the Graduate Assistant's own growth in these areas.

Assistants may not accept additional employment without permission of the Graduate Dean.

### **PROCESS OF APPLICATION AND SELECTION**

Applicants are selected on the basis of the following: a letter of application that includes undergraduate GPA and the names of two faculty who can serve as referees.

Awards are renewable Fall and Winter semesters throughout the period of the student's work toward his/her degree. Any student in financial difficulty may apply for help through the University's Office of Financial Aid, but Graduate Assistantships are awarded on the basis of competence and potential.

### **LETTER OF APPLICATION**

We ask for a letter of application which will give us a full and personal sense of who you are. Such a letter might ideally address itself to questions like these:

- 1) What ideas, theories, and approaches to studying communication have interested and involved you most fully in your undergraduate or graduate work?
- 2) What, if any, experience have you had in teaching and/or research related activities? If none, what interests you about pursuing teaching and/or research related activities?
- 3) What are your expectations as a graduate student and graduate assistant? What would you like to learn and do?

Our questions are meant to be suggestive, not prescriptive, and your own concerns and commitments will provide the most appropriate focus for your letter of application.

## M.A. Communication Program Planner

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Matriculation Semester \_\_\_\_\_

Full/Part Time: \_\_\_\_\_ Intended Date of Graduation \_\_\_\_\_

Course	Hours	Date Complete or to be completed	
<b>Gen. Core / Method Sequence</b>			
COM 5000 Intro to Grad Studies	4 credits		
COM 5001 Philosophy of Com Scholarship	4 credits		
COM 5100 (Qualitative Methods in Com)	4 credits		
or			
COM 5001 (Quantitative Methods in Com)	12 credits		
			<b>Total:</b>
<b>Elective Course Requirements</b>			
1.			
2.			
3.			
4.			
5.			
			<b>Total:</b>
<b>Exit Option</b>			
Competency Exam Adviser approved elective:	4 credits (additional elective required, no credits for exam)	Elective completion date:  Exam date:	
COM 6992 Thesis Adviser:	4 credits	Proposal date:  Final defense date:	
Committee Members:			
COM 6993 Creative Project Adviser:	4 credits	Proposal date:  Final defense date:	
Committee Members:			
			<b>Total:</b>
			<b>GRAND TOTAL:</b>
			<i>(36 credits min.)</i>

Status: Regular \_\_\_\_\_ Provisional \_\_\_\_\_ Transfer hrs.: \_\_\_\_\_

Comments:



Department of Communication and Journalism  
317 Wilson Hall  
Rochester, MI 48309