To Prospective M.A. Students
FROM THE CHAIR OF THE DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNICATION

On behalf of my colleagues in the Georgia State University Department of Communication, I want to thank you for your interest in our degree programs and encourage you to be in contact with our faculty. In the past decade we have made tremendous strides together, and I hope you will carefully consider what we have to offer.

This handbook is not designed as a recruiting document, but I think you’ll find it will help inform your choices since it includes very detailed information about the particular policies governing M.A. activity.

At any given time approximately 150 students are pursuing the Masters Degree in Communication at Georgia State, their work dispersed among the three tracks of the degree program (film & video, mass communication, and human communication & social influence). Each track connects to specific regional media industries, and in addition to pursuing advanced degree work that will facilitate promotion in the city’s journalism and PR sectors, others will pursue graduate studies at the doctoral level or careers paths in film production, media studies, political or corporate communication and other professions where competency in message production and evaluation are important assets. We work to accommodate the diverse needs of our M.A. students by offering as many evening classes as our staffing allows. We also make assistantship support available to a number of our students.

At the heart of our work is a community of exceptionally talented faculty who often combine extensive professional experience with cutting edge academic research. In the 2010-2011 academic year we are pleased to announce that we are being joined by three additional graduate faculty members. Patricia Davis (Ph.D., University of California – San Diego 2009) is a mass communication scholar; her specialization is cultural studies, with particular interest in popular depictions of racial difference (including how participatory events like Civil War enactments reproduce wider cultural logics). Nathan Atkinson (Ph.D., Carnegie Mellon 2009) studies visual rhetoric, with specific attention to the history of Cold War atomic images. Shawn Powers (Ph.D., University of Southern California 2009) is a scholar of international communication: having just completed a one year appointment at the London School of Economics, he researches Middle Eastern media systems, especially Al Jazeera. They will join other scholars at work on a wide range of academic endeavors, including ongoing initiatives to train journalists in the Arab and Asian worlds, to work with underserved high school students in the metro-Atlanta area to develop critical thinking and oral advocacy skills, to better understand media effects and the role played by the media in stereotyping, to investigate media history, and many more.

I hope you’ll take some time to explore our website (communication.gsu.edu) and to arrange to meet with the graduate director supervising the program in which you have an interest (Dr. Mary Stuckey, mstuckey@gsu.edu, oversees the mass communication and human communication & social influence tracks; Dr. Angelo Restivo, arestivo@gsu.edu, oversees the film & digital production sequence).

Dr. David Cheshier
Associate Professor / Chair
Department of Communication
FALL 2010
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Introduction

The Graduate Program in Communication offers its students a multi-disciplinary curriculum leading to the Master of Arts degree. The program is designed to prepare students for professional activities in all areas of Communication in which the Department has emphases (mass communication, film/video and digital imaging, and human communication and social influence), as well as for continued advanced graduate work on the Ph.D. level. Required core courses for the M.A. are designed to give coherence to the multi-disciplinary offerings of the program by providing an overview of the field and by introducing concepts that are common and applicable to all the areas of emphasis.

In addition to the general admission requirements of the Georgia State University College of Arts & Sciences, the Department of Communication has the following requirements:

✓ A statement of educational and career goals. Faculty reviewers are interested to see the student connect their own interests with a broad area of communication scholarship and articulate a connection to the specific strengths of the GSU faculty and research facilities. Faculty reviewers presume that a person interested in graduate studies is passionate about the field, and so that point need not be extensively elaborated. The goals statement can also be used to draw reviewers’ attention to areas of strength in the application that might otherwise be overlooked, or to explain apparent weaknesses that might impair the odds of acceptance.

✓ Two (2) letters of recommendation from individuals who can evaluate the applicant’s past experiences and potential to do graduate work in communication.

✓ A high standard of overall undergraduate achievement. An above-average undergraduate grade-point average. (A minimally qualified applicant typically will achieve at least a 3.0 on a 4.0 scale). Admission to the program does not require an undergraduate degree in communication, but if an accepted applicant lacks any background in the field, she or he may be required to take supplementary coursework so that more advanced studies can be undertaken.

✓ A sufficiently high score on the verbal and analytical portions of the Graduate Record Examination and receipt of these scores by Georgia State University prior to consideration for acceptance into the graduate degree program. (A minimally qualified applicant typically will achieve at least a 500 on the Verbal portion of the Graduate Record Examination and a combined score of 1000 on the Verbal and Quantitative portions.)

Note: The Department of Communication reviews application for fall and spring semester admission only. Deadlines for application for admission may be found on the departmental website (http://communication.gsu.edu). In order to be assured of consideration for assistantships, complete applications must be received in the department no later than February 10. A record of professional experience in communication is not required for program admission, and its absence does not undermine a case for admission, but if such a record exists, departmental reviewers endeavor to take it into account.
The Department will not consider requests for Special Status admission. Non-degree applications are considered only in very limited circumstances, which usually fall into one of three categories: (a) if the applicant has been authorized by another accredited graduate program to accept the courses as transfer credit, (b) if the applicant can document that specific courses will fulfill a teaching certification requirement, or (c) if an applicant will be in the Atlanta area for a specifically bounded amount of time that precludes them from taking a full degree course at GSU. Grades earned in approved non-degree courses are typically not credited to GSU degree programs unless a petition is approved by the Area Director and Chair. Non-degree applicants must take no more than three courses, which must be specified in the application statement.

Information and application materials may be obtained online at www.gsu.edu/~wwwgas/.
Administrative Information

Departmental Administration

The Department of Communication has designated faculty Area Directors for each emphasis in the MA program: film/video and digital imaging; mass communication; human communication and social influence. Graduate students should work with the appropriate Area Director to facilitate administrative issues. Tawanna Tookes is the full-time administrative support staff member for the graduate program.

Staying Informed of Degree and University Requirements

It is the responsibility of students enrolled in the M.A. program to keep themselves informed of rules and policies governing their program of study. Upon first registration, the university assigns each student an official email address, to which important information about a student’s status is regularly sent. Students are responsible for regularly accessing that email account, thereby staying aware of important policy announcements.

Registration

Newly admitted students who have not yet begun graduate study need not register until the week of departmental orientations (i.e., the week immediately prior to start of classes), when the student will be advised by the graduate directors and area faculty. Spaces are reserved for incoming students in all graduate seminars.

There are two (2) opportunities to register for courses each semester. Phase I registration is held toward the end of the preceding semester. Phase II registration is held immediately before the beginning of the next semester. Students primarily register at the GSU website (http://www.gsu.edu).

Details on registration procedures are found at https://www.gosolar.gsu.edu/webforstudent.htm. The Registrar’s Office will send each student a registration appointment card for Phase I registration by mail. Those students not registering during Phase I will be sent another appointment card for Phase II.

If a student’s address is incorrectly listed with the Registrar, he/she will not receive an appointment card. (Students are encouraged to update their address with the Registrar on a semester basis.)

Students who do not receive an appointment may contact the Appointments Section of the Registrar’s Office or go to the Appointments Section office in 253 Sparks Hall. Courses are listed in the Schedule of Classes, which is available online at the GSU website.

Registration appointments are assigned on a seniority basis for Phase I. The number of accumulated credit hours determines the student’s seniority. Registration appointments are assigned randomly for Phase II. Students needing a particular course should register and pay for it during Phase I registration since it cannot be assumed that spaces will remain in the course through Phase II registration.
Special Authorization

Some courses, designated by an asterisk (*) in the Schedule of Classes, will require special authorization because there are specific prerequisites for the courses. Students are eligible to obtain authorization two-three (2–3) days before their registration appointment time.

Special authorization requests for graduate Communication courses should be made to the instructor of the course in the Department of Communication, 6th floor, One Park Place South (404–413-5600).

Time Limits

All requirements for the master’s degree must be completed within seven (7) years of the student’s first semester in the program. In other words, only credits earned within seven (7) years of the semester in which the degree is to be awarded will count toward the degree.

Students should be aware of and plan their course of study in accord with the time limitations on completion of various aspects of the program. While students may request an extension from the Graduate Petitions Committee of the College of Arts & Sciences, such extensions are only granted under demonstrably exceptional circumstances. Students should therefore be mindful of their timely progress through the program.

For consideration of an extension beyond the published time limit for degree programs, students must petition through the Graduate Office, College of Arts and Sciences. Upon receipt of the petition, both the Area Directors and the Chair are asked to make recommendations for or against the proposed extensions. Factors considered in those recommendations include: successful defense of the Research Thesis/Creative Thesis prospectus, demonstrated progress toward the completion of the exit project, level of support from the student’s committee advisor, relevance of courses taken beyond the term limit to the student’s exit project, and if a previous extension has been granted. Students should provide a convincing argument that includes a discussion of these factors. The Area Directors and Chair may require a student to retake core classes (or classes that are particularly crucial to the student’s exit project) if the student took those classes more than 7 years before the semester of petition and/or if the content of those courses has changed significantly. Students should also be made aware that the Graduate Council of the Arts and Sciences, the body who ultimately grants or denies petitions, only meets once each semester.

Changing Programs

Students are accepted for graduate study in the Department of Communication. Courses throughout the Department appropriate to their areas of emphasis may be taken for credit with the approval of their Area Director, so long as courses outside the track do not exceed six (6) credit hours work. Changing from the Master of Arts program in the Department of Communication to another program in another department or from another program to the Department of Communication requires application through the admissions process for the new program and adherence to published application deadlines.

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Active / Inactive Status/ Continuous Enrollment

A student who has not registered for three (3) consecutive semesters is considered inactive and must apply for reentry through the Registrar’s Reentry Office, located in 227 Sparks Hall (404-413-2210). Students must take a minimum of six (6) hours in any consecutive three semester period, and not all in the summer session.

Students seeking an Academic Program Leave for one to three semesters must formally apply through the Graduate Office. The seven (7) year deadline for completing all degree requirements will nevertheless remain the same.

Before reentry will be approved, the Office of Graduate Studies of the College of Arts & Sciences will seek approval from their Area Director and the chair of the department.

GPA

Students must earn a grade of B or above in all required coursework, including in their advanced methods course/s. If a grade lower than B is earned in a required course, it must be retaken (and grades earned in all attempts are calculated into the overall GPA grade point total). Given the plus-minus grading system in use at Georgia State University, a grade of “B-” does not fulfill this requirement. No course in which a student receives a grade of "C-" or below will credit to degree requirements.

Scholastic Termination

A student whose grade point average falls below the 3.0 required to receive a degree will have 18 semester hours in which to raise the GPA before being subject to termination from the graduate program.

Application for Graduation

Students must apply for graduation two (2) semesters in advance of their expected date of graduation.

Applications are available in the Graduation Office (355 Sparks Hall), in the Registrar’s Office (227 Sparks Hall; 404-413-2210), or in the Office of Graduate Studies for the College of Arts & Sciences (800 Haas-Howell Building; 404-413-5040). If a student is unable to finish by the semester originally specified, it is the student’s responsibility to change the date by contacting the Graduation Office. Once a student has applied to graduate, an audit of the student’s records will be completed by the Office of Graduate Studies of the College of Arts & Sciences. It is the student’s responsibility to discuss any discrepancies with their Area Director.

Residency Requirement

At least one-half of all coursework-connected credit hours must be completed in residence.
Yearly Evaluation

All students on a graduate teaching assistantship meet with the relevant Area Director and the chair every spring. These meetings are brief and designed to provide students—and the department—with ongoing feedback relating to progress in program and the pace of professional development.

At these meetings, students are required to provide updated copies of their C.V.s and to participate in a yearly survey of professional activity.

Additional Resources

Several additional resources are available to help students navigate their M.A. degree program. Students should be in frequent contact with members of the faculty about conference attendance and presentation, publication, and so on, as pertinent to their professional or academic plans for the future.
Departmental Information

Advisement

All graduate students in the Department of Communication should seek advisement in their first semester of attendance at Georgia State University from their Area Director. Area Directors in the Department have scheduled office hours each semester. In order to obtain these hours, the student should contact their Area Director. Dr. Mary Stuckey is the Area Director for Mass Communication and Human Communication (404-413-5642). Dr. Angelo Restivo is the Area Director for Film/Video and Digital Imaging. (404-413-5626).

Students should choose an individual adviser as soon as possible.

Students should be aware, when considering committee composition and likely timetables for their program, that faculty are not obligated to be available and may not be available during sabbaticals, certain leaves, or summers in which they receive no support from the department. If a student wishes or needs to schedule a defense or other critical meeting at a time when one or more committee members is unavailable, regular committee members can often be replaced on an ad hoc basis in consultation with the committee chair. Committee chairs are difficult if not impossible to replace as they provide continuity for the student’s plan of study or dissertation project, ensuring both that the student conforms to the committee’s expectations set in plan-of-study meetings, the prospectus defense, and any other meetings the committee may have had with the student and that the student is not held to account to standards and expectations introduced at the last minute. Recognizing the limits of long-range planning and the likelihood that unexpected exigencies will arise, students should, as they create their committees, discuss possible timelines and contingencies with prospective committee members in order to have a basic idea of what kinds of flexibility might be available for each prospective member.

Requests for Non–degree Hours to Count toward the M.A. Degree

Students who have enrolled in Georgia State graduate classes as non–degree seeking students prior to admission to graduate study can petition to have a maximum of nine (9) credit hours – generally, three (3) courses – count toward the Master of Arts degree. To do so, the student should submit a request in writing to the Area Director, listing the student’s date of admission into the M.A. program, the specific courses taken as a non–degree student he/she wishes to count toward the M.A. degree, and a short justification as to why the request should be approved. The request must be made during the student’s first two (2) semesters of the student’s full status coursework in the program. The Graduate Program’s Administrative Specialist will notify the student when a decision has been reached.

Transfer Credit

A maximum of six (6) hours of graduate courses in Communication or in an area related to the student’s program of study from another accredited institution may be applied toward the M.A. degree. Application for transfer must be made during the student’s first two (2) semesters at Georgia State University. Transfer credit is subject to evaluation and approval by the Department’s Graduate Committee, the chair, and the Associate Dean of the College of Arts & Sciences. To apply for transfer credit, the student should submit a request in writing to the Area Director, listing the student’s date of admission into the M.A. program, the specific courses taken that he/she wishes to count toward the M.A.
degree with copies of appropriate syllabi and/or catalog copy, and a short justification as to why the request should be approved.

**Important Dates**

*Completion of Core Requirements (COMM 6010 and COMM 6030)*: during student's first year or as appropriate given consultation with the student's adviser

*SARI Responsible Conduct of Research*: must be completed within the first year in program.

*Declaration of Intent (Research Thesis or Creative Thesis)*: at the completion of twelve (12) hours of coursework

*Proof of Foreign Language or Research Equivalent*: prior to enrolling for Research Thesis/Creative Thesis hours

*Submission of COMM 6990 Form (Creative Thesis/Research Thesis Advisor Agreement Form)*: no later than the semester before the student plans to register for COMM 6990. However, students are strongly advised to have a thesis advisor formally in place by the time they take their seventh course.

*Registration for COMM 6990*: after the last semester of the student's coursework, or in a semester when the student is completing the last single program requirement

*Filing for Graduation*: two (2) semesters before the student plans to graduate

**Important Phone Numbers**

Department of Communication  404-413-5600

Dr. David Cheshier (Chair)  404-413-5649

Dr. Mary Stuckey (Area Director: Mass Comm./Human Comm.)  404-413-5642

Dr. Angelo Restivo (Area Director: Film/Video and Digital Imaging)  404-413-5626

Ms. Tawanna Tookes, Administrative Specialist, Dept. of Communication  404-413-5652

Office of Graduate Studies, College of Arts & Sciences  404-413-5040

**Comm-grads: An Internet Mailing List**

*Comm-grads* is an Internet mailing list for news and announcements regarding graduate study in the Department of Communication. *Comm-grads* is the primary way that the Area Directors and the Chair communicate information to Communication graduate students, and so all graduate students must subscribe. To subscribe to *Comm-grads*, go to [http://mailbox.gsu.edu/mailman/listinfo/comm-grads](http://mailbox.gsu.edu/mailman/listinfo/comm-grads).

Students are assigned a Georgia State email address automatically, and they must check that email account regularly for important information. Students on assistantship are also issued a departmental address (e.g. abc@langate.gsu.edu). If you have another primary email account you may forward your GSU email to that account. Details about accessing your GSU email and forwarding it elsewhere are available at [http://www.student.gsu.edu](http://www.student.gsu.edu).
It is vitally important that students have a way to check their email on their GSU student account, because this is how the department and university communicate with students, and important information will be missed if the account isn’t regularly checked.

**Graduate Assistantships**

The Department of Communication has three options for assistantships: graduate laboratory assistantships (GLAs), graduate teaching assistantships (GTAs), and graduate research assistantships (GRAs). In most cases students will have a combined assignment as GTA/GLA or as GRA/GLA.

GRAs assist individual faculty members in their research endeavors. GLAs assist the department in carrying out its teaching responsibilities under the direct supervision of a faculty member. GTAs have the independent responsibility for overseeing and teaching an undergraduate course.

Assistantships are renewed each semester, with the award generally lasting for two semesters unless problems arise with student performance. Students receive a full tuition waiver, a stipend, and a 10% discount at the university bookstore. Graduate teaching assistants also receive health insurance.

Graduate students on assistantship support are provided access to a heavily subsidized health insurance package. Students may either enroll in this discounted program or opt out if they are satisfied with their health insurance arrangements already in place. All graduate assistants who hold a full tuition waiver must be enrolled in mandatory health insurance (go to [www.pearceandpearce.com/PearecSite/Schools/GA/gsu](http://www.pearceandpearce.com/PearecSite/Schools/GA/gsu) to sign up prior to the first day of classes in the first year of your assistantship) or have taken the necessary steps to demonstrate that they have other health insurance coverage. More information is available as well on the College of Arts and Sciences graduate office webpage.

Graduate students may apply for an assistantship by filling out an application available from the Administrative Specialist or online at the department website (communication.gsu.edu).

**Assistantship Eligibility**: To be eligible to receive a graduate assistantship, students must be enrolled for a total of eighteen (18) hours each semester (fall, spring, and summer). As part of those eighteen hours, students must register for at least three courses in spring and fall that have announced days and times in the course schedule. Students generally register for their remaining hours by signing up for the variable credit Directed Research course under the name of the research professor to whom they have been assigned (COMM 8780). Students receive a pass/fail grade in Directed Research based on their performance as assistants. These hours of Directed Research (COMM 8780) do not count toward the requirements for the master’s degree. For example, in the fall or spring a typical full-time student with an assistantship would take 3 classes at 3 hours each plus 9 hours of COMM 8780. Graduate students on assistantships must receive permission from their Area Director to take fewer than three courses that have announced days and times in the course schedule in their fall and spring semesters.

Assistantships are normally awarded in the late spring, and the assistantship term is annual (i.e., running from July 1 – June 30) after the first year (first year student assistantships do not begin until the start of the first fall semester in which a student has enrolled. Students receiving support are required to enroll in 18 credit hours of COMM
8780 in the summer sessions connecting their years of funding, although these hours do not require a student to be in local residence.

Assistanship Evaluation and Probation: At the end of the academic year, each graduate assistant participates in an individual evaluation with the chair and the appropriate area graduate director. In this evaluation students receive feedback on their work as a teaching/research/lab assistant. The student, chair, and area graduate director discuss ways of improving performance in the future.

At any time, a student’s assistanship may be placed on probation or be terminated altogether based on a failure to perform assigned duties. Generally, a graduate assistant should strive to: (1) consistently achieve a student response score of 4.0-5.0 on question 17 of their teaching evaluations if they have assigned teaching duties; (2) consistently receive a grade of satisfactory for their performance in Directed Research if they are assigned research duties; and (3) maintain a grade point average in graduate coursework that falls between 3.5 and 4.0. Students will be notified at the year-end evaluation if their assistanship is put on probation or terminated, and the chair and graduate director will advise the student how to remedy problems when they lead to probation.

Scholarships

The Department of Communication has a number of scholarships to award to graduate students. Interested students should contact the chair of the Department’s Scholarship Committee and be prepared to provide letters of recommendation from faculty members.

Fellowships

The *James W. Woodruff, Jr., Graduate Fellowship in Media Innovation and Responsibility* is awarded annually to a graduate student in Communication who intends to pursue research or creative projects related to media ethics or technology. Selection of the recipient will be made by the Department’s Graduate Committee and the Department’s Chair. Interested students should contact the Graduate Program’s Administrative Specialist for further information.

The *George Greiff Scholarship* is awarded annually to a journalism graduate or undergraduate student in honor of George Greiff, a former journalism professor at GSU.

The *Scott-Norcosto Scholarship*, established through gifts from Norcosto, Inc., the Scott-Norcosto Foundation, and the Scott family, is awarded annually to an outstanding student in technical theater.
Degree Requirements

Only courses numbered 6000 and above may be counted toward fulfilling a student's course-work requirements.

Research Thesis Track (a minimum 36-hour program)

1) 30 hours of graduate coursework in communication and allied fields:
   a) 6 hours of core courses: COMM 6010 (Issues and Perspectives in Communication) and COMM 6030 (Research Methods in Communication). Students in the FVI track are also required to take the core COMM 6020 (Advanced Film Theory).
   b) 18-24 additional hours in communication courses designated by the area of emphasis (film/video and digital, mass communication, and human communication and social influence).
   c) SARI Responsible Conduct of Research Requirement.
   d) Optional 0-6 hours of allied coursework in another area of emphasis or outside the department as approved by the advisor.

2) Approved research skill or proficiency in a foreign language. (Note: Credit hours from the latter may not be applied to B or C above.)

3) A successful prospectus defense.

4) At least 6 hours of COMM 6998 Thesis Research.

5) A Research Thesis.

6) A successful Research Thesis defense.

Creative Thesis Track (a minimum 36-hour program)

1) 33 hours of graduate coursework in communication and allied fields:
   a) 6 hours of core courses: COMM 6010 (Issues and Perspectives in Communication) and COMM 6030 (Research Methods in Communication). Students in the FVI track are also required to take the core COMM 6020 (Advanced Film Theory).
   b) 18-27 hours of courses designated by the area of emphasis
   c) Optional 0-9 hours of courses outside area of emphasis or outside of the department as approved by adviser.

2) Proficiency in an approved research skill or relevant foreign language. (Note: Credit hours from the latter may not be applied to B or C above.)

3) A successful prospectus defense.

4) At least 3 hours of COMM 6998 Thesis Research.

5) A Creative Thesis project.

6) A successful Creative Thesis defense.
Description of Program

It is the student’s responsibility to be thoroughly familiar with the University’s requirements, as published in the Graduate Bulletin of the College of Arts & Sciences and the requirements of the Department of Communication as set forth in this document. When planning his/her program of study, the student should remember the following:

First, the Department offers a Master of Arts degree program in Communication. The student’s overall program should reflect a balance of general Communication courses and courses in the student’s area of emphasis. There are three areas of emphasis for an MA in Communication: Film/Video/Digital Imaging; Mass Communication; Human Communication and Social Influence.

Second, the student should attempt to balance more “practical” courses with more conceptual and research-based ones in his/her overall program of study. Questions regarding specific courses may be directed to the appropriate Area Director of Graduate Studies.

Third, the student should try not to duplicate prior undergraduate experiences or to limit the courses he/she takes to those offered by a few professors. Below are possible course options for students in the various areas of emphasis. Each student must speak to his/her advisor for prior approval of the planned program of study.

Courses in the Graduate program are in the process of being renumbered. When in doubt, refer to course title or ask an Area Director. Master’s students are expected to take the preponderance of their courses at the 6000 level, although they are allowed to take courses at the 8000 level (courses geared primarily for Ph.D. students).

SARI Responsible Conduct of Research Requirement

All undergraduates, graduate students, and post-doctoral appointees involved in empirical research (a designation which applies to all communication graduate students) at Georgia State University are required to undertake Responsible Conduct of Research education and training as part of their requirements for graduation or employment. As part of this educational requirement, web-based training through the Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative (CITI) is available for students. Before you log onto the CITI training program, please read carefully the “GSU Instructions for RCR Learners.” To log onto the modules provided by CITI, go to http://www.citiprogram.org/

In addition to this training, the department of communication provides an annual in-person training session that all students must complete within their first year in program. This training is typically connected with start-of-year orientation events.

Core Courses

The core courses are: COMM 6010 (Issues and Perspectives in Communication) and COMM 6030 (Research Methods in Communication). In addition, COMM 6020 (Advanced Film Theory) is considered a required course for all Film/Video and Digital Imaging students. All students should attempt to complete their core classes in the first year of their coursework. Part time students generally find that attempting to complete COMM 6010 and COMM 6030 in the same semester is not advisable. Each of the core courses in the Department is offered at least twice a year.
Course names followed by an asterisk (*) tend to be regularly offered. Those unmarked are less frequently available.

**Course Appropriate For Students in Film/Video and Digital Imaging**

COMM 6600 Acting for the Camera *
COMM 6620 Advanced Film Theory *
COMM 6125 Conceptualization and Visualization for Media Makers *
COMM 6130 Filmmaking II *
COMM 6135 Digital Cinematography *
COMM 6140 Postproduction *
COMM 6145 Digital Editing *
COMM 6170 Hollywood Cinema to 1967 *
COMM 6180 International Cinema *
COMM 6240 Documentary Film *
COMM 6250 Media Producer *
COMM 6280 Film Genres *
COMM 6310 Dramatic Writing *
COMM 6310 Feature Screenwriting *
COMM 6320 Feature Screenwriting II *
COMM 6355 Digital Moving Image Production *
COMM 6360 Digital Post-Production *
COMM 6370 Digital Effects for Film *
COMM 6380 Interactive Video Workshop *
COMM 6480 Political Communication *
COMM 6500 Visual Communication *
COMM 6510 Media and Politics *
COMM 6600 Media Management and Marketing *
COMM 6610 Desktop Editing and Publishing *
COMM 6620 Problems in Public Relations *
COMM 6630 Public Relations Writing *
COMM 6640 Media Advertising *
COMM 6670 Communication Consultancy *
COMM 6690 Contemporary Hollywood Cinema *
COMM 8060 Seminar in Communication Law *
COMM 8070 Communication Technology *
COMM 8090 Communication Ethics *
COMM 8400 Topics in Communication Research Methods *
COMM 8790 Seminar in Moving Image Studies *

**Courses Appropriate for Students in Mass Communication**

COMM 6640 History of the News Media *
COMM 6620 Critical History of Television *
COMM 6250 Media Producer *
COMM 6460 Topics in Public Communication Theory and Research *
COMM 6480 Political Communication *
COMM 6500 Visual Communication *
COMM 6510 Media and Politics *
COMM 6590 News Director in Broadcasting *
COMM 6690 Media Management and Marketing *
COMM 6610 Desktop Editing and Publishing *
COMM 6640 Media Advertising *
COMM 6650 International Communication *
COMM 6660 Corporate Communication *
COMM 6690 Women and Media *
COMM 8060 Seminar in Communication Law *
COMM 8070 Communication Technology *
COMM 8080 Seminar in Communication Policy *
COMM 8090 Communication Ethics *
COMM 8600 Literary Journalism *
COMM 8710 Seminar in Mass Communication Theory *
COMM 8050 Principles of Persuasion *
COMM 8100 Theories of the Public *
COMM 8110 Communication Consulting *
COMM 8400 Topics in Communication Research Methods *
COMM 8500 Speechwriting *
COMM 8660 Problems in Public Relations *
COMM 8670 Public Relations Writing *
COMM 8720 Seminar in Writing for Mass Audiences *
COMM 8730 Seminar in International Media and Culture *
COMM 8740 International Political Economy of the Media *
COMM 8790 Seminar in Public Communication *

**Courses Appropriate for Students in Human Communication and Social Influence**

COMM 6210 Critical History of Television *
COMM 6400 Development of Communication and Language Across the Lifespan *
COMM 6450 Rhetorical Theory and Criticism *
COMM 6460 Topics in Public Communication Theory and Research *
COMM 6470 Topics in Interpersonal Communication and Research *
COMM 6480 Political Communication *
COMM 6490 Communication and Gender *
COMM 6500 Visual Communication *
COMM 6510 Media and Politics *
COMM 6520 Speechwriting *
COMM 6600 Media Management and Marketing *
COMM 6610 Desktop Editing and Publishing *
COMM 6620 Problems in Public Relations *
COMM 6630 Public Relations Writing *
COMM 6640 Media Advertising *
COMM 6650 International Communication *
COMM 6660 Corporate Communication *
COMM 6670 Communication Consulting *
COMM 6790 Women and Mass Media *
COMM 8050 Principles of Persuasion *
COMM 8060 Seminar in Communication Law *
COMM 8070 Communication Technology *
COMM 8080 Seminar in Communication Policy *
COMM 8090 Communication Ethics *
COMM 8100 Theories of the Public *
COMM 8400 Topics in Communication Research Methods *
Special Projects (COMM 6910)

Graduate students are eligible to enroll in supervised independent study for up to three (3) hours of course credit. A special project is arranged with a faculty member willing to supervise it, and whose research expertise is related to the subject matter of the course. A form is available in the 6th floor offices of the Department of Communication (One Park Place South) in which the assignments, meeting times, and grading criteria for such studies are detailed. The negotiated workload for a three (3) -hour independent study must be fully equal to the workload normally expected in a standard three hour seminar. Faculty are under no obligation to offer independent study access given their other responsibilities. Independent studies must be approved by the Department Chair, and will not be approved if their content duplicates courses already in the catalog, whether those courses are offered at a time convenient to the student or not. Students interested in arranging an independent study should plan as far ahead of time as possible, and should include the Area Director in their planning to assure it will count toward degree requirements.

Students are expected to take the vast majority of their coursework in regularly scheduled classes. Normally, no more than two independent studies will count toward graduation. Students must receive approval from the Area Director to count more than two.

Internships (COMM 6970)

Graduate students are also eligible to enroll in internships for up to three (3) hours of course credit. An internship provides students with both observational and hands-on learning experiences that enhance their academic preparation and increase their ability to perform on a professional level after graduation. Students must have completed 12 hours of coursework in the department, have at least a 3.0 GPA, and have a full-time faculty member from their area of concentration sponsor them. Students should apply for an internship one (1) semester prior to the semester of actual enrollment.

Applications are located in the Department of Communication, 6th floor, One Park Place South. The internship program is overseen by Dr. Doug Barthlow.

Research Skill or Equivalent Foreign Language

All students pursuing the Master of Arts degree at Georgia State University must demonstrate mastery of an appropriate research skill or pass a reading examination in a foreign language. Proof of mastery is required prior to enrolling for Research Thesis or Creative Thesis hours.

Option 1: Research Skill

The research equivalency course MUST be selected in consultation with your thesis advisor. Together, the two of you will decide upon a course that will impart to you a research skill specific to the completion of your thesis project. (This course might be offered in any department, from Communication, to English, Philosophy, and Computer
Science.) You CANNOT select your research equivalency course before you have determined who your thesis director will be. Once your thesis director signs the form included in this handbook, it is then sent to the Area Director, who gives final approval.

Students seeking to fulfill their research skill requirement must obtain the approval of his/her Area Director and must complete the form included in this handbook. The purpose of the form is to assure that the method course chosen by a student will specifically train her or him for expected thesis research. Equivalent research skills in the Department of Communication include computer proficiency, advanced qualitative research methods, advanced quantitative research methods, and advanced critical theory. Directed readings and/or independent studies may not be used to satisfy this requirement. Transfer credits may not be used to satisfy this requirement. To fulfill this requirement, the department requires that the student receive a letter grade of “B” or higher in the research methods course.

The Ph.D. program in communication at Georgia State University regularly offers doctoral seminars in research methods. M.A. students may enroll for these courses and have them credit to the equivalent research skill requirement if they earn a letter grade of “B” or higher, assuming the adviser agrees. If this option is pursued, the form included in this handbook must still be completed, and adviser permission provided. Doctoral research methods courses in this category include such courses as:

- COMM 8040: New Media Research and Production
- COMM 8045: Content Analysis (rarely offered)
- COMM 8084: Feminist Methodologies
- COMM 8160: Style and Narrative Analysis
- COMM 8410: Qualitative Methods
- COMM 8420: Media Historiography
- COMM 8980: Quantitative Methods
- COMM 8980: Issues of Method in Rhetorical Criticism

The courses below represent a partial sample of courses which in the past have met research equivalence requirements for the M.A. These courses are not meant to be an exhaustive list, nor do these courses automatically fulfill the research equivalence requirement. Consult your thesis director before registering!

- ANTH 6020: Anthropology Theory
- ANTH 6040: Language and Culture
- ANTH 6480: Ethnographic Analysis
- ANTH 6550: Field School in Anthropology
- ANTH 8000: Anthropological Theory and Praxis
- ANTH 8010: Qualitative Methods in Anthropology
- AE 8050: Computer Imaging and Instructional Technology
- AL 8470: Sociolinguistics
- AL 8520: Psycholinguistics
- AL 8710: Research Design and Statistics for Applied Linguistics
- AH 8700: Contemporary Art: Theory and Criticism
- AH 8010: Methodology and Historiography of Art
- CSC 6510: Parallel and Distributed Computing
- CSC 6530: Programming Language Concepts
- CSC 6710: Database Systems
- CSC 6720: Human-Computer Interaction
- CSC 6730: Scientific Visualization
- CSC 6810: Artificial Intelligence
- CSC 6820: Computer Graphics Algorithms
- CSC 8330: Principles of Programming Languages
- CSC 8710: Deductive Databases and Logic Programming
- CSC 8720: Advanced Human-Computer Interaction
- CSC 8820: Advanced Graphics Algorithms
- ENGL 8000: Bibliography, Research Methods, and Literary Theory
- ENGL 8060: Literary Criticism
- ENGL 8070: Contemporary Literary Theory
- GEOG 6520: Quantitative Spatial Analysis
- GRD 6400: Design for Film and Television
- HIST 6920: Oral History
- HIST 6940: Administration and Use of Historical Archives
- HIST 8000: Introduction to Historical Research
- PHIL 6330: Philosophy of Mind
- PHIL 6530: Philosophy of Language
- PHIL 6520: Symbolic Logic
- PHIL 8100: Seminar in Epistemology
- PHIL 8800: Logic in Communication
- POLS 8800: Elements of Research Design
- POLS 8810: Uses of Intermediate Statistical Methods in Political Science Research
- POLS 8820: Studies in Research Methodology
- PSYC 8010: Research Methods in Psychology
- PSYC 8011: Single-Case Research Methodology
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<th>PSYC 8012. Developmental Methods</th>
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<td>PSYC 8014. Research Methods in Community and Applied Social Psychology</td>
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<td>PSYC 8020. Assessment I</td>
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<td>PSYC 8040. Assessment II</td>
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<td>PSYC 8410. Psychological Research Statistics I</td>
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<td>PSYC 8430. Psychological Research Statistics II</td>
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<td>SOCI 8100. Intermediate Sociological Statistics</td>
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<td>SOCI 8200. Research Methodology</td>
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<td>SOCI 8300. Sociological Theory I</td>
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<td>SOCI 8301. Social Inequality</td>
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<td>SOCI 8342. Qualitative Methods in Sociology</td>
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<td>SOCI 9010. Multivariate Sociological Data Analysis</td>
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<td>SOCI 9020. Advanced Research Methodology</td>
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<td>SOCI 9030. Sociological Theory II</td>
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<th>STAT 8090. Applied Multivariate Statistics</th>
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<td>STAT 8540. Multivariate Methods in Biostatistics</td>
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<td>STAT 8561. Linear Statistical Analysis I</td>
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<td>STAT 8562. Linear Statistical Analysis I and II</td>
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<td>STAT 8581. Statistical Theory I</td>
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<td>STAT 8592. Statistical Theory II</td>
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<td>STAT 8600. Probability Theory</td>
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<td>STAT 8610. Time Series Analysis</td>
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<td>STAT 8630. Experimental Designs</td>
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<td>STAT 8650. Multivariate Analysis</td>
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<td>STAT 8670. Computational Methods in Statistics</td>
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<td>STAT 8700. Analysis of Qualitative Data</td>
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<td>STAT 8750. Sample Surveys</td>
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<td>WST 8001. History and Theory of European and US Feminisms</td>
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<td>WST 8004. Feminist Methodology</td>
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Note: Registration for many of these courses requires either prerequisites (which do not normally credit toward a plan program of study) or instructor approval. Consult the graduate catalog and the relevant department before you depend on course and registration availability.

### Option 2: Foreign Language

This requirement may be satisfied by passing a reading exam in the Department of Modern and Classical Languages. International students may not take an exam in their language of origin, nor will competence in English satisfy this requirement. The reading test at GSU emphasizes translation ability and is offered once a semester, on Wednesday of the sixth week (the fourth week of the Summer Semester). The Department of Modern and Classical Languages administers examinations in French, German, Spanish, Italian, Latin, and ancient (but not Koine) Greek. Other languages that have a large body of published professional literature may be approved by the College of Arts & Sciences upon petition. Such a petition must be approved by the Area Graduate Director. For more information about the reading test, the student should contact the Department of Modern and Classical Languages (841 General Classroom Building; 404-651-2265), whose faculty administers and evaluates the exam.

**Procedure:** At least one (1) month before the examination date, the student must inform the Area Director of his/her intent to take the examination. (Please note that the pre-existing knowledge of a language does not necessarily mean that the language will be relevant to the student's program of graduate study.) The student will have the Area Director sign the Request for Graduate Foreign Language Reading Examination form included in this Handbook and take it to the Department of Modern and Classical Languages. The student will translate a passage selected by the Department of Modern and Classical Languages. The student must supply his/her own blue book (available in the University bookstore) and may supply his/her own dictionary or grammar. The time allowed for the examination is two (2) hours, including time for revision and correction. The examination will be graded within ten (10) working days of the test date. The grade assigned will be either Pass or Fail. Examinations are graded on the basis of accuracy of translation. The student must demonstrate a clear understanding of the text in his/her translation. The final product does not have to be recopied, provided it is legible. The student will obtain the results of his/her examination in writing from the Office of Graduate Studies, College of Arts & Sciences. The student should not telephone the Department of Modern and Classical Languages, the Office of Graduate Studies, or their Area Director for test results. The student may retake the exam multiple times without penalty.

Some of the courses which typically prepare students for the language examination (but which may not be substituted for the language examination) include:
FREN 6103. Advanced French Syntax
FREN 6108. French for International Business
FREN 6109. French for International Business II
FREN 6135. Comparative Stylistics and Translation
FREN 7135. Comparative Stylistics and Advanced Translation
FREN 7136. Literary Translation
FREN 7142. Advanced General Translation II
FREN 7140. Advanced General Translation I
FREN 7145. Advanced Technical Translation
FREN 7146. Supervised Technical Translation
FREN 8295. Literary Translation
GRMN 6631. Advanced Grammar and Stylistics
GRMN 6632. German for International Business I
GRMN 6635. Comparative Stylistics and Translation
GRMN 7135. Comparative Stylistics and Advanced Translation
GRMN 7140. Advanced General Translation I
GRMN 7142. Advanced General Translation II
GRMN 7145. Advanced Technical Translation
GRMN 7146. Supervised Technical Translation
LATN 6103. Seminar in Latin Poetry
LATIN 6104. Seminar in Latin Prose
LATIN 6106. Latin Stylistics
SPAN 6600. Advanced Grammar and Syntax
SPAN 6605. Spanish for International Business I
SPAN 6607. Spanish for International Business II
SPAN 6609. Comparative Stylistics and Translation
SPAN 7135. Comparative Stylistics and Advanced Translation
SPAN 7140. Advanced General Translation I
SPAN 7142. Advanced General Translation II
SPAN 7145. Advanced Technical Translation
SPAN 7146. Supervised Technical Translation
SPAN 7150. Simultaneous Interpretation I
SPAN 7152. Simultaneous Interpretation II
SPAN 7153. Simultaneous Interpretation III
SPAN 7155. Consecutive Interpretation I
SPAN 7157. Consecutive Interpretation I
Creative Theses/Research Theses

Master’s creative theses and research theses must be the product of the graduate student to whom the degree is awarded. Approval by the student’s committee of his/her Creative Thesis or Research Thesis is not only an approval of the manuscript and of the research described in it but also a certification that the student is qualified to conduct research on his/her own. Basic to that certification is the knowledge that the student is primarily responsible for designing the project or study, synthesizing the material examined, analyzing the data, and discussing the results, with minor help from his/her advisor, committee members, and others.

Georgia State University requires that each student assume full responsibility for the correctness in content and form of the Creative Thesis or Research Thesis. Very explicit guidelines for master’s theses (Research Thesis and Dissertation Guidelines) are available from the Office of Graduate Studies of the College of Arts and Sciences; these guidelines specify standards with respect to composition, typography, and certain policies and requirements (e.g., the need to post your final project as a PDF file upon completion).

Students typically register for COMM 6990 after they have completed all coursework, although they may register for COMM 6990 in the last semester of coursework if they are completing one (and only one) remaining degree requirement (such as one course or the foreign language proficiency requirement).

Although some students complete their thesis project in a single semester, thesis work often extends beyond the one semester mark. Part of the difficulty in bringing a thesis to completion in a single semester relates to the logistical demands for prospectus production and final thesis deposit, both of which carve time out of what may seem like a long uninterrupted occasion for research and writing. Students eager to draft and defend in a single term should discuss their ambition to do so with their faculty adviser, so the timetable for research and writing can be carefully planned.

If a committee member is unable to be present at a scheduled thesis defense, the student may, in consultation with the rest of the committee, (1) reschedule the defense, (2) replace the absent member, (3) with the absent member’s approval, proceed with the defense with the remaining committee members. In the case of (3) all committee members are still required to sign off on the thesis, offering their feedback with sufficient time so that it can be integrated into the final uploaded draft.

Unless the thesis project is wholly creative (such as a screenplay or completed film project), the department typically recommends that students plan to complete a research thesis. Since any but a wholly creative project will likely require the student to contextualize their efforts within the available research traditions, students are urged to conceptualize the thesis as a research project from the start.

Research theses of previous graduate students are available in the University library, and some previous creative theses are available in the Communication Department. These are good models of acceptable work, following the standards of the Department, the University, and the Communication profession.
Exit Project Procedures

Creative Thesis

The Creative Thesis is generally an applied research or creative/professional project.

The Creative Thesis is worth 3-credit hours (the equivalent of one course). The thesis student will thus have to take 11 courses besides the thesis course (and not counting the student’s meeting the foreign language/ equivalent research skill requirement) to graduate.

Students must enroll in at least one hour of thesis credit each term they require access to university facilities, faculty, equipment, or resources, including their final semester at the university, for a total of 3-semester hours.

Before enrolling in any thesis hours, a student must first get a faculty member to agree to serve as his/her thesis advisor. The signed form is then submitted to the appropriate area Graduate Director for approval and subsequently to Tawanna Tookes for course authorization.

At least two of the three-member committee must be members of the graduate faculty and either be in the student’s area of study and possess special expertise or at least be highly interested in the topic of the student’s Creative Thesis.

A prospectus must be developed by the student and his/her faculty advisor and defended before his/her committee.

A completed Creative Thesis project must be presented and defended.

Research Thesis

The Research Thesis is a traditional research project involving theoretical and critical analysis.

The Research Thesis is worth 6-credit hours (the equivalent of two courses). The Research Thesis student will thus have to take 10 courses, besides the two Research Thesis courses (and not counting the student’s meeting the foreign language/equivalent research skill requirement), to graduate.

Students must enroll in at least one hour of thesis credit each term they require access to university facilities, faculty, equipment, or resources, including their final semester at the university, for a total of 6-semester hours.

Before enrolling in any thesis hours, a student must first get a faculty member to agree to serve as his/her thesis advisor. The signed form is then submitted to the appropriate area Graduate Director for approval and subsequently to Tawanna Tookes for course authorization.

All three of the three-member committee must be members of the graduate faculty and either be in the student’s area of study and possess special expertise or at least be highly interested in the topic of the student’s research.

A prospectus must be developed by the student and his/her faculty advisor and defended before his/her committee.

A completed Research Thesis project must be presented and defended.
Guidelines for the Creative Thesis Project

The Creative Thesis is the required exit project for students seeking the Creative Thesis option for the Master of Arts degree in the Department of Communication. The Creative Thesis is a creative/professional project that carries three (3) hours of course credit. The student will continue to receive a grade of “IP” (in progress) in COMM 6990 until the Creative Thesis project is approved.

Students must register for at least one (1) credit hour of thesis research each semester the student requires access to university facilities, equipment, resources, or faculty.

Prior to Enrollment in COMM 6990

The student must take the appropriate coursework to prepare him/her for thesis work. Students who want to do a creative thesis in Digital Production must take the required sequence of digital production courses that will equip them to do production. Students who want to do a creative thesis in Feature Screenwriting must take the required sequence of screenwriting courses (COMM 6310/6320, Feature Screenwriting 1/II).

The student must identify a graduate faculty member in the Department of Communication who is willing and able to serve as the thesis advisor (see list of graduate faculty at the end of this document). Faculty asked to serve as advisors have the discretion to determine when the student has a sufficiently focused project to enroll in COMM 6990 and begin work for credit.

Selecting a Creative Thesis Committee

The student should nominate (in consultation with the thesis advisor) a minimum of two (2) additional faculty members to serve on the thesis committee. At least two (2) other committee members besides the advisor must be members of the Department of Communication faculty. At least two (2) of the thesis committee members must be members of the graduate faculty; all should possess special expertise in the area of the student’s proposed Thesis.

Arranging a Creative Thesis committee is the student’s responsibility, and is conducted with the advice of the student’s advisor. The advisor signs a COMM 6990 Authorization Form, signifying their willingness to serve on the student’s committee. The form is then submitted to the Area Director. After the Area Director signs the form, the Administrative Specialist will authorize the student’s enrollment in COMM 6990. Again, students are strongly encouraged to have a thesis advisor in place before taking their seventh course.

Creative Thesis Prospectus in Digital Production

1. Project description (1 page synopsis that implies or states clearly the theme or concept of the work; describes genre of material: fiction, documentary, experimental, animation; gives length in minutes not to exceed 20.)

2. A complete script (or detailed sequence-by-sequence description for documentary or experimental work, storyboards for animation)
3. Statement of intent. Define what ideas and themes the author intends for the audience to consider.

4. Description of visual style and/or formal qualities of the project with justification related to the stated theme or concept. (item 1)

5. Detailed ideal schedule for both pre-production, production and postproduction, referencing specific weeks and semesters for specific stages of progress in production and postproduction

6. Detailed budget with items categorized by both production phase, and by category of creative elements (i.e., Production: Craft service, tape stock, costume, and Postproduction: typefaces, music licenses, tape stock, etc.)

7. Intended location of production (give city, state and country – if international, describe means of transport, storage and insurance)

8. List of all production courses taken in the Department of Communication with grade of B or higher; include faculty names, dates of enrollment.

9. List of all equipment and facilities (rooms) in which the student was trained, and describe the course name or production context where student was trained.

10. Facility and equipment needs from GSU.

11. Brief bios of six major creative participants, or anyone who will touch GSU equipment or collaborate with student in GSU facilities. Include email addresses and phone numbers.

12. Target audience. Describe who the author is trying to reach. Give demographic specifics of age, ethnicity, culture, class, orientation or interest.

13. Venues and sites of intended exhibition and/or distribution. Give specific festivals, professional organizations, educational facilities that screen similar or related works.

14. List reference books, films, other works that inform the following:
   
a. the organizational aspect of the project,
b. the thematic and conceptual aspect,
c. the technical aspect of the project,
d. the aesthetic and expressive aspect of the project.
Creative Thesis Prospectus in Feature Screenwriting

The prospectus for a screenplay creative thesis project should resemble a feature length screenplay treatment of some 12-40 pages. It must articulate (in an engaging manner using present tense) the sequence of all significant plot events with sufficient characterization of all principal characters. It should also discuss the narrative structure of the proposed script using terms accepted in screenwriting/narrative practice.

Creative Thesis Prospectus (Other)

The Creative Thesis Prospectus should clearly present the following:

1. Overview of the intended project. A summary of the goals and procedures of the Creative Thesis.

2. Project goals. The expected outcome of the endeavor.

3. Rationale. The reason for choosing this creative/professional project. What experience/background the student brings to it and why it is important.

4. Significance. The particular contribution to knowledge, aesthetics, and/or the profession served by the project.

5. Literature and Resource Review. Review of work already done in this area of concern. A list of appropriate resources should be included:
   a. Creative work already done in the specific field (related artists and their films, videos, screenplays, speeches, journalism articles/broadcasts, productions, professional models, and/or plays).
   b. Background experience or related performances and presentations, and/or personal interviews, and contacts.
   c. Books, articles, and other print material relevant to project development.

6. Method. How the project will be conducted to meet the goals of the Creative Thesis, intended schedules and record keeping procedures for all phases of the intended project.

7. A copy of the prospectus must go on file with the Administrative Specialist.

Defending the Creative Thesis Prospectus

At least two (2) weeks after the student presents the committee with the prospectus, he/she must set up an oral defense meeting time that is agreeable to all parties involved. At this meeting, the student will answer questions from the faculty about the prospectus and make any revisions required by committee members. A copy of the prospectus must go on file with the Administrative Specialist.

If a student who has successfully defended their prospectus wants to change thesis advisor, he/she must petition the department’s graduate committee for approval. The graduate committee may recommend that the student defend the prospectus again with the newly reconstituted committee.
Again, if a committee member is unable to be present at a scheduled thesis defense, the student may, in consultation with the rest of the committee, (1) reschedule the defense, (2) replace the absent member, (3) with the absent member’s approval, proceed with the defense with the remaining committee members. In the case of (3) all committee members are still required to sign off on the thesis, offering their feedback with sufficient time so that it can be integrated into the final uploaded draft.

Format of the Creative Thesis

The student’s committee must approve the specific style manual as appropriate for the Creative Thesis project. The format of the film/video thesis should be agreed upon with the committee and formalized in the prospectus. The format of the screenwriting thesis is the Writer’s Guild of American (WGA) script format (consult committee chair for details). Deviations from this requirement must be approved in writing by their Area Director.

Presenting and Defending the Creative Thesis

A student **must** provide his/her thesis committee members with the completed Creative Thesis at least two (2) weeks before the oral presentation and defense date. The presentation must be at a mutually agreeable time consistent with the published timetable of the Graduate Office. The date, time, and location should be publicized and the meeting should be open to other interested faculty and staff. At the meeting, the student will present the Creative Thesis and answer questions about the project.

At the conclusion of the presentation, the committee will deliberate in closed session.

Unanimous agreement of the Department of Communication faculty serving on the committee is required to certify that the student successfully defended the Thesis.

When the final, signed version of the student’s Creative Thesis (appropriately bound or packaged for permanent display in the Department) is presented to their Area Director, he/she will submit a “Change of Grade” form to the Department Chair and College dean, which will allow the student to graduate.

Please note that the student still must meet all College rules and requirements. (Students should be also advised that it is courteous to present each committee member with a final copy of the student’s Creative Thesis in gratitude for the faculty member’s service on the student’s committee.) The Final Creative Thesis Document form (toward the end of this handbook), once signed by the committee, **must** go to Tawanna Tookes.

Filing for Graduation

Two (2) semesters before a student plans to have successfully completed the thesis he/she should file for graduation with the Graduation Office; 404-413-5040. See Administrative Information: Application for Graduation (p.4).
Guidelines for Research Thesis

COMM 6990 is the exit requirement for students seeking the Master of Arts in Communication on the Research Thesis track. Students must register for a minimum of six (6) credit hours of Research Thesis and will continue to receive a grade of "IP" (in progress) in COMM 6990 until the Research Thesis is completed.

Students must register for at least one (1) credit hour of Thesis Research each semester the student requires access to university facilities, equipment, resources, or faculty. Also, students must meet the requirements for continuous enrollment.

Prior to Enrollment in COMM 6990

The student must take the appropriate coursework to prepare him/her for thesis research. The student must identify a graduate faculty member (see list of graduate faculty at the end of this document) who is willing and able to serve as the Research Thesis advisor. The advisor must be from the student's area of emphasis. After the advisor has signed the "COMM 6990 Authorization Form" (available in this Handbook and from the office of the Administrative Specialist) and after their Area Director has approved the agreement, the graduate student should return the document to the Administrative Specialist who will authorize the student's enrollment in COMM 6990. The student must then enroll in COMM 6990.

Selecting a Research Thesis Committee

The student should nominate (in consultation with the Research Thesis advisor) a minimum of two additional faculty members to serve on the thesis committee. Both must be members of the Department of Communication faculty. All thesis committee members must also be members of the graduate faculty and possess special expertise in the area of the student's proposed Research Thesis topic or research method.

Arranging a thesis committee is the student's responsibility, and is conducted with the advice of the student's advisor. The advisor signs an "Authorization for COMM 6990" form, signifying their willingness to serve on the student's committee. The form is then submitted to the Area Director. After the Area Director signs the form, the Administrative Specialist will authorize the student's enrollment in COMM 6990. Again, students are strongly encouraged to choose a thesis advisor before taking their seventh course.

Developing the Research Thesis Prospectus

The first step of thesis research is to develop a complete prospectus that the student will orally defend before his/her thesis committee. The prospectus, to be developed in consultation with the thesis advisor and committee members, should include the following:

1. Abstract. A brief summary (usually limited to half a page) of the significance of the project, its research question/hypotheses, and the method planned to conduct the research.

2. Significance of the Project. Justification of why the project will extend the current body of knowledge in an important way.
3. **Literature and Resource Review.** A summary of the findings of relevant research in the proposed area of study.

4. **Research Question/Hypotheses.** The general or specific questions that will be answered by the research project.

5. **Method.** The specific procedures planned for conducting the research. Any use of students or others as subjects in surveys must be described in detail and must be accompanied by advance permissions from the GSU Research Office.

6. **Description of how final project will be organized** (e.g., chapter divisions).

There are no firm requirements governing the length or specific form of the prospectus. A large portion of the original text produced for a prospectus typically ends up as a part of the fuller thesis text.

**Defending the Research Thesis Prospectus**

At least two (2) weeks after the student presents the committee with the prospectus, he/she must set up an oral defense meeting time that is agreeable to all parties involved. At this meeting, the student will answer questions from the faculty about the prospectus and make any revisions required by committee members. A copy of the prospectus must go on file with the Administrative Specialist.

If a student who has successfully defended their prospectus wants to change thesis advisor, they must petition the department’s graduate committee for approval. The graduate committee may recommend that the student defend the prospectus again with the newly reconstituted committee.

Again, if a committee member is unable to be present at a scheduled thesis defense, the student may, in consultation with the rest of the committee, (1) reschedule the defense, (2) replace the absent member, (3) with the absent member’s approval, proceed with the defense with the remaining committee members. In the case of (3) all committee members are still required to sign off on the thesis, offering their feedback with sufficient time so that it can be integrated into the final uploaded draft.

**Format for Research Thesis**

The appropriate style requirements must conform to a standard bibliographic form, such as Turabian, MLA, APA, etc. The student’s committee must approve the specific style manual as appropriate for the thesis project. Deviations from this requirement must be approved in writing by the relevant Area Director.

**Defending the Research Thesis**

A student **must** provide his/her thesis committee members with the completed Research Thesis at least two (2) weeks before the oral presentation and defense date. The presentation must be at a mutually agreeable time and should be scheduled no later than the midterm point of the semester the student expects to graduate. The date, time, and location should be publicized and the meeting should be open to other interested faculty, students, and staff. At the meeting, the student will present the thesis and answer questions about it. At the conclusion of the presentation, the committee will deliberate in closed session. Unanimous agreement of the Department of Communication faculty
serving on the committee is required to certify that the student successfully defended the
thesis.

When the signed copy of the student's thesis title page is presented to the Department’s
Chair and a correctly formatted final copy of the approved thesis is submitted to the
Office of Graduate Studies as a PDF file, the department chair will submit a Change of
Grade form, which will allow the student to graduate. Explicit guidelines for the thesis
(“Thesis and Dissertation Guidelines”) are available from the Office of Graduate Studies
of the College of Arts and Sciences. The Final Research Thesis Document form (toward
the end of this handbook), once signed by the committee, must go to Tawanna Tookes.

**Filing for Graduation**

Two (2) semesters before a student plans to have successfully completed the thesis
he/she should file for graduation with the Graduation Office; 404-413-5040. See
Administrative Information: Application for Graduation (p.4).
Performance Expectations

Grades and Grade Point Average

In general, the College of Arts & Sciences and the Department of Communication expect students to maintain superior performance in coursework. The College requires that a grade point average (GPA) of 3.0 on a 4.0 scale be maintained and stipulates that a graduate student is subject to scholastic termination for failure to achieve a 3.0 cumulative grade point average by the end of the next twelve (12) semester hours of enrollment in letter-graded courses after the student’s GPA has fallen below a 3.0.

This is a minimum, however. Students attempting graduate level course work should endeavor to exceed this standard.

Policy on Academic Dishonesty

As members of the academic community, students are expected to recognize and uphold standards of intellectual and academic integrity. The University assumes as a basic and minimum standard of conduct in academic matters that students be honest and that they submit for credit only the products of their own efforts. Both the ideals of scholarship and the need for practices that are fair require that all dishonest work be rejected as a basis for academic credit. They also require that students refrain from any and all forms of dishonorable conduct in the course of their academic work.

The examples and definitions below are intended to clarify the standards by which honesty and academically dishonest conduct are judged. The list is merely illustrative of the kinds of infractions that may occur, and it is not intended to be exhaustive. Moreover, the definitions suggest conditions under which unacceptable behavior of the indicated types normally occurs; however, there may be unusual cases that fall outside these conditions that will also be judged unacceptable by the academic community. If a student has any doubts about what constitutes proper ethical conduct, he or she should err on the side of caution, citing original sources even in apparently ambiguous situations, and seeking clarification from the course instructor. These standards govern all work submitted in the course of degree program work; for instance, students should avoid plagiarizing material even when they are using it for ungraded classroom presentations or handouts.

Definitions and Examples

Plagiarism: Plagiarism is presenting another person’s work as one’s own. Furthermore, plagiarism includes any paraphrasing or summarizing of the works of another person without acknowledgment, including the submitting of another student’s work as one’s own. Plagiarism frequently involves a failure to acknowledge in the text, notes, or footnotes the quotation of paragraphs, sentences, or even a few phrases written or spoken by someone else. The submission of research or completed papers or projects prepared by someone else is plagiarism, as is the unacknowledged use of research sources gathered by someone else when that use is specifically forbidden by the instructor. It is, for instance, plagiarism when an article abstract is copied without attribution into an annotated bibliography, or when images are copied into presentations without providing appropriate credit. Failure to indicate the extent and nature of one’s reliance on other sources is also a form of plagiarism. The use of text copied from the World Wide Web, without specific attribution, is unethical and constitutes plagiarism. Finally, there may be forms of plagiarism that are unique to an individual discipline or course. The student is responsible for understanding the legitimate use of sources, the
appropriate ways of acknowledging academic, scholarly, or creative indebtedness, and the consequences of violating this responsibility.

**Cheating on Examinations:** Cheating on exams involves giving or receiving unauthorized help before, during, or after an examination. Examples of unauthorized help include the use of notes, texts, or "crib sheets" during an examination (unless specifically approved by the instructor). Other examples include intentionally allowing another student to view one's own examination and collaboration before or after an examination if such collaboration is specifically forbidden by the instructor.

**Unauthorized Collaboration:** Submission for academic credit of any work product, or part thereof, represented as being one's own effort, that has been developed in substantial collaboration with or without assistance from another person or source is a violation of academic honesty. Collaborative work specifically authorized by an instructor is allowed.

**Falsification:** It is a violation of academic honesty to misrepresent material or fabricate information in an academic exercise or assignment (for example, false or misleading citation of sources, the falsification of the results of experiment or of computer data).

**Multiple Submissions:** It is a violation of academic honesty to submit substantial portions of the same work for credit more than once without the explicit consent of the instructor(s) to whom the material is submitted for additional credit. In cases in which there is a natural development of research or knowledge in a sequence of courses, use of prior work may be desirable, even required; however, the student is responsible for indicating in writing, as a part of such use, that the current work submitted for credit is cumulative in nature.

**Obligation to Report Suspected Violations**

Members of the academic community - students, faculty, and staff - are expected to report violations of these standards of academic conduct to the appropriate authorities. The procedures for such reporting are on file in the Office of the Dean of the College of Arts Sciences and in the Office of the Dean of Students.
Graduate Faculty

Atkinson, Jaye L. (Ph.D., University of Kansas, 1996). Associate Professor. Areas of research include interpersonal communication, patronizing speech, aging stereotypes and communication, and sport communication. (Human)

Atkinson, Nathan (Ph.D., Carnegie Mellon University, 2009). Assistant Professor. Areas of research include rhetorical theory and criticism, rhetoric and visual culture. (Human)

Barker, Jennifer (Ph.D., University of California at Los Angeles, 2004). Assistant Professor. Areas of research include cinema studies, film and philosophy (e.g. spectatorship and phenomenology), feminist media studies, cinema history, and international film. (FVD)

Beck, Kay (Ph.D., Emory University, 1973). Associate Professor & Director, Digital Arts & Entertainment Laboratory. Areas of research include media producing, film production, media management, and film history. (FVD)

Bolia, Ly (MFA, New York University, 1994). Associate Professor. Areas of creative activity include short films and High Definition video. (FVD)

Boozier, Jack S., Jr. (Ph.D., Emory University, 1972). Professor. Areas of research include film criticism and history, film and literature, and screenwriting. (FVD)

Bruner, Michael Lane (Ph.D., University of Washington, 1997). Professor. Areas of research include rhetorical and critical theory, memory and identity studies, nationalism, globalization, and statecraft. (Human/Mass)

Cheshier, David M. (Ph.D., University of Iowa, 1996). Associate Professor. Areas of research include rhetorical theory and criticism, argumentation and public deliberation, contemporary social theory, and American public address. (Human/Mass)

Darsey, James (Ph.D., University of Wisconsin, 1985). Professor. Areas of research include rhetorical theory and criticism, social movements, American public address. (Human)

Davis, Patricia (Ph.D., University of California – San Diego, 2009). Assistant Professor. Areas of research include cultural studies, mass communication, memory and heritage studies, critical gender studies. (Mass)

Freeman, Carrie (Ph.D., University of Oregon, 2008). Assistant Professor. Areas of research include mass communication studies, media ethics, journalism studies, media coverage of social movements (e.g. animal liberation). (Human/Mass)

Friedman, Ted (Ph.D., Duke University, 1999). Associate Professor. Areas of research include cultural studies, new media, and the politics of contemporary film. (FVD)

Fujioka, Yuki (Ph.D., Washington State University, 2008). Associate Professor. Areas of research include social psychological processes involved in message effects, media use and ethnic stereotypes, and health information campaigns. (Mass/Human)

Fuller–Seeley, Katherine (Ph.D., Johns Hopkins University, 1993). Professor. Areas of research include media history, audience and exhibition studies, American social history, and silent film. (FVD)
Hoffner, Cynthia (Ph.D., University of Wisconsin, 1988). Professor. Areas of research include media effects, television and children, emotional responses to media. (Mass/Human)

Holmes, Shirlene (Ph.D., Southern Illinois University, 1991). Associate Professor. Areas of research include playwriting, African-American studies, acting, storytelling. (FVD)

Kulikova, Svetlana (Ph.D., Louisiana State University, 2008). Assistant Professor. Areas of interest include international communication, media and democratization, mass communication studies, Central Asian media studies, and communication globalization. (Mass)

Li, Hongmei (Ph.D., University of Southern California, 2006). Assistant Professor. Areas of research include international communication, globalization, media studies, and advertising. (Mass)

Lisby, Gregory C. (Ph.D., University of Tennessee, 1988). Professor. Areas of research include mass and speech communication law, legal history, censorship, ethics, and communication technologies. (Mass/Human)

Meyers, Marian J. (Ph.D., University of Iowa, 1989). Associate Professor. Areas of research include women and media, social production of news, media criticism, and cultural studies. (Mass/Human)

Perren, Alisa (Ph.D., University of Texas, 2004). Assistant Professor. Areas of research include TV studies, media industries, and media history. (FVD)

Powers, Shawn (Ph.D., University of Southern California, 2009). Assistant Professor. Areas of research include international communication, public diplomacy, Middle Eastern media, social media. (Mass)

Raengo, Alesandra (Ph.D., New York University). Assistant Professor. Areas of research include cinema studies, visual culture, critical theory, and cultural studies. (FVD)

Restivo, Angelo (Ph.D., University of Southern California, 1997). Associate Professor. Areas of research include international film and media, critical theory, and global art cinema. (FVD)

Robin, Daniel (M.F.A., San Francisco State University, 2007). Assistant Professor. Areas of creative activity include documentary film production, new media production, documentary, film history, and digital media studies. (FVD)

Romski, Mary Ann (Ph.D., University of Kansas, 1981). Regents Professor. Areas of research include child language and communication impairments, augmentative communication, mental retardation, and child language acquisition. (Human)

Schiffer, Sheldon (M.F.A., U.C.L.A., 1992). Associate Professor. Areas of creative activity include film, video and digital media production, interactive media design, film genres and Third World media studies. (FVD)

Shahaf, Sharon (Ph.D., University of Texas, 2008). Assistant Professor. Areas of research include television studies, global media, cultural studies, Israeli media, and media history. (FVD)

Smith, Greg (Ph.D., University of Wisconsin, 1988). Professor. Areas of research include style and narrative, media and emotion, and new media theory. (MIS)

Stuckey, Mary (Ph.D., University of Notre Dame, 1987). Professor. Areas of research include political communication, presidential rhetoric, American public address. (Human)
Tabako, Tomasz (Ph.D., Northwestern University, 2004). Assistant Professor. Areas of research include rhetorical studies, social movement theory, and philosophy of communication. (Human)

Teel, Leonard R. (Ph.D., Georgia State University, 1984). Professor. Areas of research include the history of American journalism, international communication, and the African-American press. (Mass)

Tindall, Natalie (Ph.D., University of Maryland, 2006). Assistant Professor. Areas of research include public relations, mass communication, and gender and racial difference as inflected in the media industries. (Public)

Vollmer, Niklas (M.F.A., University of California, 1996). Associate Professor. Areas of creative activity include non-fiction, community-based and experimental media production, streaming video on the web. (FVD)

Wilkin, Holley (Ph.D. University of Southern California, 2005). Assistant Professor. Areas of research include health communication, communication research methods, communication campaigns, and media effects. (Mass)

Williams, Ann (Ph.D., University of Michigan, 2008). Assistant Professor. Areas of research include political communication, public opinion and electoral behavior, media institutions and effects, mass communication research methods. (Mass)

Winkler, Carol K. (Ph.D., University of Maryland, 1987). Professor. Areas of research include presidential rhetoric, political debates, terrorism rhetoric, and visual communication. (Human)
COMM 6990 Authorization Form
Creative Thesis/Research Thesis Adviser Agreement Form

I agree to serve as Creative Thesis/Research Thesis adviser for:

Student Name ___________________________________________  Student Social Security Number ___________________________________________

My signature below authorizes the Administrative Specialist to approve the above named student to enroll in COMM 6990 and to begin work on his/her Creative Thesis / Research Thesis. I have certified that the above named student has completed the SARI (Responsible Conduct of Research) requirement and documentation for the (a) one hour seminar, (b) 4-hour seminar, and (c) completion of the online course are on file with Tawanna Tookes.

This student is doing a (check one):

[ ] Creative Thesis
[ ] Research Thesis

________________________________________________________
Faculty Member NAME

________________________________________________________
Faculty Member Signature

Approved:

________________________________________________________
Area Director

________________________________________________________
Date
Sample Title Page
For Thesis Prospectus
(to be submitted to the Communication Department)

Persistence of Vision:
The Censorship of Motion Pictures in Georgia

Sara Anne Mendelsohn

A Research Thesis Prospectus / Creative Thesis Prospectus (Choose One)
Presented in Partial Fulfillment for the
Degree of Master of Arts in Communication
College of Arts and Sciences
Georgia State University

Committee

__________________________
Chair

__________________________
Member

__________________________
Member

__________________________
Date

__________________________
Area Director, Department of Communication
A Creative Thesis
Presented in Partial Fulfillment for the
Degree of Master of Arts in Communication
College of Arts and Sciences
Georgia State University

Alfred Hitchcock and the Democratic Imaginary

Lisa Smith

Committee

__________________________
Chair

__________________________
Member

__________________________
Member

__________________________
Date

Chair, Department of Communication
Persistence of Vision:
The Censorship of Motion Pictures in Georgia

Sara Anne Mendelsohn

A Research Thesis
Presented in Partial Fulfillment for the
Degree of Master of Arts in Communication
College of Arts and Sciences
Georgia State University

Committee

Chair

Member

Member

Date

Chair, Department of Communication
Request for Graduate
Foreign Language Reading Examination

TO: Chair, Department of Modern and Classical Languages

FROM: Area Director, Department of Communication

STUDENT: ________________________________

SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBER: _______________________

I authorize the above named student to sit for the foreign language examination in fulfillment of a foreign language requirement for the COMMUNICATION M.A. degree program.

EXAMINER’S RECOMMENDATION: [ ] Pass [ ] Fail

EXAMINER’S SIGNATURE: __________________________ DATE: __________

Departmental Recommendation

Upon examination of the candidate, the Department of Modern and Classical Languages

[ ] recommends [ ] does not recommend

that the above named student be considered to have fulfilled the foreign language requirement for the graduate degree sought.

__________________________________________ DATE: __________
Chair, Department of Modern and Classical Languages

__________________________

Note: The examination will be given on the Wednesday of the eighth week of fall and spring semesters, and on the fourth Wednesday of the summer semester.

In case of failure to satisfy the requirement, students may request an appointment to discuss their translations by contacting the coordinator of the examination.
Research Skill Petition Form
GSU Department of Communication

INSTRUCTIONS: Only students enrolled in the GSU Department of Communication M.A. program are required to complete this form. You are not permitted to complete and submit this form until after you have passed (with a grade of B or higher) both COMM 6010 (Issues and Perspectives in Communication) and COMM 6030 (Research Methods in Communication). But the form must be completed before you defend your prospectus/research project prospectus.

The purpose of this form is to help assure that the research methods coursework you select contributes to a coherent program of study, and provides you with the specific competency necessary to undertake your Research Thesis or Creative Thesis project. Once you have completed this form and secured the approval signature of your adviser, turn one copy in to the relevant Area Director of Graduate Studies (either Mary Stuckey or Angelo Restivo); on signing the form it will be kept in the department, with the departmental administrator for the graduate program (Tawanna Tuckes), so that when your degree program is audited at graduation we can verify approval of the research skill substitution. Make sure you are familiar with the research requirements of your degree program – consult the relevant portions of the M.A. Handbook.

NAME

_________________________________________________________

M.A. Degree Track

_________________________________________________________

Contact Email Address (please print clearly)

_________________________________________________________

Contact Daytime Phone Number

Check one:  [ ] Research Thesis

[ ] Creative Thesis

Course # and Course Title Proposed to Certify Research Competency:

_________________________________________________________

Brief Rationale for This Choice: Explain how this/these course(s) specifically equip you to complete your envisioned Research Thesis/Creative Thesis project.

_________________________________________________________

Approved, Program of Study/Research Thesis/Creative Thesis Adviser

DATE

_________________________________________________________

Approved, Graduate Program Area Director

DATE