August 14, 2014

Dear Graduate Students,

Welcome to the Department of Communication at the University of Colorado Denver. We are glad that you chose to continue your higher education here at CU Denver.

Graduate school is an exciting time of growth, exploration, and change. On top of coursework, you will encounter new ways of thinking, writing, and mastering a host of policies and procedures. This book is intended to assist you in understanding these processes by giving you an overview of the Department, our expectations of you, what you can expect from us, and policies and procedural guidance. It is, however, just the beginning of what you will learn during your time in our Department. To further assist you in understanding how to pursue mentorship in the department, it accompanies a guide to getting the mentorship you need, which offers a detailed overview of graduate school expectations.

As Director of Graduate Studies, it is my job to help you navigate your time here, and I am delighted to do so, so please do not hesitate to contact me with any questions, concerns, or comments you might have. While you will be assigned a temporary advisor and will eventually select a permanent advisor, you should also reach out to each faculty member and to other graduate students so that you have a wide support network. The more interlocutors you have, the wiser you will be. And do not forget to get acquainted with our program assistant, Michelle Médal, who will also help you navigate the ropes during your time in the program.

In closing, we at the Communication Department wish you a stimulating and successful first semester and a wonderful experience in graduate school.

Sincerely yours,

Dr. Lisa Keränen
Director of Graduate Studies (DGS)
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DISCLAIMER: This graduate student handbook, which includes parts of the Graduate School Rules, does not constitute a contract with the University of Colorado Denver, Denver Campus Graduate School or the CU Denver Department of Communication, either expressed or implied. The Graduate School reserves the right at any time to change, delete, or add to any of the provisions at its discretion. For the most up-to-date rules, see the Graduate School’s website.
ABOUT THE UNIVERSITY OF COLORADO DENVER

A premier research university . . .

The University of Colorado Denver (UC Denver) is Colorado’s premier research university. The origins of this institution began in 1883 with the creation of a medical department (consisting of two students and two senior faculty) by the University of Colorado. The College of Nursing was established in 1898. The School of Pharmacy was added in 1913, and the medical center at Ninth and Colorado was dedicated in 1925.

The Downtown Campus originated as an extension of the University of Colorado at Boulder in 1912, becoming a separate institution in 1972. In 2004, the University of Colorado at Denver combined with the University of Colorado Health Sciences Center.

The university is currently found at two different locations:
- Downtown Campus, with liberal arts and sciences and professional programs in seven schools and colleges
- The Anschutz Medical Campus, University of Colorado Hospital, and patient care buildings reflects a history of service to upper division and graduate students.

Downtown students have historically been older than the traditional 18-to-21-year-old student. They are generally working at least part-time (and many fulltime) and have significant family responsibilities. The addition of residential housing adjacent to the Auraria campus has enabled a significant infusion of attention and focus to the lower-division undergraduate student.

A robust undergraduate experience is taking shape, including an appeal to high-achieving students through a University/Honors and Leaders Program. The Downtown Campus offers convenient access to businesses, organizations and government offices. Internships and class projects “in the field” enable students to gain hands-on, practical experience to complement their classroom learning. Health sciences programs are highly selective. Clinical and research components are significant drivers of the university budget and economic impact. The extensive new medical and research facilities at the Anschutz Medical Campus provide a cutting-edge environment for studies, patient care and research. When this development is complete, including the university programs as well as some affiliated hospitals and independent bio-science companies, it will be the most substantial health and research enterprise in the Rocky Mountain region.
A priority on diversity and inclusion . . .
The university places a high priority on strengthening diversity and inclusion in its student and faculty programs. The greatest diversity at UC Denver is found among staff and administrators, who are 27 percent minority and 64 percent female. Every faculty category has in the last year showed a slight increase in faculty-of-color representation. Compared to Colorado’s research universities, UC Denver has the most diverse student population: 34 percent of undergraduate students, 13 percent of graduate students and 21 percent of first professional students are students of color. Since fall 2006, enrollment for students of color has increased 4 percent. Five-year growth rates show the greatest increase came from African Americans, with 22 percent growth overall and 37 percent increase among undergraduates. International students comprise 4 percent of the total student population.

This text about the University was extracted from the CU Denver website and 2012 Factbook.
ABOUT OUR DEPARTMENT’S GRADUATE PROGRAM

The Communication Department at the University of Colorado Denver comprises a vibrant community of scholars and teachers who offer a broad-based, or “generalist,” master’s degree in communication. Our professors are nationally recognized leaders and award-winning teachers and scholars in areas such as rhetoric and public affairs, organizational communication, social justice, and health communication.

We offer MA programs with both academic and professional students in mind. Some of our graduates in the academic track go on for doctoral degrees in communication at programs such as Temple University, UNC-Chapel Hill, the University of Colorado at Boulder, and the University of Utah. Others choose a professional path and have accepted employment at places as diverse as Nike, Fox 31 TV, and the Bureau of Land Management.

In Fall of 2009, the graduate faculty decided to emphasize three areas in our graduate program; these include rhetoric, social justice, and health communication. However, faculty expertise spans a range of areas such as identity and difference, technical communication, interpersonal/organizational communication, media studies, environmental communication, rhetoric of science, rhetoric and the law, national security, and feminist theory; coursework and independent studies are available across a wide range of topics. Your job as a graduate student is to put together a unique blend of coursework from in and outside the Department that will help you achieve your goals.

More detailed information about our program may be found in the MA section of our Department’s website.
DEPARTMENT MISSION

The mission of the Department of Communication is threefold. First, the department aims to create a learning environment in which students develop the skills, knowledge, and abilities necessary to use communication to create a more civil and humane world. Second, the department strives to create scholarship of the highest intellectual merit and to contribute scholarly and creative works that further the study, teaching, and practice of communication. Third, the department aspires to provide excellent service to our college, university, profession, and community.

Our educational mission is to guide students toward developing the skills, knowledge, and abilities necessary to use communication to create a more civil and humane world.

By civil and humane, we do not mean good manners or a superficial veneer of politeness spread over interaction. We mean, instead, a way of communicating that is rooted in an acceptance and appreciation of others and that involves communicating in ways that express respect for and acknowledgment of others.

Communication that is rooted in civility and humaneness acknowledges people's space in the world, regardless of their station in life, wealth or lack of it, politics, religion, or any other quality.

As part of our mission statement, we have identified four communication skill areas that are associated with the creation of a more civil and humane world. Each of the courses we teach contributes to understanding in at least one of the four areas.

CREATION OF COMMUNITY

When individuals know and care about one another, they are less likely to be adversarial or disrespectful. This skill area fosters recognition that reasonable people do sometimes disagree and that multiple interpretations of subjects exist. We help people learn the ability to discover and use various options for managing and resolving conflicts.

COMMUNICATION WITHIN SYSTEMS

There is a special ability found in those who can understand, evaluate and communicate effectively within social, public and professional systems that enable change to occur in ways that are civil and respectful of all perspectives. Our students learn to create, sustain and communicate effectively within these systems.

ANALYSIS OF COMMUNICATION
We teach how to understand the underlying beliefs and values inherent in messages. Through critical thinking about communication using a variety of analytical systems, students learn to identify, understand and assess the range of options available in the construction of messages.

PRODUCTION OF COMMUNICATION
We teach how best to produce effective oral, written, virtual and mediated communication that can contribute to society. Our students engage in actual production and creation of messages using a wide range of communicative forms and technologies.
MEET OUR TENURE STREAM GRADUATE FACULTY IN BRIEF

Brenda J. Allen
Critical organizational communication; social identity; diversity; critical pedagogy

Hamilton Bean
Organizational communication, culture, and change; national security

Larry A. Erbert
Organizational communication and leadership; environmental communication; conflict, mediation, and negotiation; interpersonal communication

Sarah K. Fields
Gender, history of sport and culture, injury

Sonja K. Foss
Contemporary rhetorical theory and criticism, feminist perspectives on communication, visual rhetoric, and thesis and dissertation writing

Amy Hasinoff
New media; media studies; gender; sexuality

Stephen John Hartnett
Contemporary rhetorical theory and criticism; American history; prisons, the death penalty, and contemporary social justice activism; citizenship and advocacy

Lisa Keränen
Contemporary rhetorical theory and criticism; rhetoric of science, medicine, health; bioethics; biosecurity; health communication from a qualitative perspective

Brian L. Ott
Media studies; film criticism; rhetoric of film; material rhetoric

James F. Stratman
Reader interpretation processes in legal, technical/scientific, and health-risk communication; cognitive, rhetorical, and forensic linguistic research methodologies for improving legal, technical/scientific, and health-risk communication.
Other faculty who can serve on your graduate committees but not as your primary advisor:

- **Yvette Bueno-Olson**, CU Denver COMM, health communication and diversity
- **Carey Candrian**, CU Anschutz, health communication
- **Patrick Dodge**, CU ICB, intercultural communication, diversity, China
- **Larry Frey**, CU Boulder, social justice and applied communication research
- **Therese Jones**, CU Anschutz, health humanities, film and health
- **Gordana Lazić**, CU Denver COMM, intercultural communication, diversity, popular culture
- **K.E. Supriya**, CU Denver ICB, globalization, China, postcolonial theory
- **Barbara Walkosz**, CU Denver COMM, emeritus, health communication, public health campaigns
- **EJ Yoder**, CU Denver COMM, intercultural communication, globalization, food
MEET OUR FACULTY, NARRATIVELY

Dr. Brenda J. Allen (PhD, Howard University) teaches and studies organizational communication, diversity, and critical pedagogy. Among her numerous publications is a groundbreaking book entitled *Difference Matters: Communicating Social Identity* (2004, Waveland Press). Dr. Allen currently serves as the Associate Dean for Planning and Initiatives in our College of Liberal Arts and Sciences.


Dr. Larry A. Erbert (PhD, University of Iowa) was the founder/director of the Institute for Peace and Conflict Studies and a co-founder of the Center for Organizational Innovation and Human Development (UTEP & Technologico de Monterrey). He is currently a member of the steering committee for the University Honors and Leadership Program, and a member of the new Sustainability Minor and Sustainability Initiative Program at UCD. His areas of scholarly interest include organizational communication and team-building, environmental sustainability, interpersonal communication, and conflict, mediation, and negotiation. Current research projects include “The Social Construction of Environmental Sustainability,” “Border Crossings and the Communication of Identity,” and “Conflict in Work and Family for Frequent Border Crossers.”

Dr. Sarah K. Fields (JD Washington University; PhD University of Iowa) joins the faculty as an associate professor this fall. She has previously taught at Washington University in St. Louis, the University of Georgia, and Ohio State University. Her research and teaching focuses largely on the intersection of sport and American culture, specifically examining issues of gender, injury, and law, and she is the author of *Female Gladiators: Gender, Law, and Contact Sport in America* (University of Illinois Press, 2005). Dr. Fields is a semi-retired recreational athlete who enjoys outdoor activities with her dogs and partner as well as watching television with her cat.
Dr. Sonja K. Foss’s (PhD, Northwestern University) research and teaching interests are in contemporary rhetorical theory and criticism with a focus on feminist perspectives and visual rhetoric. She is the author or coauthor of Rhetorical Criticism, Contemporary Perspectives on Rhetoric, Inviting Transformation, Feminist Rhetorical Theories, Destination Dissertation, and Women Speak. Her numerous articles have appeared in journals such as Communication Theory, Quarterly Journal of Speech, Communication Monographs, Western Journal of Communication, Visual Communication Quarterly, and Women’s Studies in Communication.

Dr. Stephen John Hartnett (PhD, University of California San Diego) studies and teaches the rhetorical history of the U.S. with an emphasis on competing notions of citizenship and activism. He is the editor of Captured Words/Free Thoughts, a biannual magazine of writings by prisoners, and Challenging the Prison-Industrial Complex: Arts, Education, and Activist Alternatives (2011). His books include Executing Democracy, Volume One: Capital Punishment & The Making of America, 1683-1800 (2010); Globalization and Empire: The U.S. Invasion of Iraq, Free Markets, and The Twilight of Democracy (2006); Incarceration Nation: Investigative Prison Poems of Hope and Terror (2004); Sweet Freedom’s Song: “My Country ‘Tis of Thee” and Democracy in America (2002, co-authored with the late Robert James Branham); and Democratic Dissent & The Cultural Fictions of Antebellum America (2002).

Dr. Amy Hasinoff (PhD, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign) joins the department as Assistant Professor this fall. Dr. Hasinoff recently completed a two-year postdoctoral fellowship funded by the Social Sciences and Humanities Council of Canada in the Department of Art History and Communication Studies at McGill University. Her work on new media, gender, and sexuality appears in New Media & Society, Critical Studies in Media Communication, and Feminist Media Studies. Dr. Hasinoff’s book, forthcoming from the University of Illinois Press, examines the construction of sexting as a social problem and the responses to it in mass media, law, and education. For more information please visit www.amyhasinoff.com.

Dr. Lisa Keränen (PhD, University of Pittsburgh) studies and teaches rhetorical theory and criticism with an emphasis on the rhetorics of science, medicine, health care, and bioethics. She is the author of Scientific Characters: Rhetoric, Politics, and Trust in Breast Cancer Research (2010), and numerous essays appearing in venues such as Academic Medicine, Argumentation & Advocacy, Communication Yearbook, Journal of Medical Humanities, and the Quarterly Journal of Speech. She is past Director of the National Communication Association Forum (NCA-F) and as Director of Graduate Studies for the Communication Department. For more information, visit www.lisakeranen.com.
Dr. Brian L. Ott (PhD, The Pennsylvania State University) teaches and researches in the areas of media and rhetorical studies. His work is chiefly concerned with understanding the symbolic and material resources that media furnish audiences for confronting and negotiating the anxieties, challenges, and stresses of their everyday lives. He is committed to fostering critical citizenship in both his teaching and scholarship.

Dr. James F. Stratman (PhD, Carnegie Mellon University) teaches and studies legal writing, legal rhetoric, and legal argumentation; technical document design, writing, and editing; empirical research methods (behavioral and cognitive) in communication and document design, including usability testing. He is the author of “How legal analysts negotiate indeterminacy of meaning in common law rules: toward a synthesis of linguistic and cognitive approaches to investigation in the journal, Language & Communication” (2004). He has also authored research investigations appearing in such journals as Discourse Processes, Forensic Linguistics, and Written Communication. Beyond the university, has served as an expert witness in federal class action lawsuits focusing on employer pension benefit communication issues under the Employment Retirement Income Security Act (ERISA).
GENERAL REQUIREMENTS FOR THE COMMUNICATION MA

33 CREDIT HOURS TOTAL

At least 30 credit hours must be at the 5000 or 6000 level; 3 hours may be at the 4000 level, but 4000-level classes may NOT be in COMM. The requirements for coursework are as follows.

CMMU 6013 Introduction to Graduate Work in Communication (3 credit hours)
This course is strongly recommended to be taken the first semester of graduate coursework; it is offered only in the fall semester.

Methods Courses (3 credit hours):
Students must complete one methods course. At least one of the methods courses will be offered each year. Many of these are offered every other year.
- CMMU 5011 Research Methods: Quantitative
- CMMU 5022 Critical Analysis of Communication
- CMMU 5221 Research Methods: Qualitative
- CMMU 6205 Empirical Research Methods for Communication

Graduate Seminars (15 credit hours):
Students must take 5 graduate seminars (12 credit hours) from the Communication Department. Graduate seminars are 5000- or 6000-level courses in which there are no undergraduate students. The same course may fulfill a methods and seminar requirement. Introduction to Graduate Work in Communication does not count as one of the graduate seminars.

Electives (12 credit hours):
At least 2 of the 4 electives must be Communication courses; the remaining 2 electives may be taken from outside of the Communication Department. Students must receive permission from the DGS to take coursework outside the Communication Department. The DGS may grant permission to take more than 6 hours outside the Department.

OPTIONAL THESIS OR PROJECT REQUIREMENTS – 33 CREDIT HOURS TOTAL

Thesis (3-6 credit hours) or Academic Writing Project:
Students wishing to write a thesis must register for a minimum of three (3) and a maximum of six (6) hours of thesis work. All research conducted for a Master’s degree must meet all appropriate regulatory standards specified by federal, state, and local agencies regarding ethical research, animal use, human subjects,
HIPAA and environmental safety. The thesis is presented in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Master’s degree and must meet the formatting criteria outlined in the CU Denver "Style and Policy Manual for Thesis and Dissertations" available on the Graduate School website.

During the process of completing the thesis, students must register for Master’s thesis (COMM 6950). Students should work with their committee chair to set the number of thesis credits that will be completed each semester. Students may not use any additional thesis credits to substitute for other credits needed to complete their degree; thesis credits may not be substituted for elective credits, for example.

A master’s thesis should be between 60 and 100 pages in length. Whether the thesis is rhetorical or empirical, it involves original research to investigate a question about communication grounded in theory and established research. It generally involves between one year and 18 months to complete and is the equivalent in workload of two or three difficult courses. During the process of writing the thesis, students are expected to meet with their chair at least monthly.

The Graduate School conducts the final review of Master’s thesis for proper formatting. The final, formally approved Master’s thesis must be submitted to the Graduate School, with the appropriate supporting documentation, within sixty (60) days of the thesis defense.

A grade of “In Progress” (IP) will be assigned for thesis hours in all semesters until the final approved thesis is submitted to the Graduate School office. The Graduate

**Oral Defense of Thesis**

The oral defense of the thesis occurs after students submit their thesis to their communication as their written examination. Thus, students may defend their thesis only in March or October, the times at which the comprehensive examination is offered. The defense usually lasts approximately an hour and a half. Thesis defenses are usually friendly, open discussions in which committee members seek to understand the nature of students' work more fully. Students are allowed to bring blank paper and their thesis to the oral defense.

Following the oral defense of the thesis, the committee members assign an evaluation of satisfactory or unsatisfactory on students' performance on the entire comprehensive examination and defense, which includes the oral defense of the thesis. A satisfactory rating is a grade of pass; an unsatisfactory rating is a grade of fail. Students who fail the examination must re-take the examination during the next regularly scheduled examination period. For example, a student who fails the examination in March has the option of re-taking the examination
again the following October. If students perform satisfactorily in some areas and not in others, the committee members have the option of asking students to re-do only those portions of the examination rather than redoing all components of the examination. A lack of satisfactory performance on any aspect of the written or oral portions of the examination means that students will have to re-do the portion that received the unsatisfactory rating.

**Timely Completion**

Students are encouraged to finish their thesis promptly. They may delay registering for thesis credits for no more than one semester following the semester in which they complete the comprehensive examination. Students who fail to register for thesis credits for more than one semester following the semester in which they complete the comprehensive examination will be considered to have left the program. Students who complete the comprehensive examination in the spring semester, for example, must register for at least one credit of thesis in the fall semester. Unless students are registered for at least one credit of thesis, the faculty of the Communication Department are under no obligation to advise or consult with them about progress toward completion of the degree.
COMPREHENSIVE EXAMINATIONS

All students must pass the comprehensive examination in communication in order to earn the MA in Communication. The examination is offered twice a year, once during the fall semester (usually in October) and once during the spring semester (usually in March). It is not offered during the summer. Students should check with the Director of Graduate Studies for the exact dates for the examination each semester. Students who write theses will still defend their thesis orally and complete the “critique of a text” portion of the oral examination. Their thesis will stand in for the “written portion.”

Purpose

The comprehensive exam is intended to be an educational and culminating experience of the Master’s program. It is designed to assess a student’s ability to think critically about issues in the communication discipline; such critical thinking includes the ability to analyze, integrate, and apply concepts/theories to what you have studied in the program. To engage you in this process, the exam questions are broad-based and cut across content areas, methods, and issues (in order to provide a thorough context for inquiry). We conceptualize the exam not only as a measure of your understanding of the communication field but also as an opportunity for students and faculty to dialogue about key issues and for faculty to welcome students into the community of communication scholars.

Examination Committee

At the time they enter the MA program, students are assigned a temporary advisor. If they discover that another faculty member's interests match their interests better or if they do not get along well with the temporary advisor, they may change to another advisor. Advisors must be full-time faculty in the Communication Department; adjunct/honorarium faculty and instructors are not eligible to serve as students’ advisors.

The student’s advisor helps the student construct a committee of three faculty members, one of whom is the advisor and who serves as the chair of the committee. All committee members must be full-time faculty at the University of Colorado at Denver and members of the graduate faculty. The committee members are typically from the Communication Department, but students may select a faculty member from another department to serve on the committee if that person’s area of expertise contributes in crucial ways to the area of study. The committee is responsible for developing questions for the comprehensive examination, evaluating students' answers, and conducting the oral portion of the examination.

Recruitment of the members of the committee is the responsibility of students. Students are encouraged to select the members of their examination committee
at the beginning of the academic year in which they take their comprehensive examination. Asking faculty members to serve on their committee is a relatively informal endeavor. Students simply should make an appointment with potential committee members to discuss their willingness to be on the committee.

Once their committee is formed, students should complete the Committee Composition Form, on which they indicate who the members of their committee are. If students wish to change their committee members, they must complete a new "Committee Composition" form.

**Eligibility**

To be eligible to take the comprehensive examination, students must be in their final semester of their graduate program. Students still may be taking courses in the semester in which they take the examination. Students who are completing a thesis for the degree have the option of taking the comprehensive examination and defending their thesis at the same time or separating the two, completing the examination immediately following the completion of coursework and defending the thesis when it is done at a later date.

**Registration**

In the semester in which they take the comprehensive examination, students must:

- Register for a minimum of one of the following:
  - 1 or more credits of coursework
  - 1 credit hour of Thesis (CMMU 6950)
  - 0 credit hours of CAND 5940, which is a special course registration number for students who are taking their comprehensive examinations and no coursework or thesis work. Students who choose this option will be charged tuition equal to 1 credit hour. Students must register by hand for CAND 5940 by completing a Special Processing Form.

**Format**

The comprehensive examination has two parts -- a written and an oral component. These two parts are completed on separate days, usually with a week between them. The written portion of the examination lasts four hours (plus a 30 minute break), and the oral examination lasts approximately two hours.

**Written Examination**

In the written part of the comprehensive examination, students answer four essay questions from a list of five written by the graduate faculty. Students are expected to cite relevant scholars and sources in the answers to the questions. They may bring in one 8.5 X 11 sheet of paper with notes on both sides; no
other materials may be consulted during the exam. Students are encouraged to request copies of past examination questions from the Director of Graduate Studies. Although the examination students take will not have the exact questions as previous examinations, a review of these questions will help students anticipate the kinds of questions they are likely to be asked.

Students take the examination in the Communication Department office suite and are provided with a computer by the Department to use while writing the examination.

**Oral Examination**
The oral examination is held in the Communication Department approximately one week following the completion of the written examination. The oral portion of the examination involves three steps:

- **Critique of text:** When students arrive for the oral examination, they are given one hour to read a text selected for them by their committee members and to prepare an oral critique of that text. The text selected will depend on students’ area(s) of expertise. It may be, for example, an article in a communication journal, in which students must evaluate the research question, design of the study, the methods used, and the findings. Following the completion of the plan for the oral critique, students are given a 15-minute break before the start of the oral portion of the examination.

- **Oral presentation of critique of text:** Students present a 5-10 minute oral critique of the text they analyzed at the beginning of the oral examination period. Following the presentation, students are questioned for approximately 30 minutes about their critique.

- **Defense of written examination:** Students are questioned by their committee members about their answers on the written portion of the examination for approximately one hour.

- **Thesis defenses** stand in for the oral portion of the comprehensive exam. Students are allowed to bring blank paper on which to jot notes and the thesis to this portion of the examination.

**Evaluation of the Examination**
Immediately following the completion of the oral portion of the examination, the committee members caucus privately and assign an evaluation of satisfactory or unsatisfactory on the student’s performance on the entire comprehensive examination and defense. Grades are not given on the written examination, the thesis, or any part of the oral examination. Students are informed immediately of the decision. The decisions of the committee are final.
A lack of satisfactory performance on any aspect of the written or oral portions of the examination means that students will have to re-do the portion(s) that received the unsatisfactory rating. Students who are asked to re-take all or part of the comprehensive examination do so at the next regularly scheduled examination period. For example, a student who fails the examination in March takes the examination again the following October.

SUCCESSFUL EXAMINATION PREPARATION

The Communication faculty view the comprehensive examination as an essential part of students' overall learning process while in the program. Although the examination is challenging, it can and should be an enjoyable, satisfying experience because it is designed to enable students to review and synthesize the many concepts and skills they have acquired in their coursework. To this end, students are encouraged to follow some basic procedures as they prepare for the examination:

**Study group with peers:** Students are encouraged to form study groups with their peers. Students who form such groups and meet regularly with them in the weeks preceding the examination perform much better than students who prepare by studying alone. Such groups are supportive, helpful, and fun.

**Course materials and syllabi as a basis for review:** Students are encouraged to review the courses they have completed in the program as a primary means of preparation for the examination. They should look for linkages among the courses that were only partly visible when the individual courses were taken. A review of the discussion questions and other assignments for each course is also useful.

**Copies of previous examinations:** Students are encouraged to request copies of past examination questions. Although the examination students actually take does not have the exact questions that were on previous examinations, a review of these examinations will help students anticipate the kinds of questions they are likely to be asked. In the study groups, students are encouraged to practice how they might answer the questions on previous examinations.

**Timely completion of the examination:** Students who delay taking the examination by a semester or more do not perform as well as those who take it immediately after completing their coursework. Students who delay taking the examination risk losing touch with their peer groups and the material they have studied. A longer delay does not enable students to study longer, better, or more carefully. The intensity with which students review over a relatively short period and a supportive, convivial social environment
are most helpful in students' preparation for the examination.
KEY ACADEMIC POLICIES

1. Grade Requirements
Students must receive a grade of B or higher in all courses that are applied to the MA degree. Students who earn a grade lower than a B have two options: (1) They may retake the course, in which case the grade counted for the course and computed in the GPA is the average of the two grades for the course. This average grade must be a B if the course is to count toward the degree. Students may re-take a course only once. (2) They may request permission to substitute a different course for the one in which a grade lower than a B was earned. Such students must prepare a written request for the substitution explaining what course they wish to substitute and why the course is an appropriate, relevant substitute. The request is submitted to the Director of Graduate Studies, whose decision about whether to approve the substitution is final.

2. Assignment of Advisors
Students are assigned a faculty advisor at the time they are admitted to the MA program. This advisor is a temporary advisor only. Students are encouraged to select someone else as their advisor if another faculty member is better able to help them achieve their academic and professional goals. Students may change advisors at any time during their program by completing the Form for Declaring and/or Changing Graduate Advisors. The form should be submitted to the Director of Graduate Studies.

3. Course Transfers
Transfer credit refers to any credit earned at another accredited institution either in the USA or abroad, or credits earned as a non-degree student within the CU system. Graduate courses taken while the student was enrolled in a Graduate Program anywhere in the CU System, or an institution with established Memoranda of Understanding with CU Denver, fall outside the limits for transfer credits.

For students who obtained graduate course credits while they were enrolled in a Graduate Program at a University in the USA, or students who earned credits within the CU System as a non-degree student, the number of course credits that can be transferred to CU Denver will be determined by the graduate Program Director on a case-by-case basis (subject to the limits described at the bottom of this paragraph).

In the case of students who performed coursework at institutions outside the USA, the graduate Program Director shall provide a recommendation to the Graduate School listing the courses that they accept for transfer and will also provide documentation including an independent evaluation by the Office of International Affairs to support the recommendation. The Graduate School Dean
will evaluate the recommendation of the Program Director regarding the transfer of credits from foreign institutions and make a determination on a case-by-case basis. Our Department allows up to 9 hours of graduate transfer credit.

Coursework accepted for transfer credit must not have been applied towards an undergraduate degree or another graduate degree of the same level (e.g., MA to MS). Specifically, Master’s courses applied to one completed Master’s degree program may not be applied to another Master’s degree program; however, graduate level coursework (5000 level or above) taken for a Master’s degree may be applied toward a doctoral degree with Program approval. Likewise, coursework taken for a completed doctoral degree may be applied toward a concurrent or subsequent Master’s degree with Program approval.

All courses accepted for transfer must:
• be graduate level (5000 or above);
• have a “letter” grade (courses in which the grading is either satisfactory/unsatisfactory or pass/fail are not accepted);
• have a grade of “B minus” or better (individual programs may require a “B” or better for transfer credit and/or may require a B or better in the core classes of the particular discipline);
• be validated by the Program Director if not taken within seven (7) years of the PhD comprehensive exam or the Master’s final exam, if applicable, to ensure that the course content is still considered current; and
• be transferred prior to the semester in which the PhD comprehensive or Master’s final examination, if applicable, is taken.

Credit cannot be transferred until the student has established a satisfactory record of at least one term of enrollment at the CU Denver and earned a minimum 3.00 GPA. Transferred courses do not reduce the residency requirement but may reduce the amount of work required at CU Denver for the degree.

4. Time Limits for Completion of Degree
Master’s students, whether enrolled full-time or part-time, have seven (7) years from matriculation (the semester of formal admission to the Graduate School) to complete all degree requirements, including the filing of the thesis with the Graduate School if the Program requires a thesis. Students who fail to complete the degree in this seven (7) year period are subject to termination from the Graduate School upon the recommendation of the Program Director and concurrence of the Dean. For a student to continue beyond the prescribed time limit, the Program Director must petition the Dean for an extension and include 1) reasons why the program faculty believes the student should be allowed to continue in the program and 2) an anticipated timeline for completion of the degree. Normally, extensions for time to degree are for one year or less, but under rare circumstances, a second extension may be requested.
5. CU Denver Email
Students are required to regularly check their CU Denver email as it is an official channel of university communication.

6. Independent Studies
Students may only count two independent studies totaling no more than 6 credits towards their degree.

7. Leave of Absence
Students who need to leave CU Denver Graduate Programs for a period of time should determine with their Program Directors whether a petition for leave of absence is required for up to one (1) year. If approved by the Program Director and the Dean of the Graduate School, a copy of the Leave of Absence form is forwarded to the Registrar’s Office. The original is retained in the student’s file. Approved leaves of absence do not automatically extend the time limits for earning a degree, but they may be cited as supporting documentation to request an extension if needed. Requests for leaves of absence that exceed one (1) year will not be approved unless the Program Director provides the Dean with a compelling justification why such action should be approved. Students who are absent for longer than one (1) year will be considered to have withdrawn from the Program and will be required to reapply for admission and be considered with all other applicants.

8. Academic Probation and Dismissal
If, at any time, a student’s cumulative graduate grade point average (GPA) after matriculation falls below 3.00 (some graduate programs may require that a higher GPA be maintained) the student will be placed on academic probation. Probationary full-time students have 2 semesters, probationary part-time students have 4 semesters, in which to raise their cumulative GPA to a 3.00 (or greater if required by the program) for removal from academic probation (calculated using all graduate-level courses since matriculation, including graduate courses that a student enrolled in outside his/her main program). In addition, a minimum GPA of 3.00 (or greater if required by the program) must be maintained in each probationary term. Students who fail to meet the conditions of probation are subject to dismissal from the Graduate School. Any student who is dismissed from the Graduate School following unsuccessful academic probation or failure to meet his/her program’s guidelines for satisfactory academic progress may reapply for admission to the same or a different graduate program only after 1 year. The student should consult with the Program Director before applying.

Probation also may be imposed by the Graduate School and its programs for other reasons related to unsatisfactory academic progress and for unprofessional behavior, including honor code violations and conduct that
violates the integrity of training and research. In such instances, the length and specific conditions of the probationary period will be determined on a case-by-case basis.

Removal from Probation
Once the student’s GPA has been recalculated and shown to be 3.00 or above, and/or other specified conditions of the probationary status have been met, the student will be notified by email, with a copy of the notification sent to the student’s program.

Probation and Graduation
A student cannot take a milestone exam (Masters final exam or thesis defense, PhD comprehensive exam or dissertation defense) or obtain a degree from CU Denver | Anschutz while on academic probation.

9. Student Academic Honor and Conduct Code, Academic Grievances, Misconduct and Appeals
Students are expected to adhere to the highest standards of personal integrity and professional ethics as detailed in the Graduate School Academic Honor and Conduct Code. Students who do not meet these standards of integrity and ethics, or who violate the honor code may be placed on disciplinary probation by the Dean upon the recommendation of the Academic Conduct and Appeals Committee (ACAC). Generally, procedures for matters involving academic misconduct should emphasize due process, which should include, at a minimum, notification to the student regarding the alleged violation, an opportunity for the student to gather information in order to properly respond to the allegation, and an impartial hearing to be conducted by the ACAC. The honor code, committee guidelines, and appeal process are on file in the Graduate School office and available in the Graduate School Student Handbook, as well as online. The Schools or Colleges in which Graduate Programs are housed, or individual Graduate Programs themselves, may have additional policies and/or requirements for student conduct.

Academic Grievances
Students who feel that they have been treated unfairly should first seek to resolve the matter with the person with whom they have the conflict. They may then speak to the graduate director or chair and consider filing a grievance using the Departmental policy. Outside of normal programmatic/departmental policies, may file a grievance with the Graduate School in accordance with grievance procedures outlined in the Student Handbook and posted online. If a School, College or Graduate Program has established its own procedures to consider academic grievances, then the student must follow these procedures before they can submit a grievance to the Graduate School.
The designation academic grievance covers those problems related to academic issues. Such issues are distinguished from academic ethics cases and disciplinary cases for which separate procedures exist. Included within academic grievance cases are faculty, program, departmental, College or School (including Graduate School) policies affecting individual student prerogatives; deviations from stated grading procedures (excluding individual grade challenges); unfair treatment and related issues. Policies and procedures governing the filing of an academic grievance are available in the Graduate School and online.

10. Academic Misconduct
The Academic Conduct and Appeals Committee (ACAC) has responsibility for reviewing and resolving cases of honor code misconduct or student academic grievances unless the School or College in which the Graduate Program resides has established its own policy. For those Schools and Colleges that have their own academic misconduct policies and procedures, and which meet the standards of due process, such Schools and Colleges will have the original jurisdiction in cases involving honor code misconduct or student academic grievances. For such Schools and Colleges the ACAC may act as an appellate review board for the final action taken by the School or College and will forward their recommendation to the Dean of the Graduate School.

11. Students are responsible for knowing and following all policies of the University of Colorado Denver and its Graduate School.
FUNDING SUPPORT FOR MA STUDENTS

Teaching Opportunities
A limited number of teaching opportunities are sometimes available for M.A. students in the Communication Department. Typically, students will teach Presentational Speaking (COMM 1001) or act as teaching assistants (TAs) for Fundamentals of Communication (CMMU 1011), although students may teach other classes according to their expertise and Departmental needs, such as COMM 2050 or COMM 1021. The pay is variable depending on the assignment. Although every effort will be made to provide teaching opportunities for students, they are not guaranteed and are dependent on the instructional needs of the Department. The graduate program committee meets in late February to make TA assignments for the following academic year based on the requirements and procedures outlined below.

Minimum Requirements
- BA in Communication or related field
- Demonstrated academic achievement and maintenance of satisfactory progress toward completion of the degree, including receiving an A or A- in all UCD Communication classes
- Attendance at training workshops, pedagogy meetings, and orientation sessions

Application Procedures
A letter of interest and qualifications for teaching assistantships must be submitted to the Director of Graduate Studies by February 1 for consideration for teaching in the following academic year. The application should include detailed letter of interest and qualifications.

Selection of TAs
If there are more eligible students interested in teaching than there are positions, or there are fewer applicants than needed, the graduate committee will select the students from the eligible applicants following a conversation with the associate chair regarding teaching needs. Criteria used in selecting from among the eligible applicants include: seniority in the program, academic achievement, aspirations to remain in academe, and prior experience related to course content areas. Preference will be given to TAs with prior teaching experience. However, teaching assignments will be limited to no more than two years. The committee also strives to designate one slot for an incoming teaching assistant each year.

Graduate Grants
Need-based financial aid is available to graduate students in the form of graduate grants through UCD’s Financial Aid office. To be eligible for a graduate
grant, students must: (1) Complete a financial aid application through the Financial Aid office by April 1 (submitting the application as soon after January 1 as possible is recommended); (2) Be a Colorado resident; (3) Register for a minimum of 4 credit hours of coursework; and (4) Have a Pell-grant-eligible estimated family contribution. Any graduate student who meets these criteria will automatically be considered for a graduate grant. For more information, call the Financial Aid office: 303-556-2886.

**Travel Funds**
The Communication Department has some funds available for graduate students who present papers at conferences. Graduate students who present papers at out-of-state conferences approved by the Department chair are eligible for approximately $300 in travel funds per year, subject to the availability of funds, and must discuss their needs with Dr. Lisa Keränen as soon as possible. The Graduate School also offers once annual competitive travel grants of $500 for students who are presenting papers at national conferences. Students traveling to a conference are responsible for applying for these grants.

The National Communication Association (NCA) offers travel grants for students of color who have papers or panels accepted for an NCA convention. Grants in the range of $250 are awarded to students who need financial assistance to attend the convention and whose departmental or university funding is insufficient to cover the costs. Nominations of students should be made by faculty and should include a letter of support from the Department chair, which should verify that the nominee is a student and that the funding available from the Department or the University will not cover the student’s convention costs. The deadline for nominations is typically in early October. For more information, contact the National Communication Association: 202-464-4622 or www.natcom.org.
GENERAL EXPECTATIONS AND EVALUATION

At the end of the spring semester, each student enrolled in the M.A. Communication program receives a progress report from her or his advisor. The purpose of the progress report is to let you know how you are doing and what you can do to improve. The progress report identifies if you are **exceeding expectations, meeting expectations, or below expectations**. The progress report also describes what you need to do, if anything, to bolster your performance.

The progress report will be placed in your file and will become part of your permanent record. I encourage you to meet with me to discuss this report.

A student must do the following in order to minimally **meet expectations**

1. Attend classes regularly, be prepared, and participate orally.
2. Attend official Department functions that are relevant to graduate student education (including research colloquia and Communication Days activities).
3. Make a “B” or better in each course.
4. Meet with her or his faculty advisor at the beginning of each semester.

When a student does not meet the four criteria, she or he will be considered to be **below expectations**. If you fall into this category, the progress report will identify what you need to do to **meet expectations**.

When a student exceeds the four criteria, that student will be considered to be **exceeding expectations**. For example, if a student makes grades of “A” in classes, as demonstrated by strong writing skills and insightful classroom participation, and attends and assists in Department activities, that student exceeds expectations. Other examples of behaviors of students who exceed expectations include: Attending and/or presenting papers at professional conferences (e.g., the Rocky Mountain Communication Association’s convention), assisting professors in research and writing projects, and submitting manuscripts to professional communication journals.
DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNICATION
EXPECTATIONS FOR GRADUATE TEACHING ASSISTANTS (GTAs)

HOURS PER WEEK:
- 1/4 time GTAs are responsible for working for an average of 7.5 hours per week, including office hours.
- 1/2 time GTAs are responsible for working for approximately 15 hours per week, including office hours.
- Please note that some deviations in weekly hours will occur due to the scheduling of exams, assignments, and other obligations of course instructors and will be negotiated with the primary course instructor.

OFFICE HOURS:
- Each GTA should schedule a total of at least 2.5 office hours each week. Individual instructors may require additional office hours. Students are expected to hold their office hours on campus between Monday and Thursday during business hours and, except in truly exceptional cases, should not be meeting undergraduate students in off-campus or on-campus residential locations.
- GTAs must be present and on time for office hours. If for some reason you must miss part or all of your office hours, you should (1) contact the instructor and Michelle Médal immediately, (2) schedule make-up office hours (which you communicate with students) and (3) post a notice for students.

RESPONSIBILITIES:
- GTAs are expected to attend all of the class sessions for which they are a GTA. It is the TA’s responsibility to bring schedule conflicts to the attention of the instructor well in advance of the conflict.
- GTAs must read and review all course materials prior to the class for which they are assigned.
- In all dealings with students and other instructors, GTAs are expected to maintain a warm but professional communication climate and to demonstrate respect for students and their diversity.
- GTAs are expected to check e-mail at least once per day and respond promptly to student emails.
- GTA are expected to be present and on-time for regularly scheduled meetings with the course instructor.
- In addition to holding office hours, most GTAs will be assigned to a variety of tasks including keeping class attendance records; assisting with course planning; grading; preparing quizzes and exams; proctoring quizzes, assignments, and exams; leading recitation or special discussion
sections; developing online content and handouts; guest lecturing; and completing other course-related needs of the instructor and students.

- GTAs are expected to communicate problems with instructors as they arise. They are encouraged to share ideas about course content and progress to engage in a collective teaching endeavor.
- Faculty may allocate different tasks to different GTAs in a given class section based on class needs and aptitudes. These tasks will be negotiated between the GTA and an instructor.
- GTAs must abide by all policies of the University of Colorado Denver. Particular attention should be paid to federal student privacy regulations.
- GTA’s must attend orientation activities for the Department and graduate school, as announced by the DGS.

CONFLICTS:

- If a GTA believes that he or she is being treated unfairly by a student or instructor and cannot resolve the problem with that individual or the course supervisor, then the GTA should consult with the Director of Graduate Studies.
- Amorous relationships are not allowed between supervisors and those who report to supervisors (in this case, instructors and students) per University of Colorado Denver policy. If you fear an amorous relationship may be developing, you must remove yourself as course supervisor and inform the instructor and Director of Graduate Studies.
ADVICE FROM OUR FACULTY

Graduate school is an exciting time of change, but the first semester can be a challenging transition. We polled our faculty to see what advice they would offer.

Sonja Foss correctly emphasizes the scholarly role of graduate school when she observes that “earning a master’s degree involves substantially different skills from those you employed as an undergraduate student. As an undergraduate, you collected, digested, and reported on knowledge generated by others to verify your understanding of that knowledge. You consumed and re-presented existing scholarly insights for the primary purpose of explaining to a professor the depth of understanding you possessed about the ideas of a theorist, school, movement, or text. You learned how to produce papers that demonstrated these skills quickly, often writing them overnight and submitting first drafts. In other words, you learned skills that enabled you to be successful as a reporter.

But graduate school requires that you develop the skills of a scholar instead of a reporter. As a scholar, instead of reporting what is already known, you create new knowledge. You generate original insights and theories instead of relying on the insights and theories and others. Developing these kinds of insights takes time, so you will not be able to write excellent papers in one sitting and without substantial time for thinking and revising.

The more quickly and completely you adopt the scholar role in your graduate studies, the more successful you will be as a graduate student and the more quickly you will begin to contribute to the knowledge of the communication discipline.”

Jim Stratman offers very specific tips for developing as an intellectual. Dr. Stratman advises you to “form a strong habit of writing down questions that you have about material that you read. See question-asking as one of your most important activities as a graduate student, professional, and scholar. Skepticism and creative research go hand in hand. Problems in or with published material are often golden opportunities that can help you grow and develop personally and intellectually. Above all, keep track of questions that you feel strongly about and keep notes concerning how they change or evolve over time. Tracking your most passionate or recurring questions will help illuminate your future research path and help you keep perspective and focus when you feel confused by new information and ideas.”

Barb Walkosz offers a list of academic and social themes to keep in mind:
• Keep in touch with your advisor – meet with them at least once a semester.
• Enroll in as many graduate seminars as you can – it is exciting to be in a small group that explores ideas.
• Try to attend department colloquia and/or other sponsored lectures.
• Do not hesitate to meet with your professors if you have any questions – we are here to help you navigate the program.
• Become familiar with the library and its resources.
• If you have a theme or focus to your program, tell your professors and each class that you take can help you build your knowledge in that area (via papers. etc.)
• Consider attending a communication conference or submitting a paper to a communication conference.

Lisa Keränen stresses open conversation when she advises you to “make sure you have many interlocutors. Schedule an appointment with each faculty member to discuss mutual interests early on and keep those relationships up by having regular intellectual discussions about your research. Even if a faculty member is not on your committee, they might have good ideas for your work. Additionally, while you want to read critically, be sure to read charitably. While you do not need to agree with everything you read, in the back of your mind, you should be asking, ‘What does this theory or idea or argument help me to do? What does it help me see or think about?’”

Stephen Hartnett’s advice is to “strive for synergy: your community work and career should feed your teaching, which should feed your research, which should feed your service—and so your different areas of effort can enhance each other, creating a feedback loop of creativity and mutual support.” In other words, find your passion and let it thread deeply though all your activities.

Hamilton Bean suggests that you “know your audience. Are you writing to make a mark in your career or professional field? Are you writing for other academics? Know what will resonate with different groups and work to make your writing informative, important, and interesting for them.”

Finally, Brenda J. Allen rightly stresses the role that each of us plays in building a community when she suggests that you “be proactive about forming and maintaining a strong, supportive cohort of your peers.”
FURTHER RESOURCES

Online
A helpful resource culled together by the Graduate School at the University of Washington offers links to numerous articles about how to succeed in graduate school: http://www.grad.washington.edu/mentoring. You might spend some time poking around on this site.

Books


Robert L. Peters, Getting What You Came For: The Smart Student’s Guide to Earning a Master’s or a Ph.D. Noonday, 1997+.

NOTE: The Director of Graduate Studies has a library of books on making the most of your experiences, writing literature reviews, and general research and writing. They may be checked out for two weeks at a time.
GRADUATE FACULTY BIBLIOGRAPHY

This bibliography is intended to give you an idea of the kind of research our faculty do. It includes three representative works from each member of the graduate faculty. The asterisked article is recommended reading for incoming graduate students. Hard and electronic copies will be made available to all students in the Spring of 2010, although all graduate students should easily be able to find articles in online databases.


DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNICATION GRADUATE PROGRAM
UNIVERSITY OF COLORADO DENVER
FORM FOR DECLARING AND/OR CHANGING GRADUATE ADVISORS

Student Name:

Student Number:

Student Contact Information:
Address:
Phone:
Emails (school and alternate):

Current Advisor:
Signature and Date:

New Advisor:
Signature and Date:

Student Signature and Date:

Completed forms should be returned to Dr. Lisa Keranen in her mailbox or electronically at lisa.keranen@ucdenver.edu.

Created Fall 2006; Updated Fall 2014
IMPORTANT PHONE NUMBERS

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Michelle Médal, Program Assistant  303.315.1919
Hamilton Bean, Associate Chair  303.315.1909
Gordana Lazić, Internships Director  303.315.1917

On Campus
Graduate School DDC  303.315.2183
Admissions  303.556.4841
Financial Aid  303.556.2886
ITS  303.624.4357
Campus Security  303.556.5000
Bursar  303.556.2710
Internships & Experiential Learning  303.556.3258
Live and learn in the Mile High City, where the perfect blend of outdoor adventure and urban sophistication awaits.

As the premier urban center for communication studies along Colorado’s Front Range, the Department of Communication offers BA, MA, and certificate programs in community service & public affairs, legal communication, health communication, mediation & conflict resolution, political communication & government, rhetoric, and public relations & advertising. The Department’s award winning tenured and tenure-track faculty have earned national and international recognition for research, teaching, and service.

The University of Colorado Denver offers a hands-on, real-world education in a vibrant city in the heart of the energetic west. The University attracts the most research funding and awards the most graduate degrees in the state, and is ranked 34th in the nation among public colleges by Forbes magazine.