



# The Doctoral Handbook

Graduate Studies and Research

2021-2022

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# Introduction

The University of Florida College of Journalism and Communications (CJC) is dedicated to excellence in its Ph.D. program in mass communication. The program offers a rigorous course of study in an ideal setting for a quality educational experience.

Proud of its award-winning student body and faculty, CJC boasts the diversity made possible by one of the largest enrollments in the country. More than 200 students engage in graduate and advanced studies, joining more than 2,400 undergraduates. More than 50 graduate faculty members in the college teach, conduct research, and provide service.

The University of Florida, with 16 colleges on a single campus, ranks as one of the nation's most comprehensive research institutions. External funding for research support is approaching a billion dollars per year, placing the university among the top 10 public institutions. The university enrolls more than 50,000, including more than 16,000 graduate/professional students. They come to the university from every state in the union and more than 130 foreign countries.

Supporting programs have great strength in law, history, psychology, political science, economics, and area studies, among others. UF's Latin American

Studies Center and African American Studies Center rank among the best in the nation.

Gainesville is home to excellent museums, performing arts, craft breweries, restaurants, and live music. Yet it remains small enough at a population of 134,000 to provide a suitable environment for concentrated study.

Alachua County's K-12 schools offer many options, including magnet programs at the elementary, middle school, and high school levels.

For recreation, Alachua County residents enjoy eight state parks with more than 100 miles of trails for biking, birding and hiking, and cooling off in crystal-blue freshwater springs. Surf and sandy beaches of the Atlantic may be reached in an hour-and-a-half drive, while the top-rated fishing and seafood of the Gulf Coast lie only an hour west. The major theme parks and metropolitan areas of Orlando and Tampa are only two hours away.

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## College Communication

The graduate studies webpage is located within the college's [website](#) and provides information including:

- current student forms and information,
- the graduate student directory which includes contact information and pictures of current students,
- course offerings, and
- links to the UF Graduate School and other valuable information.

Graduate student and faculty mailboxes are located on the second floor in 2104, near the Dean's Office. Graduate student mailboxes are separated into doctoral and master's sections.

Email addresses should always be kept current with the graduate division staff. Important notices are sent to all students as needed.

The Graduate School communicates with students through their GatorLink email accounts. Please use your GatorLink (@ufl.edu) email address as your primary email source for the university and this college.

The graduate division can also be found on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#).

## Faculty

The college's graduate faculty members are listed online, along with the undergraduate departments in which they hold appointment. Brief bios, recent publications, and news items are featured to illustrate research approaches and academic interests. Students must conduct research within the boundaries set by faculty expertise.

Doctoral Faculty may be found [here](#) and all Graduate Faculty may be found [here](#).

# General Information

This handbook is intended to help students understand how to approach graduate studies in our college, so please read it carefully. The policies detailed here are set by the CJC Graduate Faculty in this college. The handbook is supplemented with updates on the CJC graduate program webpage and in emails.

This handbook is intended to be read in conjunction with the UF Graduate Catalog that is available [online](#).

Requirements listed in the UF Graduate Catalog in effect when a student enters always constitute the last word. In other words, this CJC Doctoral Handbook takes up where the Graduate Catalog stops. Students graduate under the catalog in effect at the time of their initial enrollment as a degree-seeking student at UF provided they maintain continuous enrollment. Students who do not maintain continuous enrollment will use the catalog in effect at the time enrollment is resumed.

*It is the responsibility of the graduate student to become informed and to observe all regulations and procedures required by the program the student is pursuing. Ignorance of a rule does not constitute a basis for waiving that rule.*

In addition, students should be familiar with the requirements in the publications listed below.

## The UF Graduate School Website and Catalog

The Graduate Catalog is available by clicking on the appropriate [link](#). In addition to providing the university calendar, the catalog is the University's official record of graduate policies, critical dates, deadlines, course descriptions, and faculty members for master's degree and doctoral degree students.

## Graduate School Listserv and Your Gatorlink Email

The UF Graduate School maintains a [listserv for all UF graduate students](#) and will communicate only through your GatorLink email account. Please use your GatorLink email as your primary email source for

the university and this college. The UF Graduate Student listserv is one of the primary ways the UF Graduate School keeps in touch with graduate students, to share the latest information on academic policy and deadlines, financial aid news, and professional development opportunities. All currently enrolled graduate students are added to it automatically and cannot opt out of it. The list of membership is adjusted nightly on the basis of the UF Office of the Registrar's nightly enrollment updates. Your GatorLink also will be required to log in to most essential UF IT services including Canvas courseware, ONE.UF for registration, Zoom, etc.

## The University Calendar

The calendar is published online in the Graduate Catalog [here](#) and [here](#).

## Deadline Dates

All graduate school deadline dates are available [online](#).

## Graduate School Editorial Office

[The Editorial Office](#) in Grinter Hall oversees the thesis/dissertation process, offering help and guidance to ensure students' theses and dissertations meet UF's high standards and are ready for electronic submission and digital archiving. Staff members answer questions about format and reference systems; tables, figures and equations; and copyright and documentation issues. The office also provides referrals to editors and formatters for hire. Staff members do not examine or critique content, scholarship, research methods, or writing style, which is the responsibility of the student and their supervisory committee. For more detailed information, please see this [link](#).

## Forms

Forms required by this college are available [online](#) or in the graduate division wall files outside Weimer 2013.

## Checklist for Dissertation

This checklist is an essential guide to help the student through the dissertation process and can be found [online](#).

# Academic Honesty

All graduate students in the College of Journalism and Communications are expected to conduct themselves with the highest degree of integrity. It is the students' responsibility to ensure they know and understand the requirements of every assignment. At a minimum, this includes avoiding the following:

## Plagiarism

Plagiarism occurs when an individual presents the ideas or expressions of another as their own. Students must always credit others' ideas with accurate citations and must use quotation marks and citations when presenting the words of others. A thorough understanding of plagiarism is a precondition for admittance to graduate studies in the college.

## Self-plagiarism

Self-plagiarism is defined as an author's re-use of portions of their own earlier work without citing the original content. So, for instance, it would be considered self-plagiarism if a student copied a literature review they wrote for one paper and re-used it in another related paper without substantial alteration. Obviously, when writing multiple papers on a similar topic, it is likely that many of the same articles will be cited more than once. However, to avoid self-plagiarism, each new literature review should be written independently so that the same sentences are not repeated in more than one paper. Of course, direct quotes from other authors' works may be used in multiple papers, so long as they are cited properly in each paper. And students may make reference to their own work in a subsequent paper – simply cite that earlier paper, just as one would cite a paper written by another scholar.

Many students find the concept of self-plagiarism confusing because, after all, if you wrote the original paper, how can it be “stealing” to re-use your own words? The problem is that when readers pick up a new paper by a scholar whose previous work they have read, they expect all of the material to be new. They don't expect to see “recycled” material. Certainly, a journal editor who agrees to publish your article expects that he or she would not be able to find identical or nearly identical material in articles you've had published earlier. Self-plagiarism, therefore, can damage your reputation as a scholar. During your graduate program, you may want to write more than one paper on the same or a similar topic. When you do, you should discuss your plans – and any previous papers you've written using similar materials – with the professor in the class. Although it's expected that your work in later classes will build on work you've done in previous classes, most professors follow a fairly strict “no recycling” policy in relation to your re-use of portions of earlier papers, even if you were the sole author of the earlier paper.

**What types of materials must be cited to avoid plagiarism?** In short, everything. Any material you use, from any source, **MUST** be properly cited. If you yourself did not write the material – and if you did not write it the way it appears in the paper – you must give credit to the original author or source. This includes material from scholarly publications, newspapers, magazines, advertising, press releases, television programs, webpages, conference papers, speeches, etc.





## Cheating

Cheating occurs when a student circumvents or ignores the rules that govern an academic assignment, such as an exam or class paper. It can include using physical or electronic notes in an exam, submitting the work of another as one's own, or reusing a paper a student has composed for one class in another class. If students are not sure about the rules that govern an assignment, it is their responsibility to ask for clarification from the instructor.

## Misrepresenting Research Data

The integrity of data in mass communication research is a paramount issue for advancing knowledge and the credibility of our professions. For this reason, any intentional misrepresentation of data, or misrepresentation of the conditions or circumstances of data collection, is considered a violation of academic integrity.

Misrepresenting data reported in a thesis or dissertation is a clear violation of the rules and requirements of academic integrity and honesty.

**Any violation of the stated conditions is grounds for immediate dismissal from the program and will result in revocation of the degree if the degree previously has been awarded.**

## Behavioral Expectations

The University of Florida encourages the intellectual and personal growth of its students as scholars and citizens. As an educational institution, the University recognizes that the transmission of knowledge, the pursuit of truth, and the development of individuals requires the free exchanges of ideas, self-expression, and the challenging of beliefs and customs. In order to maintain an environment where these goals can be achieved safely and equitably, the University promotes civility, respect, and integrity among all members of the community. Students are expected to exhibit high standards of behavior and concern for others. Please review the Student Conduct Code found [here](#). All students are expected to follow these expectations.

## Purpose of Doctoral Program

The Ph.D. degree is a research degree. The program is designed to develop knowledge, attitudes, and skills so graduates can make important contributions to understanding communication. Faculty members help students lay the foundation for a lifetime of significant, creative work.

The doctoral program prepares students for a variety of opportunities in mass communication and related fields. Graduates are expected to teach at colleges and universities; conduct research for organizations in advertising, journalism, public relations, media production and management, science and health communication, and other communication fields; do consulting; and conduct research and contribute to policy in government and private organizations. CJC doctoral students gain valuable experience in both teaching and research. Assistantships help prepare students for academic and other research positions. Students in the program have consistently been among the nation's leaders in winning top-paper awards at national and regional scholarly meetings.

# Degree Requirements

The doctoral degree requires 90 credit hours past the Bachelor's degree, completion of oral and written examinations, and successful oral defense of a doctoral dissertation. Doctoral students, fitting together their goals and the college's Ph.D. curriculum, prepare a degree plan during their first year. As part of the plan, they name a supervisory committee to assist them in their studies. Students have an annual evaluation to help them assess their progress. A residency requirement must be fulfilled while taking courses. When courses have been completed, students take a qualifying examination and become, on passing the examination, formal candidates for the doctoral degree. Students then complete the dissertation and have a final oral examination. Each requirement is discussed below. Additional information on requirements is given in the [Graduate Catalog](#).

## Time Limit

The Graduate Committee set a time limit of four years from matriculation in the doctoral program to the semester of the qualifying exam. If a student does not complete the qualifying exam in that time period, it would be suggested they leave the program.

Students have five calendar years after the qualifying exam to finish the degree or the qualifying exam must be repeated. Students who cannot meet that time limit due to extenuating circumstances will be allowed to petition the Graduate Committee for an extension.

## Curriculum

A student's Ph.D. program of study is tailored to serve the individual. Within broad general distribution requirements, the student's program is constructed to provide preparation for lifelong contributions to the field of communication.

## Approaches and Emphases

Doctoral faculty advise and mentor students in several areas of emphasis including:

- Advertising
- Communication and Technology
- Health Communication
- International & Intercultural Communication
- Journalism
- Law, Policy and History
- Media Effects
- Media Industry and Consumers
- Public Relations
- Science Communication



## Distribution Requirements and Transfer of Credits

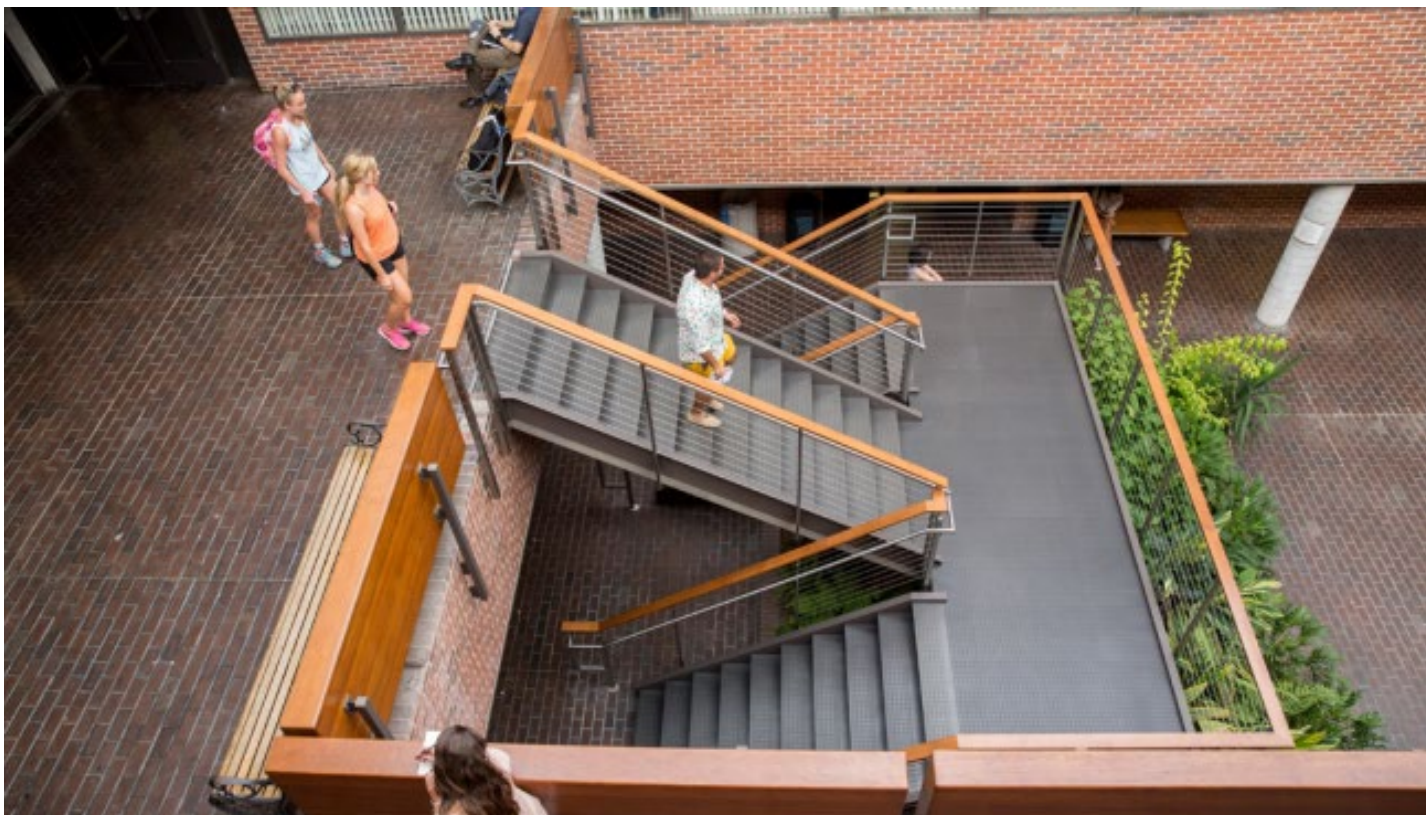
Distribution requirements are designed to encourage depth and breadth of knowledge. Five types of courses are required: (a) core courses, (b) specialization courses, (c) methodological courses, (d) supporting courses, and (e) dissertation research. Of these courses, at least five must qualify as advanced courses, which are those that require the completion of an original scholarly paper (academic conference quality) that advances knowledge in the field. No more than two of these courses may be taken as independent study, and at least three must be taken in the college. Communication Colloquium, Seminar in Mass Communication Teaching, and dissertation research credits do not qualify as advanced for this purpose. Core courses provide an

intellectual foundation upon which advanced courses may build. Specialization courses provide expertise in the student's communication concentration area. Methodological courses provide the tools with which students will undertake future communications research, including statistics. Supporting studies provide both further groundwork for advanced study and actual experience in advanced study outside the college. In the dissertation, the student makes an original contribution to knowledge.

Credit requirements may be met through a combination of master's and doctoral study. The UF Graduate School requires, for the doctoral degree, a minimum of 90 semester credits beyond the bachelor's (or the equivalent of the U.S. bachelor's). No more than 30 hours of a master's degree from another institution will be transferred to a doctoral program. These credits must reflect current or recent knowledge in the field or a supporting studies field. These courses also must have been completed recently enough so that material remains timely. In any case, the courses must have been completed within the seven years immediately prior to approval of the degree plan. The block of up to 30 credits must be approved by your academic advisor and

transferred into the program using the appropriate paperwork. No credits beyond the 30 credits of the Master's degree will be accepted into the 90 total required credits. All credits beyond the Master's will be completed at UF. The **Transfer of Credit form** is available in the graduate division [here](#).

CJC faculty recognize that departures from credits listed in various categories may be required in individual cases. The distribution requirements provide a general model for planning a program that combines the necessary depth for original contributions to understanding communication with the breadth that will enhance the student's personal life and professional activities. Departures from the model must be approved by the student's supervisory committee and the Associate Dean for Graduate Studies and Research. A doctoral student cannot receive credit toward their degree for an undergraduate class. Doctoral students are required to take any undergraduate courses needed for their program of study as an audit or for credit that does not count in the total required credits for the Ph.D. Undergraduate courses may not be taken as MMC 6905. Formal appeals to this policy must be made in writing to the CJC Graduate Committee.



# Core Courses

Core courses provide students with a foundation for teaching and conducting research in communication. One semester of Communication Colloquium is required and must be taken in the student's first fall semester. Mass Communication Perspectives is also required and must be taken in the student's first fall semester. One semester of Seminar in Mass Communication Teaching is required and may be taken in either the first fall or first spring semester. The Grant Writing course is required in the second fall semester. To achieve the depth and breadth of background required for exemplary research and teaching, students work with their advisors and committees to determine the need for any additional core courses.



## Specialization Courses

Specialization Courses consist most commonly of the College of Journalism and Communications' specialized content courses and research seminars in the student's area of interest. Students, in consultation with their advisors and committee members, will determine the specialization courses appropriate to each individual degree plan.

In addition, all students are strongly encouraged to take **MMC 6400 Mass Communication Theory** if they have not completed an equivalent course in the recent past. The course emphasizes social science theoretical conceptualizations of mass communication. Specific course numbers, titles, and credits for some of the possible specialization courses offered for master's and doctoral students by the college are listed [online](#). As the program develops, additional fixed-subject courses will be added to supplement or replace the rotating-topics courses. Prerequisites for all courses are described in the Graduate Catalog.

## Methodological Courses

The Ph.D. is a research degree. As such, a thorough knowledge of the appropriate methods of inquiry in the pursuit of answers to mass communications questions is essential. At least two methodology courses must be taken within the College of Journalism and Communications.

Additionally, knowledge of descriptive and inferential statistics, at least through regression, can be an important tool for doctoral students. CJC Graduate Faculty approved a motion that all doctoral students must have at least one **graduate level** statistics class. As appropriate, this knowledge can be acquired through coursework previously taken at the master's level. The student's advisor and supervisory committee will assist the student in selecting appropriate coursework in statistics.

**In addition to basic statistics**, all doctoral students must take MMC 6421, Research Methods in Mass Communication unless otherwise recommended by their chair after passing a methods test, two more quantitative or two more qualitative courses, and an additional method-specific course to have depth in two methods. All beginning doctoral students will take a research methods proficiency assessment in during orientation and determine with their chair if MMC 6421 will be required.



## Supporting Courses

The interdisciplinary nature of communication suggests that a student may need to complete courses in disciplines outside the College of Journalism and Communications. Supporting studies strengthen understanding of ideas and methodology important to the student's dissertation research. Courses taken will vary depending on student's research interests and intellectual preparation. Some courses may come from master's study. A minimum of 9 credit hours of coursework must be taken outside the college.

Students who need greater depth of knowledge to pursue their research interests will take articulation courses in preparation for advanced supporting studies. For example, a student with an interest in probing psychological questions in research will need a firm grounding in the basics of psychology, a student who intends to write a dissertation in history of mass communication must have a broad acquaintance with history, and so forth. But some departments offer special introductory graduate-level survey courses more suited to meet the needs of new doctoral students. Check with faculty and other students.

Students are expected to complete at least one research seminar in their supporting studies. The seminar will add perspective to understanding of research substance and method.

## Dissertation Research

At least 18 credits of dissertation research are required. Students begin work on the dissertation before the qualifying examination. Students must be registered in MMC 7979 during the term they take the qualifying exam. After passing the examination, students are admitted to candidacy and register for dissertation research under MMC 7980--Research for Doctoral Dissertation in subsequent semesters.

## Advanced-Level Courses

Advanced-level courses are those that require the completion of a scholarly paper of academic conference quality that advances knowledge in the field. Students must complete at least five advanced-level courses, with at least three within the college. No more than two of these courses may be taken as independent study. These hours may not include 7979/7980 course hours. The CJC Graduate Committee and the Associate Dean for Graduate Studies and Research determine which courses in the College of Journalism and Communications qualify as advanced-level courses prior to each semester, based on faculty syllabi. A list of advanced-level offerings within the college is available in the graduate division each semester. Courses outside the college also may be considered advanced-level, based on course syllabi, with approval of the student's committee chair.

## Languages

Students emphasizing international communication may need to demonstrate proficiency in at least one, and possibly two, languages other than English. Other students may be required by their supervisory committees to demonstrate a reading knowledge of at least one foreign language, depending on their research interests.

# Distribution Requirements

Distribution Requirements	Minimum Courses	Minimum Credits	Total
<b>Core Courses (inside the college)</b>			
Mass Communication Perspectives	1	4	
Communication Colloquium	1	2	
Seminar in Mass Comm Teaching	1	3	
Grant Writing	1	3	
<i>Total Mass Communication Core Credits</i>			12
<b>Specialization Courses</b>			
Mass Communication Theory (strongly encouraged)	1	3	
Mass Communication Specialty Courses (usually taken within the college)	3	9	
<i>Total Specialization Credits</i>			12-20
<b>Methodological Courses</b>			
Graduate Level Statistics	1	3	
Research Methods in Mass Communication	1	3	
Two qualitative or two quantitative courses	2	6	
Additional methods course	1	3	
<i>Total Methodological Credits</i>			15-20
<b>Supporting Courses</b>			
Supporting Courses (outside the college)	3	9	
Other Supporting Courses	5	15	
<i>Total Supporting Credits</i>			23+
<b>Dissertation Research</b>			
Before the Qualifying Examination, MMC 7979			
After the Qualifying Examination, MMC 7980			
<i>Total Dissertation Research Credits</i>			18-24
<b>GRAND TOTAL REQUIRED CREDITS</b>			90

# Degree Plan

A program of study, the heart of the degree plan, is determined individually for each student under the guidance and with the approval of a supervisory committee chaired by the student's academic advisor. Graduate coordinators and course instructors from supporting departments are consulted during development of the degree plan. Specific goals of the student are considered in developing the program. Students' degree plans must be approved by the advisor prior to pre-registration for your second semester of coursework.

The final degree plan, signed by all members of the supervisory committee, should be submitted to the Associate Dean for Graduate Studies and Research in the College of Journalism and Communications by the end of the second term of study. Degree plans can be found on the [website](#) and in the wall files outside Weimer 2013. The original copy of the final degree plan will be placed in the student's file, and subsequent changes to the degree plan must be approved by the supervisory committee chair and indicated on the original copy.

## Prospectus

A prospectus is a preliminary document that is used in several ways. It is used primarily to inform potential committee members of the topic and to solicit their participation. The document outlines the student's proposed topic, its importance and relevance, the literature to be covered, methodology, and expected findings. The length varies as directed by the chair of the committee. Unless otherwise approved by the chair, each student should plan to meet with their prospective committee to gain approval for the prospectus before finalizing the committee and scheduling the qualifying exam.

## Proposal

The proposal is normally made up of the first three chapters of the dissertation—the introduction, the literature review, and the methods. In the case of a three-article dissertation, students should consult with their chairs for proposal requirements. In addition to passing the qualifying exam, the student must have

the dissertation proposal approved before being admitted into candidacy.

## Supervisory Committee

The supervisory committee plays a crucial role in doctoral studies. The committee assists the student in developing and carrying out a program of study and executing the dissertation. Proposed committee members are given a copy of the student's prospectus and must approve the complete degree plan, as noted above. After reviewing the student's qualifications and program of study, committee members indicate their approval by their signature on the degree plan and the supervisory committee form.

The committee has at least four members, at least two of whom come from inside the college (including the chair) and at least one from outside. If an outside member of the committee has not been identified prior to the second semester of coursework, students must submit the names of three potential outside committee members with the degree plan. If the committee consists of only two members from inside the college, both must be full-time, active graduate faculty members. With the possible exception of medical school and law school faculty members, all outside members must be graduate faculty members.

**The committee is not “official” until the supervisory committee form, complete with all signatures, has been submitted to the graduate division and processed.**

The committee also conducts the qualifying examination and passes judgment on dissertation topic, progress, and completed work. **The committee chair will serve as the student's academic advisor.**

The UF Graduate Council has changed the policy for all examinations involving a graduate student's thesis, project, or dissertation supervisory committee. Only the student and the chair or co-chair are required to be in the same physical location. All other committee members can participate via teleconferencing. Exceptions to this rule may be granted on approval of a written petition to the Graduate Committee.

# Academic Progress



## Annual Evaluation

Each doctoral student is reviewed annually during the spring semester. This review is conducted by the student's advisor and shared with the student for comment. To facilitate this evaluation, the student will submit to the advisor evaluation materials as requested and a current curriculum vita. This evaluation will include the student's coursework completions, research accomplishments, teaching or research assignment performance, dissertation progress, and overall level of progress toward the doctoral degree. After the student has a chance to see and comment on the evaluation, a copy is also placed in the graduate division files and is available for review by the entire graduate faculty of the College of Journalism and

Communications. A copy of the review form used by the faculty for this annual review process and a copy of the material requested of the student for its completion is available online.

The Division of Graduate Studies and Research is advised of potential problem evaluations. Students who seem unlikely to complete the program or who appear to hold little promise of contributing to the field will be advised of alternatives to studying in the doctoral program. Students who fail to remain in good academic standing will be suspended from the program.

## Unsatisfactory Progress

Any student may be denied further registration in the university or in a graduate major if progress toward the completion of the planned

program becomes unsatisfactory to the college or the Dean of the Graduate School. The UF Graduate School defines unsatisfactory progress as failure to maintain a cumulative overall GPA of 3.0 (B) or a cumulative major GPA of 3.0 (B). Students who declare a minor must maintain a 3.0 GPA in the minor. Grades of incomplete may lead to a GPA problem.

The college has defined unsatisfactory progress more severely than the Graduate School. Beyond considering a GPA of less than 3.0 as unsatisfactory, the college also considers as unsatisfactory progress receipt of grades below B-. See probation and suspension, below.

## Computing GPA

The Graduate School computes two GPAs for all students, overall and major. For students with a minor, the Graduate School also computes a minor GPA. The major GPA includes only graduate courses in the college. In computing the overall GPA, the Graduate School counts all courses at the 5000 level or above and 3000/4000 level outside the major taken while the student has been classified as a 7, 8, or 9. Students may repeat courses in which they earn failing grades. The grade points from both the first and second attempts will be included in the computation of the GPA, but the student will receive credits only for the second attempt. When computing the GPA, the Graduate School does not round up fractions. Thus, a 2.99 GPA fails to meet the 3.0 requirement.

Courses receiving grades of satisfactory/unsatisfactory (S/U) are excluded in GPA computation, as are correspondence courses and courses at the freshman and sophomore (1000/2000) levels. The Graduate School also excludes any courses at the junior and senior (3000/4000) levels if in a student's major. Hours at the 1000/2000 level may not count toward residency or toward the total credits required for a degree. Courses designated with a grade of H (used only in special situations when the work is expected to be developed over a period of time greater than a single

term) are excluded until such time as grade changes are processed. All H grades must be cleared prior to graduation. The grade of H is not a substitute for a grade of S, U, or I. Courses for which H grades are appropriate are noted in their catalog descriptions and must be approved by the Graduate Curriculum Committee and the Graduate School.

## Incomplete or Unsatisfactory Grades

Grades of I (incomplete) must be removed by the date stated on the Incomplete Grade Contract (see below) or the deadline stated in The University Calendar—whichever comes first. If grades of I or NG have not been changed within 150 days, the grade will be treated as an E in calculating the grade point average and for suspension purposes.

If the student receives an I, U, or NG grade while on probation, it constitutes a violation of probationary or conditional status.

Grades of I (incomplete) cannot be given for a graduate level S/U course.

Courses in which students receive grades of U or NG do not meet the Graduate Council's standard of satisfactory performance. Accordingly, such grades either must be changed or the Graduate School must approve a petition setting forth the reasons why the student should be allowed to graduate with the U grade on the record.

The CJC Graduate Committee and Graduate Faculty approved a policy regarding the number of incompletes a student may have in their academic career. A doctoral student will be allowed a maximum of three incompletes in their academic career (including "no grades") and three "U" grades over the academic career.

## Incomplete Grade Contract

The Incomplete Grade Contract should be used in every instance of assigning an incomplete grade. The procedure is described in detail on the form, which is available in the graduate division in Weimer Hall as well as on the CJC graduate program [webpage](#). The form should be completed and filed with the graduate division before the end of the semester in which the incomplete grade is given.

## Penalty for I/U grades over the limit

As mentioned above, doctoral students are allowed a maximum of three incompletes (**including "no grades"**) and three U grades. Per the vote of the Graduate Faculty, **a student who receives more than the allowed number of I/U grades will be forbidden from registering for two semesters and be required to reapply to the program by submitting the application for readmission to the Graduate Committee for approval.**

Readmission is not guaranteed.

# Probation and Suspension

## Probation

Students may be placed on probation if their progress becomes unsatisfactory. The Associate Dean for Graduate Studies and Research will attempt to contact any student whose grade point average has fallen below 3.0. However, the student bears the responsibility of determining whether the grade point average is sufficient to remain on regular status. If it is not, the student must confer with the Associate Dean for Graduate Studies and Research at the start of the first term during which the GPA stands below 3.0. Any doctoral student who earns a GPA less than 3.0 and/or receives one grade below B- will be placed on probation, with the exception of courses taken from the Levin College of Law. For these courses, any student receiving one grade below C in any course from the Levin College of Law will be placed on probation.

If students are placed on probation, they will need to work with their chair to devise a plan to improve their grades. They will need to submit the plan to the Associate Dean for Graduate Studies and Research, and that plan must be approved in order for the student to re-start or maintain an assistantship. If the students satisfy that plan in the term of probation and achieve a cumulative GPA of 3.0 or above, the probation flag will be lifted. If the plan or GPA requirement is not satisfied, they will be suspended for one term. If a student satisfies the probation plan but the situation arises in future terms, the student will not be granted another probation term, they will be suspended.

## Suspension

Per the official University definition of suspension: "The student is required to leave the University for a given or indefinite period of time, the termination of which shall depend upon specified acts of the student's own volition related to mitigation of the offense committed. The student must comply with all sanctions prior to re-admission." The college does not guarantee readmission; it is subject to review by the Graduate Committee. Any doctoral student who accumulates two grades below B- (with the exclusion of courses taken from the Levin College of Law—one grade below C) during their graduate studies will be suspended, as will any student who receives one grade of D+ or lower at any time during graduate studies.

When a student is suspended, the student's records will be flagged, and future registration will be forbidden until the Graduate Committee approves lifting the flag. To have the suspension flag lifted, the student will need to devise a plan, in conjunction with their chair, for review and approval by the Graduate Committee.

### **Students who remain on suspension are not eligible to hold a graduate assistantship.**

Students will be allowed only one suspension. If another suspension is necessary, the student will be removed from the program. If the suspension is due to a below-3.0 GPA, the student will have one semester to bring the GPA to a 3.0 or higher before further actions are taken. Please note: a student who does not register for two consecutive semesters must apply

for re-admission to the program and acceptance is not guaranteed.

Any violation of the academic honesty guidelines is grounds for immediate dismissal from the program and will result in revocation of the degree if the degree previously has been awarded.

## Miscellaneous Petitions

Students may petition to receive exemption from a core course, to continue in attendance after failing to meet criteria spelled out in a conditional admission or probation status, or to deviate from any other rules or regulations regarding graduate study. The petition form (available in the graduate division) will be placed in the student's academic file as a written record of action. The chair of the supervisory committee or, if the committee has not yet been named, the academic advisor, typically must act on the petition before it is reviewed.

Any time the student receives permission to deviate from usual policy governing the doctoral program, signed and dated written confirmation of the action is advised. A copy of the confirmation should be placed in the student's academic file. Failure to place documentation of deviation from the usual policy into the file may delay graduation.

Students who wish to petition for changes in grades they have received may do so through the College Grade Appeals Committee. The chair of the committee should be contacted regarding procedure. Students may obtain the chair's name through the office of the Dean of the college.

# Registration

## Dropping or Adding Courses

At the beginning of a semester, during the drop/add period, students may drop or add courses to their preregistered courses with no fee penalty. After the drop/add period, however, students are expected to complete all courses for which they are enrolled. Students may be administratively dropped from a class if they miss the first week's meetings, unless they notify the instructor before the first week and have an acceptable excuse such as a medical or family emergency.

After the drop/add period, students can no longer drop a class and replace it with something else with no added tuition or charges. Students will be responsible for tuition and fees for the class they drop as well as the added class.

Students who find it necessary to drop a course after drop/add should visit the graduate division to obtain a Course Schedule Change Request form. The form requires signatures of the student, academic advisor and Associate Dean. To add a class, the student must also have the signature of the instructor of the course to be added. After completion of the form, the student should return it to the graduate division. The student will then follow the procedure described [here](#). International students must receive approval from the UF International Center to drop a course following the drop/add deadline.

Excessive drops are not allowed. Ordinarily, more than two drops are considered excessive. If the student is on a graduate assistantship, dropping credits during the semester may result in the termination of the assistantship.

**Remember:** Students are TUITION and FEE LIABLE for all courses on their schedule at the end of the drop/add period. Tuition and fees will not be refunded for courses dropped after the drop/add deadline.

## Minimum Registration

All students in the college, unless on assistantship, must register for a full-time load unless they obtain a written waiver from the Associate Dean for Graduate Studies and Research. In the fall and spring terms, a full-time load is 9-12 credits or more. Permission to carry less than a full-time load is normally given when a student must work full-time or has health problems, commuting problems, or special home conditions. A waiver must be obtained BEFORE the affected term starts. If registering in a term, **in no case may a student register for fewer than three credits in either the spring or fall semesters or two credits in the summer semester.**

Graduate assistants are not required to obtain a waiver from the 12-credit rule. They are covered by a separate rule, enforced throughout the State University System, which may be waived only by the dean of the Graduate School. Petitions should be sent directly to the dean of the Graduate School; they will not be supported by the college. The rule requires graduate assistants to register for credits based on the percent of assistantship. Students who will graduate in a fall or spring semester must register for at least three credits of MMC 7980 in their final term of study. August graduates need to sign up for only two credits during a summer term.



## Registration Preparation

To enable your registration, it is required that you go to ONE.UF and complete the Registration Preparation requirement and update your emergency contact information **every term** prior to your registration start time. You will have a “registration preparation hold” until it is completed.

This [site](#) will tell you how to register. If you need help, or if the course is departmentally controlled, contact Kimberly Dukes in the graduate division.

**Mass Communication is the graduate “department.” Don’t choose JM, TC, ADV, or PR— those are all undergraduate courses.**

## Summer Registration in MMC 7979/7980

All students wishing to defend their dissertation during the summer semester must meet certain criteria:

- Have an agreement signed by every committee member that stipulates if and when they will be available during the summer for committee meetings, defense, reading, etc. It is advised that students secure from each committee member what they are willing and able to do over the summer semester.
- Submit a reasonable timeline as part of this agreement for all steps of the approval process (i.e., submissions to chair, committee, revisions, submissions to Graduate School, etc.) when registering for dissertation hours. Students will not be allowed to register for dissertation hours without the signed agreement and timeline.



## Independent Studies

The graduate program has four courses (other than advanced research and doctoral research) that do not normally involve classroom participation. The four are COM 6940—Supervised Teaching (S/U grade), MMC 6905—Individual Work (letter-graded), MMC 6910—Supervised Research (S/U grade), and MMC 6949—Internship (S/U grade). Consult the Graduate Catalog for details about these courses. Students may take a maximum of six credits in MMC 6905 during their career with an additional three if approved by the Graduate Committee. The maximum number of credits for COM 6940 and MMC 6910 is five in the academic career (not all in one semester). For other independent study maximums, see the Graduate Catalog.

If a student wants to be registered for a non-classroom course, the form (available in the graduate division as well as on the [webpage](#)) and an attachment describing the proposed work and method of evaluation, must be approved by the supervising professor, advisor, and Associate Dean for Graduate Studies and Research. After receiving the appropriate approvals, the student will submit the form to Weimer 2014, Division of Graduate Studies, for registration prior to the registration deadline.

Proposals for Individual Work (MMC 6905) must include:

- the sub-topics to be studied,
- the resources to be used,
- the requirements for completion, and
- the method of evaluation (basis on which the work will be graded).

Typically, students taking Individual Work must conduct original research. Building on an exhaustive search of the literature, students must make an original contribution to the understanding of mass communication. The finished products ideally would be accepted for publication or presentation at a conference. Regular meetings with the course instructor must be scheduled. The course instructor **MUST** be a graduate faculty member. Any exceptions to this rule must be approved by the Associate Dean for Graduate Studies and Research. Graduate students cannot be the instructor of record for any independent study courses.

In the case of Supervised Research (MMC 6910), (max credits—five in academic career) proposals must include:

- the goal of the activity,
- the specific duties to be fulfilled,
- how often and for how long the student will confer with the instructor, and
- the method of evaluation.

In the case of Supervised Teaching (COM 6940), (max credits—five in academic career) proposals must include:

- the goal of the activity,
- the specific duties to be fulfilled,
- how often and for how long the student will confer with the instructor,
- the method of evaluation, and
- the name/number of the course.

The student and instructor should also be aware of the following expectations for students taking COM 6940:

- The student is there for class observation and does not have to attend every lecture.
- The instructor should provide tutoring in grading techniques with no actual grading responsibilities for the student, as well as discuss the process with the student.
- The student is not required to spend more than 3 hours per credit per week.
- Unlike TAs, this should be more of a learning experience to help the student, not primarily to provide assistance to faculty members.
- The student is allowed to present up to 10% of lectures.
- TAs may not receive credit for the class to which they are assigned.

The student should discuss the required information with the person supervising the course and present the completed form and accompanying details for the supervisor's approval. Forms are available in the Division of Graduate Studies office or [online](#). A completed proposal, including the signed form, must be submitted to the Division of Graduate Studies and Research before the student will be registered. Students must have the signature of the instructor to be registered for the course.

## Undergraduate Courses

Doctoral students cannot receive credit toward their degrees for undergraduate classes. Doctoral students are required to take any undergraduate courses needed for their program of study as an audit or for credit that does not count in the total required credits for the Ph.D. Undergraduate articulation courses must be passed with a C or better, and grades will count towards the students' GPA. Doctoral students may not take undergraduate courses as MMC 6905. Formal appeals to this policy must be made in writing to the CJC Graduate Committee.

# Residency Policies

## Residency

The University of Florida requires a period of concentrated study during a doctoral program. Students must complete on the Gainesville campus at least 30 credits in one calendar year or 36 credits in no more than four semesters within a period of two calendar years. A doctoral student who will not be registered at the university for a period of more than one semester must request written permission from the academic advisor for a leave of absence for a designated period of time.

## Committee Examination Policy

Only the student and the chair or co-chair are required to be in the same physical location. All other committee members can participate via teleconference technology. Exceptions to this rule due to extenuating circumstances may be granted on approval of a written petition to the Graduate Committee.

# Qualifying Examination

At the conclusion of courses in the Ph.D. program, each student must pass a comprehensive qualifying examination. The examination covers mass communication, both the field as broadly conceived, and the specific approach followed by the student. It also covers the supporting studies. The written part of the examination is followed by orals. In addition to passing the qualifying exam, the student must have the dissertation proposal approved before being admitted to Candidacy. The supervisory committee has the responsibility at this time of deciding whether the student is qualified to continue work toward the Ph.D. degree.

## Preparation for Examination

The student must schedule an initial meeting with the entire committee prior to the semester of the qualifying exam. To provide the committee with adequate information for the development of appropriate written examination questions, each student shall submit to the committee chair syllabi or course descriptions and paragraphs describing the parameters of the study area established for each question in consultation with the appropriate committee member(s). The course descriptions need to include required readings for each course taken during the coursework portion of the program. Students will be held responsible for the coursework they were required to complete as a prerequisite to the doctoral program. All of these materials – syllabi, course descriptions and paragraphs describing each question area – must be submitted to the chair no later than the beginning of the semester planned for the qualifying examination.

In addition to the paragraphs describing each question, the student must submit a reading list of current journals and journal articles, books, and other appropriate documents for each question, prepared in consultation with the individual committee members and chair. The reading list is meant to act as a study guide so that the student and the committee agree on necessary preparation.

The student also must submit a dissertation proposal, approved by the chair, to the supervisory committee no later than the first day of the written qualifying exams. The proposal is composed of a completed draft of the first three chapters of the dissertation, including: the research problem, the paradigmatic and theoretical foundations for the project, the rationale for the project, key definitions and literature of the topic, a description of the methodology to be used (for example, survey research, experimentation, historical research, legal research), and a tentative bibliography, research schedule, and tentative budget. Students planning for the three-article dissertation option should consult with their chairs to determine proposal expectations.

As mentioned, only the student and the chair or co-chair are required to be in the same physical location. All other committee members can participate via teleconference technology. Exceptions to this rule may be granted on approval of a written petition to the Graduate Committee. Only with advance notification and permission of the Associate Dean for Graduate Studies and Research can a graduate faculty member substitute for another committee member. Justification for the substitution must be made in writing to the Associate Dean and contain a reasonable timeframe for the substitute to review and prepare for the oral portion. Only in extraordinary situations would a substitution be approved less than one month prior to the oral portion of the examination. No substitutions are permitted for the committee chair or the external member. If a substitution is denied, the oral portion must be cancelled and rescheduled when all committee members are present.

Upon passing the qualifying examination, the student is admitted to candidacy for the doctorate. Between the oral portion of the qualifying examination and the date of the degree there must be a minimum of **two registered semesters**. The semester in which the qualifying examination is passed is counted, provided that the successful oral defense occurs before the midpoint of the term. All work for the doctorate must be completed within five calendar years after the qualifying examination, or this examination must be repeated.

A full description of the policies governing the qualifying examination is on the CJC graduate studies [website listed under "Guidelines and Policies,"](#) as well as in the wall files in the graduate division.

One of our graduates has written a guide to preparing and studying for the qualifying exam. The information is based on her personal experience with input from other sources. The guide can be found [online](#) and is included as an informational item, not official policy.



# Dissertation



The dissertation contributes to mass communication knowledge. It conveys results of original research on a topic approved by the supervisory committee. All students are required to submit dissertations in electronic form. Please see this [webpage](#) for details on electronic dissertation workshops, submission procedures, and deadline dates. Electronic dissertations may be viewed [here](#).

## Three-article Option

A second option is [the three-article option](#) – three separate articles that have a common introduction and discussion that tie the articles together. If interested in this option, please review the link and discuss with your chair.

## Final Oral Examination

In the final oral examination, the supervisory committee assesses the dissertation for originality and contribution to knowledge. As detailed above, only the student and the chair or co-chair are required to be in the same physical location. All other committee members can participate via teleconference technology. Exceptions to this rule may be granted on approval of a written petition to the Graduate Committee. When necessary, there may be one graduate faculty substitute, but not for the chair or the external member. The examination is open to the public. All work for the doctorate must be completed within five calendar years after the qualifying examination, or this examination must be repeated.

## Participation in Graduation Ceremonies

A doctoral student may not participate in the graduation ceremony in a semester prior to the completion of the dissertation. Only after the student has successfully defended the dissertation and the oral portion of the examination process is the student eligible to participate in the college and university graduation ceremonies and to be “hooded” by a member of the student’s supervisory committee as a part of the formal process for conferring the doctoral degree.

# Financial Aid

Most students admitted to the doctoral program are offered four years of financial aid. Renewal of aid is contingent upon favorable term-by-term evaluation of performance of assigned duties and responsibilities, the needs of the college's departments, and availability of funds. Good academic standing is required. Likelihood of support is enhanced by the size of the college's endowment, which now ranks among the very largest for journalism and mass communication programs. Student aid often takes the form of an assistantship with accompanying tuition waiver.

Students may compete for many types of financial aid, among them fellowships, loans, and grants for research and travel. Additional funding sources may be available for applicants with particular qualifications. Applicants should stay in contact with the CJC graduate division, the Graduate School, and the [Office of Student Financial Aid and Scholarships](#) to check for new financial aid programs.

All applicants who qualify for [Florida residency status](#) must make sure residency is established prior to registration. An individual claiming in-state residency status must have established and maintained a legal Florida residence for at least 12 months prior to the first day of classes in the semester for which in-state residency status is sought. A student's residency status as established during the application process will continue until they graduate, unless a change of residency is requested.

## Assistantships and Fellowships

All application papers should be in by early January to be sure of consideration for the full range of fellowships. Most assistantships carry tuition waivers. The Division of Graduate Studies and Research is able to offer a select number of graduate assistantships through specific funding from the UF Graduate School. This program is aimed at recruiting the most nationally competitive applicants

and carries a slightly higher stipend level.

Graduate assistantship of .25 FTE (10 hours weekly) or more are eligible to enroll in the GatorGradCare health insurance program for a small annual premium. Please see more information [here](#).

The Graduate School also provides fellowships such as the Grinter Fellowship. The Grinter Fellowship, named after a former dean of the Graduate School, pays up to \$4,000 a year for as many as three years. The College of Journalism and Communications uses the Grinter Fellowships to supplement doctoral teaching and research assistantship stipends.

## Teaching and Research Experience

Duties vary. Teaching assistants often instruct students in labs, for example in writing, reporting, or production. Many teaching assistants assume responsibility for entire courses after a term of training and mentoring as a TA with a faculty member. The university requires students holding teaching assistantships to attend a teaching workshop and meet minimum language requirements.

Research assistantships involve a progression of duties from basic research through supervising entire small-scale studies.

## Tuition Waivers

Doctoral students on assistantships more than quarter time and less than three quarter



time, will receive a tuition waiver in the semester they are on an active assistantship. Typically, this waiver covers the tuition portion for required registration, 9 credits in fall and spring and 6 credits in summer (if on a 12-month appointment). Students are responsible for the fees portion of the charges, including but not limited to miscellaneous fees (building, capital improvement trust fund, student financial aid, activity and service, athletic, and health [limited service]). The percentage waived depends on graduate student union negotiations and funding levels. Students also will be responsible for any excess credits taken beyond the required registration. If a student's registration drops below the required registration at any time in the semester, the

student will become financially liable for the entire registration's tuition and fee charges. Tuition waivers are generally included with fellowships more than \$4,000 per semester.

### Loans

Doctoral students may be eligible for one of a variety of loan programs. Check with the [Office of Student Financial Aid and Scholarships](#).

### Work Limitations for Graduate Students

Funding is not guaranteed. In the cases where graduate students are funded in part or in whole by the college, they are limited to working a combined full-time equivalency (FTE) of .50 FTE, or 20 hours a week, during the fall and spring semesters for all jobs

on campus. During the summer, this limitation may increase to 1.0 FTE. Holders of the Graduate School Preeminence Award are not allowed any additional employment either within UF or outside of UF without prior approval. For students funded by the college, funding will not continue after the fourth year of Ph.D. studies.

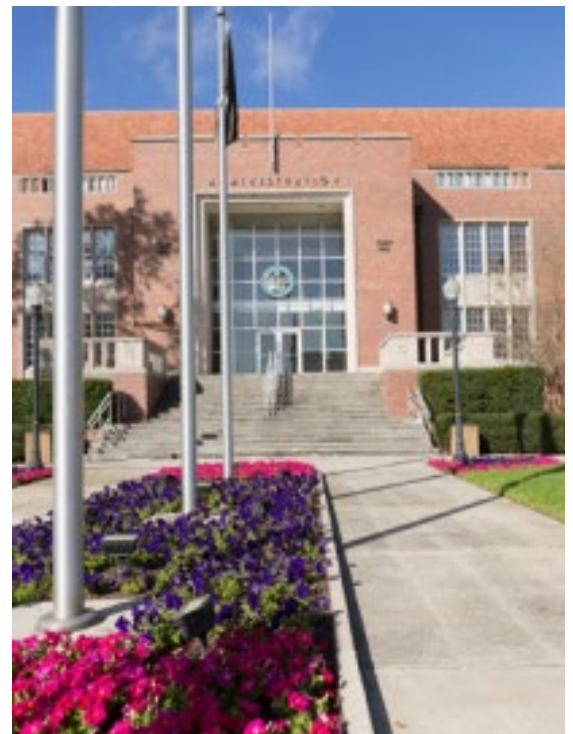
These limitations are to assist our graduate students in their academic success and to allow them to focus on their graduate studies. Exceptions to these limitations will only be granted in the most extreme situations. Exemption petitions, in essay form, must be submitted to the Graduate Committee or college administration if the Graduate Committee is not actively meeting.

## Travel Grants

Travel grants are awarded by the college for students whose research papers are accepted for presentation at refereed sessions of mass communication scholarly conferences. These funds are available for use on a fiscal year basis, July 1 to June 30, each year, and student allocations of travel funding are based on the fiscal year in which a conference falls. Travel grants will be awarded as graduate division funds are available and funding is not guaranteed – funds are limited. The graduate division may be able to provide additional travel support on a competitive basis after the annual \$500/\$500 travel awards have been utilized. Factors considered include but are not limited to: if the event is a major communication conference, awards that the paper and/or author received, and number of author's papers accepted to the conference. The awards follow the fiscal year in which a conference falls and will be awarded only as funds are available but is not guaranteed. Please see the graduate division for more information.

Forms and specific requirements and rules are available in the graduate division or [online](#).

The following policies were developed and approved by the Graduate Students in Mass Communication Association (GSMCA) and the CJC Graduate Committee:



- Both Master's and Ph.D. students will be eligible equally for conference funding. Students must be registered and in residence as full-time graduate students in the college at the time the paper is presented.
- One student on an accepted paper will be funded as long as funds are available.
- In the case of a multi-authored paper, the student authors must decide which author will request college funding to attend the conference. In the case that the authors disagree about who should be funded, authors may appeal to the Graduate Committee.

Beginning July 1, 2020 this award was changed from \$500/\$150 to two \$500 awards per fiscal year to support travel to a regional, national or international conference. Also, you must:

- Submit a [Travel Grant Award Request Form](#) to the graduate division at least 30 days before the travel dates.
- Submit a copy of your acceptance letter/email with your Travel Grant Award Request Form.
- Submit all original itemized receipts. Reimbursement will be made for things such as lodging, airfare, and personal meals.
- Include the original airfare receipt and/or rental car invoice and hotel bill, even if neither of these is being used as the basis for reimbursement. Evidence of extravagant expenditure will nullify this award.
- Turn in receipts within 30 days of return.
- Submit a copy of the complete conference program. Copy should include cover page and schedule of the conference. Please highlight or notate your presentation on the schedule.
- Follow University of Florida's travel procedures and policies.

We are committed to supporting graduate student success by supporting travel to the maximum extent the budget allows. We feel it is important to you, as well as to the college, to continue funding your conference travel to present your research to national audiences. Hopefully, these guidelines will enable us to support the broadest range of student work possible during the present budget limitations.

Please remember that some academic organizations that host conferences try to help with graduate student travel and offer small grants for that purpose.

Additional travel funding is offered by the Graduate School and Graduate Student Council. Research and travel funding also may be available through the University of Florida's Latin American Studies Center, Center for African American Studies, or Asian Studies, for research projects involving those areas.



# Honors for Students



All graduate students compete for the college's Outstanding Graduate Student Award and the Outstanding Student Research Award, and all teaching assistants compete for the college's Julie Dodd Outstanding Graduate Student Teacher Award.

## Outstanding Student Research

One student each year receives an award for outstanding research. Applicants may submit documentation (e.g., research articles, conference papers, projects) themselves, or faculty members may nominate candidates and submit documentation. Application is made to the CJC Research Committee, which recommends to the Dean a student to receive the honor. For more information, students should contact their committee chair. The recipient is honored at the college's annual awards assembly and receives a plaque.

## The Julie Dodd Outstanding Graduate Student Teacher Award

Applicants may submit documentation (e.g., letter of recommendation, teaching evaluations, syllabi/teaching materials, teaching philosophy) themselves, or faculty members may nominate candidates and submit documentation. The Graduate Committee each spring recommends to the Dean one outstanding graduate student teacher from the year's teaching assistants. The student is honored at the college's annual awards assembly and receives a plaque.

# College History

<b>1947</b>	<b>First master's degree conferred</b>
<b>1969</b>	<b>100<sup>th</sup> student graduated from master's program</b>
<b>1990</b>	<b>First two doctoral degrees in mass communication conferred</b>
<b>1999</b>	<b>College awards its 50<sup>th</sup> Ph.D. degree</b>
<b>2000</b>	<b>The Graduate Division was officially renamed the Division of Graduate Studies and Research</b>
<b>2004</b>	<b>College awards its 100<sup>th</sup> Ph.D. degree</b>
<b>2012</b>	<b>College offers first online master's program</b>
<b>2013</b>	<b>College's doctoral program named as one of UF's top 10 doctoral programs in the university</b>
<b>2015</b>	<b>College awards its 2,000<sup>th</sup> master's degree and 250<sup>th</sup> doctoral degree</b>
<b>2016</b>	<b>College launches Professional Master's program</b>
<b>2020</b>	<b>College awards 2,500<sup>th</sup> master's degree (and 302<sup>nd</sup> Ph.D.) and its 500<sup>th</sup> online master's degree</b>

