

Master of Arts - Communication Studies

Plan Description

The Master of Arts program in the Department of Communication Studies brings together scholars interested in the various aspects of relational and public communication studies. The program prepares you for careers in the private sector, government agencies, or further educational opportunities. Our recent graduates are regularly accepted into top doctoral programs throughout the country.

For more information about your program, including your graduate program handbook and learning outcomes, please visit the Degree Directory.

Plan Admission Requirements

Application deadlines

Applications available on the UNLV Graduate College website.

Students complete a program of coursework that leads to them completing either a thesis or a professional project. Programs of study are designed to meet the student's individual, professional and/or personal objectives. Although an undergraduate degree in communication is not required for admission to the program, a student without a background in communication may be required to complete course work in addition to the minimum requirements.

The Department of Communication Studies accepts applicants only in the fall semester of each year.

Please see the application deadlines page for information regarding review of applications.

All domestic and international applicants must review and follow the Graduate College Admission and Registration Requirements.

Students are accepted into a degree program as described in the Graduate Catalog. The faculty and corresponding sub-disciplines and sub-plans within the described programs are subject to change at any time.

Plan Requirements

See Subplan Requirements below.

Subplan 1: Thesis Track

Subplan 2: Professional Project Track

Subplan 1 Requirements: Thesis Track

Total Credits Required: 32

Course Requirements

All students enrolled in the program are required to complete core courses in their first year.

Core Courses – Credits: 14

Complete 14 credits by completing all of the following courses:

COM 700 Professional Development Seminar I	
COM 710 Survey of Communication Studies	3
COM 711 Rhetorical-Critical Research Methods	3
COM 712 Empirical Research Methods	3
COM 730 Theories of Communication	3
COM 701 Professional Development Seminar II	

Elective Courses – Credits: 12

Complete 12 credits of advisor-approved electives. A maximum of 6 credits can be taken outside the Department of Communication Studies.

Culminating Experience – Credits: 6

Complete 6 credits of 797 (repeatable).

COM 797 Thesis	3
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Degree Requirements

A student must complete a minimum of 26 credits of approved course work plus 6 credits of thesis credits. The classes may include six credits outside the Department of Communication Studies. An oral examination on the thesis is required.

The Graduate Studies Coordinator will be the advisor for all entering students. Before completing 16 credits, the student should select a permanent advisor. The permanent advisor will work with the student through the completion of the program. The student's advisor must approve all course work.

Acceptable course work is defined as any class in which a student receives a grade of B- or higher. Any required course graded C+ or below will not be included in the candidate's degree program.

In consultation with their advisor, a student will organize a thesis committee of at least three

departmental members. In addition, a fourth member from outside the department, known as the Graduate College Representative, must be appointed. An additional committee member may be added at the student and department's discretion. Please see Graduate College policy for committee appointment guidelines.

The defense of the thesis may result in any of three decisions: pass, pass with further edits, no pass. The most common of these three results is the pass with further edits decision. These edits may range from simple editing of style, grammatical errors, and so forth, to extensive rewrites of entire sections of the thesis. The committee may decide to either "sign off" on the thesis or not at the time of this decision depending on the extent of the edits. The committee may also want to see the final edits or not. Signing off on the thesis means that the committee agrees to sign the appropriate forms for the completion of the thesis. Again, they may do that at the time of the defense, or at a later time after edits are completed.

- a. If the thesis passes outright, then the student will have no further edits except those that the Graduate College may request. The committee signs off on the thesis at the time of the defense.
- b. In the event that the student's thesis is not passed, the student will, at that time be severed from the program and will not be granted a Master of Arts degree.

Graduation Requirements

The student must submit all required forms to the Graduate College as well as apply for graduation up to two semesters prior to completing their degree requirements.

The student must submit and successfully defend their thesis by the posted deadline. The defense must be advertised and is open to the public.

After the thesis defense, the student must electronically submit a properly formatted pdf copy of their thesis to the Graduate College for format check. Once the thesis format has been approved by the Graduate College, the student will submit the approved electronic version to ProQuest. Deadlines for thesis defenses, format check submissions, and the final ProQuest submission can be found here.

Subplan 2 Requirements: Professional Project Track

Total Credits Required: 32

Course Requirements

All students enrolled in the program are required to complete core courses in their first year.

Core Courses – Credits: 14

Complete 14 credits by completing all of the following courses:

COM 700 Professional Development Seminar I	
COM 710 Survey of Communication Studies	3
COM 711 Rhetorical-Critical Research Methods	3
COM 712 Empirical Research Methods	3
COM 730 Theories of Communication	3
COM 701 Professional Development Seminar II	

Elective Courses – Credits: 15

Complete 15 credits of advisor-approved electives. A maximum of 6 credits can be taken outside the Department of Communication Studies.

Culminating Experience -- Credits: 3

Complete one course:

COM 798 Professional Project

Degree Requirements

The Professional Project Track entails the completion of 29 credits of course work and 3 credits toward a culminating experience which may be one of three projects: theoretical application project, resource guide project, or curriculum project. The classes may include six credits outside the Department of Communication Studies. An oral examination on the professional project is required.

Students select a four-person committee: three departmental faculty, one of whom serves as chair, and one Graduate College representative. Students prepare and defend a prospectus by end of the third semester in the program, work primarily with the committee chair through development of the paper, and meet with the full committee in their final semester for a formal presentation and defense of the project.

The Graduate Studies Coordinator will be the advisor for all entering students. Before completing 16 credits, the student should select a permanent advisor. The permanent advisor will work with the student through the completion of the program. The student's advisor must approve all course work.

Acceptable course work is defined as any class in which a student receives a grade of B- or higher. Any required course graded C+ or below will not be included in the candidate's degree program.

Professional Projects may be assessed as Pass, Pass with revisions, or Not Pass. Revisions may include—but are not limited to—minor stylistic changes, investigating Committee members' questions about substantive claims, revising sections of the argument, and so on. In some cases Committee members may want to see the final revisions; in other instances they may entrust the Chair to act on the Committee's behalf. In both cases, and when the initial judgment is Pass, Committee members will sign the required Graduate College documents the day of the

Presentation. In cases that require more elaborate revision, or when a performance is assessed as Not Pass, the Committee will delineate the necessary course/s of action before the student leaves the Defense.

Graduation Requirements

The student must submit all required forms to the Graduate College as well as apply for graduation up to two semesters prior to completing their degree requirements.

The student must successfully complete and defend their professional project.

Plan Graduation Requirements

Refer to your subplan for Graduation Requirements.

Subplan 1: Thesis Track

Subplan 2: Professional Project Track