

The background of the cover is a photograph of a large, classical-style building with a prominent copper-colored dome and a clock tower on top. The building is partially obscured by the branches of trees with reddish-brown leaves in the foreground. The sky is a pale, hazy blue.

School of Mass Communication and Journalism

Graduate Handbook

University of Southern Mississippi
9/1/2009

ADMINISTRATION BLDG

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History of Graduate Study in Communication at the University of Southern Mississippi

Graduate study in the discipline of human communication at the University of Southern Mississippi has existed almost as long as the institution has existed. Founded in 1912 as Mississippi Normal College for the preparation of teachers, the University offered its first graduate degrees in teaching in the late 1920s and its first recorded Master's degree in the teaching of "Speech and Theatre Arts" in 1933.

In 1962, Mississippi Southern College, by Act of the Legislature, was made the University of Southern Mississippi.

The Ph.D. program in Communication was put in place in 1971.

In 1979, the program was given the "Center for Excellence" designation for Communication studies in the State of Mississippi and resources were made available to assist the growth of excellence in the graduate program. In 1982 the present administrative structure of the School of Communication containing the separate Departments of Journalism, Radio-Television-Film, and Speech Communication was formalized with Dr. R. Gene Wiggins as Director and in 1985 USM was designated the "Leadership" institution in the State of Mississippi for studies in Communication. In 2001, the department of Journalism and Radio, Television and Film merged to form the new School of Mass Communication and Journalism. Speech Communication became an independent department in the College of Liberal Arts (now the College of Arts and Letters).

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Admission to Graduate Programs

Master's Programs

An applicant may be granted regular or conditional admission to a master's program.

Regular Admission

- A. The applicant normally must hold a baccalaureate degree from an institution approved by a recognized accrediting agency.
- B. The applicant must have a minimum grade point average of 3.0 on the last 60 hours of undergraduate study and Graduate Record Examination (GRE) scores.
- C. The applicant must submit at least three letters of recommendation which address the applicant's academic preparation and readiness for graduate work.
- D. The applicant must submit a statement of purpose, indicating why he/she wishes to pursue a master's degree at USM.

Conditional Admission

An applicant who does not meet the minimum admission standards for regular admission may be considered for conditional admission if he/she has a GPA of 2.75, Graduate Record Exam scores, and the letters of recommendation.

A conditional student at the master's level must maintain a GPA of at least 3.00 (B) average on the first nine semester hours of graduate work. The hours will be taken in communication and must be regular courses, not independent study. A student on conditional admission must have met requirements (3.0 GPA on first 9 hours) for a change to regular admission status before they will be advised or allowed to register for additional classes.

Doctoral Program

Regular Admission

- A. For regular admission to a doctoral program, the applicant normally must hold a master's degree from an institution approved by a recognized accrediting agency.
- B. The applicant must have appropriate scores on the aptitude section of the Graduate Record Examination (GRE) and a GPA of 3.50 on previous graduate work.
- C. An applicant must also submit at least three letters of recommendation.
- D. An applicant must submit a statement of purpose, explaining why he/she wishes to study in the doctoral program in mass communication at USM.

Conditional Admission

For conditional admission an applicant must have appropriate GRE scores and a GPA between 3.25-3.50 on previous graduate work.

A student admitted on conditional basis must make a GPA of 3.50 on the first 9 hours after admission. Only regular courses in communication shall be taken-not independent study. A student on conditional admission must have met requirements (3.5 GPA on first 9 hours) for a change to regular admission status before they will be advised or allowed to register for additional classes.

Non-Degree Graduate Student

Admission as a non-degree graduate student may be granted for any of the following reasons:

- A. The applicant did not meet requirements for conditional or regular admissions before the deadline. These admissions requirements must be met and the Non-Degree status changed to conditional or regular by the end of the first full semester after the student enrolls in graduate courses in order to continue course work.
- B. The student may or may not be able to meet admission requirements but does not desire to work toward a graduate degree.
- C. The student is enrolled in another university and desires to obtain credit from the The University of Southern Mississippi to be transferred to the graduate school in which the student is seeking a degree.

Regulations Governing Non-Degree Graduate Students

Even though a non-degree graduate student has been admitted to the university, the student has not been admitted to any department or to any degree program. An applicant for doctoral study may take courses as a non-degree graduate student if the department chair and dean give their permission. However, no credit earned as a non-degree graduate student may be applied to doctoral degrees. Master's non-degree graduate students must have the permission of the Graduate Coordinator and the dean to register for any graduate courses. It is the responsibility of these students to check admission standards of the school before enrolling in the courses.

A non-degree graduate student must hold a baccalaureate degree from an accredited institution.

To be allowed to continue as a non-degree graduate student, the student must consult with the Graduate Coordinator during the first semester enrolled at the university regardless of whether the student plans to seek a degree.

No more than nine (9) semester hours earned while classified as a non-degree graduate student, not including independent study hours, will be accepted toward a master's degree at The University of Southern Mississippi. A student must, therefore, gain conditional or regular admission before completing more than nine (9) semester hours of study for additional hours to be counted toward a master's degree.

An applicant for admission to the doctoral program may be granted non-degree admission, but no credit earned as a non-degree graduate student may be applied to the degree requirements.

Deficiencies

A deficiency is defined as inadequate academic preparation for the graduate program of interest. A deficiency is identified by the Graduate Coordinator. Master's candidates with undergraduate deficiencies must take undergraduate courses to correct the deficiencies without receiving graduate credit for the additional course work. Doctoral candidates with deficiencies must take either undergraduate courses to correct the deficiency without receiving graduate credit or additional graduate courses beyond the required hours.

Course Work and Grading System

Courses open to graduate students for graduate credit are those numbered 500 or above. Many courses have prerequisites. A student who wishes to register for a particular course must satisfy the school that he or she has had preparation adequate for admission to the course. Beginning Fall 2001 the graduate grading system will employ plus and minus notations that will affect GPA. The grading system for graduate work is as follows:

- A** Indicates that the student's work is of unusually high quality.
- B** Indicates that the student's work is of high but not exceptional quality.
- C** Indicates that the student has met the minimum requirements for passing the course.
- D** Indicates that the student's work is below that which is expected of a graduate student. A Course in which the student has earned a grade of D will not apply toward a graduate degree. A student who earns more than six (6) semester hours in grades of D or below may not be considered as a candidate for a degree.
- E** Indicates a course in progress. It is to be used only for thesis and dissertation credit while in progress.
- F** Indicates that the student has failed the course. A student who accumulates more than three (3) semester hours of F grades will not be considered as a candidate for a degree.
- I** Indicates an incomplete record. An I is treated as an F if not removed within one term of attendance.
- P** Indicates completion of thesis and dissertation credit and is assigned only upon completion. Also used for grades in courses 697 and 797.
- W** Indicates withdrawal from a course passing.

The general regulation that degree work must be completed within a six-year period applies to all course work and research tools.

A grade-point average of B or better is required of all candidates for graduate degrees by the time they complete the course-hour requirements for the degree.

On the recommendation of the student's committee or major professor, a student may retake one graduate level course in order to improve his grade point average.

Probation

A student whose cumulative graduate grade point average (GPA) or whose program grade point average falls below 3.0 will be placed on probation. That student must attain a cumulative 3.0

GPA by the end of the following (probationary) semester. A student who fails to achieve a 3.0 at the end of the probationary semester can be reclassified as a non-degree student. Departments may set more stringent probationary conditions. A new application would be required for consideration to reenter the program.

Grade Review Policy

The instructor (defined as one who has the responsibility for a class, special problem, thesis or dissertation) has the authority in his or her class over all matters affecting the conduct of the class, including the assignment of grades. Student performance should be evaluated according to academic criteria made available to all students within the first two weeks of each semester. Grades should not be determined in an arbitrary or capricious manner.

When a student disagrees with the final grade given by an instructor, fair play requires the opportunity for an orderly appellate procedure. The procedure assures due process for both the instructor and student. For deadlines to appeal grades, see the Grade Review Policy section of the Graduate Bulletin. For policies and procedures governing grade review, contact the Office of the Provost.

Course Loads

- I. Although the maximum load of a full-time graduate student for Fall or Spring semester is sixteen (16) hours, the normal load for a full-time graduate student is generally considered to be twelve (12) semester hours.
- II. Thirteen (13) hours is the maximum load for a graduate fellow teaching one undergraduate class or its equivalent. In no case may the total hours involved in a student's program, including both the course work and the assistantship assignment, exceed sixteen (16) hours.
- III. During the summer semester, twelve (12) hours is the maximum for all graduate students, including hours taken in Intersession courses in May.

A student who held a graduate fellowship during the previous Fall and Spring terms must enroll in a minimum of nine (9) hours in the Summer term to qualify for a tuition waiver.

- IV. The minimum load for a full-time graduate student is nine (9) semester hours for students living in Pine Haven, using the services of the Clinic, using the services of Veteran's Affairs, or using other such services of the University.
- V. The courses numbered 697 and 797-Independent Study and Research-may be taken for any amount of credit. Students who are not in residence but who are actively working on a thesis, research problem, or dissertation must enroll for at least three (3) hours each semester not to be counted as credit toward a degree or they must enroll for at least three (3) hours of thesis (MC 698) or dissertation (MC 898).

Master's Degree Requirements

Master of Arts in Communication - Mass Communication Emphasis

Substantive core: MC 607, MC 608	6 hrs.
Research Methods: MC 720	3 hrs.
Select two from MC 721, MC 722, MCJ 525, or Statistics	6 hrs.
Electives in Mass Communication	9 hrs.
Thesis: MC 698	<u>6 hrs.</u>
TOTAL	30 hrs.*

* At least 18 hours must be taken at the 600 level or above. Candidates must take a comprehensive written examination and defend the thesis.

Master of Science in Communication – Mass Communication Emphasis

Thesis Option - same requirements as for the MA degree above, but without the foreign language requirement.

Non-Thesis Option

Substantive Core: MC 607, MC 608	6 hrs.
Research Methods: MC 720	3 hrs.
Select two from MC 721, MC 722, MCJ 525, or Statistics	6 hrs.
Electives in Mass Communication	<u>18 hrs.</u>
TOTAL	33 hrs.*

* At least 18 hours must be taken at the 600 level or above. Candidates must take a comprehensive written examination.

Master of Science in Public Relations

Note: Students admitted without undergraduate public relations courses must take MCJ 521 and MCJ 522.

Substantive Core: MC 608, MC 620, MC 621, MC 626	12hrs.
Research Methods: MC 720, MCJ 526	6 hrs.
Thesis Option	
Thesis: MC 698	6 hrs.
Mass Communication Electives	6 hrs.

or

Non-Thesis Option	
Major Project or Internship	3 hrs.
Mass Communication Electives	9 hrs.
	<u>12 hrs.</u>
	TOTAL
	30 hrs.*

* At least 18 hours must be taken at the 600 level or above. Candidate must take a comprehensive written examination and those pursuing the thesis option must defend the thesis.

Time Limitation

The student must complete the master's degree within five calendar years from the date of initial enrollment in a graduate program (starting fall 2009). If more than five years are needed to complete requirements, the Vice Provost of Graduate Studies, under extenuating circumstances, may revalidate over-age credit hours if the original credit was earned at The University of Southern Mississippi and if the dean of the college concerned approves the revalidation. The revalidation is secured by the student's successfully passing a special examination on the course. However, any student who fails to complete the master's degree program within the five-year time period becomes subject to any changes in degree requirements made at any date five years prior to graduation. Charges for the special revalidation examination are \$30.00 per course. The fee must be paid before the validation examination is taken. Over-age extension courses cannot be revalidated.

Credit Hours Limitations

- A. At least half of the semester hours required for a degree program must be earned on a campus of the University of Southern Mississippi.
- B. A minimum of fifty per cent of the credit earned at the University of Southern Mississippi must be taken on the campus from which the degree is awarded.
- C. A minimum of eighteen (18) semester hours must be in courses numbered 600 or above.
- D. A total of no more than nine (9) semester hours of work earned as a non-degree student may be applied toward a master's degree. Please note F below.
- E. As many as six (6) semester hours of graduate credit from other accredited institutions may be transferred to the student's program with the approval of the director of the School and the vice provost for graduate studies provided that the course work transferred falls within the six-year period allowed for the degree.
- F. A total of no more than nine (9) semester hours of transfer work and non-degree work may be applied toward a master's degree.

The Master's Committee

The student's work toward the master's degree is supervised by a departmental committee composed of a chair and at least two members recommended by the department chair and appointed by the Vice Provost for Graduate Studies.

Minor

No minor is required, but if approved by a student's committee, it shall consist of a minimum of nine (9) semester hours of course work.

Comprehensive Examination

Master's degree candidates must pass a six-hour written comprehensive examination that tests the accumulation and integration of knowledge from his or her area of study as well as the ability to evaluate information and ideas. This examination may not be taken until all core and research method courses are completed. The student must stay enrolled in the semester when the comprehensive examination is taken.

The comprehensive examination is administered by the Graduate Coordinator. Students may be asked questions from any faculty member from whom they have had courses. Faculty members who submit questions read the answers to their own questions. If a student fails to write a satisfactory answer for any part(s) of the exam, the student will be asked to rewrite the section(s) (generally a similar type of question rather than a second attempt at the same question). If, after rewriting, the student has still not passed part(s) of the exam, the student's academic committee will meet in order to decide if the student has passed or failed the entire examination.

The Master's Thesis

- A. The degree of Master of Arts entails the writing of a thesis (698. Thesis, 6 hrs.). Students intending to pursue a degree higher than the master's are encouraged to write a thesis.
- B. As appropriate, the Human Subjects Protection Review Committee and/or the Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee must approve the thesis topic.
- C. A separate bulletin outlining University requirements concerning the preparation of a thesis is available in the Graduate Office.
- D. The student must register for at least three (3) hours of 698 during the semester/term in which he or she expects to defend the thesis. Students who have previously registered for the maximum total of six (6) hours of 698, and/or who are not in residence, but who are actively working on a thesis, consulting with the major professor, and/or using other resources of the University, must register for at least three (3) hours of 697- Independent Study and Research.

Thesis Requirement

Students pursuing a thesis option must submit and defend a scholarly thesis. A bulletin outlining University requirements for the preparation of the thesis is available from the Graduate School. The student must register for at least 3 hours of MC 698 during the semester or term in which the thesis will be defended. Remember, thesis option degree plans require a total of 6 hours of MC 698.

Thesis Committee

The thesis committee is made up of a thesis director and two other graduate faculty members who are eligible to serve on thesis committees. The committee must approve the formal written thesis prospectus as well as the completed thesis.

Ph.D. Degree Requirements

Course Requirements

The doctoral degree requires a minimum of 54 semester hours of course work beyond the master's degree (or 84 semester hours beyond the bachelor's degree). In addition, Ph.D. students must attain proficiency in research tools, satisfied by 15 hours of course work approved by the student's advisory committees. Course work taken to attain proficiency in these areas DOES NOT count as part of the required hours for the degree.

The four-course sequence in research theory and methodology required of all doctoral students is listed below.

Mass Communication Emphasis

MC 607	Theories of Mass Communication
MC 608	Critical & Cultural Theory
MC 720	Introduction to Graduate Research
MC 722	Communication Research Methods

Minor Courses

Doctoral students may select an outside minor consisting of 12 semester hours approved by the student's major professor and academic committee. These hours count as part of the 54-(or 84-) hour degree plan.

Graduate Advisor

The Graduate Coordinator serves as the overall graduate advisor. However, doctoral work is committee directed. Each doctoral student will select a member of the graduate faculty of the School of Mass Communication and Journalism to serve as the student's major professor for the purpose of advisement, committee formation, creation of the plan of study, and administration of the comprehensive examination. (See the next section.)

Time Limitations

Courses taken above the master's degree or its equivalent which will fit into the degree program but which are six or more years old at the time of admission to the advanced graduate program may be counted toward meeting degree requirements when recommended by the School director and approved by the Vice Provost for Graduate Studies.

Doctoral students have six years after admission and enrollment into advanced graduate standing (Ph.D. work) to complete their comprehensive exams. Failure to meet the deadline will require approval for continuation by the student's doctoral committee in consultation with the Director of the School, and no less than nine hours of additional advanced coursework.

The School of Mass Communication and Journalism allows two more years for completion of the dissertation, after which time the candidate may re-qualify for two years by satisfying the dissertation committee through an oral examination that the candidate maintains a current knowledge of the field. The Director of the School will keep records of doctoral students' progress and make faculty aware of students whose deadlines are approaching.

Credit Hour Limitations

- A. A minimum of thirty-two (32) semester hours of work beyond the master's degree must be earned on the University's Hattiesburg Campus.
- B. Transfer of credit for graduate work done at other institutions must be approved by the School Director and the Vice Provost for Graduate Studies. Final evaluation of and acceptance of transfer credit will not be made until the student has been in residence for one semester/term. Transfer of credit for doctoral degree programs is limited to not more than six (6) semester hours or nine (9) quarter hours beyond the master's degree. Exceptions to this restriction may be made with the approval of the School Director and the Vice Provost for Graduate Studies.
- C. Credit earned as a non-degree graduate student cannot be applied toward a doctoral degree. Doctoral students allowed to register as non-degree students must attain conditional or regular admission status before the end of the term they are allowed to register as non-degree.

Doctoral Academic Committee

Doctoral study is committee directed. The academic committee approves the student's plan of study and both prepare and read the comprehensive examination. The academic committee is ordinarily composed of five members of the Graduate Faculty of the School of Mass Communication and Journalism who hold doctoral committee graduate faculty status. When an outside minor is part of the student's plan of study, one of the five committee members will be from the minor field. Students should seek to work with committee members who have the necessary expertise, interest, and involvement with the student's area of interest.

Plan of Study

A plan of study is a listing of the specific courses that a student will take to complete the requirements for the doctoral degree. It should be developed by the student and the academic committee early in the student's program. The purpose of the plan is to ensure that the student develops specific expertise in one or more areas of the field of communication. The plan of study should be completed not later than the semester during which 18 hours of doctoral course work will be completed. Earlier preparation of the plan of study is encouraged. After the plan is created it can be modified by the agreement of the student's academic committee. In no case should a plan of study be delayed until late in the doctoral program. Should a student simply continue to take courses without a plan of study, courses taken may not be approved by the academic committee. This may result in additional course work and delays in the completion of degree requirements.

Qualifying Examination

Qualifying exams are left to the discretion of the individual schools and departments. At present, the School of Mass Communication and Journalism does not administer a qualifying examination but reserves the right to do so in the future.

Residency

All doctoral students must spend a period of continuous full time work and study on the USM campus. The purposes of residency are to provide doctoral students with significant time for extensive involvement with faculty, professional colleagues, and peers and to provide a period of time for concentrated study and course work. It is structured as a full-time experience. The following are options for satisfying the residency requirements: (a) two consecutive terms of 12 hours each, (b) two consecutive summer terms of 12 hours each with continuous enrollment during intervening terms, or (c) three consecutive full-time terms.

Comprehensive Examination

The doctoral comprehensive examination consists of both a written and an oral examination. The written exam covers sixteen hours spread across several days. The exam is devised by the student's academic committee following consultation with the student and tests the student in the areas of expertise and competence that the student and committee have agreed upon in the plan of study. The doctoral comprehensive, therefore, is not course based.

Each committee member reads and evaluates answers to his or her part of the exam (sometimes the entire exam) and judges the student's answers to be defensible or unacceptable. If the writing is unacceptable, the student must re-take that professor's portion of the exam, answering a different set of questions in the same area of the field. (Alternatively, if the written answers are, in the committee's judgment, weak, the entire exam may have to be retaken.) One re-write is allowed.

The oral examination phase is scheduled only when the entire committee agrees that all written

answers are defensible. Questions asked in the oral examination phase often stem directly from the student's written answers, seeking clarification or elaboration. However, any question pertinent to the student's graduate education may be asked in the oral phase.

At the end of the oral examination, the student's academic committee makes a determination as to whether the student has passed the comprehensive examination. The committee makes one of three choices:

- (1) Unconditional pass: full approval
- (2) Conditional pass: some remedial action is required
- (3) Unconditional fail

A conditional pass means that some remedial work is necessary before a final judgment can be made. Such work might include readings, course work, a written paper, an additional written examination, or some other appropriate remedial action. After the remedial work is completed, the committee must then determine if the student's work merits an unconditional pass or an unconditional fail.

Dissertation

- A. The doctoral degree entails the writing of a dissertation (MC 898, 12 hrs.).
- B. As appropriate, the Human Subjects Protection Review Committee and/or the Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee must approve the dissertation topic.
- C. A separate bulletin outlining University requirements concerning the preparation of a dissertation is available in the Graduate Office.
- D. The student must register for at least three (3) hours of 898 during the semester/term in which he or she expects to defend the dissertation. Students who have previously registered for the maximum total of twelve (12) hours of 898, and/or who are not in residence, but who are actively working on a thesis, consulting with the major professor, and/or using other resources of the University, must register for at least three (3) hours of 797- Independent Study and Research.

The dissertation is a major research project which must make an original and significant contribution to knowledge in an area of the field of communication in which the student is developing expertise. The dissertation topic is approved by the student's dissertation committee and the completed work is submitted to and defended before this committee. The dissertation committee may or may not be composed of the same faculty who made up the student's academic committee. The dissertation committee should be composed of those faculty members who have expertise that is more relevant to the student's topic area. The dissertation committee is ordinarily composed of five members of the Graduate Faculty of the School of Mass Communication and Journalism who hold doctoral committee graduate faculty status. When an outside minor is part of the student's plan of study, one of the five committee members must be from the minor field.

The first step in completing the dissertation is completion of a prospectus. The prospectus presents a detailed picture of what the student plans to study, why the topic is important to the field, what questions the dissertation will answer, and the manner in which the questions will be answered. The length and format of the prospectus will be determined by the dissertation committee chair (dissertation director). When the dissertation director is satisfied that the prospectus has been properly prepared, it must then be approved by the entire dissertation committee. All committee members should receive a copy of the prospectus at least 14 days prior to the prospectus meeting. After the prospectus is approved the student files a formal Application for Admission to Candidacy and Degree with the clerk in the Graduate Studies office. At this point, the student is officially considered a doctoral degree candidate.

The second step in the dissertation is completing and orally defending the dissertation itself. The student should obtain the current version of the Graduate Office Policies for Preparing Theses and Dissertations and the thesis and dissertation calendar from the Graduate Readers' office. After the dissertation committee chair has approved a reading copy, the candidate should schedule an oral defense of the dissertation and provide each committee member with a copy of the reading copy at least 14 days prior to the scheduled defense. Committee members may make suggestions for additional analyses and revisions. Usually the committee chair makes sure that such revisions are made.

The doctoral dissertation is committee directed under the supervision of the dissertation committee chair. Ordinarily, dissertation chapters are submitted first to the committee chair for comment and critique and are subsequently revised to the chair's satisfaction before being passed on by the chair to the other committee members. Candidates must understand that revisions are based on the professional, scholarly judgment of committee members and are deemed to be in the best interest of the candidate, the program, and the discipline. Therefore, revisions are a normal part of the dissertation process and must be made as specified. The dissertation is read by the Graduate Reader for USM's style and format requirements. Approval by the Graduate Reader does not constitute approval by the dissertation committee.

General Policies

Orientation

An orientation meeting will be held for master's students and Ph.D. students during the first week of classes in the fall semester. At that time, students will be introduced to the standards expected of students who pursue graduate work, and will be introduced to the Graduate Student Handbook. In addition, graduate faculty and graduate assistants will be introduced.

Human Subjects Review

All research projects (class projects as well as thesis and dissertation research) which involve the collection of data on or from human subjects must be approved by the Human Subjects Protection Review Committee of the university. This is university-wide policy. Each college has a representative to this committee from whom appropriate forms and information can be obtained.

Requirements for Academic Standing

Master's students must maintain a 3.0 average and Ph.D. students must maintain a 3.25 in order to receive a degree from the School of Mass Communication and Journalism. Incompletes must be removed prior to comprehensive exams. Students may make no more than two Ds or one F and earn a degree. MA, MS students must complete their coursework within five calendar years from the time of enrollment. Ph.D. students must complete their coursework within six calendar years from the time of enrollment. A 9-12 hour credit semester load is considered to be full-time. Students taking only an internship or thesis or dissertation research courses should enroll for a minimum of 3 hours.

Evaluation of Student Progress

Students who have been conditionally admitted will be reviewed by the Director of Graduate Studies during their first nine hours of work to determine whether they are making satisfactory progress. All student records will be reviewed for satisfactory progress after 12 credits and 24 credits earned. If deficiencies are noted, students will be notified to make an appointment with an advisor to determine whether the plan of study is satisfactory.

Petitions and Grievance Procedures

When a student disagrees with the final grade given by an instructor, or feels some other grievance, fair play requires the opportunity for an orderly appellate procedure. The procedure assures due process for both the instructor and student. For policies and procedures governing such issues, contact the Office of the Provost.

Cheating and Plagiarism

For graduate students, honesty and professionalism are required. All work submitted by a student is expected and required to be the student's own original work. Cheating refers to the use of improper assistance on an exam or assignment. This includes, but is not limited to cheating during an in-class exam, or the use of the work of other students on a take-home exam, or other assignment. Knowingly providing improper assistance to another student is also considered to be an act of cheating.

Plagiarism is a serious offense. Members of the educational community avoid plagiarism by fully acknowledging the sources of all statements, ideas, studies, and projects used in their own speaking and writing. All graduate students in the school are expected to follow this policy.

Additional Equipment

Overhead or LCD projectors may be found in most classrooms. Students needing access to VCR or DVD players/recorders may contact the main office to place a work order. Faculty requests for use of equipment will be met first, and then graduate students' needs will be met as much as possible.

School Graduate Student Association

Graduate students benefit from having a formal organization that permits them to identify common concerns, explore academic options and to provide a social network. Students have the option at the beginning of the semester to select a chairperson to act as presiding officer and coordinator and other such officers as deemed appropriate.

Graduate Assistantships

Several assistantships involving teaching sections or lab sections of basic media courses are available for those graduate students who have already completed 18 hours of graduate coursework in the relevant subject area. Graduate assistants must have regular or conditional admission status. Assistants will be held to high standards of teaching and research and will have their work periodically evaluated. Continuation or renewal of assistantships is contingent upon good performance. The student must pay tuition and out-of-state fee if graduate assistantship is removed or given up voluntarily.

Orientation

Students on assistantship are expected to start on the Thursday before classes start and be available during the week prior to the beginning of classes for orientation to their responsibilities. Depending on the purpose of the assistantship, graduate assistants (GAs) will be acquainted with their tasks in teaching, research, or monitoring.

Expectations and Responsibilities

Some GAs facilitate broadcasting laboratory courses while others teach basic journalism courses. Master's level GAs often work as assistants to professors who hold organizational offices. GAs are expected to devote the number of hours per week as stipulated by their contract. If in charge of classes or labs, all sessions are expected to be met. GAs are responsible for finding substitutes or making arrangements for meeting a class or lab in the event they cannot be present. Excessive absences are considered a failure to fulfill GA responsibilities.

Requirements for Academic Standing and Progress

In order to retain an assistantship, GAs must be making progress toward their degrees; i.e., taking courses, comprehensive exams, or progressing on writing a thesis or dissertation. Failure to progress in one's academic program may lead to termination of an assistantship. While master's and Ph.D. students have five or six years from the time of enrollment to complete course requirements, a quicker pace is expected for those on assistantships. GAs are expected to be enrolled in the graduate program on a full-time basis and maintain a 3.0 GPA. Graduate assistants are required to take 12 hours in the fall and spring semester, and 9 semester hours in summer. If not, their waivers will not process. The tuition waivers do not cover course fees (online course fees and other fees).

Annual Evaluation and Renewal

Each year, the GA's supervisor and the School Director will assess the GA's performance of responsibilities as well as progress toward a degree. If both are found satisfactory, the assistantship will be renewed for up to one additional year for master's students or two additional years for doctoral students. Failure to meet assistantship expectations or failure to progress toward a degree may result in the discontinuation of an assistantship.

Classrooms and Offices

Classrooms will be assigned by university scheduling. GAs are expected to meet with students, if needed, before and after classes as well as by appointment. Use of GA office or empty classrooms for this purpose is quite acceptable.

Graduate Faculty

Christopher P. Campbell (Ph.D., University of Southern Mississippi) is Professor and Director of the School of Mass Communication and Journalism. He is the author of *Race, Myth and the News* (Sage Publications, 1995) and has published a number of articles and book chapters about media and culture. He writes frequently about TV and cultural diversity for *Television Quarterly*. He has been a newspaper reporter, copy editor and local TV news assignment editor, and he taught high school English and journalism in St. Louis from 1977 to 1985. He teaches Critical & Cultural Theories. christopher.campbell@usm.edu

David R. Davies (Ph.D., University of Alabama) is Professor of Journalism and Dean of Honors College. His research specialties are the press and the Civil Rights Movement and trends in American newspapers since World War II. He has written two books, *The Press & Race: Mississippi Journalists Confront the Movement* (University Press of Mississippi, 2001) and *The Postwar Decline of American Newspapers, 1945-1965* (Praeger, 2006). He also teaches the School's British Studies in Journalism class each summer in London as part of the USM British Studies Program. In 1998 his doctoral dissertation won the prize for best dissertation in media history awarded by the American Journalism Historians Association (AJHA). He has served on the board of directors of the American Journalism Historians Association and currently serves as coordinator of the AJHA's book award. Dave.Davies@usm.edu

Phillip Gentile (Ph.D, University of Rochester) is Assistant Professor of Film Studies. Dr. Gentile's areas of teaching expertise include film history and theory, film production and animation. His areas of scholarly interest include documentary film, postwar American avant-garde film and cinematic representation of masculinity. He is presently revising his doctoral dissertation, "*Pugilistic Occasions: Cultural Constructions of Boxing.*" His recent film *Cursive* was awarded Best Experimental Film at the 6th Annual Crossroads Film Festival. Phillip.Gentile@usm.edu

Mazharul Haque (Ph.D., Ohio University) is Professor of Radio, Television and Film. Dr. Haque teaches a number of graduate and undergraduate courses in the school, including Cultural-critical Theories in Mass Communication, International Communication, Process and Effects of Mass Communication, Introduction to Graduate Research, Media, Culture and Society, Media Law and Survey of Mass Media. Dr. Haque has published two books, *What is News in India? A Content Analysis of the Elite Press*, and *Representation of the Cultural Revolution in Chinese Films by the Fifth Generation Filmmakers*, which he coauthored with Dr. Ming-May Jessie Chen, a former doctoral student. Earlier, a monograph, *Information Societies and the Developing World: A Synthesis of Theories*, was published by the University of Georgia. He has also published many book chapters, book reviews, journal and encyclopedia articles. His work has been published in *Journalism Quarterly*, *Journal of Asian Cinema*, *Asian Journal of Communication*, *Gazette*, *Media Asia* and *Odin*. He has presented nearly sixty papers at national and international conferences and moderated dozens of panels at professional conferences. Dr. Haque has collaborated with several Asian scholars on research projects. He has delivered a series of lectures at a number of Asian Universities in China, Taiwan and Korea. M.Haque@usm.edu

Cheryl Jenkins (Ph.D., Howard University) is Assistant Professor of Journalism. She has taught courses in news writing, news editing, reporting, feature writing, media history, the Black Press, introduction to mass communication and media criticism. Before entering academia, she worked as a newspaper reporter at the Hattiesburg American and interned as a media buyer with a political consulting firm on Capitol Hill. She was a 2004 Mellon Fellow for the Salzburg (Austria) Seminar session on Ethics in News Reporting and Editing and received the NABJ Region VII Cheryl Smith (leadership) Award in 2004. She has served as advisor to an award-winning collegiate newspaper and to student chapters of the National Association of Black Journalists. Jenkins has presented research on popular culture issues, minority representation in the media and cultural diversity at national and regional conferences that focus on mass and human communication. Her specific area of research examines the impact of cultural identity on news reporting and historical and contemporary issues related to the Black Press.
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Kim LeDuff (Ph.D., Indiana University) is Assistant Professor of Broadcast Journalism. Dr. Kim M. LeDuff has been a member of the MCJ faculty at USM since 2005 and assistant director since summer of 2008. A native of New Orleans, she previously taught at her alma mater, Xavier University of Louisiana and at Hampton University in Virginia. She was selected to attend the Scripps Howard Leadership Academy in the summer of 2008. Dr. LeDuff's professional experience includes promotions production for UPN in Maryland, research for B-97 FM in New Orleans, and production for the University of Maryland Flagship Channel. She also worked as national account executive and voice-over talent at the New Orleans Convention and Visitor's Channel. She has taught intro to mass media as well as courses in media writing and broadcast journalism. She also teaches a course titled "Race, Gender and Media" at both the undergraduate and graduate levels which is reflective of her research on representations of minority groups in the mass media. Her current research explores user-generated content in response to on-line media coverage of social and racial issues. Dr. LeDuff also has a vested interest in journalism education and has published research on experiences of minority students in graduate programs in communication. She is a member of AEJMC, NCA, and SSCA and presents at their annual conferences regularly. kim.leduff@usm.edu.

Scott Dixon McDowell (M.F.A, Southern Illinois University at Carbondale) is Professor of Film Studies. Mr. McDowell has been teaching film production and screenwriting for eighteen years. He has produced a number of short films and authored several screenplays, including *In Morning Calm*, which won the MGM/UA Screenwriting Competition and was later optioned by Falcon Productions in Hollywood. His research has been devoted to studying the work of Academy Award- and Pulitzer Prize-winning screenwriter and dramatist Horton Foote. Mr. McDowell has written and presented papers about Foote's work at conferences throughout the United States. He wrote a chapter for *Horton Foote: A Case Book*, which was published in 1998. He is currently in post-production on a feature length documentary about Foote, which includes original interview material with Matthew Broderick, Arthur Penn, Robert Duvall, the late Alan J. Pakula and many others. Mr. McDowell was instrumental in the formation of the Mississippi Film and Video Alliance, a non-profit organization whose mission is to foster indigenous film and video production in Mississippi. He currently serves on the board of the organization. Mr. McDowell has also served on the advisory boards for the Natchez Literary and Cinema Celebration and the Mississippi Film Enterprise Zone. scott.mcdowell@usm.edu

Mary Lou Scheffer (Ph.D., Louisiana State University) is Assistant Professor of Broadcast Journalism. Her research area includes sports media, media management and the influence of new technologies on established news mediums. She has published in *The Sports Journal*, *Journal of Sports Media*, *Journal of Communication Studies*, *Newspaper Research Journal*, *Electronic News*, *Journal of Computer Mediated Communication*, *The International Journal of Media Management*, and *Berkshire Encyclopedia of World Sport*. Dr. Scheffer has over 10 years professional experience in broadcasting that includes: news/sports videographer, director (for newscast, sports shows, telethons, and special events), one-man-band, and PSA director. She is the broadcast journalism sequence head. She is a native of Chicago, Illinois and therefore a die-hard Cubs fan! Mary.Sheffer@usm.edu.

Jae-Hwa Shin (Ph.D., University of Missouri-Columbia) is Assistant Professor of Public Relations. Dr. Jae-Hwa Shin has received many academic awards and honors at national and international levels, including the Best Dissertation Award from the Public Relations Division of the International Communication Association, and the Suzanne B. Roschwalb Awards from the Public Relations Division of the Association of Education in Journalism and Mass Communication in 2002. She has recently co-authored a public relations textbook, *Public Relations Today: Managing Conflict and Competition*, incorporating her research, teaching and professional experiences. She has published her research in *Journalism & Mass Communication Quarterly*, *Public Relations Review*, and other peer-reviewed journals and presented at national and international conferences. She has been cited as the fourth most published public relations researcher nationally in major refereed journals in the millennium bolometric analyses of public relations research scholarship. Her research areas are strategic conflict management, public relations theories, agenda-building process, political campaign strategies and health communication. She teaches undergraduate and graduate courses in public relations, conflict/issue/crisis/risk management, campaigns, theories, and research methods. JaeHwa.Shin@usm.edu

Fei Xue (Ph.D., University of Alabama) is Assistant Professor of Advertising and Coordinator of the Mass Communication & Journalism Graduate Program. His research specialties are advertising and consumer studies, international advertising, social effects of advertising, and, recently, new communication technologies. He has published in a variety of marketing and communication journals, such as *Advances in International Marketing*, *China Media Research*, *International Journal of Internet Marketing and Advertising*, *Journal of Advertising*, *Journal of Consumer Marketing*, and *Journal of Magazine and New Media Research*. He has also published several book chapters in advertising and presented dozens of research papers at national and international advertising and communication conferences. He was the recipient of 2007 Advertising Educational Foundation (AEF) Visiting Professor Program fellowship. He also received the 2008-09 Aubrey Keith Lucas and Ella Ginn Lucas Endowment for Faculty Excellence Research Awards at the University of Southern Mississippi. He teaches graduate courses in Advertising Research, Psychology of Advertising, and Content Analysis. Fei.Xue@usm.edu

David Bennett* (Ph.D, University of Southern Mississippi) is a Visiting Assistant Professor of Journalism. He teaches courses in reporting, editing and feature writing. Before he entered academia he was a staff writer and editor for the Bogalusa (La.) Daily News, the Jackson (Miss.) Daily News/Clarion-Ledger and the News Orleans Times-Picayune. He began his journalism career as a sports writer and remains an inveterate sports junkie who enjoys few things more than watching the New Orleans Saints, USM and SEC football and NCAA basketball. He has written extensively about literary journalism and its major voices, the role of journalists during the Civil Rights Movement and the enduring works of Pulitzer Prize winner Richard Rhodes, one of the most eloquent writers of this generation. He is now studying the emergence of weblogs as a driving force in internet journalism. Dr. Bennett was born and still lives in Bogalusa, La., near a lake that is filled with fat bass. He believes that one of the prettiest sights he's ever seen is a bass hitting a top-water bait just as the fog lifts off of the lake. davidben1@bellsouth.net

Joey Goodsell* (M.S., University of Southern Mississippi) is a Professor of Practice in Media Production. He has been teaching audio, video and television production in higher education since 1997. Goodsell has taught at the University of Alabama and in the nationally ranked Radio-Television department at Southern Illinois University-Carbondale. He applies over 20 years of media production experience to the classroom. Currently specializing in producing and editing live concert performance videos, Goodsell has produced several projects in a variety of musical genres. Goodsell produced "Tough It Out, Webb Wilder Live" for Nashville recording artist Webb Wilder in 2005. The project was released in the U.S. and Europe as a retail DVD in 2006. "Tough It Out" also aired nationally on PBS in 2007 and won two industry awards. His latest creation is the television series "Southern Sessions," which features performances and interviews with local and regional musicians. Goodsell has also written and produced hundreds of radio and television commercials for local and regional clients throughout the southeast. He has won numerous awards for his creative work including a regional EMMY nomination in 2003. He holds a B.S. in Radio, Television and Film and an M.S. in Communication from the University of Southern Mississippi and has completed course work towards a PhD at Southern Illinois University-Carbondale. You may view a sample of Goodsell's work at myspace.com/joeygoodsell or myspace.com/southernsessions. joey.goodsell@usm.edu

Leyla Goodsell* (M.S., University of Southern Mississippi) is a Visiting Professor of Practice in Public Relations. Her professional career includes over 12 years experience in nonprofit organizations, fundraising development and higher education public relations. Most recently, she served as Director of Communications for Advancement at The University of Alabama and as Director of Marketing, Advertising and Community Relations for the Tuscaloosa County Park and Recreation Authority. She has also practiced public relations in healthcare and public broadcasting. Goodsell has been recognized for her professional work through the Public Relations Council of Alabama Medallion awards and the Southern Public Relations Federation Lantern awards. As an active member of several professional and civic organizations, she held numerous public relations leadership positions, including president of the West Alabama PRCA chapter, president-elect of PRCA's statewide board, public relations chair for the Junior League of Tuscaloosa and member-at-large of the SPRF board, which is comprised of practitioners representing professional public relations organizations from Alabama, Mississippi, Louisiana and portions of Florida. She is also a member of the Pine Belt chapter of the Public Relations Association of Mississippi and serves as faculty co-advisor for the USM

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