



THE UNIVERSITY
OF IOWA

SCHOOL OF JOURNALISM
& MASS COMMUNICATION

**GRADUATE
STUDIES
HANDBOOK**

Revised Summer 2005

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For Additional Information

Visit our web site at www.uiowa.edu/~journal

E-mail for questions: j-grad@uiowa.edu

By telephone, at (319) 335-3401

For information about the Graduate College go to www.grad.uiowa.edu

CONTENTS

1 INTRODUCTION	1
2 HOW TO APPLY	2
How Decisions are Made	3
Communication with the School.....	4
3 MA DEGREES	5
Professional Program in Journalism (MAP).....	5
Requirements for the MA Professional Project	6
Media Communication Emphasis (MAT)	8
Requirements for the MA Thesis.....	8
Applying to the PhD Program.....	9
4 PHD DEGREE IN MASS COMMUNICATION	10
PhD Seminar & Convention	11
The Academic Adviser	12
Admittance to Candidacy.....	12
PhD Student Semester Evaluations.....	13
Requirements for the Comprehensive Examination	14
Procedures for Writing the Comprehensive Examination	15
On the Purpose and Content of the Comprehensive Examination.....	16
The Doctoral Dissertation.....	18
5 APPOINTMENTS AND FINANCIAL SUPPORT	21
Fellowships at Iowa	21
Teaching and Research Assistantships	22
Scholarship Opportunities.....	22
6 FAILURE TO MEET ACADEMIC STANDARDS	25

1

INTRODUCTION

The School's three graduate programs are all individualized and interdisciplinary. The MA Professional program offers students an opportunity to develop skills in writing, photography, design, online journalism and broadcasting in preparation for professional work in the communication fields. In the MA Thesis and PhD programs, students develop plans of study that approach communication from theoretical, historical, cultural, international, legal and behavioral perspectives.

We also offer a joint degree in law in which students complete both law and journalism degrees at either the MA or PhD level. Students in all of our degree programs have the academic resources of most university departments, schools and colleges to draw from as they develop individual plans of study.

Our faculty represents a rich diversity of intellectual interests, professional media and cultural backgrounds. Most of our faculty teach in both the professional and conceptual parts of the program, and all take a critical and analytical approach to the study of communication and professional journalism. Graduate programs at Iowa are relatively small and personal, with a stimulating atmosphere for learning, teaching and research where students and faculty learn together.

In using this handbook, students should note that the School of Journalism and Mass Communication adheres to the rules and regulations of the The University of Iowa Graduate College as published in the latest edition of the *Manual of Rules and Regulations of the Graduate College*.

Students may obtain a copy of the *Manual* from the office of the Graduate College or on-line at the Graduate College web site (grad.uiowa.edu). The Graduate College web site also provides about the Thesis Manual, with formatting requirements for theses and dissertations, and calendars of academic deadlines.

2

HOW TO APPLY

New students are admitted in the fall semester only. We begin reviewing applications on January 10 for fall admission. To be considered for an assistantship or fellowship you should apply by January 10. The Graduate Admissions office encourages everyone to submit their applications electronically. The application process and online applications are available at <http://www.uiowa.edu/admissions/graduate/process.html>. Be sure to check the journalism application requirements linked from the application page.

Note that some application materials should be sent to the Admissions office, while others go directly to the School. These details are explained on the Admissions web site. Send the following directly to the School of Journalism and Mass Communication:

- Your official academic records (transcripts)
- A statement of purpose for graduate study (Question E on the application form)
- Three letters of recommendation with handwritten signatures on institutional letterhead. (Emailed recommendations cannot be accepted.) They should be mailed directly to the Graduate Secretary in the School of Journalism and Mass Communication, by people who are familiar with your academic and/or professional background.
- A description of professional experience in journalism and mass communication as well as other employment, including dates and responsibilities.
- A resumé or curriculum vitae.
- Samples of your work. Applicants for the MA Professional program should send samples of professional work or other writing. Applicants for the MA Thesis and PhD programs should send samples of their academic writing.
- A detailed description of the skills or areas of knowledge you would bring to a teaching or research assistantship. Examples include news writing, specific computer applications, media law knowledge, foreign language proficiency, research skills and knowledge of American history.

Our application deadline for fall admission is January 10. Mail your materials to: Graduate Secretary, School of Journalism and Mass Communication, Adler Journalism Building, University of Iowa, Iowa City, IA 52242.

If you have any questions, do not hesitate to e-mail (j-grad@uiowa.edu) or phone (319) 335-3401. We look forward to receiving your application.

How Admissions Decisions are Made

We take a holistic approach to reviewing applications for the graduate programs. That is, *we do not have exact cutoff points for test scores, grades or other aspects of an application*. Instead, decisions are made for each application based on a composite view of the information, with an eye for the application's overall merits and the Graduate Committee's judgment of how well a student's interests can be met in our program. The University of Iowa requires a minimum 3.0 GPA (on a 4-point scale).

For international applicants, we look for indicators of an applicant's abilities to work effectively in a verbally oriented graduate program. For this reason, we require a TOEFL score above the Graduate College minimum. Specifically, we require a score of at least 267 on the computer form of the test.

International applicants who receive an assistantship position must pass a test of spoken English through the University's English as a Second Language (ESL) office before they may work as teaching assistants. (This test is administered the week before the start of the fall semester and at several other times during the year.) For this reason, we generally offer assistantship positions only to those international applicants who have previously studied in the United States.

In particular, we examine five components of each application. These include:

- The *academic record*, for indicators of success in graduate study;
- The *Graduate Record Examination*, especially the verbal and analytical writing components, because of the School's emphasis on writing.
- The *statement of purpose*, where we look for a clear focus, as well as a good fit to the program's strengths.
- *Related work experience* helps us assess an applicant's understanding of the field. It also helps us understand the skills and knowledge that an applicant could bring to an assistantship.
- In *letters of reference*, we look for indicators of an applicant's professional and academic achievements and abilities.

Teaching assistantships and research assistantships are the only form of financial support offered by the School. There are no scholarships that provide full tuition costs or living expenses.

Students who wish to change their degree objectives after admission to a specific program must complete the Request for Change of Graduate College Status form. The School's Graduate Committee will act on all requests. The form must be endorsed by the Director of the School of Journalism and Mass Communication and submitted to the Graduate College.

After three years of inactivity or if the time limit for completing the doctoral dissertation lapses, graduate students must reapply for the program. The Graduate College specifies that the School

must reevaluate the student in light of the requirements of the current graduate program. Copies of the readmission form and information on application materials required can be obtained from the Graduate Secretary of the School of Journalism and Mass Communication.

Communication with the School

Once admitted, graduate students are responsible for meeting relevant deadlines and for learning about special events in their graduate program. To facilitate reliable communication between students and the School, graduate students will receive a mailbox in the School's mailroom.

Students should also subscribe the graduate student listserv, which is managed by the editor of the *Journal of Communication Inquiry* (jci-editor@uiowa.edu). Students should check their mailbox and e-mail regularly for announcements and information from the School.

3

M.A. DEGREES

The School of Journalism and Mass Communication offers a Master of Arts program with two separate emphases: professional journalism and media communication.

The professional journalism program requires 30-35 semester hours (s.h.) of course work and successful completion of a master's project. The media communication program requires 32 s.h. and completion of a thesis. The specific requirements of each emphasis are described below.

All graduate programs in Journalism and Mass Communication begin in the fall semester.

Professional Program in Journalism (MA professional program—MAP)

This program is designed primarily for individuals who have an academic or professional background in some area of media communication and who seek to enhance their careers through specialized study in a selected area. Exceptional applicants without these qualifications may be accepted on the condition that they complete one noncredit preparatory course. The MA in professional journalism is considered a terminal degree. It does not ordinarily prepare students for doctoral work.

In consultation with an academic adviser, each student creates an individually focused program of courses chosen from inside and outside the School. Some examples include narrative writing, investigative reporting, publication design and broadcast news within the school and outside areas in the arts, law, political science, business, medicine, science, the environment, book arts, and race, gender and sexuality studies.

Students who have a background in journalism might choose to develop a focus in an outside area of study for some of their electives. Those new to the study of journalism and media communication may want to focus all their study in the School of Journalism and Mass Communication.

Building on conceptual and advanced skills courses, students complete their programs with a master's project of a professional nature, such as a depth reporting series, design, multimedia, video or documentary photography project, or applied research on a mass communication topic.

All courses are chosen in consultation with the student's academic adviser. The Graduate Director initially advises entering MA students. After completion of the first semester, students should consult with the Graduate Director to select a permanent academic adviser from among the School's graduate faculty members.

The following courses are required in the Master's Professional Program (MAP):

Courses	s.h.
019:225 Contemporary Problems in Journalism	3
019:226 Advanced Master's Reporting and Writing	3
019:229 Master's Media Project	3
A conceptual course chosen from 019:140-019:169 or 019:250 and above	3
Advanced writing or workshop (2 courses) from the 19:120, 019:130, 019:170 and 19:220 series	6-8
Electives in journalism and mass communication or outside focus area (3 courses)*	9-12
<u>019:299 Master's Research (professional project)</u>	<u>3</u>
Minimum total semester hours for M.A. Professional degree	30-35

**Students who have not taken a recent U.S. media law class must enroll in 019:140 Legal and Ethical Issues in Communication or an alternative media law course, with the consent of the instructor and approval of the student's adviser.*

MA Professional Project

Students must complete a professional project (19:299). Project proposals, prepared with the advice of the adviser, are presented to the student's project committee. The project committee is composed of three graduate faculty members. One member may be from outside the School of Journalism and Mass Communication.

Before beginning work on the project, a student must secure committee approval of his or her project proposal. A form certifying this approval must be filed with the Graduate Secretary as part of the student's permanent record. The proposal typically will be about five pages in length. The proposal should include the following sections:

1. A clear and concise statement of the problem or issue the student plans to address in the project. It is here that the student identifies the central purpose and goal of the project.
2. A description of the form the project will take. For example, the project could be a series of reporting pieces focused on one topic, a photographic essay, or a set of public relations campaign materials.
3. A discussion of how the project is to be accomplished. This section describes the methods used to gather and prepare elements of the project. This section should also include a tentative schedule for completion of parts of the project as well as when it will be defended.
4. An indication of the topics that will likely be covered in the project's literature review. Students are not expected to have completed the review of literature for the proposal but should offer examples of the material that will be used.

In preparing the project proposal, the student should work closely with his or her adviser. A project proposal should be submitted to the student's committee only after being approved by the student's adviser. When the adviser determines that the proposal is complete, he or she will schedule a meeting with the committee to discuss and approve the proposal.

In developing the literature review, the student should make clear the intellectual and journalistic traditions out of which the project grows. Typically, the literature review appears as an addendum to the project. It is expected to be comprehensive and substantive, usually 10-15 pages in length.

A typical project is presented in a binder or as a spiral-bound document. It should contain the following parts:

1. Professional project, in its final form. This could include printed pages, a CD, audiotapes or videotapes, or other graphic or printed materials.
2. Literature review, including a reference list formatted according to a recognized style guide (APA, Chicago, etc.). This section should focus on the ideas gleaned from the readings, with appropriate citations included.
3. Reflective essay. In this part, the student reflects on the process of accomplishing the project, what has been learned along the way, how the project might have been approached differently, and any other challenges, opportunities and learning experiences that might have been encountered. This section helps you consider the project in the context of learning and career goals.

No more than 3 hours of credit for the project shall be counted toward the minimum degree requirement. The final examination consists of an oral defense with the committee of the completed MA project. Before scheduling the final examination, a Plan of Study must be signed by the faculty adviser and the Director of the School of Journalism and Mass Communication and submitted to the Graduate College (this is accomplished through the School's academic secretary).

The student must distribute copies of the project to the committee at least two weeks prior to the scheduled final examination. Ordinarily, final examinations are not scheduled during the final week of classes, the University's final examination period, or during the summer.

The final examination is evaluated on a satisfactory/unsatisfactory basis. Two unsatisfactory votes make the examination a failure. The final examination, if failed, may be repeated only once, not sooner than during the following semester or summer term.

Each MA candidate must deposit one copy of the approved project in the School's Resource Center. In addition, the candidate should provide each committee member with a copy of the finished project.

Media Communication Emphasis (MA with thesis–MAT)

This program offers a specialization in the study of mass communication phenomena and emphasizes communication research, theory and methodology. It prepares students for doctoral studies. Students take foundation courses in common with beginning PhD students.

Given the interdisciplinary nature of the field, students are expected to take courses outside the school. The nature and extent of this work is determined by students in consultation with their advisers. The course work should prepare students both theoretically and methodologically for the completion of the thesis. The media communication program requires 32 s.h. and completion of a thesis.

The following courses are required for the media communication thesis (MAT) program:

Courses	s.h.
019:231 Media Communication Theory I	3
019:232 Media Communication Theory II	3
019:235 Media Communication Research Methods I	3
019:236 Media Communication Research Methods II	3
019:220 Master's Seminar (1 s.h. for 2 semesters)	2
Advanced methods, at least 3 s.h.	3
Electives, at least 6 s.h. in Journalism and Mass Communication	12
<u>Master's Research (thesis)</u>	<u>3</u>
Minimum total semester hours for MA thesis degree	32

MA Thesis

Students must complete a master's thesis (19:299), which represents an effort to conduct original scholarly research.

The thesis proposal is prepared with the advice of the academic adviser, and then presented to the student's thesis committee. The committee is composed of three graduate faculty members. Ordinarily, the student's permanent adviser serves as chair. One member of the committee may be from outside the School of Journalism and Mass Communication.

Before beginning thesis research, the student must secure committee approval of his or her thesis proposal. A form certifying this approval must be filed with the Graduate Secretary as part of the student's permanent record.

No more than 3 hours of credit for the thesis shall be counted toward the minimum degree requirement. The final examination consists of an oral defense with the committee of the

completed MA thesis. Before scheduling the final examination, a Plan of Study must be signed by the faculty adviser and the Director of the School of Journalism and Mass Communication and submitted to the Graduate College (this is accomplished through the School's academic secretary).

The student must distribute copies of the thesis to the committee at least two weeks prior to the scheduled final examination. Ordinarily, final examinations are not scheduled during the final week of classes, the University's final examination period, or during the summer.

Students are responsible for checking Graduate College deadlines for first deposit, final examination, and final deposit. The thesis must be prepared according to the 5th Revised Edition (2000) of the University of Iowa Thesis Manual, which can be found at the Graduate College web site. Students should also meet with their adviser before the first deposit to review the Manual's checklist, which must be submitted with the first deposit.

The final examination is evaluated on a satisfactory/unsatisfactory basis. Two unsatisfactory votes make the examination a failure. The final examination, if failed, may be repeated only once, not sooner than during the following semester or summer term.

The MA candidate must deposit one unbound copy of the thesis in the School's Resource Center, along with paying a fee to cover the cost of binding. This requirement is in addition to the copy required by the Graduate College. The candidate must prepare a thesis abstract of not more than 250 words to be submitted with the copy of the thesis. In addition, the candidate should provide each committee member with a copy of the finished thesis.

Applying to the PhD Program from the MAT

In general, master's students are best served by undertaking doctoral studies at a different university than where they completed their master's degree. However, students in the program may petition the School's Graduate Committee for admission to the PhD program after successful completion of at least 18 s.h. of MA work. If admitted to doctoral studies, the applicant must complete all master's requirements (including a successful thesis defense) before starting that program.

The application process is similar to that for students outside the School, except that MAT students request a change of status within the Graduate College, rather than applying for admission.

The Graduate Committee will review these documents, along with the student's academic record. If approved, the student will be notified and the Graduate Secretary will send a change of status form to the Graduate College.

4

PhD Degree in Mass Communication

The PhD program emphasizes interdisciplinary inquiry into media communication phenomena from cultural, historical and social perspectives. The program's substantive nature is defined by the scholarly interests of its faculty, which include investigations of historical, legal, critical, cultural, social, feminist and international aspects of media communication, both verbal and visual; comparative communication, convergence, new media, health communication, popular culture and globalization. Faculty use qualitative or quantitative research methods in their research and teaching.

Students' PhD programs are highly individualized. Drawing on courses in the School of Journalism and Mass Communication as well as other academic units, each student, in consultation with an academic adviser, develops a course of study that reflects his or her academic background, experience, professional goals and intellectual preferences.

The PhD requires 80 s.h. Students may transfer a maximum of 30 s.h. from their master's degree with the approval of the Graduate Committee. Transfer courses must be relevant to the student's PhD plan of study. The Graduate College does not accept transfer credit for professional skills courses. The PhD program is designed for students who have completed an MA thesis. Students who have earned professional master's degrees must take additional courses beyond the minimum PhD requirements.

The Graduate Committee considers any requests from transfer students wishing to gain acceptance for academic credits earned elsewhere beyond the MA work. All transfer work submitted to The University of Iowa is subject to approval by the Graduate College. The transfer student will be notified of the number of semester hours accepted as appropriate for the student's program. Transfer students must meet residence requirements.

To meet Graduate College residence requirements, a student must enroll for at least two semesters at full-time (at least 9 s.h.) enrollment or three semesters with 6 s.h. (while holding an assistantship). Graduate assistants in the School are required to carry at least 7 s.h. each semester until the comprehensive examination has been passed. However, graduate assistants must take a minimum of 9 s.h. to receive the full tuition scholarship provided by an assistantship.

The following courses are required for the doctoral program:

Courses	s.h.
019:231 Media Communication Theory I	3
019:232 Media Communication Theory II	3
019:235 Media Communication Research Methods I	3
019:236 Media Communication Research Methods II	3
019:265 Approaches to Teaching Media Communication	3
019:320 PhD Seminar (1 s.h. for 4 semesters)	4
Advanced research methods, at least 3 s.h.	3
Advanced theory, at least 3 s.h.	3
Journalism and Mass Communication electives, at least 6 s.h.	6
<u>Outside concentration, at least 9 s.h.</u>	<u>9</u>
Minimum semester hours during PhD studies	40
Maximum transfer credit from master's degree	30
019:399 Dissertation, at least 10 s.h.	10
Minimum total semester hours for PhD degree	80

Courses outside the School may be taken with satisfactory/unsatisfactory grading with the consent of the instructor and the adviser. Independent study courses within the School do not count toward the minimum elective coursework.

PhD Seminar & Convention

PhD students must be continuously enrolled in the PhD Seminar until they pass the comprehensive examination (maximum 4 s.h. total credit). The seminar is intended as a forum for the discussion of substantive theoretical and methodological problems and issues. It is also a forum for formal presentation of PhD dissertation proposals, along with guest speakers from other departments, universities and organizations.

Once each year, during the first two years of study, each student presents a paper at the PhD Convention held in conjunction with the PhD Seminar. During the semester in which students will present a paper, they register for the Seminar under the instructor number of the faculty member who is serving as paper adviser.

Although students are not required to register for PhD Seminar after successful completion of the comprehensive examination, they are encouraged to continue attending Seminar regularly.

The Academic Adviser

Given the highly individualized nature of the PhD program, the advising function is critical. The Graduate Director will serve as adviser to each entering PhD student until the student chooses a permanent academic adviser. In consultation with the Graduate Director, the first-year student should plan the initial program of study and determine who on the faculty can best serve as permanent academic adviser.

Normally, students entering in the fall semester should select a permanent adviser by March 1 of their first year. It is expected that the student will work closely with the permanent adviser in drawing up the plan of study required for the student's candidacy petition.

Admittance to PhD Candidacy

After completing 18 graduate hours of doctoral studies, a student must petition for candidacy. The Graduate Director will hold a meeting at the start of each semester to explain the candidacy process and preparation of the Candidacy Petition.

The student should prepare a program of study that includes advanced theory and methods appropriate to the dissertation topic and an outside area (in a discipline other than Communication Studies), as well as specialized courses beyond these needed to prepare for the dissertation. The goal of the student's plan of study should be preparing for dissertation research, regardless of the number of credit hours necessary to do that.

The Candidacy Petition is submitted to the Graduate Committee. Deadline for submitting the Candidacy Petition in the Fall Semester is October 15. The Spring Semester Deadline is March 1. Three copies should be submitted.

Failure to gain candidacy prohibits a student from continuing in the program. The granting of candidacy is based not merely on successful completion of course work during the first year, but also on the evaluation of the student's ability to successfully complete an approved program of study, including the dissertation.

The petition for candidacy is organized by the following sections:

1. Adviser's letter. This should discuss the general rationale for the plan of study and provide an assessment of the student's ability to complete it successfully.
2. Introduction. This is where the student describes his or her academic background and interests, and how it relates to the academic program.
3. General area of dissertation research. Discuss the general area where work will be done, the basic conceptual/theoretical foundations to be drawn on, and the likely research method(s) that will be employed.

4. Outside area of study. Describe the basic outside area and explain how that area fits the likely dissertation research. An outside area can be built from a single discipline or from a hybrid area that draws on a number of related disciplines.
5. Research methodology. Discuss how coursework in research methods relates to the dissertation, including coursework from the MA and PhD, and from both inside and outside the School.
6. Potential committee members. Suggest likely and alternate members, as well as identifying outside members. Plan to have spoken to those committee members before preparing the candidacy petition.
7. Plan of study. List courses that have been taken and are planned for the future, both within and outside the School, that will be applied toward the degree. Professional skills courses may not be included. A maximum of 30 hours can be included from the MA program. Include the following, which should also be organized by the areas for comprehensive examinations:
 - a. *MA coursework*, including numbers, hours, titles and course descriptions for courses not taken within the School.
 - b. *PhD coursework completed*, including numbers, hours, titles and course descriptions for courses not taken within the School. This should be listed semester by semester.
 - c. *PhD coursework in progress*, including numbers, hours, titles and course descriptions for courses not taken within the School.
 - d. *PhD coursework planned*, including numbers, hours, titles and course descriptions for courses not taken within the School. Alternative courses should be listed to allow flexibility for actual scheduling of courses.
 - e. *Summary of coursework* organized by the comprehensive examination areas, along with total hours.
 - f. *Timetable of plans* for comprehensive exams, dissertation proposal, and dissertation completion.

Example Candidacy Petitions are available for review in the School's Resource Center.

After admission to candidacy, the student must obtain the signed consent of the adviser and Graduate Committee if any alteration of the plan of study is proposed. The Candidacy Committee must be informed of any changes in the approved plan of study. If the student substantially changes his or her research interests after the petition has been approved, a new petition must be submitted.

PhD Student Semester Evaluations

At the close of the fall and spring semesters, the graduate faculty meets to evaluate the progress of each PhD student. This process specifically considers assessments of performance in formal course work, assistantship positions, independent research, scholarly activity, the PhD Seminar

and convention, scholarly and professional meetings and organizations, and service activities in the School.

The Graduate Faculty assesses each student's progress in the program and the likelihood of successful completion of the degree. A determination will be made whether the student's overall progress is satisfactory or unsatisfactory. If overall progress is deemed unsatisfactory, the student will be placed on probation with specific remedial action required by the faculty with a reasonable time period in which to complete such action. After appropriate warning and failure to take satisfactory corrective action, a student will be dismissed from the program.

The evaluation will also consider the success of the student's assistantship assignment, including feedback from the faculty supervisor and consideration of the student's teaching evaluations.

Each semester, the evaluation made of each student's progress will be summarized in a letter to the student. A copy will be placed in the student's file. If a student has any questions regarding the matters specifically dealt with in the evaluation, he or she is encouraged to discuss them with the Graduate Director. If a student feels that aspects of the evaluation are inaccurate or that the evaluation fails to take into account significant information, the student is encouraged to respond in writing to the Graduate Director. If necessary, any matter can be referred back to the graduate faculty for reconsideration.

Requirements for the Comprehensive Examination

Comprehensive examinations are taken during or after the semester in which the student completes the plan of study. Each semester, the Graduate Director meets with students planning to take the comprehensive examination, providing guidelines about the examination process.

The candidate and his or her academic adviser (who ordinarily serves as the chairperson of the comprehensive examination committee) select the other members of the examining committee according to Graduate College rules. The committee is composed of five members of the graduate faculty, one of whom must be a faculty member from outside the School of Journalism and Mass Communication. A minimum of three members of the committee must be from the graduate faculty of the School.

With the request for the comprehensive examination, the candidate should file a plan of study with the chairperson of the examining committee and the Graduate Secretary. Invitations to serve on the committee come from the chairperson. The committee is formally appointed by the Dean of the Graduate College upon recommendation of the School of Journalism and Mass Communication.

The comprehensive examination consists of both written and oral parts. The written part consists of a series of five four-hour written examinations in the following areas:

- theory
- methods
- a primary area of communication study
- an area of study outside of communication
- an area of the student's choice with the consent of the advisor

With the approval of the committee, foreign students whose native language is not English may take six hours to answer each question. The written examination is taken in a room set aside by the School. The School will provide a computer and blank disks for word processing. If the student needs any special accommodations for test taking, these arrangements should be made when the examination is scheduled.

The candidate is allowed to bring a printed bibliography to the examination room for each question. A paper copy of each examination question will be provided to the candidate and will be attached to the printed copy of examination answers. A copy of each question (and the related bibliography) will be attached to the student's answers provided to each committee member.

Following the written examination, an oral examination will be conducted by the student's committee, usually within two weeks of the completion of the written examination. Normally, oral examinations are not scheduled during the last week of classes, the final examination period or during the summer. Invitations to the defense are issued by the adviser.

Performance on the examination is judged "satisfactory," "unsatisfactory," or "satisfactory with reservations" by each member of the committee. If the performance is deemed "satisfactory with reservations" by two or more members of the committee, the committee must stipulate the manner in which the candidate may remove the reservations.

Two "unsatisfactory" votes result in an outcome of unsatisfactory. In the case of a report of unsatisfactory on a comprehensive examination, the committee may grant the candidate permission to present himself or herself for reexamination not sooner than four months after the first examination. The examination may be repeated only once, at the option of the department.

Upon completion and evaluation of the candidate's examination by the Committee, the chairperson reports the results to the candidate and to the Graduate College. The comprehensive examination may be retaken only once.

Procedures for Writing the Comprehensive Examination

The follow procedure applies to all doctoral students in the School when taking the comprehensive examination:

1. Students will be allowed four hours to write each examination answer. International students whose native language is not English may take six hours with permission of the examination committee.
2. Answers will stand as they are submitted at the end of each examination period. No additional time will be allowed for proofing or editing.
3. Because several students take comprehensive examinations each semester, a student should contact the School's Academic Secretary as soon as the dates for writing the examination answers have been chosen. This is important to ensure that a room and computer will be available on those dates.
4. At least one week before the planned examination dates, the student's adviser should invite committee members to submit questions to the adviser, who will submit them to the Academic Secretary. Committee members should be made aware of the planned examination dates. Questions can be submitted on paper or by e-mail.
5. The adviser, in consultation with the student and committee members, shall set an oral defense date. The adviser will issue an invitation to committee members. The Academic Secretary will reserve a meeting room once the date has been provided. Ordinarily, oral defenses should take place within two weeks after the written examination has been completed.
6. The student will receive each day's question, along with a two blank floppy disks for writing examination answers, from the Academic Secretary. The disks will be returned to the secretary at the end of each examination day. The second disk may be used only for making a backup copy of the answers.
7. The student should create a header in the computer file for each answer that includes the student's name, examination date, and the name of the faculty member submitting the question.
8. Original questions will be attached to copies of the student's answers by the Graduate Secretary.
9. The student may take a paper copy of the bibliography into the examination room. No other materials may be brought into the examination room.
10. The student will be provided with a paper copy of the questions, answers and bibliography when copies are prepared for committee members.

On the Purpose and Content of the Comprehensive Examination

The following points provide a foundation for planning comprehensive examination questions in a way that serves both the student and the School's doctoral program:

1. For the student, the examination is an important juncture in his or her graduate studies. The examination helps the student look back over coursework and build a sense of how coursework adds up to a larger whole. At the same time, the examination helps the student look ahead to see how coursework and other scholarly experiences can lead toward future dissertation research and beyond. It provides a sense of vision and sharpens the focus on future directions.
2. For the School's doctoral program, the comprehensive examination provides a quality assurance checkpoint. In this role, it assesses the student's competence in the areas where he or she hopes to work. The examination also provides a means of assessing whether the student is ready for dissertation work and ultimately, to embark onto a scholarly career in academia.

The comprehensive examination should not be seen as something that is either passed or failed. Instead, much of its meaning is qualitative, helping to provide a picture of the student's maturation as a scholar. Examination questions:

1. should represent a synthesis of coursework across the student's program, rather than drawing heavily on new material beyond coursework that has been completed;
2. should serve as an exercise for the student to demonstrate thinking abilities in his or her research areas;
3. should provide an opportunity for the student to look at the relationship between coursework and the likely areas of dissertation research;
4. should provide an opportunity for the student to demonstrate clear competence in his or her important areas of scholarly work.
5. should provide an opportunity for the student to demonstrate methodological readiness to successfully accomplish the likely areas of dissertation research.

Some guidelines for developing comprehensive questions and related reading lists include:

1. Each reading list should be built primarily upon references drawn from coursework relevant to the topic area.
2. Adding *some* new readings to the list should be seen as reasonable and beneficial when these readings serve as a bridge over divergent parts of the reading list, update core readings since courses were taken, or help illuminate an important, but missing, dimension. *Extensive* lists of new readings ordinarily should be developed through independent study courses before comprehensive examinations are planned, but can also be developed in other ways that accommodate a student's needs or interests.
3. The student should have some existing common ground with the faculty member, both in terms of the substantive areas of the examination question and through previous

interaction between the student and the faculty member (i.e., coursework, independent study, research collaboration).

4. The student should meet with his or her adviser to discuss which examination area best fits each committee member. Questions should then be negotiated between the student and each committee member to clarify the dimensions of the question area and ascertain that the question will not significantly overlap with questions from other committee members.

The Doctoral Dissertation

The candidate, with the advice of his or her adviser, will prepare a dissertation proposal. This may only be done after successful completion of the comprehensive examination. The student must present the dissertation proposal to the PhD Seminar and to the student's dissertation committee. Usually, the dissertation proposal will be presented to the PhD Seminar first.

The committee selection procedures for the dissertation committee are the same as those for the selection of the comprehensive examination committee (one committee may serve both functions). At least one member of the dissertation committee must be from outside the School of Journalism and Mass Communication. A minimum of three members of the committee must be from the graduate faculty of the School. The adviser usually serves as the dissertation chairperson, but this is not mandatory. The committee is appointed by the Dean of the Graduate College upon recommendation of the School of Journalism and Mass Communication.

The dissertation proposal must indicate clearly the logical steps necessary for the completion of the project and suggest a plan of action. The proposal should reflect the form and manner in which the candidate proposes to proceed in his or her research for and writing of the dissertation. Accuracy, clarity of thought and completeness of the presentation are major requirements for the dissertation proposal. Generally, a dissertation proposal will include these areas:

1. Introduction, which provides the general premise for the research, along with an overview of what will be done for the research. The large question driving the research should be provided in the introduction, but specific research questions should appear after the Conceptual/Theoretical Foundation. This section should also address the "So What?" question.
2. Context for the Study, which provides an overview of the problem to be studied. This section should draw on related research findings, as well as factual information from government or industry reports where appropriate.
3. Conceptual/Theoretical Foundation, which presents a carefully crafted and integrated discussion of key concepts and theoretical dimensions, presented in a way that leads toward research questions and guides design of the research method. This section should provide essential references, but need not be exhaustive. A more comprehensive foundation will be included as part of the dissertation research.

4. Research Questions, which follow logically from the Study Context and the Conceptual/Theoretical Foundation. There should also be a clear linkage to the research problem presented in the Introduction.
5. Research Method, which provides a clear depiction of what will be done for the dissertation research. Considerations should include (a) a rationale for the data to be collected; (b) a description of the likely scope and nature of the data; (c) assessment of any human subjects considerations necessary to collect the data; and (d) a discussion of data analysis procedures.
6. Bibliography of items cited in the proposal.
7. Chapter Outline, with a brief description of what each proposed chapter will contain.
8. Tentative Timeline, including plans for committee approval, data collection, writing and final defense.

Before beginning work on the dissertation, the student must secure approval of the dissertation proposal by his or her committee. The committee must meet with the student to discuss the proposal after the adviser has determined it complete. The adviser will call the meeting of the committee. A form certifying this approval must be filed with the School's Graduate Secretary as part of the student's permanent record.

To be eligible to enroll in Dissertation (19:399), the student must have completed all the regular coursework in his or her plan of study. A minimum of 10 hours of Dissertation credit (maximum 12 s.h.) must be included in the minimum 80-hour degree requirement.

Candidates must be in continuous registration (excluding summers) while they are completing their degree work. After taking the necessary number of Dissertation credits, students register for Doctoral Continuous Registration and pay tuition for 2 s.h each semester until the semester when the dissertation is defended (when the student registers for Doctoral Final Registration instead). Failure to register each semester will mean a student may not be readmitted to doctoral candidacy unless the readmission is approved by the student's adviser, the Director of the School of Journalism & Mass Communication, and the Dean of the Graduate College.

In planning a dissertation defense, a student is responsible for meeting the Graduate College's deadlines for first deposit, last date for filing an examination report, and final deposit. The dissertation must be prepared according to the 5th Revised Edition (2002) of the University of Iowa Thesis Manual, which can be found at the Graduate College web site. Students should also meet with their adviser before the first deposit to review the Manual's checklist that must be submitted with the first deposit.

The completed dissertation is submitted to members of the dissertation committee after it has been approved by the chairperson. Copies of the dissertation must be available to committee members at least two weeks before the scheduled date of the final examination. The examination consists of an oral defense of the completed dissertation and is open to the public. The School will announce the time and place of dissertation defenses in advance.

The final examination may not be held until after the first check of the dissertation by the Graduate College. Ordinarily, final examinations should not be held during the last week of classes, the University's final examination period or in the summer. The final examination may not be held in the same semester as the comprehensive examination. A request for the final examination must be filed in the Graduate College office at least three weeks before the examination is to be held.

When doctoral students plan to defend their dissertations, students will register for "Doctoral Final Registration," 000:00Y. During this final registration semester, all students will be required to pay for 2 s.h. of tuition. The final registration may be repeated if the degree requirements are not completed in this session.

The examination will be evaluated as "satisfactory," "unsatisfactory," or "satisfactory with reservations" by each member of the committee. If the performance overall is deemed "satisfactory with reservations" by two or more members of the committee, the committee must stipulate the manner in which the candidate may remove the reservations. Two unsatisfactory votes results in the examination being a failure. If the oral examination is failed, the candidate may not make a second attempt until the following semester.

A student must pass the final examination *no later than five years* after passing the comprehensive examination. Failure to meet this deadline will result in a reexamination of the student to determine his or her qualifications for taking the final examination.

The PhD candidate must deposit one unbound copy of the thesis in the School's Resource Center, along with paying a fee to cover the cost of binding. This requirement is in addition to the two copies required by the Graduate College. The candidate must prepare an abstract of not more than 250 words to be submitted with the copy of the dissertation. In addition, the candidate should provide each committee member with a copy of the finished dissertation.

5

Appointments and Financial Support

Most of the financial support provided for graduate students by the School comes in the form of teaching assistantships. There are also a limited number of research assistantships, fellowships and scholarships. Fellowships are generally offered to incoming students, although some are available to PhD students who have reached the dissertation stage of their studies.

Fellowships at Iowa

The School annually awards the *Les Moeller Doctoral Scholar Award in Mass Communication* to an incoming doctoral student. This is a three-year award. The scholar is a teaching assistant and a research assistant for one year each. In the third year, the scholar is designated a fellow and has no assigned duties, freeing the student to concentrate on his or her own research. This award provides an annual stipend and qualifies the student for in-state tuition. Moeller Award recipients are also eligible for a fourth year of assistantship funding.

The University awards twenty-five *Presidential Graduate Fellowships* to the most talented PhD applicants nominated by departments. These fellowships are highly competitive. The Graduate College provides a full fellowship during first and dissertation years, annual summer fellowships, and a full tuition and fees scholarship up to five years. Students also receive tuition, standard graduate student University fees, and substantial health and dental insurance allowance. The student's department provides second and third academic year assistantship support.

Dean's Graduate Fellowships are also offered by the Graduate College to incoming master's and doctoral students from academically underrepresented populations upon nomination by department. Master's students receive a service free stipend during two academic years and may apply for summer stipends for two summers. Doctoral students receive service free stipends for their first year and final dissertation year. The department provides a teaching or research assistantships during the intermediate years. The Graduate College also provides a summer stipend for all four years. Students also receive tuition, standard graduate student University fees, and substantial health and dental insurance allowance.

For students who have begun dissertation research, the Graduate College offers *Seashore and Ballard Dissertation Fellowships*. Approximately 15 awards are given each year to doctoral students completing dissertations in the humanities nominated by departments. These fellowships offer stipends of \$1,500/mo for up to 12 months. The Graduate College also pays for two credit hours of tuition each fellowship semester, along with standard graduate student University fees, and health and dental insurance allowance.

T. Anne Cleary International Research Fellowships are awarded to doctoral students who have completed their comprehensive exams. The awards are for dissertation research outside of the United States and are meant to supplement other research funds. Amounts awarded can be for up

to \$10,000, but generally range from \$1,500 to \$5,000. Graduate students in any discipline may apply.

The *Graduate Incentive Fellowship (GIF)* program will provide a 10% supplement to any Nationally Competitive Fellowship (NCF) awarded to an Iowa graduate student. The award winning student and his/her department will receive funds equal to 5% of the national fellowship stipend for each year of the award. These funds are to be used to enhance professional development opportunities, such as travel to professional meetings, subvention of publication costs, software for preparation/presentation of research results, etc., for the recipient of the national fellowship and for graduate students in the department or program.

Teaching and Research Assistantships

Teaching and research assistantship appointments are made by the Director of the School of Journalism and Mass Communication. They are based upon students' academic and professional records. Announcements of successful applications are generally made on or before April 15. All assistantship positions are subject to the agreement between the University and the United Electrical, Radio and Machine Workers of America Local 896/COGS (see www.cogs.org for contract information).

Assistantship appointments are made for the nine-month academic year, but are renewed each semester. Students holding at least a quarter-time teaching or research assistantship pay in-state tuition rates. Position announcements are placed on the COGS bulletin board in the School. Positions will also be announced on the School's graduate student listserv.

Continuing students who already have an appointment and who are performing well in their studies and in their position will be asked each spring whether they wish to be considered for an assistantship appointment the following year. Continuation of financial aid is contingent upon satisfactory progress in the program, satisfactory performance of duties in the assistantship, availability of funds and needs of the program.

The maximum duration of assistantship appointments is one year for MA students and four years for PhD students. Additional one-year appointments may be possible if the student has made appropriate progress in his or her academic program and has performed well in required duties. Reappointment for additional years are contingent on availability of funding and specific needs of the School's programs.

The School of Journalism and Mass Communication encourages students to apply for outside funding of their studies. The Graduate College provides current listings of potential sources.

Scholarship Opportunities

The School of Journalism and Mass Communication annually awards scholarships to students currently enrolled in the School. Awards range from a few hundred to a few thousand dollars. Most of the scholarships recognize outstanding professional work of the School's students.

Student research (including MA Professional projects) is supported by *Small Murray Grants*. Graduate students are eligible for up to \$300 in reimbursable expenses per fiscal year (July 1 start). Applications are available from the School's administrative secretary for Small Murray Grants. They must include a projected budget and be approved by the student's academic adviser before being submitted.

Student travel to major research conferences (AEJMC, ICA, NCA) is also provided by the School for students with an accepted refereed paper. Graduate students are eligible for up to \$500 in reimbursable travel expenses per fiscal year. Applications are available from the School's administrative secretary for conference travel support. Conference travel support must be requested before travel takes place.

Murray Summer Dissertation Fellowships are provided by the School each year. Graduate students in the PhD program of the School of Journalism and Mass Communication who have completed the comprehensive examination, presented a dissertation proposal to the PhD Seminar and have had the proposal accepted by the dissertation committee are eligible to apply. Preference will be given to first-time applicants and students who are still active on campus. Only one grant may be awarded to each eligible graduate student. The size of the grant normally ranges between \$250 and \$750.

Grants can be used for any reasonable expense incurred in the completion of dissertation research (except for preparation, typing and duplicating of any draft of the dissertation). Examples of the kind of expenses that may be supported by grants include specialized research materials, postage, equipment rentals, photo supplies and processing, travel in direct support of research activity, literature searches or highly specialized publications not otherwise available through conventional sources, telephone charges when directly related to research purposes, expenses involved in field work, preparation of specialized research materials or instruments, etc.

The purpose of the Murray Dissertation Fellowships is to encourage graduate students to undertake projects that they would not normally try if they could only draw upon their own financial resources. (Through the availability of additional funds, the dissertation research would be strengthened and more likely to make a more valuable contribution to the field.) Applications that clearly demonstrate this use of funds will be given higher consideration than those that show the grant will be used for only routine or normal expenses that every doctoral student could reasonably expect to incur during completion of dissertation research.

Applications for the Murray Dissertation Fellowships must include the following materials:

- 1) Application letter from the student with a one- or two-page description and justification of what the grant will be used for, and the total amount requested, *along with an itemized budget*. Attention should be given to how the dissertation research will be strengthened by the additional activity or resources supported by the grant.
- 2) One-page abstract of dissertation project.
- 3) Letter of evaluation and recommendation by the dissertation supervisor.

Applications should be submitted to the School's Graduate Director. The application deadline is April 30. Applications will be considered as a group on a competitive basis by the Graduate Committee. The committee will make recommendations to the Director, who will make final decisions by May 15.

6

Failure to Meet Academic Standards

To be considered in good academic standing, master's students must maintain a cumulative grade point average of at least 2.75 and make satisfactory progress in coursework. Doctoral students must maintain a cumulative grade point average of at least 3.0, make satisfactory progress in coursework and present passing papers in PhD Convention.

Students who fail to meet the academic standards set by the School of Journalism and Mass Communication will be notified in writing in accordance with the *Manual of Rules and Regulation* of the Graduate College. (Doctoral students failing to gain admittance to candidacy will not be permitted to continue in the program.)

The School of Journalism and Mass Communication has developed the following appeal procedures in compliance with Graduate College regulations:

1. Prior to the formal initiation of the academic dismissal review process, a student should discuss any grievances with the Director.
2. If the student believes his or her dismissal was improper and was not resolved by meeting with the Director, the student shall forward a written request for review of his or her dismissal to the Director. The student's letter should outline his or her grievances in reasonable detail. The student should recommend two graduate faculty members to the Director to serve on the student's review committee.
3. The Director of the School will select three faculty members to serve on an academic dismissal review committee. The Director shall designate a chairperson of the committee from those committee members identified by the student.
4. The review committee chairperson shall convene the committee as soon as possible. Normally it is expected that the review process will be completed within two weeks of its formal initiation by the student.
5. The student requesting the review shall have the opportunity to discuss his or her grievances directly with the committee and provide any supporting material relevant to the review.
6. The review committee shall then determine what additional information or consultation is necessary to complete its review.
7. Upon completion of the review, the committee shall communicate its findings and recommendations in writing to the Director. The School shall then inform the student in writing of the result of his or her appeal, including a summary of the major considerations in the decision.