

Department of Communication Studies, University of Nebraska-Lincoln
Ph.D. STUDENT HANDBOOK
Revised August, 2008
Table of Contents

INTRODUCTION TO THE PROGRAM

- Summary of Forms, **p. 1**
- University and Departmental Program Structure, **pp. 1-2**
- Admission to the Ph.D. Program, **p. 2**
- Registration and Employment, **p. 2**
- Residency and Time Requirements, **p. 3**
- Three-Year Plan of Study, **pp. 3-4**
- Continuation in the Ph.D. Program, **pp. 4-5**

APPOINTING AN ADVISOR, COMMITTEE, AND AREA(S) OF CONCENTRATION

- Appointing an Advisor and Supervisory Committee, **p. 7**
- Expectations of Faculty and Students, **p. 8**

COURSEWORK AND PROGRAM OF STUDY

- The Program of Study, **p. 10**
- Program of Study Process, **pp. 10-11**
- Form A Department Proposed Program of Study, **pp. 12-15**
- Form B Department Program of Study Approval Form, **p. 16**
- Form C Department Change in Program of Study Approval, **p. 17**

COMPREHENSIVE EXAM, DISSERTATION PRE-PROPOSAL, ORAL EXAM, CANDIDACY

- The Dissertation Pre-proposal, **p. 19**
- Written Comprehensive Exam Process, **pp. 19-21**
- Taking the Comprehensive Examination **pp. 21-22**
- Oral Examination, **pp. 22-23**
- Admission to Candidacy (All But Dissertation ABD), **p. 23**
- Fourth Year Assistantship **p. 24**
- Form D Department Comprehensive Exam Approval, **p. 25**
- Form E Department Evaluation of Written Comprehensive Exams, **p. 26**
- Form F: Graduate Program Assessment Orals Rating Form **p. 27**

RESEARCH DISSERTATION AND COMPLETION

- Dissertation Prospectus and Dissertation Research, **p. 29**
- Preparing for Final Oral Defense of Dissertation, **pp. 29-30**
- Final Oral Examination Meeting, **pp. 30-31**
- Finishing Up: Editing, Depositing, and Publishing the Dissertation, **pp. 31-32**
- Life as an All but Dissertation (ABD) student, **p. 32**
- Annual Report on Progress Toward Degree, **pp. 32-33**

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

- Things to Do to Prepare for an Academic Career **pp. 35-36**
- Working Toward and Articulating a Research Specialty **pp. 37-38**
- Submitting and Presenting at Academic Conferences, **pp. 39-49**
 - Papers, Panels, Ethics, Presenters, Chairs, Respondents, Posters
- Publishing in Scholarly Journals and Books, **pp. 50-53**
- Letter of Recommendation Handout **pp. 54-55**
- Tips for Creating a Curriculum Vitae **pp. 56-57**

Ph.D. STUDENT HANDBOOK 2008

This handbook is meant as a *supplement* to and not a replacement for, the *UNL Graduate Studies Bulletin*. Students should be familiar with the guidelines in that document as these govern your work and conduct here at UNL. The UNL Graduate Studies Bulletin and the Graduate Studies website will provide greater detail on university-level policies that affect a student's program and progress toward degree. Please read these sources carefully and often (and they will often be more up-to-date and reflect recent changes). Each individual student is responsible for being familiar with, and meeting, the university and departmental requirements, paperwork, and deadlines. Students are urged to keep copies of all forms submitted and correspondence received.

In the Department of Communication Studies at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln students and faculty work as partners in the search for knowledge. Students work with faculty members and fellow students posing and answering relevant questions about communication. Students will participate in seminars where new theories and concepts are explored and become scholars pursuing independent lines of inquiry. Students will engage scholars from other universities when they visit the department or at professional meetings. Engaging in these activities is preparation for assuming a meaningful role in the discipline of Communication Studies.

Summary of Forms

Forms located on Graduate Studies Website: <http://www.unl.edu/gradstudies/current/doctoral.shtml>

- Appointment of the Supervisory Committee
- Program of Studies for the Doctoral Degree
- Application for Admission to Candidacy
- Application for Degree
- Application for Final Oral Examination or Waiver
- Final Packet for Doctoral Students

Forms located in this handbook:

- Form A- Proposed Program of Studies (Department use only)
- Form B – Approval of Proposed Program of Study (Department use only)
- Form C- Request Change in Program of Studies- (Department use only)
- Form D- Comprehensive Examination (Ph.D.) Approval, (Department use only)
- Form E- Evaluation of Written Comprehensive Examinations (Department use only)
- Form F- Graduate Program Assessment Orals Rating Form (Department use only)

University and Departmental Program Structure

Graduate Studies

- Graduate Studies- governs all issues of graduate student work. Check their webpage for information, deadlines, and online forms: <http://www.unl.edu/gradstud>
- Dean of Graduate Studies- Appoints student committees as recommended by the department, and makes final decisions on matters related to graduate students and their studies
- Doctoral Program Specialist- Coordinates all doctoral requirements and paperwork in Graduate Studies for all doctoral students on campus. Answer questions locally first and call this person after exhausting other avenues. The Doctoral Specialists have been incredibly helpful to us.
- Fellowships/Assistantships Specialist- handles financial matters of graduate students

Department of Communication Studies

- Department of Communication Studies- located in the College of Arts & Sciences
- Department Chair- responsible for departmental administration and GTA teaching
- Director of Graduate Studies (DGS)- responsible for assisting students and faculty on issues surrounding graduate study; initial advisor to all students; Chair of Graduate Committee
- Graduate Committee- departmental committee oversees all issues of graduate program
- Supervisory Committee- (advisor and three additional graduate faculty members (one from outside the department) who guide a graduate student's work.
- Examining Committee- Supervisory Committee and any other faculty who write questions for the comprehensive exams
- Reading Committee- Two Supervisory Committee members who read the dissertation after it is approved by advisor)
- Department Governing Body (DGB)- Departmental governance made up of all faculty and senior lecturers, two graduate student representatives
- Communication Studies Administrative Assistant- coordinates graduate student record-keeping and GTA paperwork, payroll

Admission to the Ph.D. Program

The Department of Communication Studies admits doctoral students once per year, for fall admission. The Graduate Committee begins reviewing student files for fall admission after January 15th and continues until the department reaches its admission limit for the academic year. Students who are accepted to the program must meet the requirements for admission to Graduate Studies of the University of Nebraska and then may be granted Full Graduate Standing or Provisional Standing. Students must complete the masters degree to be admitted with Full Graduate Standing.

Admission: Students may be admitted with or without a Graduate Teaching Assistantship (GTA). Once a student is accepted to the program and university, Graduate Studies will inform the student of the conditions of admission and will issue a Certificate of Admission. Ultimately, admission decisions rest with the Dean of Graduate Studies.

Provisional Status: Students admitted on Provisional Status will be given a letter from the Director of Graduate Studies, prepared in consultation with the Graduate Committee, that specifies what must be completed to have Provisional Status removed and be admitted with Full Graduate Standing. Courses taken to remove admission deficiencies are not counted as part of the graduate program leading to the Ph.D.

Registration and Employment

Before enrolling for courses, new students must schedule a meeting face-to face or over the telephone with the department's Director of Graduate Studies to discuss course registration. The DGS will serve as advisor until a permanent advisor is appointed.

Many Communication Studies graduate courses close early in the registration period, so students are urged to *register as early each semester* they are in the program.

Full-time status. To be considered full-time, students must be enrolled for at least 9 credit hours in both the fall and spring semesters and for at least 3 credit hours during one summer session (GTAs must be

registered full-time). Students should make all registration decisions with the Director of Graduate Studies initially and, later, their advisor and committee.

Credit limit. For students who are employed, hold a teaching or research assistantship that is not thesis related the maximum registration is 12 credit hours. For current tuition and registration fees, contact the Office of Graduate Studies.

Employment: Students on full Graduate Teaching Assistantships *may not hold any other employment during the academic year.*

Residency and Time Requirements

The residency requirement for the Ph.D. is 27 hours of graduate work in a consecutive 18-month period or less. Not more than 9 hours total credits taken during the summer session may apply toward the residency requirement. The residency requirement is part of the approved Program of Study. See *Graduate Studies Bulletin* for more complete information.

A minimum of three full years of graduate study is normally required to complete the Ph.D. The maximum time limit on granting the Ph.D. is eight years from the time of filing the Program of Study in the Graduate Studies Office. Students must maintain active progress toward the degree to remain in the program. The Graduate Faculty reviews all students annually and graduate students may be put on probation or dismissed from the program if adequate progress toward degree completion is not made.

Three-Year Plan of Study

Our program is designed so that full-time students will complete the doctoral degree within three to four years. Full-time students normally complete coursework and take comprehensive exams/orals/dissertation pre-proposal during fall of the third year, advancing to candidacy (all but dissertation-ABD). Students are expected to complete a full dissertation proposal and meet with their Supervisory Committee soon thereafter, and normally within the following semester. Students will then complete the degree by the end of the third year or within the fourth year.

Stages of doctoral program: Work toward our Ph.D. consists of four stages: (1) coursework and preparing the Program of Study, (2) written comprehensive and oral examination, (3) dissertation proposal, and oral examination, and (4) dissertation research, writing, and final oral examination.

Normally a student's plan of study contains a *minimum* of 90 hours, including a maximum of 30 hours transferred from the Masters program, distributed in approximately the following manner:

Minimum of 90 credits required including:

45-54 credits of coursework past Master's degree (total number to be determined in consultation with the Supervisory Committee) consisting of:

12 credits minimum of Communication Studies courses in a primary area

9 credits minimum of Communication Studies courses in a secondary area (within a departmental area or combined into a cohesive secondary area)

15 credits minimum of research methods (from Master's & Ph.D.)

Additional credits inside and outside of Communication Studies to establish primary specialization*

30 credits maximum transferred from Master's degree

12 credits minimum of dissertation credits

*While the faculty recommends the Preparing Future Faculty Program (PFF), it will not count in the first 45 credits

The following schedule enables a full-time student to complete the Ph.D. in three to four years, including summer coursework, research on projects, and making progress toward dissertation:

1st Semester

- Take courses from and become acquainted with departmental faculty.
- Select areas of concentration and determine research tool needs in consultation with advisor.
- Meet with the advisor to plan spring and summer registration.

2nd Semester

- Ask a Graduate Faculty Member to serve as advisor (normally toward end of first semester or early in the second semester).
- Work on getting to know faculty outside of department who might serve on Supervisory Committee.
- Discuss Supervisory Committee in consultation with advisor
- Draft Program of Study and meet with advisor (may hold a meeting) (Forms B & C). Complete this process in second semester if possible and no later than 4th week of third semester.
- File Program of Study in Graduate Studies (download from Grad Studies website).
- Develop topic for dissertation research.

3rd Semester

- Complete Program of Study, and seek Supervisor Committee Approval. File form in Grad Studies (by mid-semester)
- Coursework

4th Semester

- Progress made on dissertation pre-proposal this semester and summer.
- Meet with Advisor to develop plan for Comprehensive examinations.
- Supervisory Committee members approve plan for comprehensive exams.
- Meet with comprehensive examination question writers for direction for studying for exams.

5th Semester

- Complete coursework, if necessary.
- Take comprehensive exams and distribute dissertation pre-proposal.
- Take oral exam over comprehensive exams and dissertation pre-proposal.
- Complete full dissertation prospectus and hold proposal meeting with Supervisory Committee (no later than 6th semester)

6th Semester +

Dissertation research and oral defense when the work is completed

Note: There are a limited number of fourth year funding opportunities (see below).

Continuation in the Ph.D. Program

A cumulative grade point average of 3.5 is required for continuation of a Graduate Teaching Assistantship (GTA). A cumulative grade point average of 3.0 or higher is expected for continuation in the degree program for all other students. Graduate course grading is different from undergraduate grading, and a "C" grade is considered unacceptable. In some courses, "C" grades cannot be counted toward degree. See the section on Scholastic Grade requirements in the *Graduate Studies Bulletin* for complete information on grades and required minimum grades in different levels of graduate courses.

Academic Progress and Probation. Students who are struggling for any reason are encouraged to meet with their advisor, Director of Graduate Studies or Department Chair to see assistance and talk about strategies for succeeding in the program. All of us want to help.

If a student earns a less than acceptable grade in a course, if a student's overall GPA does not meet the minimum expected, or if a student is not making sufficient progress toward degree completion, the Graduate Committee will address the issue. The Graduate Committee will place the student on Academic Probation, and will lay out criteria for prompt removal of probation and continuing in the program, or may recommend dismissal from the program. Students placed on probation will receive a letter specifying the committee's decision and steps for returning to good standing.

Removal of Provisional Status. For students who were admitted to the department's graduate program on Provisional Status, after the requirements have been completed, schedule a meeting with the Director of Graduate Studies. She or he will recommend admittance with Full Graduate Standing and will write a letter to Graduate Studies to recommend removal of provisional status. The Certificate of Admission will have the conditions of the admission status. This memo removing Provisional Status must be submitted before filing the Program of Studies form.

Annual check-up meeting. The faculty meets each spring to review the graduate program and the progress of each student in the program. Advisors should meet with their students after the meeting to discuss their progress and goals. Students may initiate this conversation with their advisors as well. The Director of Graduate Studies will write a letter to teach graduate student concerning their progress. Consistent progress and good performance is necessary to remain in good standing in the program.

Managing problems. If a student finds himself/herself struggling in the program academically, or with handling the demands of the degree program, teaching, time management, etc., they are strongly encouraged to meet with their advisor, the Director of Graduate Studies, Department Chair, or another faculty member. It is advisable to do this as early as possible. Our ultimate goal is the success of each student. We want to help.

**APPOINTING AN ADVISOR, COMMITTEE &
SELECTING AREAS OF CONCENTRATION**

Appointing an Advisor and Supervisory Committee

During the first semester, students identify their areas of emphasis. See Program of Studies section of this handbook to look forward at how to put together a program. Toward the end of the first semester or early in the second semester, students request a Graduate Faculty Member in the Department of Communication Studies to work with them as their advisor. The Director of Graduate Studies can give you a list of Graduate Faculty Members and eligible departmental advisors for doctoral students.

Faculty members make advising decisions based on a number of factors, including the student's area of interest, research methodology, and current number of advisees. See the UNL "Guidelines for Good Practice in Graduate Education" document for a description of the role of the faculty advisor. (<http://www.unl.edu/gradstudies/current>). Students and/or advisors may make changes in this advising agreement as time goes on, for example, as a student's interest and focus have changed. Schedule a meeting with a potential advisor to talk over your goals and preferences. If an advisor cannot serve, s/he will likely have a suggestion for a replacement. For assistance, see the Director of Graduate Studies.

Students and advisors are an important partnership. Open lines of communication between them are essential. Students should discuss expectations and processes with their advisor and ask how the advisor would like to be kept abreast of the student's progress. The Director of Graduate Studies and Department Chair can also serve as a resource to the student when needed.

While some advisors or committee members may choose to work with students over breaks and summers, this should not be an expectation on the part of the student.

Appointing the Advisor. Inform our Department Administrative Assistant and Director of Graduate Studies upon the appointment of an advisor, as we keep a current list. There is a form to submit the names of the Supervisory Committee to Graduate Studies when the Program of Studies is filed.

The Supervisory Committee. Together, the student and advisor discuss the members of the student's Supervisory Committee. The duties of the Supervisory Committee include guiding the student in planning a Program of Study, selecting an Examining Committee for comprehensive exams, and planning and submitting a satisfactory dissertation. Once students and advisors have identified potential Supervisory Committee members, the student should talk with each person and determine his or her willingness to participate.

The Supervisory Committee must consist of four Graduate Faculty Members, normally three who are Graduate Faculty Members from the Department of Communication Studies and one must be a Graduate Faculty Member selected from an outside department (although other possibilities exist). Faculty from other universities can serve on a courtesy appointment in addition to the UNL faculty. Two members of the Supervisory Committee will later be designated as members of the Dissertation Reading Committee (usually the two members from inside the department--not the advisor) and given responsibility for reviewing the dissertation prior to the final oral defense.

The Supervisory Committee must be appointed while students still have more than 45 hours remaining to be taken, exclusive of language and/or research tools (end of second semester for full-time students). Submit the form, Appointment of the Supervisory Committee, to Graduate Studies (no later than when the student files the Program of Studies) and make sure the department has a list of the committee members.

Changing the Supervisory Committee. Changes may be made in the committee, as a student's interest and foci change. Students should initiate a discussion with their advisor and then the faculty member before a change is made. While this might seem uncomfortable for some students, remember that faculty members expect that students may make committee changes as their studies progress. Students should

feel free to discuss these issues with the Director of Graduate Studies. Committee changes should be filed immediately via an email memo from your advisor to Graduate Studies. Inform the Department Administrative Assistant and Director of Graduate Studies of changes in your committee.

Expectations of Faculty and Students

The UNL “Guidelines for Good Practice in Graduate Education” document does an excellent job of describing the outlook on graduate studies we practice at UNL. Please read it carefully (download from Graduate Studies website). The document states, “A primary purpose of graduate education at the University of Nebraska is to instill in each student and understanding of and capacity for scholarship, independent judgment, academic rigor, and intellectual honesty” (p. 1).

The document provides clear guidelines for conduct for both graduate students and faculty members that we take seriously. Both faculty members and graduate students are expected to “Conduct themselves in a mature, ethical, and civil manner in all interactions with faculty and staff in accordance with the accepted standards of the discipline and University of Nebraska policies governing discrimination and harassment” (p. 2). Students should read this document carefully. If students have any questions or concerns about any of these issues, they are encouraged to see their advisor, Director of Graduate Studies, or Department Chair.

COURSEWORK AND PROGRAM OF STUDY

Students, their advisor, and Supervisory Committees together develop Programs of Study. The Program of Study is a personalized document that defines the content of coursework and study, and a schedule for completion of doctoral work.

The Program of Study

This is a very important and helpful planning process for students, their advisors and committees as well. Students will come away from the process with a plan to complete their degree in a timely way.

The Supervisory Committee is not obligated to accept credits beyond the Masters degree, which were completed prior to its appointment. This is one important reason for appointing the committee and filing the Program of Study as early as feasible. The Program of Study must be completed within the student's first 45 hours of coursework (the 45 hours includes all approved courses transferred from the student's Masters program exclusive of language and research tools remaining to be taken) or 9-15 hours of coursework beyond the Masters degree (at least half of the total program of courses and dissertation research must remain to be completed after the submission of the Program of Study). For full-time students, the faculty recommends submission at the end of the second semester or at the very latest, the beginning of the third semester.

Criteria for designing and reviewing the Program of Study

(1) To reflect the interests and goals of the student. The Program of Study should provide coursework to meet these needs, and envision a comprehensive examination, which certifies that the student has acquired the knowledge commensurate with these needs and interests; (2) To acquire the specialized knowledge (content and research methods) necessary to successfully complete an independent research dissertation, and the depth of knowledge characteristic of the holder of a research degree; (3) To develop grounding in Communication Studies sufficient to bring a breadth of knowledge and preparation to the post-doctoral profession. Hours transferred to UNL from another institution will be evaluated for their consistency with these criteria

Program of Study Process

The student's Program of Study should be guided by the following: At least half of the graduate work, including the dissertation, will be done in the student's major field. The remaining work, subject to the approval of the Supervisory Committee, must include supporting courses from within the department and in other programs as approved by the advisor and committee. Important note: any courses taken to remove admission deficiencies cannot be counted as part of the graduate program leading to the Ph.D.

The Program of Study process is completed in four steps:

(1) (a) *Prepare a draft of the Proposed Program of Study* (Form A). This is an internal Department of Communication Studies planning document. We mean this form to be flexible; thus students and advisors may design this form to meet and most clearly present the student's proposed program and configuration of primary and secondary emphases. See page three in this handbook for a summary of the department's degree requirements.

Include both MA and Ph.D. courses on the form (clearly delineate MA classes). Check to see that the Program of Study meets the minimum requirements of the program presented earlier. Schedule a meeting with the advisor to discuss the document and plan. Meet with the advisor and finalize this form. After completing Form A, place the cover sheet, "Approval of Proposed Program of Study" (Form B) on top.

(b) *Prepare a rationale for Program of Study*. As part of this process, the student should attach a written Rationale for Program of Studies to Form A. This document should be approved by the advisor before

distribution to the committee. This 1-2 page statement should advance the student's argument for the configuration of areas of specialty and coursework s/he is proposing (both MA and Ph.D.). Pay particular attention to a rationale that integrates the areas chosen. Prepare this argument with an eye toward organizing and choosing coursework, guiding research and areas of specialty, as well as to looking forward to how one will present credentials upon graduation.

(2) *Review by Supervisory Committee.* After obtaining advisor approval, the student distributes the Program of Studies (Forms A & B) to the Supervisory Committee members. A face-to-face meeting with each committee member is advised.

The committee may approve, ask for revisions, and/or choose to meet.

(3) *Review by Director of Graduate Studies.* Once the Supervisory Committee has approved the document, submit it to the Director of Graduate Studies for review and signature (schedule a meeting).

(4) *Prepare and submit POS and Committee Forms to Graduate Studies.* Once the DGS has approved the document, (a) transfer the information to the “*Program of Studies for the Doctoral Degree*” form (download from Grad Studies website); (b) Also submit the “*Appointment of Supervisory Committee*” form (download from Grad Studies). Have a copy of these materials placed in your file in the Communication Studies office.

Changes to Program of Study. Students' areas of interest may change during the course of the graduate program. In such a case students are encouraged to consult with their advisors. Changes are easily accomplished and do not reflect any weakness on the part of the student, the advisor, or the Supervisory Committee. The rationale for requested alterations is ultimately to strengthen a student's program.

Changes must be approved by the Supervisory Committee members (use Form D or the advisor may consult with the other committee members). Any changes from the Program of Study should be submitted by the advisor in writing (via email) to the Doctoral Program Specialist in Graduate Studies. All changes must be made and filed before taking comprehensive exams.

Dissertation Credits (COMM 999). Students do need to “buy” dissertation credits during the Ph.D. process. Students must register for the number of credits listed on the program of study (the UNL minimum is 12 credits). These credits are not part of the minimum number of coursework credits students are required to complete.

Students on GTA lines may sign up for these credits during their program and they come out of the total credits they may take each semester. For GTAs, these credits may also come from the six covered credits GTAs receive for summer classes. Students may also sign up for dissertation credits when the coursework is done and they are still in residence. However students do it, plan ahead and make sure to have taken the minimum number of dissertation credits that the program of study indicates by the semester of graduation.

FORM A
PROPOSED PROGRAM OF STUDY
DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNICATION STUDIES

Instructions: This form is for department uses only. It may be adapted to fit your specialized program. Please type or print clearly. After you have filled out the form with advisor and completed the Rationale for Program of Study, place Form B on top and distribute to the Supervisory Committee for approval.

Name: _____ Date: _____

BA Institution: _____ Year Graduated: _____

MA Institution: _____ Year Graduated: _____

Projected Year of Graduation: _____ Semester: _____

Advisor _____

Supervisory
Committee Members _____

Reading Committee _____

Proposed Dissertation Title or
Subject Area _____

Degree Requirements:

Minimum of 90 credits required including:

45-54 credits of coursework past Master's degree (total number to be determined in consultation with the Supervisory Committee) consisting of:

12 credits minimum of Communication Studies courses in a primary area

9 credits minimum of Communication Studies courses in a secondary area (within a departmental area or combined into a cohesive secondary area)

15 credits minimum of research methods (from Master's & Ph.D.)

Additional credits inside and outside of Communication Studies to establish primary specialization*

30 credits maximum transferred from Master's degree

12 credits minimum of dissertation credits

*While we recommend the Preparing Future Faculty Program (PFF), it will not count in the first 45 credits

Not fewer than 45 semester hours must be completed at UNL.

SECTION I: PROGRAM STRUCTURE

Adapt this form as necessary; *Indicate which are transfer courses from masters degree

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY REQUIREMENT (Language and Research Tool)

Minimum 15 Credit Hours

COURSE NUMBER AND TITLE	SEMESTER/YEAR	CREDIT HOURS
Total Credit Hours =		

PRIMARY AREA OF CONCENTRATION: _____

Minimum 12 Credit Hours

COURSE NUMBER AND TITLE	SEMESTER/YEAR	CREDIT HOURS
Total Credit Hours =		

SECONDARY AREA CONCENTRATION: _____

(Instructional, Interpersonal & Family, Organizational, Rhetoric & Culture, or _____)

Minimum 9 Credit Hours

COURSE NUMBER AND TITLE	SEMESTER/YEAR	CREDIT HOURS
Total Credit Hours =		

RELATED INTEREST AREA:
 (optional) Courses inside & outside dept. _____

COURSE NUMBER AND TITLE	SEMESTER/YEAR	CREDIT HOURS
Total Credit Hours =		

SECTION III: SUMMARY OF HOURS

Research Methodology _____ Hours (min. 15 MA & Ph.D.)
Primary Area of Concentration _____ Hours
Secondary Area of Concentration _____ Hours
Related Interest Area (optional) _____ Hours
Miscellaneous Hours _____ Hours
Dissertation Hours _____ Hours (minimum 12)
Transferred Hours from MA _____ Hours (maximum 30)
TOTAL HOURS _____
*Total minimum of 90 hours

***please check your math

SECTION IV: TENTATIVE COMPREHENSIVE EXAMINATION PLAN

4 Hours in _____ Primary Area of Concentration
4 Hours in _____ Secondary and Related Areas of Concentration
4 Hours in _____ Research Methodology

Rationale for Program of Study Attach a Rationale for Program of Study. This 1-2 page statement presents the student’s argument for the configuration of courses and areas of specialty s/he is proposing (include MA and Ph.D.). Pay particular attention to a rationale that integrates the areas chosen. Prepare this argument with an eye toward organizing and choosing coursework, guiding research and areas of specialty, as well as to looking forward to how one will present credentials upon graduation.

FORM B
Ph.D. PROGRAM OF STUDY APPROVAL FORM
DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNICATION STUDIES

Student: _____

Advisor: _____

Supervisory Committee Members:

Committee Members: Please review the attached proposed Program of Study, fill in the committee response portion of this memo and sign the Program of Study. The advisor will work with the suggestions of the committee (feel free to contact advisor directly), and the student will return the form with changes, if necessary.

RETURN THIS FORM BY: _____

TO: _____
 (Advisor's Name) (Office Address) (Email) (Telephone Number)

<input type="checkbox"/> Approve <input type="checkbox"/> Approve with the following changes: _____ <p style="text-align: center;">Signature</p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Request a meeting <input type="checkbox"/> Disapprove (please discuss with advisor) _____ <p style="text-align: center;">Date</p>
---	---

<input type="checkbox"/> Approve <input type="checkbox"/> Approve with the following changes: _____ <p style="text-align: center;">Signature</p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Request a meeting <input type="checkbox"/> Disapprove (please discuss with advisor) _____ <p style="text-align: center;">Date</p>
---	---

<input type="checkbox"/> Approve <input type="checkbox"/> Approve with the following changes: _____ <p style="text-align: center;">Signature</p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Request a meeting <input type="checkbox"/> Disapprove (please discuss with advisor) _____ <p style="text-align: center;">Date</p>
---	---

<input type="checkbox"/> Approve <input type="checkbox"/> Approve with the following changes: _____ <p style="text-align: center;">Signature</p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Request a meeting <input type="checkbox"/> Disapprove (please discuss with advisor) _____ <p style="text-align: center;">Date</p>
---	---

 Director of Graduate Studies Signature

 Date

FORM C
CHANGE IN PROGRAM OF STUDY APPROVAL
DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNICATION STUDIES

Student: _____

Committee Members: _____

The above named student has requested the following change(s) in their program of study for your consideration and approval. Please respond via this form. Contact the advisor if you have questions or concerns.

RETURN THIS FORM BY: _____

TO: _____
 (Advisor's Name) (Office Address) (Email) (Telephone Number)

Presently on the Program of Study:

Course Title & Number	Course Title & Number	Course Title & Number

Request Substitution:

Course Title & Number	Course Title & Number	Course Title & Number

Reason(s) for Request: _____

<input type="checkbox"/> Approve <input type="checkbox"/> Disapprove (please discuss with advisor)	
_____ Signature	_____ Date

<input type="checkbox"/> Approve <input type="checkbox"/> Disapprove (please discuss with advisor)	
_____ Signature	_____ Date

<input type="checkbox"/> Approve <input type="checkbox"/> Disapprove (please discuss with advisor)	
_____ Signature	_____ Date

<input type="checkbox"/> Approve <input type="checkbox"/> Disapprove (please discuss with advisor)	
_____ Signature	_____ Date

Student: After receiving approval signatures, bring this form to the dept. Administrative Assistant to be kept in your file. Advisor should email changes to the Graduate Studies Office.

**COMPREHENSIVE EXAMINATIONS,
DISSERTATION PRE-PROPOSAL, ORAL EXAM,
AND ADVANCEMENT TO CANDIDACY**

The Dissertation Pre-proposal

Before taking the comprehensive written and oral examination, students will begin the process of planning for the dissertation research project. Most students find their general idea for the dissertation in their second semester, first summer, or third semester and begin working on developing their expertise, research methods, and pilot projects for the larger dissertation project. It is helpful to read the proposal and dissertation documents of former students in a similar area to get an idea of the scope and focus of these projects.

Part of demonstrating mastery of the knowledge of the discipline in the comprehensive examination is the ability to construct a research proposal. Before taking comprehensive exams, students will write a dissertation pre-proposal (format to be determined in conference with advisor). In general, pre-proposals are approximately 10-15 pages outlining the rationale for the project, literature consulted, proposed purpose or research questions/hypotheses and proposed method for carrying out the research. Once the advisor approves the pre-proposal document, the student will submit this pre-proposal to the Supervisory Committee as part of the written exam.

***Note: The pre-proposal document must be completed and approved by the advisor before the student may begin the written exams (the pre-proposal will be submitted to the Director of Graduate Studies along with the student's exam questions the week before the exam begins). Students may not begin their exams until the pre-proposal is submitted*

After the written and oral comprehensive exams are completed, students will write a complete dissertation prospectus (see below) and meet again with the Supervisory Committee to approve that document.

Written Comprehensive Exam Process

Written and oral comprehensive exams are an opportunity for students to draw together and review their studies over the years and to demonstrate their breadth and depth of knowledge. These exams are an assessment of students' preparation for doing original research in their area of specialty. Comprehensive exams are intended to be an opportunity for synthesis and not a repetition of course examinations.

When to take exams? Doctoral students are eligible to take written comprehensive exams after they have substantially completed their coursework (usually defined as having completed all but one or two courses) have completed their research tool requirement. Any incompletes must be finished before starting exams. During the Program of Study process, students and advisors discuss a tentative proposal that will later serve as a basis for selection of coursework in preparation for the comprehensive exams.

Students choose semester to take the exam with their advisor and must inform the Director of Graduate Studies the semester *before* they intend to take their exam. The Director of Graduate Studies will conduct a workshop on taking exams each spring semester so students may plan for the following year.

The Director of Graduate Studies schedules written comprehensive examinations during *fall* and *spring* semesters. The department does not offer summer exams.

Changes to Program of Studies. Before taking the exam, it is important to file any changes in the program for any course changes made from the original Program of Study. Use Form C, "Request Change in Program of Studies" to run changes by the Supervisory Committee. Inform Graduate Studies of any changes (an email from advisor to Doctoral Program Specialist will suffice). The important thing is that the program Graduate Studies checks at the end must match the courses completed.

Examining Committee. During the semester before the exam students and their advisors prepare a proposal that defines the general area of each portion of the written examination, specifies the distribution of hours among the portions, and proposes the question writer(s) in each area. The group of faculty writing the examination questions, plus the Supervisory Committee members forms the student's Examining Committee. The Examining Committee is comprised of the Supervisory Committee members, and may include members inside or outside of the department who are not members of the Supervisory Committee. While Supervisory Committee members often write exam questions, it is not required that all do so.

Dates and length of exam. The written examination involves a total of 12 hours of written exams and is normally administered over a period of not more than 14 days. Normally, the exams will begin the Monday of week four of the semester and students write exams on Monday and Fridays. The Director of Graduate Studies will announce dates and times for the exam.

Distribution of examination hours. Normally the distribution of hours for the written portion of the exam approximates the following (changes in these hours can be made by the Supervisory Committee):

- Four hours to demonstrate an integrative understanding of the primary area of concentration sufficient to reflect a meaningful assimilation and synthesis of the literature, and conduct an active program of research.
- Four hours to demonstrate an integrative knowledge of the secondary area(s) of concentration sufficient to reflect a meaningful assimilation and synthesis of the literature, conduct an active program of research, and relate these interests to the primary area of concentration.
- Four hours to demonstrate an integrative understanding of the research methods central to the student's program of research generally and dissertation project specifically.

Comprehensive examination plan approval. Students will draft Form D, "Comprehensive Examination (Ph.D.) Approval, Department of Communication Studies" and meet with their advisor. Once approved, students submit this form to the Supervisory Committee members for approval. Students and advisors should be sure that all Examining Committee members who are not part of the Supervisory committee agree to participate as indicated and that all members approve the plan for the exam. Exam questions will be due to the advisor a week before the start of the exam. Form D must be completed and signed by all Supervisory Committee members prior to finals week the semester before the exam takes place.

Meeting with Examining Committee members. Most students schedule individual appointments with each member of their Examining Committee to talk about the focus of their studying for that examiner's questions. Many students will follow up these meetings with memos to the examiners to perception-check their understanding. Students should hold these meeting prior to finals week the semester before the exam takes place, unless otherwise directed by a committee member.

Advisor responsibilities. As the exam approaches, the student's advisor will request that the members of the Examining Committee submit their questions to the advisor who will prepare and pass them along to the Director of Graduate Studies the week before the written examination period begins. Responsibilities of advisors include:

- Obtaining all written exam questions in a timely fashion
- Organizing questions into labeled envelopes (indicating student name, date of exam, length of time to write the question(s), and whether the question is to be answered open or closed book)
- Submitting *all* questions to the Director of Graduate Studies *no later than one week before the written examinations begin*. All questions must be submitted before the student may begin their exam.

The advisor may circulate the questions to all members of the Examining Committee for suggestions, alterations, and approval, if they choose.

Supervisory Committee Member Responsibilities. Departmental members are expected to attend oral examinations for exams and dissertations. Committee members on sabbatical leave should consult with the student's advisor and do their best to help the student stay on schedule.

Participation of outside committee members. Each UNL department has a slightly different set of procedures for exams and dissertations. Advisors should explain our department's processes to outside committee members to avoid any misunderstanding. Students and advisors should check with the outside Supervisory and Examining Committee member to see what s/he desires. Sometimes these members wish to be involved in both the written and oral exams. In some cases the member will be involved in the written exam only. The same thing goes for the outside members who are members of the Examining Committee. Some will write and evaluate written questions but may not wish to attend the oral exam.

Taking the Comprehensive Examination

Schedule. The Director of Graduate Studies will designate the time and place of the examination (weeks four and five of the semester, normally Mondays and Fridays), and will work out the format of the exam in advance (i.e., computer use) and rooms to be used. The DGS will ask students to submit a schedule for when they will write their exams and they may schedule their questions and writing times.

Most all students type their exams on a computer (provided by the department). If a student wishes to handwrite, please consult with the advisor and DGS.

The questions. Normally, exam questions are closed book, unless the student is notified in advance, and the advisor has indicated this on the envelope for the question. Students will pick up the question(s) from the examination administrator (usually the Department Administrative Assistant will serve as exam administrator or the Director of Graduate Studies) on each day they are writing.

Proctor: There will be a faculty member on duty during exam writing days to serve as a proctor and resource person. Please leave the door to the room unlocked during the exam and expect the proctor to stop by. Report any problems to the proctor.

Proofreading. Students should leave a brief amount of time at the end of each writing period to quickly proofread their exams.

Printing and Copying Exams. Immediately after finishing writing for the day, students should print out the exams (the Administrative Assistant will help), make a copy of the questions and answers, and give the copy to the examination administrator. The examination administrator will pass the materials along to the advisor at the end of all the written exams. Students are advised to keep an electronic copy of the exam on disk as well, and to make a backup as soon as possible.

Academic Integrity. All students are expected to abide by the highest standard of integrity during the exam. Questions are closed book and closed notes, unless otherwise indicated. Students may not see any notes, consult any other sources, log on to the internet, access information from a flash drive or hard drive, consult with any person, or otherwise supplement what the committee has indicated the student may use during the exam. Violations of the honor code will result in failure of the exam and dismissal from the program. If students have any questions about these expectations, they should consult in advance with their advisor, Director of Graduate Studies, or with the faculty proctor during the exam.

Distributing the comprehensive examination and dissertation proposal. After all written examinations are completed; the student will organize and distribute a copy of all questions and answers, and the dissertation pre-proposal to each member of the Examining Committee (including all Supervisory Committee members). Make sure that the question writer's name appears on each question sheet, followed by the answers. Place Form E, "Evaluation of Written Comprehensive Examinations" on top as a cover sheet and indicate a response of *two weeks* from distribution to return Form E to the advisor.

Note: Students may *not* make any changes in the written examination answers at this point and advisors should check over exams before they are distributed.

Evaluation of written exam. Within two weeks of the completion of the written examination, members of the Examining Committee are asked to inform the advisor of their evaluation of the written examination. Students may want to remind their advisor as this date approaches. Orals may be scheduled once all sections of the written comprehensives are deemed satisfactory. The committee members may also indicate to the advisor areas of possible questioning in the oral examination.

At this point, members of the Examining Committee should communicate with the *advisor only* about the student's exam. Advisors are responsible for coordinating with the committee and communicating the outcome of the exams to their advisees. If there are any deficiencies, advisors will work with committee members to determine how best to proceed and to determine what they will ask the student to do to overcome deficiency. Advisors may call a meeting of the Examination Committee if necessary.

Oral Examination

Once advisors have received committee approval of written examination, students may schedule the oral examination. The oral exam normally lasts two hours. The student is responsible for scheduling the meeting time, the room, and informing all members of the Examination Committee. As stated earlier, work with outside members concerning their desired participation in the process.

The advisor will chair the meeting. Students should be sure to review their written exams (bring a copy to the exam) and be prepared to discuss any areas of weakness they or their committee has identified. As part of the oral exam, time should be left to talk about the dissertation pre-proposal, to give the student direction on their dissertation project.

At the conclusion of the meeting, the committee members will confer to determine the outcome of the student's comprehensive exam (both written and oral). The basic principle of "majority rule" is operable in all cases where there is a difference of opinion among the committee members concerning the student's performance.

The student must prepare and *bring two forms to the oral exam:*

- 1) "Application for Admission to Candidacy for Doctoral Degree" (download from Graduate Studies website).
- 2) The student should also bring a copy of the "Graduate Program Assessment Orals Rating Form" (Form F) (the advisor turns these in to the Dept. Administrative Assistant)

Deficiencies on Written or Oral Exams. The committee may decide to pass the student on the entire comprehensive exam, ask for some additional work or rewrites on certain questions, or direct that the written comprehensives and/or orals be retaken over a certain area(s) during the next academic session. Students may be directed to take additional coursework or complete other remedial work, if necessary.

Committee decisions are communicated to the student by the advisor and, if there are deficiencies, the advisor will prepare a memorandum to the student detailing the steps needed and the time frame in which to complete the exam process. All committee members should approve this memorandum before it is distributed to the student. A copy of this memo should be given to the Director of Graduate Studies as well.

The student may retake written comprehensive and/or orals over an area only once. The departmental Graduate Committee, upon the request of the student's advisor, must approve additional retakes.

During this examination process, students are encouraged to talk with their advisor, Director of Graduate Studies or other faculty if they need assistance.

Admission to Candidacy (All But Dissertation ABD),

Successful completion of the comprehensive written exams and orals means the student is advanced to Candidacy (what is commonly known as "all but dissertation" ABD). Congratulations!

Following the successful completion of the oral exam meeting, the student should immediately submit the signed "Application for Admission to Candidacy for Doctoral Degree" to Graduate Studies.

Students are encouraged to complete and orally defend a full dissertation prospectus (generally the first chapters) as quickly as possible, generally within 2-4 months of the oral exam over the pre-proposal.

Following Admission to Candidacy, students must register in the Graduate College during each academic year semester until they receive the Ph.D. degree. Students not in residence may register for a minimum of one semester hour credit in dissertation on forms available from the Office of Graduate Studies. Failure to register during each academic year semester will result in termination of candidacy.

Maintaining registration. Following admission to Candidacy a graduate student must register for one credit hour during *each* academic year semester (fall and spring) until they receive their degree. It is very important to maintain enrollment each semester one is ABD.

The in-absentia resident tuition rate is a benefit for doctoral candidates who are paying their own tuition. Because we require candidates to be registered each academic semester until they graduate, they are eligible to pay resident tuition rates for one credit hour each academic semester when this registration is in excess of the hours on their program of studies. Students, who were classified as Residents for tuition purposes while here on campus, will maintain Resident status on future billings even when they move away from campus. Students must file an in-absentia form each semester and may obtain these forms from UNL Graduate Studies.

An ABD graduate student receiving financial aid is eligible for fulltime status when they have been admitted to formal doctoral candidacy (this after passing comprehensive exams and orals), registered for at least one credit hour for the period stated, and **not** working more than 20 hour per week. This form is term specific so it must be filed for each enrollment period. Students must file a Full-time status form each semester and may obtain these forms from the Communication Studies main office or Graduate Studies.

Note: See sections on "Life as an All but Dissertation (ABD) student" and "Annual Report on Progress Toward Degree" later in this manual.

Fourth Year Assistantship

The department has committed to make available a limited number of fourth year doctoral GTA positions annually. These positions will be awarded pending funding and when the Graduate Committee determines that there are candidates who meet the criteria.

The intent of the department is to offer fourth year funding to outstanding students who (1) show excellent progress toward completing the degree, and (2) demonstrate the greatest promise as researchers, promise that can be increased significantly with a fourth year in residence. In the situation that we cannot offer positions to all qualified applicants, the department will to our best to assist students in finding other campus or local opportunities for support.

Process:

- (1) The Director of Graduate Studies (DGS) will put out a call to all third year students at the start of the school year. Details on the application process will be provided.
- (2) Applications are due September 15th and students may continue to apply on a rolling basis. Preference will be given to students who apply by September 15th. The Graduate Committee will review applications and award positions as they become available.
- (3) In the event the department can offer 4th year funding, students will be asked to accept the position as soon as possible after the offer. Students must let the department know if they are accepting the position no later than February 1 of the same academic year. If plans change a student may certainly reapply, but may move to the bottom of the list of applicants.

If there is any change in future, as with all GTA positions, the department will inform the student at the earliest possible date.

Criteria for selection:

- 1) Excellent grades and progress in our program
- 2) Excellent progress toward degree
- 3) Demonstrated excellence in research (including publications, conference papers, top papers, research activities, e.g., participation in research teams, participation in departmental research activities).

Students who receive 4th year funding are expected to remain active members of our department and make substantial progress toward degree.

**FORM D
COMPREHENSIVE EXAMINATION (PH.D.) APPROVAL
DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNICATION STUDIES**

Student: _____

Supervisory Committee Member: _____

Please review the following comprehensive examination plan for the above named student, make your recommendation, and sign at the bottom of this form. Thank you.

RETURN THIS FORM BY: _____

TO: _____
(Advisor's Name) (Office Address) (Email) (Telephone Number)

NOTE TO ADVISOR: After Supervisory Committee approval, it is the advisor's responsibility to see that the Examining Committee receives a copy of each memo with approval signatures.

Questions must be submitted to the advisor by: _____

Preliminary title and paragraph synopsis of the proposed dissertation:

Proposed date for the written exam:

Primary Area of Concentration	# of Hours	Members of the Examining Subcommittee

Secondary Area of Concentration	# of Hours	Members of the Examining Subcommittee

Outside Related Interest	# of Hours	Members of the Examining Subcommittee

Research Methods	# of Hours	Members of the Examining Subcommittee

To be completed by each member of the Supervisory Committee concerning the proposed written examination:

_____ Approve _____ Disapprove _____ Request a meeting _____ Approve with the following changes

Signature of Supervisory Committee Member

Date

FORM E
EVALUATION OF WRITTEN COMPREHENSIVE EXAMS
DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNICATION STUDIES

Student: _____

Supervisory Committee and Examining Committee: By now you should have received copies of the comprehensive exam answers and dissertation pre-proposal. The next step is to review the answers and determine if the answers are satisfactory and warrant allowing orals to be scheduled.

RETURN THIS FORM BY: _____

TO: _____
(Advisor's Name) (Office Address) (Email) (Telephone Number)

Approval of Answers in Specific Areas:

Examining Committee: Make recommendations based on answers to the questions within your specific areas:

_____ Answer(s) in my area are satisfactory. I approve scheduling orals. (Please attach feedback
If there are particular problems you would like to address at orals.)

_____ Answer(s) in my area are *not* satisfactory. I request a rewrite prior to scheduling orals.
(Please attach reasons).

Approval of All Answers and Pre-proposal:

Supervisory Committee: Make a recommendation based on the readiness of all answers and pre-proposal.

_____ Pending approval of examining committee members, I approve scheduling orals.

_____ There are problems that need to be addressed before scheduling orals.
(Please attach reasons).

Committee Members please note: Committee members should communicate with the *advisor only* at this point about the exam. Advisors are responsible for communicating the outcome of the exams to their advisees. If there are any deficiencies, advisors will work with committee members to determine how best to proceed. Advisors may call a meeting of the Examination and Supervisory Committee if necessary.

Signature

Date

FORM F
Department of Communication Studies
Graduate Program Assessment Orals Rating Form

*** Students: bring a copy of this form for each committee member to your comprehensive exam and final dissertation defense oral meetings.*

This evaluation is for a:

_____ Comprehensive examination

_____ Master's thesis defense

_____ Doctoral dissertation defense

Semester and year student's work was evaluated _____

Rate the student on the following points with the following scale:
(Unacceptable=1; Poor=2; Satisfactory=3; Good=4, Excellent=5)

Demonstrates knowledge of appropriate theory: 1 2 3 4 5

Shows understanding of relevant issues of the field in question: 1 2 3 4 5

Cites appropriate scholarship: 1 2 3 4 5

Writes coherently and to an appropriate mechanical standard: 1 2 3 4 5

Speaks articulately about disciplinary issues: 1 2 3 4 5

Demonstrates methodological expertise: 1 2 3 4 5

Comments:

RESEARCH, DISSERTATION AND COMPLETION

Dissertation Prospectus & Dissertation Research

After the pre-proposal is approved at the comprehensive oral exam, the student develops the full dissertation prospectus for the dissertation research. Students are encouraged to complete and orally defend a prospectus as quickly as possible, generally within 2-4 months of oral exam over the pre-proposal.

The prospectus document is a formal presentation of and justification for the dissertation research, and a detailed plan for completion of the study (for most projects, this constitutes the first chapters of the dissertation). Students should work with their advisors on the form and scope of the prospectus.

Prospectus Meeting. Once the prospectus is completed by the student and approved by their advisor, the student distributes it to the Supervisory Committee and schedules a prospectus meeting. Committee members should be allowed a minimum of two weeks to read the prospectus. Students should schedule the meeting date, time, and room.

At this two-hour meeting, the student and the Supervisory Committee discuss the proposed project. Students should not begin research or data collection until after receiving Supervisory Committee approval. If the advisor and student desire, they may note changes to be made in writing and pass these by the Supervisory Committee.

Once the student receives Supervisory Committee approval, he/she begins formal research and the preparation of the dissertation text. Agreement should be reached between the student, advisor, and Supervisory Committee regarding the frequency and manner in which the Supervisory Committee will be involved in the dissertation process. Some advisors prefer to approve dissertations chapter by chapter, most prefer to wait until the dissertation is substantially completed.

Advisors should communicate with Supervisory Committees and keep them abreast of the student's progress, especially as the student nears completion and submitting work to the committee.

During the entire dissertation process, students should not send any materials to the Supervisory Committee without knowledge and approval of their advisor.

Use of Human Subjects. If the dissertation research involves the use of human participants, students will need to file the appropriate forms with the university's Institutional Review Board, per departmental and university procedures, as detailed on the UNL Research Compliance website. All researchers must complete an online IRB training prior to filing these forms.

Materials and expenses. Students are responsible for the cost of *all* materials for dissertation research (e.g., library costs, computer use, analysis, software, audio or videotapes), all copying expenses, express mailing, and all travel expenses. Departmental staff members are not available for typing, editing, proofing, or copying student dissertations, nor are they responsible for distributing paperwork or forms.

Style Manual: Dissertations should conform very carefully to the style sheet as directed by the advisor (usually APA or MLA). Students should also consult the UNL "Guidebook for Preparing a Thesis or Dissertation" available on the Grad Studies website.

Preparing for Final Oral Defense of Dissertation

Check the Graduate Studies Website for a summary of the forms and deadlines as these may change:
<http://www.unl.edu/gradstudies/current/degrees/doctoral.shtml>

Students must apply for graduation early in the semester they will graduate. Check with the advisor before filing this form. If one ends up delaying graduation for any reason, contact the department's DGS and the Graduate Studies Doctoral Program Specialist immediately.

Once the dissertation is written and approved by the student's advisor, the full dissertation goes to the Reading Committee, who need a minimum of two weeks to read the dissertation. Once they approve the dissertation for defense, the student is eligible to apply for the final oral examination. The student should prepare the form "Application for Final Oral Examination or Waiver of Examination for Doctoral Degree" (available on Graduate Studies website). The form must be typed.

The form must be filed at least three weeks prior to the scheduled final oral exam (dissertation defense). As the student needs to leave two weeks for the readers to read the dissertation, thus, the dissertation needs to go to the readers no less than five weeks before the anticipated defense date.

The chair or co-chairs must also sign prior to submission of the form. At this time, the student also submits to the Graduate Studies Doctoral Program Specialist a copy of the dissertation and abstract in final form. Graduate Studies Doctoral Program Specialist will check the document for proper format. This may be done in attachment form via email (please compile and send as one document).

If not in residence at UNL to file the paperwork in person, students must arrange to have a colleague collect and deliver the paperwork for them.

The final oral should be scheduled at a time when at least three members of the committee, and preferably all, including the advisor, can attend. The final oral may be waived if there is unanimous consent of all members of the supervisory committee. If the examination is to be waived, all members of the committee must sign the form and a reason for the waiver must be included on the form.

The signed "Application for Final Oral Examination or Waiver of Examination for Doctoral Degree" form must also include the time and date of the final oral exam meeting (schedule two hours). Do not schedule the meeting without advisor approval.

Be sure to schedule Oldfather 438 (or ask the Communication Studies Administrative Assistant to help you find an alternative room) for two hours for the defense meeting.

The Graduate Studies Doctoral Program Specialist will also provide the instructions on downloading and preparing the final examination form that the committee signs at the completion of the final oral meeting. Complete and bring this form to the final oral, along with the two title pages for the committee to sign (see the "Guidebook for Preparing a Thesis or Dissertation" (download from Graduate Studies website) and the Graduate Bulletin for details).

No more than two weeks before the final oral examination, a complete copy of the dissertation (everything except acknowledgements) is distributed to all Supervisory Committee members. Comments made by the Reading Committee, if any, should have been addressed in this final document.

Final Oral Examination Meeting

The final oral examination (final defense of the dissertation) is conducted by the Supervisory Committee. The meeting may involve a 10-20 minute oral presentation of the dissertation findings open to all department and community members (at the discretion of advisor and student. The advisor will issue an invitation for others to attend). Once the guest depart, the Supervisory Committee meets with the candidate and the committee may ask questions on the special field of the dissertation, the candidate's general knowledge, as well as questions designed to test judgment and critical powers. The student and advisor take detailed notes during the meeting.

The final oral for the Ph.D. will not be scheduled unless the chairperson of the Supervisory Committee (advisor) and at least two other members of the committee are available for the examination. Exceptions may be made only by permission of the Dean of Graduate Studies.

At the end of this meeting, the Supervisory Committee renders a final judgment and signs the Report on Doctoral Degree. Students should bring the following to the final oral defense:

- (1) Report on Completion of the Doctoral Degree (see Grad Studies website)
- (2) Signature Page for dissertation
- (3) “Graduate Program Assessment Orals Rating Form” (Form F) (the advisor turns these in to the Dept. Administrative Assistant)

Deficiencies. In the event a student does not pass the final oral examination, the Supervisory Committee must file a report with the Office of Graduate Studies and indicate what the student must do before taking another examination. Another examination may not be held during the same semester of the original exam.

Finishing Up: Editing, Depositing and Publishing the Dissertation

After the final oral examination, the student makes all changes stipulated by the Supervisory Committee. Students should give the document one final proofread as this copy is widely available and will be associated with the student forever! The advisor and/or whole committee may ask to see the final document before deposit.

Follow instructions carefully from the Doctoral Program Specialist and Graduate Studies website on how to submit the dissertation. Please remember that the Doctoral Program Specialist is handling all of the doctoral students at UNL (any many are finishing dissertations at the same time). Thus, please pay careful attention to deadlines and what needs to be done.

The Survey of Earned Doctorates. Graduate Studies will also ask graduating students to participate in data collections about the graduate experience. These do not take much time and are important. We would appreciate it very much if you would do so. The Survey of Earned Doctorates is an especially important national survey. NCA and our discipline obtains valuable information on our graduates in this survey and it is a way to highlight our excellent doctoral programs and students nationally.

Copies of the dissertation. In our departmental tradition students present one bound copy of the dissertation to their advisor and a second bound copy to the Communication Studies office for deposit in the department library in 438 Oldfather. Most students offer Supervisory Committee members copies of the dissertation as well (most often paper-bound copies or electronic copies).

Publishing Dissertation or Thesis Work/Publishing with the Advisor

One question students have after they complete their thesis or dissertation is whether their work is a good candidate for a conference paper(s) and/or publishable? Rarely is a document ready as is; most will take cutting and refining, sometimes a significantly, especially for publication. The best source of information will likely be the advisor of the project. Talk over these issues with the advisor while the project is in process (most advisors are thinking ahead about this as they help design the results chapters).

A second question many students have concerns whether the advisor should be a co-author on some or all of the work that comes from the thesis or dissertation. It is important to initiate a discussion with your

advisor about this. Many students will invite the advisor to be a co-author on some or all of the manuscripts. First, the advisor can contribute his or her expertise to the conference paper and especially the publication process. Second, inviting the advisor is a way to recognize his or her significant contributions to the project. The most important thing is to talk with one's advisor about all this and know what his or her expectations and preferences are. If they would like to co-author, come to an agreement about timeline and the role the advisor would like to play in the process. Finally, whether the advisor is a co-author or not, do make sure to acknowledge the advisor and degree-granting university in all manuscripts coming from the thesis or dissertation.

Life as an All but Dissertation (ABD) Student

It is not easy to be an ABD student, especially if one takes full-time employment away from campus. Students are urged to complete their degree before leaving campus if possible or to finish within the first year of departure. After leaving campus there are many of obstacles that can come into play, especially the substantial demands of a new job and location. In addition, committee members or advisors may depart, retire, and they take on other responsibilities and additional students.

Students are encouraged to establish a regular schedule and means to check in with the advisor.

Please make sure that the advisor and the department have a current email and address.

Annual Report on Progress Toward Degree

The Graduate Committee of the UNL Communication Studies Department has instituted an annual follow-up with each graduate ABD candidate. The Graduate Committee and faculty in our department want each of our students to complete the degree and we are committed to making sure this occurs in a timely fashion and in such a way that protects the integrity of our degree.

This Annual Report on Progress Toward Degree is due from each ABD student to the department's Director of Graduate Studies no later than March 15th of each year. ABD students should send the report in no later than 3/15 via a one-document attachment.

The Annual Report on Progress Toward Degree is a one-document attachment that includes:

- (1) A description of progress made toward completing the degree in the past year
- (2) Evidence of progress e.g., chapters written, evidence of data collected, etc.
- (3) A specific timeline, approved by the advisor before submission, for completion of the degree. This timeline should show specific dates and tasks to be completed. And should represent the most realistic thinking of the student and advisor. Be sure to discuss this with the advisor before submitting.

The faculty will review the progress of all students at a meeting in spring and will provide feedback to students concerning their progress. The Director of Graduate Studies will write a letter to teach graduate student concerning their progress. Consistent progress is important to remain in good standing in the program.

Timeline for degree Completion. In a policy adopted by UNL Graduate Studies in April 2002, doctoral students have eight years to complete the degree from the date of filing the Program of Study. Extensions from Graduate Studies are extremely unlikely and will only be considered in the most extreme circumstances.

Expectations on completing the degree. While students have eight years after filing the Program of Study to complete the degree, this does not guarantee that a student's advisor or committee will remain active for that length of time. *The faculty expects that students will make consistent progress toward degree completion and complete their degree within **three years** of Advancement to Candidacy* (at the completion of the comprehensive exams), and hopefully *much* sooner. Students who do not make sufficient and consistent progress post-candidacy may be dismissed from the program.

If the end of the three-year period passes, students run the risk of losing advisors and committee members due to faculty leaving or retiring, or due to changes in faculty members' obligations. After the initial three-year period passes, the departmental Graduate Committee may stipulate that the student complete additional coursework and/or pass another comprehensive examination before continuing.

Changes in advisor or committee membership. When students lose an advisor or committee members during their program or while ABD, they are responsible for finding replacements for those members. The Director of Graduate Studies and the Graduate Committee can help students negotiate this process. Ultimately it is the student's responsibility to obtain and maintain their doctoral committee. The department is unable to guarantee that faculty members who were not on the original supervisory committee will be available to serve as replacement members.

All students should remember that faculty members are not required to be available for reading documents or attending meetings during the summer months. In fact, this should not be an expectation and students must plan accordingly.

Our goal as a faculty is for students to complete their degrees in a timely way and these policies are in place to help students accomplish this goal.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

THINGS TO DO DURING GRAD SCHOOL TO HELP PREPARE FOR AN ACADEMIC CAREER

Dawn O. Braithwaite, Ph.D., Professor, Department of Communication Studies, University of Nebraska-Lincoln

- 1) Do excellent work consistently.
- 2) Develop knowledge of the scholarship and people in the discipline. Read and listen!
 - What is in the current journals?
 - What significant new books published?
 - Trends in research and pedagogy
 - Read association newsletters: SPECTRA and regionals
 - Read association web pages
 - Join relevant listserves to associations (e.g., CRTNET) and your research area(s)
- 3) Develop and protect your reputation in the department and discipline
 - 9) Be known for: working hard, being smart, caring about your work, being collegial, following through, being innovative, being on time, being pleasant to work with, developing interesting ideas and projects
- 4) Obtain research experience on your own and apprenticing with faculty members
 - Research teams and apprenticeships
 - Conference papers & panels
 - Publish your work *(these normally take 1.5-2.5 years, so you need start early!)
- 5) Attend professional conference regularly and actively and *work* at conferences
 - Take advantage of all activities conferences have to offer; attend panels and learn from others
 - Present your work; practice presentations
 - Be very visible at the conference; take the opportunity to meet other scholars and make connections
 - Attend business meetings of your interest groups
 - Stay for whole conferences
 - Volunteer as a Paper Reader or to run for appropriate office
 - Ask faculty members to introduce you to people
 - Rarely should you leave the conference during the day- work it!
 - Attend evening events—chance to meet people
 - Dress appropriately
 - Remember you are representing yourself and your university at all times—day and night!
 - Watch how you conduct yourself—you never know who you are meeting-- the person who will be interviewing you for a job, reviewing your manuscript, voting when you run for office, inviting you to contribute a chapter to their book, becoming your colleague, chair, or dean, or might be in a position to help one of your own graduate students
- 6) Take a Teaching Assistantship, if available, and do an excellent job
 - Develop your skills and knowledge as a teacher
 - Develop a teaching portfolio
- 7) Get to you know your faculty members
 - Be vigilant to protect your reputation in the department- remember these are your recommenders when you apply for doctoral programs or job! Small stuff counts!

- 8) Obtain some different teaching experiences and good student evaluations
 - Do not teach so much your classes or research falter (2-3 different classes plenty)
- 9) Attend departmental events, colloquia, and especially opportunities to learn, present, and meet visiting scholars,
- 10) Participate in Preparing Future Faculty (PFF) or other professional preparation programs and activities
- 11) Seek leadership positions in department, university, and professional associations as appropriate (i.e., committees)
- 12) Join and monitor professional associations and listserves know your discipline and the main issues (e.g., CRTNET)
- 12) Get to know your department's alumni
- 13) Track position announcements so you know what jobs are out there and start thinking about how to describe

WORKING TOWARD AND ARTICULATING A RESEARCH SPECIALTY

Dr. Dawn O. Braithwaite, University of Nebraska-Lincoln

As you think about research opportunities in your graduate classes and other research opportunities that present themselves, think about your projects in terms of the research experiences they bring to you and also consider how you are developing your own research specialty. You want to take the classes and engage in projects that develop your methodological specialization and you want to develop your area(s) of research specialization as well.

Thinking future, what do you want your area of specialty to be, at least as you start career? And as you continue in the career, how will you identify yourself? Broadly, you have an interest in a broad area of the discipline (e.g. interpersonal & family communication or organizational communication). You also develop specialization in theoretical areas (e.g. Structuration Theory, Symbolic Convergence), a content area (social support, the public sphere, narrative, ethics), relational type (e.g. stepfamilies, grandparenting), and/or a context (e.g. bereavement communication, international adoption, Navajo educational practices).

As you apply for academic positions and especially later as you apply for tenure and promotion, being able to articulate a clear line of research is important. This does not mean you should be too narrow or not pursue different opportunities, but you want to weave your experiences together in a coherent way. You want a statement that will make sense to you, your department, other colleagues in the discipline, and interdisciplinary colleagues. Your statement should meet that test.

Perhaps an example will help. In my own case, I began my research career as a doctoral student studying communication and stigma, looking at communication of people with disabilities and how they communicatively managed the discomfort and uncertainty of nondisabled people who interacted with them. This came from a very personal motivation as my cousin had become disabled and I wanted to figure out how to talk with him. I began a series of graduate school projects in this area—I followed the uncertainty reduction project with a rhetorical criticism of the rhetoric of the National Federation of the Blind, followed by a study of how people with disabilities managed privacy another class. Communication of people with disabilities became my dissertation research and my early research focus and I still do some research in it today. From there, over the years I have expanded my focus from a narrower focus on communication and stigma to

The communicative negotiation of relational and family change and challenge. I have studied this in a variety of contexts (e.g. stepfamilies, spouses with Alzheimer's disease, people with disabilities, voluntary kin), from a variety of theories (e.g. Relational Dialectics, Social Construction), and conceptually via rituals, social support, and turning points.

Another thing to consider is hooking your work in to a larger line of research of colleagues. For example, we have students and faculty at Nebraska studying rhetoric in the public sphere or communication in post-divorce families, as one example. Joining research teams or a community of scholars can give you additional support and opportunities, as well the excitement and fun of contributing to a larger community with your work.

One warning: many of us become interested in studying contexts as they interest us. However, being known by context can be very risky as you will get typecast and pigeonholed very easily-- "she is the disability person." This will not serve you well, will not help others relate to or understand your work, and will not let you leave your context easily. It is much better to be known for be known by a communication process (e.g. bereavement communication) or theory (e.g., facework or privacy) that you are known by. So for example, one of our recent graduates is working in the context of child-free couples, which is fine as long as it is clear that he is interested in the process of couples and decision-making and family identity.

Early in your graduate career, think about developing a coherent line of research. Start a list of research ideas and identify the themes that interest you. Think about your own paradigmatic leanings (are you more attracted to critical work, causes and effects of Logical empiricism for example). Think about the methodological skills you will need to support your desires. As your career keeps developing, refine your statement.

Issues to consider include:

1) **Where do you want to start as a scholar?** How does your idea fit into your developing or ongoing line of research?

2) ***What is the unique communication focus that you want to take? Think about the ideas that interest you the most and write them with a clear interaction/communication focus. Don't leave communication embedded in there; it should be explicit. When one reads your ideas they would know for sure that you are coming at this from communication, rather than psychology for example.***

3) Start thinking about **theory**-- what theory(ies) will guide the research?

4) Start thinking about **paradigm and methods**. Read the excellent chapter in Baxter & Babbie or Deetz on paradigms). Different research foci require work in different paradigms to answer the kinds of questions you are interested in. So, your question should fall within one of the paradigms and that will guide your RQ, methods. That also requires that you are thinking about the methodological expertise that (a) you have now and, (b) are looking to develop.

5) I encourage you to look at the **focus and work of our department and faculty**. You will benefit most from the expertise of the faculty and also of the reputation and energy of research programs going on when you can hook your work to the train(s) that are already chugging along. We imagine that is why you wanted to come here.

Talk with advisors colleagues, alumni and to people in the discipline (one good reason to go to conferences).

SUBMITTING AND PRESENTING AT ACADEMIC CONFERENCES

- I. **How to Submit a Competitive Paper**
- II. **How to Submit a Conference Proposal**
- III. **Ethical Issues and Obligations when Submitting a Conference Paper or Panel**
- IV. **Responsibilities of Conference Presenters, Chairs, or Respondents**
- V. **Preparing a Visual Display Presentation ("Poster Session")**

How to Submit a Competitive Paper

- 1) Read the "Call for Papers" document carefully for information and guidelines on submission for the conference you would like to attend. This document will tell you about a conference theme, deadlines for submission, and any other information you should know about submitting a paper. Individual disciplines and conferences may have different procedures to follow.
- 2) Choose your best paper. Completed data-based, rhetorical or critical studies usually have the best chance of being accepted (versus a literature review or thinkpiece), but good theory papers are certainly worthy too. Faculty colleagues can advise you on making selections.
- 3) Choose the appropriate Interest Group/Division within the organization for submission of the paper. Faculty colleagues can help you with this selection too. NOTE: It is unethical to submit a paper to more than one conference and Interest Group within the organization at a time. One should not submit a paper after it is accepted for publication. Papers presented to conferences should be original work for that conference, not in press or published at the time of submission. In other words, one should not present the same paper twice (the exception is previous presentation a student conference--see #6 below).
- 4) Plan to do a **thorough** edit/rewrite of the paper. Follow a style sheet consistently (i.e. APA or MLA). Papers normally should be kept to 25 pages or less unless you have received notice otherwise.
- 5) Prepare a title page and a 150-250 word abstract for the paper.
 - a) The title page for one copy of the paper should have a full citation, (title, name, institution, address, conference, history of the paper, acknowledgments {optional}).
 - b) If the papers are blind reviewed (reviewed without author name & institution), the other copies should have a title page without your name or institution. Sample title pages are attached.
- 6) Student and/or debut papers. On the upper right-hand corner of each title page (full citation and title-only page), write "Student" (if you are a student). If you have not presented a paper at a professional (non-student) conference before, also write the word "Debut Paper" (check "Call for Papers" for this information). Follow directions from conference organizers on this.
- 7) Sending the paper. Most conferences have papers submitted electronically. Follow directions for electronic or hard copy submission carefully. The due date for papers is usually strictly enforced.
- 8) Notification of acceptance. If the paper is accepted, you will be notified usually about eight to twelve weeks after submission. Three to five papers are usually grouped thematically on a panel. You will be told the name of the respondent, if any, (the person who will read and respond to the papers on the panel) and how long you will have to present the paper at the conference (usually 10-12 minutes). Often the

Interest Group chair or organization will send a copy of your paper to the respondent. Read the acceptance letter carefully to be sure this is the case. Follow carefully instructions on registration for the conference.

9) Editing the paper. If your paper is accepted, you normally have a chance to edit the paper, if you wish, and send it to the respondent. Usually the edited version is due to the respondent about a month before the conference. If the respondent does not hear from you, s/he will respond to the paper s/he received from the Interest Group chair.

10) Bring copies of the paper to the conference. You will usually be asked to bring multiple copies of the paper to the conference. Be sure to attach a full title page to each copy (see 5 above) and/or make copies available electronically.

Source: Dawn O. Braithwaite, Ph.D., Communication Studies Department, Univ. of Nebraska-Lincoln

How to Submit a Conference Panel

Most conventions allow for the submission of entire panels, which are also judged competitively. While submitting entire panels is a common activity among faculty, students may not realize that with careful planning, they too can submit a panel.

The purpose of a competitive panel is to bring together scholars from different institutions to present scholarship and/or pedagogy on a focused topic that will be relevant to a wider audience.

Timing. Start putting the panel together at least a month before the deadline. Established scholars will be asked to be on numerous panels. Contacting them earlier will increase your chances of getting them to participate with you. It is fine to contact panelists via email or telephone (email will likely be most efficient).

Format. Panels may follow the traditional convention format: a chair, four presenters, and a respondent. Or, panels may take a more interactive approach, providing discussion among panelists and/or audience members. More commonly, panels are taking the latter approach, as panel members and attendees find the interaction more useful and stimulating.

Some panels require full papers, some require shorter position papers, and others require no papers at all. Before contacting possible panelists, be clear on what you want. Note: many established scholars are less likely to participate on panels with full papers required (unless the panel is organized around the presentation of data-based research projects). Some panels are also organized around presenting research in progress. You may also consider panels that use the “Poster Session” format.

Presenters. Contact individuals who will agree to write papers and/or present on the topic. Do your homework and know who is doing research in this area—look at published work as well as recent conference programs (which are often available on association webpages). Do not hesitate to ask some of the “big name” scholars. They may be happy to participate and looking for opportunities. Other times, they are simply overbooked. You may also ask them for ideas of other people to ask. As a general rule, do not put together a panel of people from the same university (e.g. the members of your recent graduate seminar). These panels are less likely to be accepted and are almost always poorly attended.

Chair. Invite someone to introduce panelists, facilitate the session, and time presentations (if necessary). Ask someone not already on the panel to give more people an opportunity.

Respondent. Many panels do not include a respondent. Include a respondent only if there are papers that will be prepared ahead of time, so that the respondent may read and comment meaningfully. Select a respondent who has expertise in the topic area so that s/he can give an informed and helpful response to all the papers. You may also choose an established scholar to summarize the discussion at the panel.

Submission guidelines. Read the "Call for Papers" document carefully for information and guidelines on submission for the conference. This document will tell you about a conference theme (connect to it if you can), deadlines for submission, and any other information you should know about submitting a panel. Individual disciplines and conferences may have different procedures to follow.

Choose the appropriate division or interest group within the organization for submission of the panel. Faculty colleagues can help you with this selection too. Note: It is unethical to submit a panel to more than one conference and Interest Group within the organization at a time.

Original work. Papers presented on the panel should be original work for that conference, not in press or published at the time of submission. In other words, one should not present the same paper more than

once. There are times on panels when scholars will discuss some information presented previously, for example, as they are drawing together an area of research, but the presentation should be new and prepared for this conference.

Format. Most conferences give a specific format for panel submissions in the “Call for Papers.” Follow these guidelines carefully. Most call for a descriptive title for your panel, a rationale for presenting the panel material and inviting these presenters, and the names and contact information for all panelists. Many guidelines ask submitters to attach a 150-250 word abstract written by each of the presenters, as well as the chair and respondent. Be sure that the panel submitter’s name and contact information are provided. The division chair or association will communicate with the submitter only and the submitter is responsible for contacting panelists in a timely way.

Most conferences will ask you to submit materials electronically. Start early and follow the directions carefully.

Informing panelists. You will be contacted by the interest group chair or association after all proposals are reviewed. It is normally your responsibility to notify your participants about the status of the panel (accepted or rejected). Email contact is fine. Be sure you provide presenters, chairs, and respondents with details such as format of presentations, maximum time of presentations, etc. Send them the time and date of the panel as soon as you receive that information from the interest group chair.

Papers to respondent. If your panel is accepted, the authors will begin writing their papers. Make sure you establish clear and firm deadlines for the receipt of completed papers by the respondent. Consult with the respondent to establish the deadline. Generally, respondents will want all completed papers one month before the convention. Work with the respondent to make sure he/she has received all the papers.

Reminders. About three weeks before the conference, email and remind panelists about the date, time, room, and expectations (e.g. length and format for presentations).

Thank yous. Write a letter of appreciation to each participant following the conference.

Source: Dr. Dawn O. Braithwaite, University of Nebraska-Lincoln. Adapted from materials prepared by Dr. Betsy W. Bach, Dr. David Cornelius, and Dr. Sue Poulsen

Sample Panel Proposal

PANEL PROPOSAL

ENGAGING THE COMMUNITY: INTERPERSONAL RESEARCHERS' CONTRIBUTION TO COMMUNITY-BASED RESEARCH

**Interpersonal Communication Division
National Communication Association
2000 Meeting, Seattle, WA**

Rationale: For the past five years, the Interpersonal Communication Division has sponsored preconferences and panels dedicated to presenting and exploring community-based research. At the 1999 business meeting of the division, the membership indicated continued interest in, and support for, continuing these panels. We have found that many interpersonal scholars are just getting started in community based work, or would like to become involved but do not know where to begin. Our purpose is to bridge that gap by featuring one community-based project-- work by Nataltie Dollar and Brooke Zimmer with street-oriented and "houseless" youth. First, Dollar and Zimmer will provide an extended description of their project, discussing method, findings, and current and potential community implications. Second, four interpersonal communication scholars, who have studied the Dollar and Zimmer work, will discuss how their scholarship could connect to a community-based research effort like this. The presenters' work represents interpersonal communication research in: communication and emotion, communication and management of privacy boundaries, family communication, and cultural communication. Third, we will open the discussion to audience members to talk about how the work they are others are doing can become part of community-based research efforts. Our goal is to model potential community research partnerships by exploring how scholars who have and have not situated their work in community sites may bring valuable resources to the community and, in turn, how their work may benefit from community involvement and connection.

Chair: Dawn O. Braithwaite, University of Nebraska-Lincoln

"Community-based Research with Houseless Youth" Natalie Dollar, Oregon State University,
Brooke Zimmer, Career Education Options Community College Program

"Contributions from Communication and Emotion Research." Sally Planalp, University of
Montana

"Contributions from Communication and Management of Privacy Boundaries Research." Sandra
Petronio, Arizona State University

"Contributions from Family Communication Research." Dawn O. Braithwaite, University of
Nebraska-Lincoln

"Contributions from Cultural Communication Research." Kristine L. Fitch, University of Iowa

2000 NCA Convention Proposal Form

NCA Unit/Affiliate Sponsor: [Interpersonal Communication Division]

Expected Attendance: [30]

Name of Program Submitter

First name: [Dawn]
Middle unit: [O.]
Last name: [Braithwaite]

Address of Submitter (use lines as needed)

Department: [Communication Studies Department]
University: [University of Nebraska-Lincoln]
Street/Box: [424 Oldfather Hall]
City ST Zip: [Lincoln, NE 68588-0329]

Format: [Panel Discussion]

Telephone Numbers/E-mail:

Voice: [(402) 472-2239]
Fax: [(402) 472-6921]
E-mail: [dbraithwaite@unl.ed]

Copy as it will appear in the convention program:

ENGAGING THE COMMUNITY: INTERPERSONAL RESEARCHERS' CONTRIBUTION TO COMMUNITY-BASED RESEARCH

We will present one community-based research project and explore how interpersonal communication researchers' work could contribute to this project.

Chair: Dawn O. Braithwaite, University of Nebraska-Lincoln

“Community-based Research with Houseless Youth” Natalie Dollar, Oregon State University, Brooke Zimmer, Career Education Options Community College Program

“Contributions from Communication and Emotion Research.” Sally Planalp, University of Montana

“Contributions from Communication and Management of Privacy Boundaries Research.” Sandra Petronio, Arizona State University

“Contributions from Family Communication Research.” Dawn O. Braithwaite, University of Nebraska-Lincoln

“Contributions from Cultural Communication.” Kristine Fitch, University of Iowa

Equipment Needed: None

Comments: Please try and schedule after Interpersonal Division business meeting.

Participants' Contact Information: *Fill in names, addresses, email addresses*

PRESENTER'S ABSTRACTS: ATTACHED

Ethical Issues and Obligations when Submitting a Conference Paper or Panel

Some of the responsibilities all faculty and student members of the discipline must take. Several issues come to the forefront:

Submission = Agreement to Attend Conference

If you submit a paper or agree to be on a conference panel, you are at that time committing to attend that conference. Failure to do so is a serious professional breach that hurts the credibility and reputation of the person who did not attend. It also damages the credibility of their institution and department, the panel organizer, and the interest group sponsoring the panel. In addition, nothing makes conference attendees more upset than to choose a certain panel over others only to find out that presenters are not there.

If you have a co-author on a paper, it is not necessary for all authors to attend. And, of course, when serious life events occur, for example illness, pregnancy, or some other very serious unforeseen event, everyone understands that would prevent a person from attending. In that case, be sure to inform the panel organizer, interest group chair, and the chair of the panel as far in advance as possible.

Not attending for reasons that are foreseeable, e.g., too busy, financial limitations-- these are the kinds of issues one needs to think through *before* submitting. Sending a paper along or asking a colleague to present a paper for you does not make up for not attending. In sum, submitting a paper or agreeing to be on a panel is a commitment to attend the conference.

Submitting Ethically

Questions have arisen about the ethics of submitting papers. It is unethical to submit a paper to more than one conference and Interest Group within the organization at a time. One should not submit a paper after it is accepted for publication (in press). In addition, papers presented to conferences should be original work for that conference. In other words, one should not present the same paper twice (the exception is presenting it the first time at a small, student-only conference or if the Call for Papers explicitly stipulates that it is acceptable to present work previously presented). One may present different aspects of a larger project, of course, but presenting the same paper twice what I am talking about.

Getting Papers to Respondents

If your competitive paper is accepted, you normally have a chance to edit the paper, if you wish, and send it to the respondent (usually interest group chairs send the papers to the respondent, but check to make sure). Usually the edited version is due to the respondent about a month before the conference. If the respondent does not hear from you, s/he will respond to the paper s/he received from the Interest Group chair. Whether a competitive paper or panel, it shows poor judgment, as well as poor manners, to send the paper to a respondent less than one week before the conference. If you do that, do not expect the respondent to read your paper and you can fully expect the embarrassment of having them mention this is public at the panel.

Bring Copies of the Paper to the Conference

You will usually be asked to bring multiple copies of the paper to the conference. Be sure to attach a full title page to each copy and bring ample copies with you.

Feel free to talk with your professors if you need help or advice on submitting papers and panels.

Source: Dr. Dawn O. Braithwaite, University of Nebraska-Lincoln (Devel

Responsibilities of Conference Presenters, Chairs, or Respondents

Responsibilities of a Good Convention Presenter:

"Why can't presenters communicate better?" is a very common complaint from convention audiences. Some of us doubt that the problem is better communication, rather few people are given much guidance for convention presentations. The following statements are collected from a number of successful presenters.

1. Do not read selected paragraphs of your paper, deliver an extemporaneous talk about the paper (planned, not canned!).
2. Consider the presentation a chance to invite people to read your paper. Quality of information over quantity.
3. Share with the audience *why* this work is important to you--how did the project/study emerge. Make the presentation conversational and share the important conclusions, concentrating on results and conclusions- what you found and what these findings mean to you and scholars in the discipline. We recommend you spend most of the time on Results and Conclusions.
4. To present conference paper effectively, follow the rules of public speaking:
 - a) Know your time limit and practice as many times as necessary to meet that time limit.
 - b) Do not hesitate to bring a stopwatch and use it during your presentation.
 - c) Consider your audience- think about what would be most interesting for them to hear.
5. Use all the skills of a good public presenter: extemporaneous style-- planned, practiced, but talking WITH the audience; good eye contact, conversational style. Show enthusiasm for, and commitment to, your hard work by preparing and presenting well!

Courtesy Demands:

1. Send a copy of your paper to the critic well in advance of the conference.
2. Bring ample copies of your paper to the conference (usually 25).

Responsibilities of the Panel Chair:

1. Please welcome the audience and indicate that this is one of the panels sponsored by your interest group (indicate co-sponsor when applicable) and give the title of the panel.
2. Introduce all speakers at the beginning of the panel. Include their affiliation and a word about their interests (you may ask for biographical notes from each participant prior to WSCA).
3. Introduce each panelist again prior to his/her presentation by saying. "Please join me in welcoming...." Please also announce the title of the paper about to be presented.
4. Please keep time and give each speaker a signal at an agreed-upon time and a final one minute warning. It is important to keep on time so that each speaker gets his/her full time. Some chairs appoint time-keepers from members of the audience so that they do not need to shuffle notes to the presenters. Note that panels are 80 minutes long. Assuming that you take 5 minutes for introductions, each panelist should have approximately 10-12 minutes to present (assuming there are three papers and one respondent). This should leave time for the respondent and discussion.

5. If there is time at the end of the panel, lead a discussion by recognizing people and regulating the length of their comments.

6. At the conclusion of the panel, please thank the participants and indicate that there are other panels sponsored by your interest group (specify when) and a business meeting (specify time and place). Invite audience members to support your interest group.

Responsibilities of the Panel Respondent:

1. Respondents are a very important part of the scholarly experience at conferences. This is especially true for students and you should keep in mind that many presenters at WSCA are new scholars and students, and many are first-time presenters.

2. Your task is to be insightful and *constructive*; to build scholars' insight and confidence. Some students and new scholars may not be used to oral discussion of their work. You may certainly point out ways they could improve their work, but, as you can imagine, it is important to do so constructively. We ask that you discuss strengths of the work as well as weaknesses.

3. It is insightful to discuss themes running through all the papers on the panel.

4. Respondents are encouraged to summarize their comments in writing and distribute these to authors, and, if you wish, to audience members.

5. If you are a respondent for a competitive paper panel, you should receive papers from the interest group chairs. Authors may update their papers, and interest group chairs should let them know when these papers are due to you.

6. If you are a respondent for a program, you should receive papers from the individual authors, in most cases. Respondents are advised to let the program submitter know the date you need to receive the papers from the authors. You are encouraged to be clear with the submitter about the latest date you will be willing to read papers before the conference. No respondent is responsible for reading incredibly late papers or papers given to them at the conference.

Source: Dr. Dawn O. Braithwaite, University of Nebraska-Lincoln; some material adapted from WSCA convention planner materials

Preparing a Visual Display Presentation (aka “Poster Session”)

The Concept

The point of a poster session is to have your research presented in a creative and interesting way to entice your colleagues to engage in conversation about your research. Like an advertisement, the poster should be visually accessible and persuade colleagues to take the time to stop, read the text, and talk about your research.

Logistics

- Plan to arrive at least 15 minutes early to find your location and to set up your poster
- The location of your board is usually indicated by the conference organizer
- The entire display should fit within a 4' high by 6' wide board
 - SCA plans to provide push pins to fasten your materials to the board, but, just in case, you might want to bring pins or adhesive strips
- It is useful for you to stay with your poster for the entire session. We ask that you find a colleague to stand in for you if there is any time you cannot be present
- Give some thought to how you will safely transport your poster to the convention

Poster Preparation

Three factors to consider when preparing your poster:

Content of the text. Present the least amount of material that will convey the gist of your study

Reading sequence. The reader should know how to follow the text that is, left to right, top to bottom (you may use headings, spaces, numbers, and arrows to indicate the sequence).

Color. Use color to guide the reader's eye and set off different parts of the information

** The goal is to have information that is readable by two to three people deep at one time and the posters should be able to be read in no more than one or two minutes*

Components Of A Poster

Title- The label or title of the study. The author's name should be large and visible from 6' away (writing 1-2" or larger)

Abstract. Since it is the first thing people will read, this is a very important part of your poster. It should be short (maximum of 150 words) and easy to see

Purpose of the study- No more than three or four points should be made suggesting the aims of the study

Methods and Tentative Results. Be very selective about any written text. If you can display the information visually, that is, think about using a figure, table, graph, or even a photograph that will make the poster more enticing. However, *limit the information included on the poster.*

Implications and Future Directions, If this is research in progress your visitors will want to know more about what you hope to find. Make it interesting by conveying the anticipated outcome of your study. If the research is completed, present a summary of findings and implications.

"Dos and Don'ts" for a Poster Session

- Don't try to include everything on the board--be selective!
- Do bring an extended written abstract that will remind visitors about your research project when they return home
- Do be creative with captions and devices to call attention to your poster
- Don't be late to the session or leave your poster unattended

Source: Dawn O. Braithwaite, Ph.D., University of Nebraska-Lincoln, based, in part, on a lecture by Dr. Betty Lou DuBois, New Mexico State University, 1991.

PUBLISHING IN SCHOLARLY JOURNALS AND BOOKS

1) Differences between class papers, conference papers, published manuscripts

2) Choosing the right outlet for your manuscript

Scholarly journals, books, book chapters

- Peer-reviewed journals
- Journal article (invited)
- Book chapters (refereed)
- Book chapters (invited)
- Turning a long manuscript into a book

Peer-review

Blind review

Judging the quality of journal & book outlets

Disciplinary/interdisciplinary reputation

Acceptance/rejection rates for journals

Scholarly fit for your work is important!

Consider what your institution will value (especially when untenured)

3) Choosing the right manuscript to submit

Does my work fit the journal content and editor?

Check recent issues of the journal

Query editor

Editor and their tenure/timeline (are the editor's volumes almost full?)

Editors generally have three-year terms and start receiving ms. A year before publishing their first issue. You can query editor on this.

Know what the editor will do if their pages are full (this varies from discipline and journal)

Editorial Boards and Reviewers (check journal and/or web site)

Usually two of three reviews will come from this Editorial Board- when a good fit, include their work

Time of year

Watch post-convention, holiday, or summer rush

4) Preparing the manuscript to send out for review

How do I know when my manuscript is ready?

Getting peer feedback

Importance of “small stuff”--following guidelines, style sheet, proofreading

Errors hurt your credibility

5) How the review process works

Sending out a manuscript for review

What does the editor do with the manuscript?

What do the reviewers do with the manuscript?

How long does it take to get an answer?

What if I do not hear anything for six months?

6) Reading and interpreting your reviews

Differences in feedback from professors and journal reviewers

Reading the reviews

The initial read of a review can sometimes be hard

Put review away for a short time, if needed

The best editors will identify the most important issues for you

Categories of decision letters

Accept as is (rare!)

Accept with minor *or* major revisions

Revise and resubmit (major, minor revisions)

Most common in Comm. Studies (*many never follow through*)

Reject for fit and suggest you submit elsewhere

Reject

7) Dealing with feedback, changes, and rejection

If revising, give the editor a timeline (and stick to it)

Do not take too long to revise

Decide what you are willing and able to change/not change. You may be able to confer with the editor on this once you have a plan in mind.

Write a descriptive, anonymous feedback letter, detailing the changes you made

Letter should be specific and address the reviewers and editor comments

Do not take a defensive tone

If you cannot make changes suggested, provide a rationale

What happens to a revised manuscript?

Ms. usually goes back to the same reviewers

You may be asked to revise more than once

Be sure that your manuscript appears as you would want it to appear in print (hard to make changes later)

8) Once the manuscript is accepted—what happens then?

Timeline for publication

In-Press

Galley proofs/page proofs

Answer editor or publisher questions

Very few changes can be made at this point

Be prepared to return these quickly

Source: Dawn O. Braithwaite, Ph.D., Dept. of Communication Studies, University of Nebraska-Lincoln

SO YOU'D LIKE A RECOMMENDATION?

A recommendation is needed when a university, employer, or other entity requests one. Some organizations will require a letter, some require the recommender fill out a form, and some require both. Some will not require a letter but rather will contact a recommendation to talk about a candidate.

Most recommenders are asked to provide many recommendations during the year. Your thoughtfulness and careful preparation will help your recommender be able to write the best letter possible to help you. Remember, that *the person requesting the recommendation must take responsibility and initiative* in the recommendation process. This document will talk about recommendation letters and of course many of the points below pertain to verbal recommendations as well. Although recommenders will vary in their preferences, here are some general guidelines to follow:

A. Asking the recommender

1) **Ask the recommender in person when possible.**

- "ask"- no recommender owes you a recommendation. You are requesting help from that person; make your statement in the form of a request. Be willing to take "no" for an answer.
- "in person"- do not put the request under an office door, leave in a mailbox, or grab the recommender in the hallway. Ask the recommender when they will have time to discuss this with you, preferably during their posted office hour. Obviously sometimes we need to do this by phone or email and recommenders understand that. In person is best when you can do it.

2) **Ask if the recommender would be able to provide a *favorable* recommendation.**

- If the recommender cannot honestly provide a favorable recommendation, you will want to find another person who will.

3) **Ask if the recommender would be able to provide a *specific* recommendation.**

- If the recommender does not know you well enough to be specific in their comments, the recommendation will not do you much good anyway. Ask someone else.

B. Your responsibility: What you should do

1) **Allow ample time for the recommender to write the letter.**

- At least *two weeks* or more should be allowed.

2) **Provide the recommender with *all* the relevant forms and instructions at one time.**

- Find out how your recommender wants to receive the materials. They ask you to send all materials electronically. If they want to materials in hard copy, put them in a large labeled envelope (your name and phone number) so the materials will not get lost. Whatever you do, *send this all at one time* in as few documents/attachments as possible.
- If the organization provides a form for the letter, get the form to the recommender.
- If the organization provides general instructions for preparing letters, send the instructions to the recommender. Highlight the instructions. Send along the information about the letter that is needed-- the specific job announcement, call for papers, award call, etc.
- Make sure the recommender has the *correct and full name, title, address for the person/organization to whom the letter is addressed* (make sure all this is spelled correctly), and the *deadline* for submitting the letter. Some will want this information electronically. Check with your recommender.

3) **Type in all information you are responsible for providing.**

- *Type* your name and other information on *all* forms, where needed (handwriting is unprofessional).

4) Provide the recommender with your vita/resume and statement of your goals.

- *In addition to sending your resume*, remind the recommender of your major(s) and minor(s), which classes you took from the recommender, term when you took the classes and grade received in those classes.
- Provide the recommender with any information about your participation in the class, projects completed, etc. Help the recommender recall your class performance in as much detail as possible if they do not know you well or if time has elapsed since they worked with you.
- Remind the recommender about relevant experiences, internships, research projects, grants etc. they can highlight. Stress especially leadership positions held and awards won.
- Provide the recommender with information on some of your relevant activities, Provide the recommender with a statement of your goals and/or reasons for choosing the university/job/conference/award/fellowship for which you are applying.

5) Provide explicit instructions on sending the recommendation.

- Give the recommender specific instructions whether the recommendation is to be mailed, emailed, given to you to mail, etc.
- If the recommendation is to be mailed, offer to provide the recommender with an addressed envelope for each recommendation. *Type* the correct address on each envelope (ask for university envelopes if they are needed; some recommenders will not need envelopes—ask).

6) Make sure the recommender has sent the letter of recommendation.

- *Politely check* with the recommender *a few days before the deadline* to make sure the letter has been completed and sent. Don't be shy about this—we do forget! It is your job to make sure the recommendation has been sent.

7) Follow up the recommendation with a thank-you letter to the recommender.

- Recommendation take time, thought, and effort. Let the recommender know you appreciate the effort made on your behalf.

C. Do students receive copies of the letters of recommendation?

1) Each recommender will have a policy on giving students copies of the recommendations.

- Ask the recommender what their practice is, if you desire a copy.

2) Some recommenders will be willing to discuss their recommendations with you after they are written.

- If you wish, you may ask the recommender if s/he would be willing to discuss the recommendations with you.

© Dawn O. Braithwaite, Ph.D., updated: 2008, Communication Studies, Department University of Nebraska-Lincoln. Earlier version published in: *Association for School, College and University Staffing Annual*, Addison, IL, 1989.

Tips for Creating a Curriculum Vitae

Bill Seiler, Professor and Chair
Department of Communication Studies
University of Nebraska

A picture is worth a thousand words so it has been said. In the case of the résumé, vitae, or curriculum vitae (CV), however, it can be worth a lot more than a thousand words—it could be your future or the difference between getting the academic position you desire or not. Although no one document is necessarily the only bases upon which hiring decisions are made, the CV is a picture of who you are and what you have accomplished. How important is it in the interview process? It is extremely important! It is the one document that is used by all search committees to decide whether a candidate fits the job and should remain on the list of possible candidates.

The CV is a document that requires a lot of thought in its preparation and should never be done haphazardly. You need to think about how you want it to connect to those who are going to read it or what message or messages you want it to convey to the reader. Do you want to highlight that you are an effective teacher, an active researcher, or a good department citizen? Or do you want it to convey all of these messages? Which message is more important to stress? How do you know which to convey if you are to be considered for the position? Here are some suggestions for you to consider when developing your CV to demonstrate that you are the best fit for the job:

- Determine the message you want to convey as the focal point in your CV. Is it your research, teaching, or service? This is usually determined by how you position this information on your CV. For example, if you place research first you are putting it in the primary position and thus readers will likely see it as your strength or emphasis. You need to review the job description and what it is emphasizing as well as the type of institution and its mission in order to determine how you will organize your CV.
- Develop several versions of your CV rather than sending one that is not focused or directed toward the position for which you are applying.
- Do not over embellish your accomplishments--you must always be truthful, accurate, and honest. Information can be verified. If you are caught giving misleading or inaccurate information it will automatically eliminate you from consideration, not to mention the potential negative consequences that will become known throughout the discipline.
- Be consistent when cite your research---it is recommended that you use APA and that you use it correctly.
- Proof, re-proof, and re-proof everything to ensure that there are no spelling or grammatical errors. These types of errors will likely automatically eliminate you from consideration. Ask a colleague or faculty member to proof read it.
- Do not include superfluous information or dated information. No one is interested in what you did in high school or your summer jobs unless they are related to the position you are seeking.
- The CV should always be printed clearly on a good quality white paper.
- Do not include a photograph or personal information that might invite discrimination.
- Do not include lengthy text explanations. Place longer explanations in your cover letter or teaching dossier.
- Make sure your contact information is up-to-date and accurate.
- Do not include references—do include them on a separate page with complete contact information and attach at end of CV. Of course, make sure that those who are listed as references are agreeable and willing to give you a positive evaluation.

- Look at models of other CVs for ideas—check out multiple examples from faculty or advanced students who are in the job market---examine which formats and styles are best to convey your message.
- There are many excellent websites to help you develop an effective CV—you can do a search using key words *Curriculum Vitae* and you will find an array of sites. One that is particular helpful is <http://www.training.nih.gov/careers/careercent/cv.html> or you might check your university's graduate or career services websites. Check departmental websites for different models.
- Once you have completed your CV, you must keep it current. Add new information and accomplishments as soon as possible. Most faculty members are asked to provide their CV for one reason or other several times a year, and certainly as part of their annual reviews.
- You should create a separate teaching portfolio or dossier to supplement your CV. In this document you include teaching data, your teaching philosophy, and list courses you have taught or can teach. Your teaching data should be concise and very clearly presented in a table along with clear interpretations of what the data mean. You may include student comments. The courses you list should correspond to the job description.

There is much to consider when developing and preparing a CV. However, if you keep in mind that it represents who you are and how you compare to others with whom you are competing for the same position, you will understand why it is important to do it carefully and completely. Your CV not only shows who you are but what the program or institution will get should they hire you. Most CVs follow a standard format, but a really good one should also distinguish you from other applicants and should show the professional qualities you have to offer.