



# SCHOOL OF JOURNALISM GRADUATE STUDENT HANDBOOK 2019-2020



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## **WELCOME TO THE UNIVERSITY OF ARIZONA SCHOOL OF JOURNALISM!**

This handbook is designed to guide you through your graduate program. It highlights information specific to the School of Journalism and complements materials on the Graduate College website:

<http://grad.arizona.edu/>

Founded in 1885, the University of Arizona is a major land-grant university ranked among the top public universities for education and research. It ranks 46th among all public universities. UA belongs to the Association of American Universities, which includes the 62 leading public and private research universities.

The School of Journalism is part of the College of Social and Behavioral Sciences, also known as the People's College. The school has a four-fold mission:

1. To provide future journalists with the intellectual training and professional skills necessary to gather, evaluate, organize and disseminate information in a way that enables citizens to participate in a democratic society in a meaningful way.
2. To provide all students with the opportunity to develop an understanding of the role of the press in a multicultural society, so they can learn to think critically about the ways in which the news media affect individuals, institutions and social values. This includes an understanding of the legal and ethical issues that are an integral part of the journalism profession.
3. To encourage faculty scholarship that reflects a balance of theoretical and professional approaches to exploring the role and impact of the news media at a time when information generated by news organizations has become a major component of international cross-border data flow.
4. To develop a dialogue with journalism educators and professional journalists concerning the most effective ways to encourage professional standards at a time when the profession is confronting unprecedented challenges arising from the technological changes that have created the global information age.

Welcome!

### **School of Journalism**

Louise Foucar Marshall Building

Room 334

University of Arizona

Tucson, AZ 85721

## CAREER OPPORTUNITIES FOR JOURNALISM GRADUATES

Journalism is a competitive field, but students who are dedicated, curious and hard-working will find enormous satisfaction in a career they'll love. Graduates of our master's program have pursued a variety of journalism careers.

- **Reporters** inform the public about news and events, spending much of their time in the field conducting interviews and investigating stories. They work on tight deadlines in a fast-paced environment, striving to be the first to publish the story. They report for newspapers, magazines, websites, radio and television.
- **Editors** collaborate with writers to plan stories, edit content and oversee every step of the publishing process. Editors work at magazines, newspapers, online and mobile media outlets. Basically, anywhere there's a story, there's an editor.
- **Video journalists** report, shoot, write and produce news solo. They have the skills to create an entire news story from the ground up, handling all the different jobs that go with producing a news story from start to finish.
- **Social media specialists** communicate with the public through social media platforms. They also review data and analytics to see how they can improve their news outlet's social shareability.
- **Broadcast anchors** deliver scripted and ad lib material on air with professionalism, personality and purpose. Some anchors head out into the field and break big stories. These newsroom leaders help mentor producers and reporters. Anchors might also write and edit scripts.
- **Broadcast producers** are responsible for the creation and presentation of newscasts. They work in a fast-paced, deadline-driven environment to help deliver news content to various social media sites and websites as well.
- **Station managers** oversee the day-to-day operation of radio or television stations. They lead the management team, motivate the staff and ensure that the key objectives of the station are met in terms of output, audience and revenue.
- **Graphic designers** are responsible for the design of media products in both print and digital formats, such as a newspaper, magazine and website. They might also edit, post and update stories and multimedia content for digital platforms.

Not all journalists work for a media outlet.

- **Technical writers** prepare instruction manuals and how-to guides to explain how a product or service works.
- **Grant writers** use their persuasive talents to demonstrate the importance of a nonprofit organization's causes through written proposals and win funding for research, support or other needs.

### UA School of Journalism alumni

To see where some graduates of the UA School of Journalism master's programs are working, go to <https://journalism.arizona.edu/masters-alumni>

## CONTACTS

**Director** (manages the school and represents it within UA; oversees the school's budget)

Carol Schwalbe

[cschwalbe@email.arizona.edu](mailto:cschwalbe@email.arizona.edu)

(520) 300-0693

**Associate Director** (helps the director run the school)

Mike McKisson

[McKisson@email.arizona.edu](mailto:McKisson@email.arizona.edu)

(520) 621-6385

**Director of Graduate Studies** (advises you about courses; helps you select an adviser or committee chair and committee members for your project or thesis)

Maggy Zanger

[zanger@email.arizona.edu](mailto:zanger@email.arizona.edu)

(520) 621-7556

**Graduate Program Coordinator** (helps with the logistics of your graduate program)

Debbie Cross

[debbiecross@email.arizona.edu](mailto:debbiecross@email.arizona.edu)

(520) 621-9616

**Outreach Coordinator** (handles alumni relations, events and social media)

Mike Chesnick

[mchesnick1@email.arizona.edu](mailto:mchesnick1@email.arizona.edu)

(520) 626-3079

**Administrative Assistant** (manages the main office)

Andrés Dominguez

[dad4@email.arizona.edu](mailto:dad4@email.arizona.edu)

(520) 621-7556

**Internship Coordinator** (helps you find and succeed in internships)

Renée Schafer Horton

[rshorton@email.arizona.edu](mailto:rshorton@email.arizona.edu)

(520) 626-9219

**24/7 Computer/Email Support (UITS)** (provides technical and computing support)

(520) 626-8324

## **FACULTY (eligible to serve on committees)**

### **David Cuillier**

**Research:** citizen and press access to government information, psychological effects in journalism

**Teaching:** reporting, data journalism, government secrecy, media law and ethics

### **Geoff Ellwand**

**Teaching:** television news writing, reporting and production; documentary production

### **Rogelio Garcia**

**Teaching:** broadcast writing, reporting and production; media law

### **Celeste González de Bustamante**

**Research:** television news and media in Latin America, violence against journalists in Mexico

**Teaching:** television news writing, reporting and production; documentary production

### **Susan Knight**

**Teaching:** reporting public affairs, feature writing, journalism ethics

### **Linda Lumsden**

**Research:** alternative press, history of U.S. journalism

**Teaching:** journalism history, journalism ethics and journalism, gender and race

### **Mike McKisson**

**Teaching:** multimedia, entrepreneurial journalism, mobile app development, tech tools

### **Kim Newton**

**Teaching:** photojournalism, multimedia

### **Jeannine Relly**

**Research:** global influences on news media systems, government information policy, press-state relations

**Teaching:** news writing, reporting, theory and practice, research methods, media and terrorism

### **Bill Schmidt**

**Teaching:** reporting, feature writing

### **Carol Schwalbe**

**Research:** visual communication, gatekeeping, role of news media in advancing govt. accountability

**Teaching:** reporting, editing, feature writing, science and environmental journalism

### **Nancy Sharkey**

**Teaching:** editing, feature writing, reporting public affairs

### **Susan Swanberg**

**Research:** role of propaganda in the history of science journalism

**Teaching:** news writing, science and environmental journalism, media law

### **Maggy Zanger**

**Teaching:** international journalism and Middle East in particular, media coverage of conflict, media and terrorism

## PHYSICAL RESOURCES & FACILITIES

The graduate and undergraduate programs in journalism, along with classrooms, faculty offices and the main office, are located on the third floor of the Marshall Building.

### Grad Lounge

Graduate students have dedicated space (mailboxes, desks, bookcases, printer, fridge, coffee maker, microwave, sofa) in Marshall 311. You can access the grad lounge 24/7 by swiping your CatCard. See the administrative assistant in the main office about gaining access.

### Library resources

The University of Arizona takes pride in the outstanding quality of its libraries. The Main Library and the Science Library, both on the main campus, hold extensive collections of general and scientific periodicals and books.

You may borrow technology from the library—laptops, tablets, cords, chargers, cameras, projectors, scanners, audiovisual equipment and more. Just bring your CatCard to one of the library service desks.

Mary Feeney is the wonderful librarian who specializes in journalism resources. She is happy to help you with research projects. Make an appointment at [mfeeney@email.arizona.edu](mailto:mfeeney@email.arizona.edu) or (520) 307-2615. Her office is in Room A403 of the main library.

### Gear-to-Go Center

The [Gear-to-Go Center](#) offers free loan of digital still cameras, digital video cameras, 3D cameras, microphones, audio recorders, lights and tripods for UA students, faculty and staff for any course-related, not-for-profit purpose. **You must bring your CatCard.** Complete the [Access Form](#) 72 hours in advance of checking out equipment. You may reserve equipment over the phone or in person but not via email or voicemail.

- Computer Center, Room 214C (inside the main entrance, 1077 N. Highland Ave.)
- (520) 621-0GTG (0484)
- OSCR homepage: <https://oscr.arizona.edu/>

### Human subjects

The protection of human subjects is an integral component of many aspects of modern research. You'll become familiar with human subjects protection and other relevant laws and regulations in JOUR 489/589 Research Methods. You must check with your chair to see whether your thesis or professional project needs approval from the UA Institutional Review Board. Journalism's IRB representative can also help with this process. More information is available at <http://orcr.vpr.arizona.edu/>



## **CHECKLIST FOR NEW STUDENTS**

### **Get a UA email account**

You must have a UA email account. Go to <https://account.arizona.edu> All university business is conducted via your UA email address.

### **Enroll in classes**

Work with the director of graduate studies to pick classes for your first semester. Register online using UAccess. You can get to UAccess from the UA's home page ([www.arizona.edu](http://www.arizona.edu)) by clicking on the student tab.

If you can't register, it may be because Campus Health doesn't have your complete immunization record. Check with Campus Health or the graduate coordinator to determine if you have a registration hold.

### **Join the journalism internship listserv**

Send an email to [Renée Schafer Horton](mailto:rene@journalism.arizona.edu), our amazing internship coordinator, and ask her to add you to her journalism internship listserv. You'll gain valuable information about internships, the school's internship fair and job opportunities.

### **Get your ID**

Once you have enrolled, obtain a CatCard (UA ID) from the CatCard office in the Student Union.

### **Get access to the Marshall Building and the Grad Lounge**

Once you have a CatCard, you can get access to the Marshall Building and the Grad Lounge. Bring your CatCard to the administrative assistant in Marshall 334.

### **Tell us your story**

Send the graduate coordinator your bio for the school website. Include your program, areas of interest, undergrad degree, hometown, background/goals and why you chose to study journalism at UA. See the examples at <https://journalism.arizona.edu/meet-our-current-grad-students>

### **Meet with the graduate coordinator**

See Debbie Cross in Marshall 334 to update your contact information, ask any questions you have and make sure you are set for the coming semester!

## **KEEPING IN THE LOOP**

It is important to stay in the loop to make sure you hear about job and funding opportunities, internships, student clubs, academic policies and so forth. Here's how to keep informed.

### **Journalism graduate student listserv**

The graduate coordinator posts messages at least once a week on the grad student listserv. To post to the listserv, send a message to the graduate coordinator.

### **Journalism internship listserv**

Internship coordinator [Renée Schafer Horton](#) circulates valuable information about internships, the school's internship fair and job opportunities.

### **Committee chair**

Your chair can help you not only with your thesis or project but also with research, professional/academic development, career/academic opportunities and more.

### **Monthly get-togethers for journalism grad students**

Join the graduate coordinator and a faculty member each semester for an informal get-together each month. The school will provide treats or appetizers at Gentle Ben's; the drinks are on your own.

### **GPSC service**

Participate in the [Graduate and Professional Student Council](#) (GPSC), which serves as the voice of UA's graduate students. The GPSC also disburses funds for travel and professional development. Join their listserv! Here's a link to their website: <https://gpsc.arizona.edu/about-gpsc>. Subscribe to their listserv by scrolling to the bottom of the page (right) for details.

## **IMPORTANT LINKS**

Graduate students are expected to follow the policies and procedures for both the UA Graduate College and the School of Journalism. Policies are updated frequently. It is your responsibility to comply with current policies.

**School of Journalism:** <https://journalism.arizona.edu/>

Information about faculty and staff, student clubs, news and events

**School of Journalism Graduate Program:** <https://journalism.arizona.edu/grads>

Information about degree programs, tuition/student aid, courses, resources, study abroad

**School of Journalism Faculty:** <https://journalism.arizona.edu/peo-faculty>

Research interests, courses taught, professional background, curriculum vita

**University of Arizona Graduate College:** <http://grad.arizona.edu/>

GradPath forms, academic services, policies, contacts, resources, deadlines, funding

**University of Arizona Graduate College:** <http://grad.arizona.edu/new-and-current-students>

Child care services and family-friendly information, professional development, health and wellness

**University of Arizona General Catalog:** <http://catalog.arizona.edu/>

Comprehensive information related to academic programs, including schedule of classes, course descriptions, deadlines, academic calendar, registration and graduate policies

**Academic integrity:** <http://deanofstudents.arizona.edu/codeofacademicintegrity> (link is external)

Students taking courses for credit are subject to this code of academic integrity.

**Responsible Conduct of Research:** <http://www.orcr.arizona.edu/> (link is external)

Policies and procedures that promote the safe, legal and ethical conduct of research

## FUNDING

### School of Journalism

- **Zenger Fellowship.** Each year the School of Journalism awards the John Peter and Anna Catherine Zenger Fellowship to an incoming master's student in recognition of academic achievement and potential. The fellowship covers in-state tuition, mandatory fees and program fees up to 12 units per semester for the first academic year and possibly the second academic year, based on academic and other factors.
- **Travel aid.** The Carpenter Student Travel Scholarship helps UA graduate and undergrad journalism students travel to expand their knowledge of the world and skills in journalism. Scholarships can be used to attend conferences, practice journalism internationally or participate in other journalism education activities. Scholarships average \$500. Recipients are expected to share what they learn with other students before receiving the scholarships.
- **Annual scholarships.** The school offers scholarships made possible through the generosity of donors, investors and alumni. You can apply for several of these scholarships through [Scholarship Universe](#). Is this true for grad students?

### Jobs

- The [Daily Wildcat](#), UA's student newspaper, runs ads for jobs.
- The **Wildcat Student Employment Fair** is held every August to hire UA students for the upcoming academic year. Students are invited to attend via listservs and Daily Wildcat ads. Students can access a list of participating departments and organizations via the Career Services website before the fair begins. Dozens of UA departments participate, as do local businesses interested in hiring students.

### Assistantships

- **Assistantships.** The School of Journalism does not offer teaching assistantships, research assistantships or graduate assistantships. To apply for a graduate assistantship elsewhere at the university, contact the department where you would like to work to see if there are any openings. For academic departments, the best contact is usually the graduate coordinator. For non-academic departments, start with the business manager. There is no complete listing of available positions.
- One place to look for a teaching, research or graduate assistantship is in the **weekly newsletter published by the Graduate & Professional Student Council (GPSC)**. You can subscribe at the bottom right of the [GPSC home page](#).

### Other sources

- [Fellowships, grants and scholarships](#) are available from a variety of sources. Be sure to see the Gradfunding Newsletter listed there.
- The UA Graduate College's [Graduate Access Fellowship](#) is intended to broaden the access of U.S. students to graduate education and to promote the diversity of our graduate student body. Eligibility for these fellowships is restricted to incoming domestic graduate students who have shown academic achievement despite facing challenging social, economic or educational obstacles. Fellowships for master's students provide up to \$4,000. NOTE: Students cannot apply directly for a Graduate Access Fellowship. Only departments can nominate incoming students to

the Graduate College. Email the graduate coordinator for more information.

- The university offers other [fellowships and scholarships](#) to foster a diverse student body.
- [University of Arizona Alumni Association](#) chapters and clubs award \$1 million in scholarships each year.
- The Graduate & Professional Student Council (GPSC) awards [travel grants](#) for graduate and professional students who are attending or presenting research at academic or professional conferences.
- [Taylor/Blakeslee University Fellowships](#) are available for students "who have been accepted for enrollment in graduate-level programs in science writing."
- The American Association of University Women offers [Career Development Grants](#) (\$2,000–\$12,000) to women pursuing a certificate or degree to advance their careers, change careers or reenter the workforce and whose bachelor's degree was received at least five years before the award period.

#### **International students**

- The UA Graduate College provides information about funding for international students studying in the United States: <https://admissions.arizona.edu/cost-aid/international/scholarships-loans>
- The American Association of University Women offers [International Fellowships](#) (\$18,000–\$30,000) for women pursuing full-time graduate or postdoctoral study in the United States who are not U.S. citizens or permanent residents.

## **GRADUATE DEGREE PROGRAMS IN JOURNALISM**

Full-time students take at least 9 units each semester. Students may also enroll part-time.

### **LEARNING OUTCOMES FOR MA PROGRAM:**

#### **Critical Thinking**

Conduct journalistic investigations or journalism studies by methods appropriate to the profession.  
Collect and evaluate reliability of information using methods appropriate to the field.

#### **Communication**

Communicate clearly, concisely and accurately through the written word, imagery, or multimedia.

#### **Diverse Perspectives**

Demonstrate an understanding of the diversity of peoples and cultures and the significance and impact of journalism representations of people in a global society.

#### **Roles and Responsibilities**

Understand and apply basic mass communication theories to journalism.

Demonstrate understanding of the role and responsibilities of journalism in democracy.

#### **Legal and Ethical Principles**

Demonstrate comprehension of media law relevant to journalism.

Understand professional ethical standards applicable to journalism and/or journalism studies research.

### **M.A. programs**

#### **M.A. in Journalism, professional emphasis**

The skills-oriented curriculum includes writing, multimedia and on-the-street reporting for print, television and online media serving communities in southern Arizona. Those interested in the skills-oriented program are expected to demonstrate outstanding English and writing skills because of the rigor of the assignments and the expectation that after graduation they may begin working immediately in a news organization. Full-time students generally take two years to complete this 33-unit program. For semester-by-semester details and a list of requirements and electives, see the [website](#).

#### **M.A. in Journalism, studies emphasis**

The studies emphasis concentrates on the news media as an academic discipline that focuses on the nature and effects of journalism in a global society. Students explore international media models, media law, ethics, journalism history and the effects of media coverage on contemporary societies around the world. This 33-unit program is an alternative for students who are interested in pursuing a doctoral degree and entering academia rather than in acquiring the professional skills offered in the professional emphasis option. For semester-by-semester details and a list of requirements and electives, see the [website](#).

#### **One-year M.A. in Journalism**

Students must complete a minimum of 33 units to graduate. The curriculum consists of four required courses, including a final project or an approved internship, plus skills courses and electives. Electives can be drawn from journalism or with permission from other disciplines. There is no thesis option. For semester-by-semester details, see the [webpage](#).

#### **Accelerated Master's Program (AMP)**

The Accelerated Master's Program enables undergraduates who have a minimum 3.3 GPA to earn both bachelor's and master's degrees in five years. Students take 12 graduate credits in their fourth year and continue to work with the director of graduate studies in their fifth year to ensure that all courses and requirements are met, including a project or thesis. For more detail, see the [website](#).

### **Dual-degree programs**

Dual-degree programs allow students to explore special areas of interest at the same time they hone their journalistic skills and understanding. In just one year of study beyond the stand-alone journalism degrees (language training excepted), they can earn two master's degrees:

- [Dual M.A. in Journalism and Legal Studies](#)
- [Dual M.A. in Journalism and Environmental Science](#)
- [Dual M.A. in Journalism and Master of Public Administration](#)
- [Dual M.A. in Journalism and Latin American Studies](#)
- [Dual M.A. in Journalism and Middle Eastern and North African Studies](#)

### **Graduate specialties**

In addition to the core journalism courses to earn a master's degree (JOUR 508, JOUR 509, JOUR 589 and JOUR 909 or JOUR 910), you may select a specialty, if you wish, in Digital Journalism, Global Journalism or Science and Environmental Journalism. The specialization is noted on your diploma and transcript. Each specialty requires 9 credit hours. For more detail, see the [website](#).

- Digital Journalism
- Global Journalism
- Science and Environmental Journalism

### **Professional M.A. Partnership with SILLC**

A partnership with the School of International Languages, Literatures, and Cultures (SILLC) allows journalism graduate students to take up to 9 units offered by any of the SILLC master's programs (Classics, East Asian Studies, French, German Studies, Russian and Slavic Studies). Master's students in SILLC programs can take up to 9 graduate units in the School of Journalism. See the [website](#) for more detail.

### **Ph.D. Minor in Journalism**

This program welcomes doctoral students in other programs who want to increase their understanding of journalism practices and/or professional skills in the United States or globally. The minor comprises 9 units from 500-level courses in the School of Journalism for which students have the prerequisites. In consultation with the director of graduate studies, doctoral students may select professional skills courses, journalism studies courses or a combination. After selecting a tentative slate of courses, students must complete a Doctoral Plan of Study, declaring Journalism as their Ph.D. minor. Submit the form via [GradPath](#) in UAccess. For more detail, see the [website](#).

Comprehensive exams—both written and oral—must include the minor. If a program chooses to offer the minor, then it must ensure that the student has a comprehensive knowledge of that field. The writtens can be done in a number of ways—a question or two added to the major program's writtens or a free-standing short exam or integrative paper. A minor is more than a couple of classes; it needs to be integrated with the student's major and evaluated in a comprehensive way. Sometimes students want to add a minor late or to change minors. That is acceptable, but some arrangement needs to be made to ensure that there is a comprehensive written and oral examination over the minor field. The oral comp committee requires a fourth person because it must cover the minor. The final defense requires only three people because it does not require participation of the minor.

## **ADVISING**

Faculty members are dedicated to your success. Mentoring graduate students is one of the most rewarding aspects of our jobs. You'll meet with the director of graduate studies each semester to discuss your academic progress, select courses for the following semester and pick a project chair or thesis committee chair and members.

While working on your project or thesis, you'll meet on a fairly regular basis with your adviser or chair. To make the most of these meetings, it is important that you come prepared. Plan to email outlines and drafts ahead of your meeting to ensure that the time is spent moving forward rather than simply catching your chair up on what you've been doing. It is your responsibility to keep in touch with your adviser or chair. Email is strongly recommended when face-to-face meetings can't be arranged.

You are also encouraged to cultivate relationships with your committee members as well as other faculty. Meet with professors during their office hours, or email them to arrange a mutually convenient time.

## **ANNUAL REVIEW**

### **First-year review**

The purpose of the first-year review is to inform you of the faculty's judgment of your overall progress and to point out both perceived strengths and possible areas of improvement, based on collective discussion of your work during your first year. The director of graduate studies synthesizes comments from faculty who have worked with the student into a written evaluation summary and includes it with the annual evaluation (below). The summary and evaluation are given to the student and placed in the student's file. If a student is judged not to be doing well in particular areas, the commenting faculty may recommend (a) that the student take or sit in on additional coursework in weak areas or (b) that the student not continue in the graduate program. In any case, students are encouraged to discuss their progress periodically with the director of graduate studies, their chair and the faculty members who are most familiar with their work.

### **Second-year review**

Students who are graduating in the spring semester of their second year do **not** have a review.

Students who are **not** graduating in the spring semester of their second year undergo a similar review midway through the spring semester as a follow up to the first-year evaluation. Comments from faculty who have worked with the student in the third and fourth semesters are sent to the director of graduate studies, who synthesizes these comments into a written evaluation summary and includes it with the annual evaluation (below). The summary and evaluation are given to the student and placed in the student's file. If the evaluation is negative, the director of graduate studies consults with all relevant faculty to determine a course of action. The courses of action are the same as those for the first-year evaluation.

### **Annual evaluation for graduate students**

This evaluation will help us gauge your academic progress during the past academic year and identify areas for improvement.

Progress toward degree

1. Excellent
2. Average
3. Moderately delayed or somewhat low
4. Unsatisfactory

Quality of academic work

1. Excellent
2. Average



3. Slightly or moderately problematic
4. Unsatisfactory
5. Insufficient information to evaluate quality of work

Both scales represent an average across all the work you have done. For example, a rating of 3 for quality of academic work could reflect average quality of work in some classes and somewhat problematic work in others. A rating other than 1 or 2 indicates that you should discuss with your professor(s) what areas you could improve. A rating of 3 for progress might simply reflect a known reason for delayed progress toward degree, such as health or family issues.

## **ACADEMIC PROGRESS**

### **Satisfactory academic progress**

A high level of performance is expected of students in our graduate program. The minimum criteria for satisfactory progress include the following:

- Cumulative GPA of at least 3.0 in all graduate course work. GPA is calculated at the end of each semester.
- No more than two incompletes at any given time.
- Successful defense of your thesis or project proposal by the end of the third semester.
- Successful defense of your thesis or project by the end of the fourth semester.

For more information, see <http://catalog.arizona.edu/policy/graduate-academic-standing-progress-and-probation>

### **Time to complete your degree**

Most full-time students (at least 9 units per semester) complete the Accelerated Master's Program in 1 year, the M.A. in Journalism (professional emphasis and studies emphasis) in 2 years and a dual degree in 2.5 to 3 years.

You must complete all requirements for the master's degree in 6 years. The clock begins ticking with the earliest course listed on your Master's Plan of Study, including credits transferred from other institutions.

If you take a break from your studies or if your time to degree exceeds 6 years, check with the [Graduate Student Academic Services](#) office to determine your options.

If you do not finish your degree in 6 years, you may petition for an [extension of time to complete degree](#). If your coursework is more than 6 years old, you may be required to take additional courses.

### **Incompletes**

You may have no more than two incompletes at any given time. You are encouraged to take care of all incompletes before the beginning of the following semester. If your instructor doesn't remove the incomplete (I) grade within one year, it will automatically convert to a failing grade.

You do not have an automatic right to an incomplete in any course. You must negotiate an incomplete (and a plan to make up the missing assignments, quizzes or exams) well before the last class of the semester. You and your professor will fill out an Incomplete Grade Contract where the instructor specifies (1) which assignments or exams should be completed and when, (2) how this work will be graded, and (3) how your course grade will be calculated. Both you and the instructor sign this agreement, and both of you keep a copy. A copy is also given to the Graduate Coordinator.

You can download the Incomplete Grade Contract at <https://www.registrar.arizona.edu/online-forms-available-from-office-of-the-registrar>, where it's listed in the Academic Program Forms.

### **Leave of absence**

Any graduate student may apply for a [Leave of Absence \(link is external\)](#) for up to one year for academic, medical or personal reasons. Normally, such leaves do not extend the time to degree. For more information, see <http://grad.arizona.edu/policies/academic-policies/extension-time-degree>

### **Academic probation**

If you do **not** have a cumulative GPA of 3.0 or higher at the end of a given semester, the Graduate College will place you on probation. You are required to meet with the director of graduate studies,

discuss steps to address the problems that led to the probationary status and draw up a written plan of action. After the first semester on probation, you will be allowed to register for one additional semester. If your cumulative GPA does not reach at least 3.0 by the end of the second consecutive semester of probation, you will be blocked from registering for courses and you will be disqualified from the graduate program. The school may petition for a [one semester extension \(link is external\)](#) if you have a good chance of succeeding.

### **Remediation**

If you are not making satisfactory progress, you may be removed from the program and lose your funding. Students judged to have academic difficulties (e.g., poor grades, failing or at risk of failing to satisfy program requirements) will receive written notice from the Graduate Committee with specific suggestions as to how these problems might be remedied and the date by which such actions must be taken.

The Graduate College has established guidelines that departments must follow in order to dismiss graduate students from their programs. You should familiarize yourself with the steps in this process so you know your rights, responsibilities and remedies should such a situation develop. Students who fail to remediate by the deadlines specified may be dismissed from the program.

### **Student appeals**

You have the right to request exceptions to school policies and procedures. If you want to appeal any policies or procedures, submit a written appeal to the director of graduate studies. The appeal will be reviewed by the Graduate Committee and may include a meeting with you. A decision to accept the appeal will be based on a majority vote. The committee may place additional requirements/deadlines as a prerequisite for continuing in the program. Students who wish to appeal the Graduate Committee's decision must submit a written appeal to the school's director.

### **Grievances**

In general, you should first try to resolve difficulties informally by bringing your concerns to the person responsible for the action. Any graduate student with a grievance may at any time, without fear of retribution, discuss the grievance with the director of graduate studies or the school's director. For more information, see the School of Journalism's grievance resolution process: <https://journalism.arizona.edu/grievance-resolution-process> If that doesn't help, you may also seek help from the Graduate College: <http://grad.arizona.edu/policies/academic-policies/grievance-policy>

For a summary of different types of grievances and the channels of appeal, go to <http://grad.arizona.edu/policies/academic-policies/summary-grievance-types-and-responsible-parties>

## GRADUATE MILEPOSTS

The table below indicates the semester in which certain steps should take place in order to make satisfactory progress toward completing your graduate degree requirements.

When	Task	Who or where
Midway through 1 <sup>st</sup> semester	Select topic for project or thesis Begin thinking about project adviser or thesis chair and 2 committee members.	Discuss with DGS during advising meeting, when you will also plan your courses for next semester.
Midway through 2 <sup>nd</sup> semester	Select adviser or chair and 2 committee members.	Discuss with DGS during advising meeting, when you will also plan your courses for next semester.
Before end of 2 <sup>nd</sup> semester	Fill out Responsible Conduct of Research. Submit Master's <a href="#">Plan of Study</a> . Submit Master's/Specialist Committee Appointment form.	Go to <a href="#">GradPath</a> for all these forms.
Midway through 3 <sup>rd</sup> semester	Finish preparing project or thesis proposal defense.	Discuss with DGS during advising meeting, when you will also plan your courses for next semester.
Before end of 3 <sup>rd</sup> semester	Submit written project or thesis proposal to adviser or chair. After revision, submit thesis proposal to committee members. Defend thesis or project proposal.	Request examples of thesis or project proposals from director of grad studies. Adviser, chair and committee members sign Project/Thesis Proposal Approval Form (in this handbook).
By end of 4 <sup>th</sup> semester	Take 3 units of Master's Report (JOUR 909) or Thesis (JOUR 910). Submit thesis or project to chair or adviser. After revision, submit thesis to committee members. Defend thesis or project.  Submit Completion of Degree Requirements Form. Send revised thesis or project to director of grad studies and graduate coordinator. Required for thesis only: Submit revised thesis for archiving.	Be sure to sign up for correct course in UAccess. Request examples of theses or projects from director of graduate studies. Chair and committee members sign Project/Thesis Approval Form (in this handbook). Include in your revised thesis or project. For thesis, chair signs <a href="#">Thesis Approval/Statement by Author page</a> .  See graduate coordinator.  Submit revised thesis through site maintained by <a href="#">ProQuest/UMI</a> .

## **PROFESSIONAL PROJECT or THESIS?**

Master's students complete a project or thesis. The topic is your choice. You may find a topic through your courses, conversations with faculty or other students, or your own interests. Talk with faculty early to determine whether your idea is feasible. By the end of the first semester, you should have a good idea of the topic you want to pursue.

Dual-degree students may have to complete a thesis. Check with the other department on their requirements and talk to the journalism advisor. Latin American Studies, for example, requires a thesis.

### **Professional project (3 credits)**

A project is *highly recommended* if you are in the professional emphasis and plan to work as a journalist or other media professional. A project could be a long-form feature story, a series of investigative articles, a video documentary or a multimedia website. No matter what form a project takes, it must be noteworthy for background research, substance and professional quality. A project is the culmination of your studies and should reflect what you have learned in the program. A project is much more than a class assignment and requires as much research and effort as a thesis.

### **Thesis (3 credits)**

A thesis is recommended *only* if you plan to pursue a doctorate and are enrolled in Journalism studies. A thesis presents original research that contributes to the scholarly literature of journalism. A thesis includes a review of relevant literature, use of an appropriate research method and analysis of findings.

## **PROFESSIONAL PROJECT: YOUR SECOND SEMESTER**

Students in the professional emphasis are *strongly encouraged* to produce a high-quality professional project instead of a thesis for completion of the master's degree requirements in the School of Journalism. If you are completing a dual degree, check with the non-journalism department to see if they allow a project or require a thesis. The professional project option is not available to dual-degree students in Journalism and Latin American Studies, for example.

According to the UA Graduate College, you should choose your project topic and select an adviser by the end of your second semester in the master's program. That means you should start thinking about your project topic almost as soon as you arrive on campus—these two years will fly by! Generally, master's students develop their professional project proposal in conjunction with JOUR 508 (Journalism Theory & Practice), which you should take in your first (fall) semester, and JOUR 589 (Survey of Research Methods), which you should take in your second (spring) semester.

A project must be a substantial and original body of work on a significant topic that demonstrates your competence as a journalist. Key skills include gathering, synthesizing, analyzing and presenting information to an audience in an ethical manner. You may work in any journalistic medium or combination of media: print, photography, audio, documentary video, or multimedia. A successful project must be of publishable quality.

### **Filling out the Responsible Conduct of Research form**

The first step is to fill out the Responsible Conduct of Research form in [GradPath](#). You can't open any of the other required forms until you complete this form. To see the form, click **Create New**. Make sure you've read the **General Information** section. Then, in the **Certified** section, read the statement and check the box.

This form does not require any approvals. Once you submit it, you can immediately access the Master's Plan of Study. To return to your forms page, click the **Return** button.

## **Filling out the Master's Plan of Study (MPoS)**

Next, complete the online Master's Plan of Study (MPoS), which must be approved by the director of graduate studies and your project adviser and filed with the Graduate College. This document is essentially a contract among you, the School of Journalism and the Graduate College specifying which courses you will take to fulfill the master's degree requirements. It also requires you to find your project adviser and specify the semester you plan to graduate.

The MPoS identifies (1) courses you intend to transfer from other institutions, (2) courses already completed at UA that you intend to apply toward your graduate degree and (3) additional courses to be completed to fulfill your degree requirements. The Graduate College will charge your student account when you file your MPoS. All deficiencies must be satisfied before it is approved. If you change your graduation date, you won't be billed again.

As stated by the Graduate College, "In conjunction with his/her major professor, each student is responsible for developing a Plan of Study as early as possible during the first few months in residence, to be submitted to the Graduate College no later than the second semester in residence." The sooner the Plan of Study is submitted, the sooner you know whether the proposed coursework is acceptable under Graduate College policies. Students who wait too long to submit the Plan of Study sometimes unexpectedly have to alter their coursework late in their degree program and may have to take additional courses. You will not be able to graduate without a Plan of Study that is approved by the School of Journalism and the Graduate College. More information is available here:

<https://grad.arizona.edu/gsas/degree-requirements/masters-degrees#plan-of-study>

To complete the form, go to [GradPath](#) Click on My Grad College, log in, and click on Forms. Scroll down to "Master's/Specialist Students" and click on "Master's/ Specialist Plan of Study." Fill it out online. Be sure to include all past and planned coursework.

Generally, journalistic interviews are not considered scientific "human subject research," and for a project you should not have to get approval from the UA Institutional Review Board, but, you should check with your chair to make sure. Journalism's IRB representative can also help with this process. More information is at <http://orcr.vpr.arizona.edu/>

The MPoS should be completed by the end of your second semester. Generally, students work on their project proposal over the following summer and defend it in the fall (third) semester. If approved, students complete their project during their final (fourth) semester.

If you need to change the semester you plan to graduate, please email the journalism school's liaison in the Graduate College Degree Certification office.

If you need to change your MPoS, it's easy to go back into [GradPath](#) and do so.

### **Deciding on a Project Adviser**

By the end of your second semester, you must also fill out the Master's/Specialist Committee Appointment form in [GradPath](#). Click on "do not have a committee" if you are working with one adviser instead of a committee. There is a place in MPoS to put your adviser name.

As you begin shaping your project proposal, talk with your professors and with the director of graduate studies about ideas for faculty members with expertise in your topic area. Your project adviser is your main point of contact and must approve your topic. The adviser will help guide your proposal and see you through completion of your project. Select someone with whom you have a mutually respectful relationship, someone who is interested in your area of study and can contribute to your work. But your

adviser does not have to be experienced in every aspect of your work. There are many professors you can confer with on specific areas if need be.

Make sure your adviser they will be available to serve on your committee when you intend to do your work. Ask her or him about future plans, such as fellowships, sabbaticals and Fulbrights. This is especially important if you plan to work on your project during the summer, as many faculty hold a nine-month appointment and are not available then.

Meet regularly with your adviser to discuss your progress and plans at all stages. Be proactive! If you want to discuss a particular topic or need a resource to aid your research, ask! Check to determine how often you'll meet and whether you'll confer via face-to-face meetings, phone calls, email exchanges or a combination.

You may change your adviser if necessary. Please amend your Master's/Specialist Committee Appointment form in [GradPath](#).

### **PROJECT PROPOSAL: YOUR THIRD SEMESTER**

The project proposal describes what you plan to do, how you plan to do it, when you will do what—and why. It is the blueprint for this long-term professional project that you will be working on for several months. The proposal also serves as a kind of contract between you and your adviser that establishes what work you agree to do in exchange for final project approval. A major purpose of the project proposal is that you and your adviser agree from the earliest stages on the criteria for judging its success. The clearer and more specific your proposal, the smoother and less stressful completing your project will be. For a sample project proposal, please contact the director of graduate studies.

### **PREPARING YOUR PROJECT PROPOSAL**

**The proposal should include each of these sections:**

#### **Tentative title**

The main title should be catchy, while the subtitle following a colon should describe your topic more specifically. The title should be clear enough that your audience knows what to expect. Here are examples: “The Wall: A multimedia exploration of the effect of the U.S. Homeland Security’s Mexico-Arizona wall on borderland communities” or “Foreclosed: A documentary about the housing crisis in Tucson.” You may revise your title as your project becomes more refined, but a well-considered title will help you focus on the main idea of your project.

#### **Introduction**

The most important part of the introduction is a clear, coherent statement of purpose. What is your topic? Why is it important? The introduction should contain a brief overview of the topic, possibly including any important background information and justification as to why it is a relevant news project now. An anecdote that segues into the broader topic you plan to address can be an effective way to introduce a topic. Although the introduction is the first section in your project proposal, it is best to write it after you have finished the rest of the proposal.

#### **Background: Review and analysis**

This section of your proposal will allow you to demonstrate that you are thoroughly familiar with how reporters, and possibly scholars depending on the topic, have approached the topic in the past and in which platforms. The background section demonstrates that you have fully informed yourself about the topic and are aware of what reporting already exist.

The background section is the most substantial and lengthy section of your proposal and a crucial step for you in formulating a coherent project. This process will allow you to narrow your broad topic to more specific stories and angles and help you determine which platform(s) you will employ.

The background section allows you to show how you intend to contribute new, original information on the topic. You will need to make a case for why your project is a useful or necessary “next step” that will further the public’s understanding of the issue your project will address. This section, which will run to multiple pages, will serve as a guideline or road map to your final project.

Your background section should provide a review of material on the topic from all platforms, including the popular press (newspapers, consumer magazines, books), websites, television, photography, video, podcasts, and film. It might also include information about relevant material that has been published in scholarly journals and government or institute reports.

The background section is an extended annotated bibliography in some ways. It will illustrate to your advisor that you are aware of what has been published or produced over time by other journalists or scholars regarding your topic. But to write this section effectively, you will need to read or view the material and synthesize its main arguments or observations. You also will analyze how the authors and producers used the media to tell the story or convey their intended message. Analyzing the strengths and weaknesses of various pieces will help you shape your project, because it will give you ideas for new angles or perspectives on the topic. It also will help you avoid writing material or producing media that others already have done.

You can search for previous works on your topic in UA library databases. You will learn how to use these databases and others in JOUR 508 (Journalism Theory & Practice) and JOUR 589 (Survey of Research Methods). You can obtain articles or books not available at the UA library or its databases through interlibrary loan. Your adviser can guide you to other sources for this background section. You and your adviser will decide upon a citation style for your project.

The final section of the background section should identify gaps in the media that your project will attempt to fill. This is where you describe what topic you intend to research, and what work you will produce. What new material or perspective will you contribute to the literature or media on the subject? Explain its significance. The specific angles of stories and medium of each may be decided later once reporting is underway, but serious thought should be given to the possibilities now.

### **Journalistic method**

Professional projects involve different types of procedures and methodologies, depending on the project. The methodological decisions involved in planning and writing a work of literary nonfiction, for instance, will be very different than for making a video documentary.

In this section, describe the techniques and approaches you will use to explore your topic. What course work, skills, or professional or personal experience qualify you for this project? What medium/media will you employ? Who is the intended audience? What databases will you use? Which agencies, institutions, corporations or individuals will you consult as sources? Discuss your strategy for gathering and verifying information.

Availability of resources is an important consideration in completing a successful project on schedule. Where are your sources? Are they accessible? Will you need to travel? If so, where will the funding come from? Will you apply for grants? Which ones? Finally, where do you intend to publish or show your work?



## **Description of end products**

The professional project allows you to devise creative means of storytelling to explore an issue that intrigues you through your choice of media. Although project parameters are much wider than those of a thesis, projects are expected to be as intellectually demanding as a thesis. Students also may produce a hybrid work that combines a journalistic project with a scholarly research article.

Close communication with your adviser is key to a successful project. As it is the culmination of months of work, the end product's scope and quality should reflect a high level of intellectual endeavor, creative thought and journalistic skills. You will work closely with your adviser to shape a project that challenges your abilities and enables you to experiment with journalistic genres and technological innovations. The project should be good enough to be published or produced, and your chair may require that you attempt to do so. It should be something you will be proud to show to a prospective employer. The proposal should include an outline of the various parts of your intended final product. You and your adviser should establish the expected length, depth and form of the end products and describe them in the proposal.

Originality, depth, multi-sourcing, compelling writing and excellent technological quality are among characteristics of a final project that meets acceptable standards for graduate-level work. The following examples are just a few ideas for suitable projects.

- A series of in-depth investigative newspaper articles combining data reporting skills with personal interviews to explore the effects of southern Arizona home foreclosures on individuals, the community and the state.
- A substantial documentary film exploring the lives of day laborers in Tucson.
- A website on Somali refugees in Tucson that includes video presentations, audio slideshows, text articles and interactive features that not only put a face on individual refugees but also illuminate the political issues that forced them from their home and the cultural and economic issues they face here.
- A hybrid project that combines a photo portfolio depicting Tucson's Mexican-inspired mural art and artist profiles with a scholarly historical investigation tying it to the social, political and artistic role of murals in Mexican culture.
- A lengthy, in-depth, multi-sourced magazine article investigating Arizona immigration issues on the scale of a *Vanity Fair* or *New York Times Magazine* feature.

For inspiration and ideas on shaping your project, you might look at annual collections, such as the *Best Reporting of 20--* or the *Best Magazine Stories of 20--* or *Best Use of Multimedia in 20--*. Or check the Pulitzer Prize website at <http://www.pulitzer.org>

Online sites that showcase excellence in journalism include the following:

### **Multimedia**

<https://nppa.org/content/2017-best-photojournalism-multimedia-winners>

<http://www.socialdocumentary.net/>

<https://www.nytimes.com/section/multimedia>

<https://www.revealnews.org/>

<http://www.nytimes.com/projects/2012/snow-fall/index.html#/?part=tunnel-creek>

### **Long-form print journalism**

<https://studybreaks.com/tvfilm/10-top-tier-websites-for-longform-journalism-stories/>

<http://www.esquire.com/features/page-75/greatest-stories>

<http://www.magazine.org/asme/national-magazine-awards/winners-finalists>

<https://longreads.com/>

<https://www.theatlantic.com/category/longreads/>

**Limitations**

Set parameters for the scope of your investigation. Justify those limits. For instance, a series on treatment of AIDS patients may be limited to Tucson hospitals because it is beyond your means to travel to Phoenix or elsewhere. Project parameters may include certain time periods, demographic populations or geographic regions.

**Schedule**

Develop a timeline by describing the steps in your project and when you will complete them. Set deadlines with your adviser for when you will submit outlines, drafts, other preliminary work and finished pieces. Include the schedule in your proposal. Note that even drafts of all work should meet professional standards: Spelling and mechanical errors are unacceptable in graduate-level work.

**Reference List**

The reference list should formally cite the sources you intend to use in your final project as well as those discussed in your background section. Discuss with your adviser which bibliographic style is most appropriate for your project.

**DEFENDING YOUR PROJECT PROPOSAL**

Your adviser may request revisions or additional material along the way. But when you think the proposal is complete, the two of you will sit down formally and go through the proposal. The two of you will discuss any questions or comments. If approved, the adviser signs the school's "Professional Project Proposal Approval Form" and pass it to the director of graduate studies. The original is placed in your file. You can find a copy of the "Project Proposal Approval Form" at the end of this handbook.

**PROJECT: YOUR FOURTH SEMESTER  
COMPLETING YOUR PROJECT**

After the proposal approval, you will work with the input of your adviser during the months in which you conduct your research and complete your professional project. This will entail spending many hours gathering and verifying information in the field, on the phone and at the computer.

This is *your* project, and it should reflect your skills and abilities. But you should consult your adviser throughout the process. You two should agree on a schedule when you will submit drafts and/or parts of the project for the adviser to review and provide comments. Expect to make several revisions as you proceed. Consult when you have questions about any professional, technical or ethical issues you encounter. Should you encounter any roadblocks—and journalists undoubtedly will—seek advice. Your adviser, and other faculty members, are available to help out in their areas of expertise.

**Final project**

Your final project presentation includes the title page, signed project approval form, gratitude (optional), acknowledgments (optional), table of contents, introduction, background (review and analysis), journalistic method, limitations/challenges, reflective essay (see below) and references.

**Reflective essay**

All final projects must be accompanied by a short reflective essay in which you discuss the process and challenges of creating your project. This is a first-person, somewhat informal essay that should be less than 1,500 words.

**Registration and tuition**

You must be registered as a UA student the semester you defend your project. Sign up for 3 units of JOUR 909 (Master's Report). Dual-degree students must take 3 credits of JOUR 909 and 3 credits from the other master's program.

If you do not complete JOUR 909 (Master's Report) during the semester, you may continue enrollment for 1 credit in summer or 3 credits in fall or spring.

Journalism faculty members generally are **not** available for defenses during the summer except under exceptional circumstances approved in advance. If you do not finish your project in the spring semester, plan on registering and paying tuition for another 3 credits of JOUR 909 the following fall.

### **Academic Integrity Policy**

The final project must meet all standards of the UA Code of Academic Integrity and the School of Journalism Academic Integrity Handbook. Work found in violation of the code, including but not limited to plagiarism and fabrication, will receive a failing grade and the student will be removed from the program. You can download the handbooks here:

<http://deanofstudents.arizona.edu/policies-and-codes/code-academic-integrity>

<https://journalism.arizona.edu/student-handbooks>

### **Formatting your project**

Make sure your project follows the proper format. See the following:

- Thesis Formatting Guide: <http://grad.arizona.edu/gsas/dissertations-theses/dissertation-and-thesis-formatting-guides>
- Sample Pages: <http://grad.arizona.edu/degrecert/samples-templates>

If you have specific formatting questions, please contact our Graduate College degree counselor:

<https://grad.arizona.edu/tools/degrecounselors>

### **Scheduling your defense**

When you and your adviser agree that your project is ready, schedule a date and time for your public presentation. Figure on a two-hour block of time. It probably won't take that long, but it's good to have a cushion so you don't feel rushed.

Share a final copy of your project to your adviser **at least two weeks before the thesis defense date**. If you schedule your defense after classes are over, make sure (1) your adviser is available and (2) you have enough time to make revisions before the date you must complete all requirements for your degree. For deadlines, see <https://grad.arizona.edu/gsas/degree-requirements/important-degree-dates-and-deadlines>. As soon as you have a date and time, reserve a room with the main office. Inform the director of graduate studies, the graduate coordinator, your adviser of the date, time and room number.

### **Promoting your defense**

Your defense is a public event. Make flyers with your name, title of your project, name of your adviser, date, time and room number. Give flyers to the administrative assistant, who will post them around the third floor. Also send a copy of your flyer to Michael Chesnick, [mchesnick1@email.arizona.edu](mailto:mchesnick1@email.arizona.edu), so he can publicize the event on social media and in kudos.

Invite your friends, family and other graduate students to attend this grand occasion!

A few days before the defense, email a reminder to the director of graduate studies, the graduate coordinator, and your adviser.

### **Preparing for your defense**

Prepare a 20- to 30-minute presentation of your project. If you're showing a PowerPoint, for example, that illustrates all of your project work, see if your adviser would like to review it beforehand.

## **DEFENDING YOUR PROJECT**

Bring a copy of the school's Final Approval Form, which is at the end of this handbook. Print the form or pick up a copy from the graduate coordinator. After you, your adviser signs the form, gives it to the director of graduate studies to sign.

The candidate usually brings something to drink and a snack. Nothing fancy. About 20 people usually attend a defense.

Go to the room early. Make sure the projector is working and your PowerPoint, video or website is ready to go. You don't want to be stressed by technology. After your adviser introduces you, you'll make a 20- to 30-minute presentation. Your adviser and members of the audience will then ask questions. Be prepared to answer questions about how and why you made decisions you did on developing and implementing your project.

A successful project defense requires that you and your adviser sign the journalism school's Final Approval Form. Afterward, give it to the director of graduate studies to sign.

**REVISING YOUR PROJECT** After the defense, your adviser may work with you to revise your project. When the final, revised version is ready, you must provide the director of graduate studies and the graduate coordinator with an electronic copy for their files.

### **THESIS: YOUR SECOND SEMESTER**

According to the UA Graduate College, you should choose your thesis topic and select your committee by the end of your second semester in the master's program. That means you should start thinking about your topic almost as soon as you arrive on campus—these two years will fly by! Generally, master's students develop their thesis proposal in conjunction with JOUR 508 (Journalism Theory & Practice), which you should take in your first (fall) semester, and JOUR 589 (Survey of Research Methods), which you should take in your second (spring) semester.

A thesis is an original piece of scholarship based on independent research that tests a hypothesis or answers research questions. A thesis employs quantitative or qualitative research methods or both. Quantitative methods use statistics and other mathematical forms of data analysis to conduct empirical observation of phenomena. Qualitative methods focus on analyzing language, signs and behavior in a search for context and social meaning.

The thesis generally comprises several chapters, including an introduction, literature review, hypotheses or research questions and explanation of research methodology, all of which are part of the thesis proposal. The remaining chapters to be completed after approval of the thesis proposal include a discussion of your findings and a conclusion, followed by a bibliography or list of references. A completed thesis usually runs 50 to 100 pages.

#### **Filling out the Responsible Conduct of Research form**

The first step is to fill out the Responsible Conduct of Research form in [GradPath](#). You can't open any of the other required forms until you complete this form. To see the form, click **Create New**. Make sure you've read the **General Information** section. Then, in the **Certified** section, read the statement and check the box.

This form does not require any approvals. Once you submit it, you can immediately access the Master's Plan of Study. To return to your forms page, click the **Return** button.

#### **Filling out the Master's Plan of Study (MPoS)**

Next, complete the online Master's Plan of Study (MPoS), which must be approved by the director of graduate studies and your committee chair ("major advisor") and filed with the Graduate College. This

document is essentially a contract among you, the School of Journalism and the Graduate College specifying which courses you will take to fulfill the master's degree requirements. It also requests you to state a thesis title, find your committee chair and specify the semester you plan to graduate.

The MPoS identifies (1) any courses you intend to transfer from other institutions, (2) courses already completed at UA that you intend to apply toward your graduate degree and (3) additional courses to be completed to fulfill your degree requirements. **The Graduate College charges your bursar's account a graduate candidacy fee when you file your MPoS.** All deficiencies must be satisfied before it is approved. If you change your graduation date, you won't be billed again.

As stated by the Graduate College, "In conjunction with his/her major professor, each student is responsible for developing a Plan of Study as early as possible during the first few months in residence, to be submitted to the Graduate College no later than the second semester in residence." The sooner the Plan of Study is submitted, the sooner you know whether your proposed coursework is acceptable under Graduate College policies. Students who wait too long to submit the Plan of Study sometimes unexpectedly have to alter their coursework late in their degree program and may have to take additional courses. You will not be able to graduate without a Plan of Study that is approved by Journalism and the Graduate College. More information is available here: <https://grad.arizona.edu/gsas/degree-requirements/masters-degrees#plan-of-study>

To complete the form, go to [GradPath](#) Click on My Grad College, log in and click on Forms. Scroll down to "Master's/Specialist Students" and click on "Master's/ Specialist Plan of Study." Fill it out online. Be sure to include all past and planned coursework.

You must check with your chair to see whether your research needs approval from the UA Institutional Review Board. Journalism's IRB representative can also help with this process. More information is available at <http://orcr.vpr.arizona.edu/>

The MPoS should be completed by the end of your second semester. Generally, students work on their thesis proposal over the following summer and defend it in the fall (third) semester. After approval, students complete their thesis during their final (fourth) semester.

If you need to change the semester you plan to graduate, please email the journalism school's Degree Counselor in the Graduate College.

If you need to change your MPoS, it's easy to go back into [GradPath](#) and do so.

### **Forming a thesis committee**

By the end of your second semester, you must also fill out the Master's/Specialist Committee Appointment form in [GradPath](#).

As you begin shaping your thesis proposal, talk with the director of graduate studies about ideas for faculty members with expertise in your research area. Think about which faculty members you would like to work with and who have the background and skills you will need to help you complete your thesis. Besides a chair, you will need to ask two other faculty members to serve on your committee.

The UA Graduate College requires that thesis committees include at least two tenured or tenure-track faculty members. The chair or co-chair must be a tenured, tenure-eligible or tenure-equivalent Journalism faculty member. If the third member is not tenured or tenure track, Journalism's graduate coordinator must submit a Special Member Request Form to the Graduate College. One committee member may be

from outside the School of Journalism. Occasionally, a committee may have four members. Dual-degree student committees must include a faculty member from each program.

Your chair is your main point of contact. Your chair must approve your topic. Your chair will help guide your proposal and see you through completion of your thesis. Your chair is usually someone you have had as a professor. Select someone with whom you have a mutually respectful relationship, who is interested in your area of study and who can contribute to your thesis. Your chair does not have to be experienced in every aspect of your thesis. Other committee members can contribute expertise in those areas.

Your chair can help you select committee members who can contribute to your work. Make sure they will be available to serve on your committee when you intend to do your work. Ask potential committee members about future plans, such as fellowships, sabbaticals and Fulbrights. This is especially important if you plan to work on your thesis during the summer, as many faculty hold a nine-month appointment and are not available then.

Beyond approving your thesis proposal and final thesis, the role of members varies from committee to committee. You may have selected one member for his or her expertise in your method or statistical analysis; you can rely on that person for help in that area. Another member might have expertise in the subject matter or geographical area. Based on discussions with your chair, you may submit draft sections to all members, or you may submit them only to your chair and have other members read only your revised sections.

In any case, discuss the role of your committee members early in the process. Your chair can help you determine how to make the committee function smoothly. In addition, committee members should be told up front what you expect from them. Your entire committee reads your thesis proposal and finished thesis and attends the defense of each one.

Meet regularly with your chair to discuss your progress and plans at all stages of your thesis. Be proactive! If you want to discuss a particular topic or need a resource to aid your research, ask! Check with your chair to determine how often you'll meet and whether you'll confer via face-to-face meetings, email exchanges, phone calls or a combination.

You may change your chair at any time. Be sure that the faculty member you choose to work with agrees to be your new chair and that the original chair is notified of any changes. In addition, please amend your Master's/Specialist Committee Appointment form in [GradPath](#).

### **THESIS PROPOSAL: YOUR THIRD SEMESTER**

The thesis proposal is a 20+-page document that describes what you plan to do, how you plan to do it, when you will do what—and why. It is the blueprint for this long-term research project that you will be working on for several months. The proposal also serves as a kind of contract between you and your committee that establishes what work you agree to do in exchange for the committee's final thesis approval. A major purpose of the thesis proposal is that you and your committee agree from its earliest stages on the criteria for judging its success. The clearer and more specific your proposal, the smoother and less stressful completing the thesis will be. For a sample thesis proposal, please contact the director of graduate studies.

### **PREPARING YOUR THESIS PROPOSAL**

#### **Tentative title**

The main title should be catchy, while the subtitle following a colon should describe your topic more specifically. The title should be clear enough that your audience knows what to expect. Here are examples: "Picturing Afghan Women: A content analysis of AP wire photographs during the Taliban

regime and after its fall” or “Access Attitudes: Measuring and conceptualizing support for press access to government records.” You may revise your title as you refine your thesis, but a well-considered title will help you focus on the main idea of your thesis.

### **Introduction**

The most important part of the introduction is a clear, coherent statement of purpose. What is your topic? Why is it important? The introduction should contain a brief overview of the topic, possibly including any important background information, what questions/hypotheses you intend to address and how you envision doing it. An anecdote that segues into the broader topic that you plan to address can be an effective way to introduce a topic. Although the introduction is the first section in your thesis proposal, it is best to write it after you have finished the rest of the proposal.

### **Literature review**

This is the lengthiest section of your proposal and provides the theoretical background for your research and its significance. Theoretical frameworks will vary and may include approaches such as framing, agenda setting, critical theory or survey research. You could begin with a statement like this: “This research draws on four areas of literature: feminist media theory, scholarship on women’s changing roles in India, studies of gender and media in India and South Asia, and global studies examining women’s representations in newspapers.” You should then proceed to summarize pertinent scholarship in each category and their interconnections. It’s helpful to use subtitles to organize this review.

Often running more than 15 pages, the literature review demonstrates that you have informed yourself about the topic and are aware of what works on your topic already exist. Based on that information, the literature review allows you to explain how you intend to contribute new, original information on the topic.

The literature review is more than an annotated bibliography. Besides synthesizing the main arguments in scholarship relevant to your thesis, you must analyze their strengths and weaknesses. The final section of the review should identify gaps in the literature that your thesis will attempt to fill.

### **Research questions and/or hypotheses**

Following the literature review, you should summarize the rationale for your research questions or hypotheses drawn from all the areas of literature you have reviewed. Finally, you should clearly state your main research questions or hypotheses. What new material or perspective will you contribute to the literature on the subject? Explain the significance.

### **Research methods**

Explain how you will conduct the study in as much detail as possible. Describe your methodology: Framing analysis? Historical research methods? Content analysis? Legal research methods? Explain the steps you will take to answer your questions or test your hypothesis. When and where will you conduct your research?

You may need to discuss the following items in a quantitative thesis: unit of analysis, population, sampling procedures, research instruments (questionnaire, coding categories), and reliability and validity. Regardless of method, everyone should discuss the resources to be drawn upon and how they will be analyzed or interpreted.

### **Limitations**

Some discussion of the limitations of your approach(es) may be appropriate. Set parameters for the scope of your research and justify those limits. Parameters may include the time period, demographic populations, geographic regions or type of mass medium.

## **Schedule**

Develop a timeline by describing the steps in your thesis and when you will complete them. Set deadlines with your committee chair for when you will submit outlines, drafts, other preliminary work and finished chapters. Include the schedule in your proposal.

Note that even drafts of all work should meet professional standards: Spelling and mechanical errors are unacceptable in graduate-level work.

## **Citations**

Proper and full citation of sources is crucial in scholarly research. Citation styles differ according to discipline and methodology. Your chair will help you select the most appropriate citation style for your thesis. The most common citation styles are

- University of Chicago for historical research
- American Psychological Association Manual for social science research
- Bluebook for legal research
- Modern Language Association

## **Defending your thesis proposal**

When your chair decides that your proposal meets the requirements, you will send copies to the other committee members. They may request revisions or additional material. After all agree that the proposal is ready for approval, you will schedule a mutually agreeable date and time for the proposal defense. You should reserve a room with the main office. Your brief presentation is followed by committee questions and comments. If approved, all sign the school's "Thesis Proposal Approval Form" and give it to the director of graduate studies. The original is placed in your file. You can find a copy of the "Thesis Proposal Approval Form" at the end of this handbook.

## **THESIS: YOUR FOURTH SEMESTER**

### **COMPLETING YOUR THESIS**

After the proposal approval, you will work closely with your committee chair during the months in which you conduct your research and complete your thesis. In addition to the introduction, literature review and research methods section, the remaining parts of the written thesis include a description of your results, a discussion of the findings and a conclusion. Often a chapter on historical (or other) context is also included and precedes (or sometimes follows) the literature review. In a qualitative thesis the organization is often similar up through the methods section. The presentation and discussion of results should be organized in consultation with your chair.

Completing your thesis will entail spending many hours gathering and analyzing data. The writing will require many more hours of work. You and your chair should consult throughout the process, and you should agree on a schedule when you will submit drafts and/or parts of the thesis for your chair's review and comments. Expect to make several revisions as you proceed. Consult your chair when you have questions about any scholarly, technical or ethical issues you encounter. Should you encounter any roadblocks, seek your chair's advice.

### **Registration and tuition**

You must be registered as a UA student the semester you defend your thesis. Sign up for 3 units of JOUR 910 (Thesis). Dual-degree students must take 3 credits of JOUR 910 and 3 thesis credits from the other master's program.



If you do not complete JOUR 910 (Thesis) during the semester, you may continue enrollment for 1 credit in summer or 3 credits in fall or spring.

Journalism faculty members generally are **not** available for defenses during the summer except under exceptional circumstances approved in advance. If you do not finish your thesis in the spring semester, plan on registering and paying tuition for another 3 credits of JOUR 910 the following fall.

### **Academic Integrity Policy**

The thesis must meet all standards of the UA Code of Academic Integrity and the School of Journalism Academic Integrity Handbook. Work found in violation of the code, including but not limited to plagiarism and fabrication, will receive a failing grade and the student will be removed from the program. You can download the handbooks here:

<http://deanofstudents.arizona.edu/policies-and-codes/code-academic-integrity>  
<https://journalism.arizona.edu/student-handbooks>

### **Formatting your thesis**

You can find formatting guidelines for master's theses on the Graduate College website:

<http://grad.arizona.edu/gsas/dissertations-theses/dissertation-and-thesis-formatting-guides> These formatting guidelines are fairly flexible, but there are a few required items, particularly with respect to the first two pages of your thesis: (1) the title page and (2) the thesis approval/statement by author page. You can find samples of those pages at <http://grad.arizona.edu/gsas/dissertations-theses/sample-pages> If you have specific formatting questions, please contact the journalism school's liaison in the Graduate College Degree Certification office.

### **Scheduling your defense**

When you and your chair agree that your thesis is ready, schedule a date and time for your defense with your chair, then make sure all committee members are available. Figure on a two-hour block for your defense. It probably won't take that long, but it's good to have a cushion so you don't feel rushed.

Send a copy of your thesis to your committee members **at least two weeks before the thesis defense date**. If you schedule your defense after classes are over, make sure (1) all your committee members are available and (2) you have enough time to make revisions before the date you must complete all requirements for your degree. For deadlines, see <https://grad.arizona.edu/gsas/degree-requirements/important-degree-dates-and-deadlines>

As soon as you have a date and time when your chair and committee members are available, reserve a room with the main office. Inform the director of graduate studies, the graduate coordinator, your chair and your committee members of the date, time and room number.

### **Promoting your defense**

Your defense is a public event. Make flyers with your name, title of your thesis, name of your chair and committee members, date, time and room number. Give the flyers to the administrative assistant, who will post them around the third floor. Also send a copy of your flyer to Michael Chesnick so he can publicize the event on social media and in kudos.

Invite your friends, family and other graduate students to attend this grand occasion!

A few days before the defense, email a reminder to the director of graduate studies, the graduate coordinator, your chair and your committee members.

### **Preparing for your defense**

Work with your chair on a 20- to 30-minute presentation of your thesis. If you're showing a PowerPoint, for example, see if your chair would like to review it beforehand. You might also want to do a dry run with your chair.

### **DEFENDING YOUR THESIS**

Print out and bring **two** copies of the Thesis Approval/Statement by Author page (either Copyrighting or NOT Copyrighting—your choice) to your defense. You'll find this form at

<https://grad.arizona.edu/gsas/dissertations-theses/sample-pages>

- a. Enter your thesis title and name in the first paragraph. Type your thesis director's name and title at the bottom of the form. Use your defense date as the date for the director's signature. Type your name next to your signature line at the top.
- b. Print out a hard copy and have your thesis director sign it.
- c. Copy and insert the signed page into your thesis file as page 2.

The school's Final Approval Form is at the end of this handbook. Print the form or pick up a copy from the graduate coordinator. Take it to your defense. After you, your chair and your committee members sign the form, give it to the director of graduate studies to sign.

The candidate usually brings something to drink and a snack. Nothing fancy. About 20 people usually attend a defense.

Go to the room early. Make sure the projector is working and your PowerPoint is ready to go. You don't want to be stressed by technology.

After your chair introduces you, you'll make a 20- to 30-minute presentation. Your chair then invites committee members to make comments and ask questions. If there's time, members of the audience can ask questions as well. Be prepared to answer questions about how and why you made decisions about your thesis.

After the Q&A, you and the members of the audience will be asked to leave the room so the committee can deliberate. When you return, you will receive feedback. The committee usually requests revisions.

A successful thesis defense requires (1) that you and your chair sign the Thesis Approval/Statement by Author page (either Copyrighting or NOT Copyrighting—your choice) and (2) that you, your chair and your committee members sign the journalism school's Final Approval Form. Afterward, (1) put the signed Thesis Approval/Statement by Author page in your thesis and (2) give the signed Final Approval Form to the director of graduate studies to sign.

### **REVISING YOUR THESIS**

After the defense, your chair works with you to revise your thesis. When the final, revised version is ready, you must provide the director of graduate studies and the graduate coordinator with an electronic copy for their files.

### **ARCHIVING YOUR THESIS (REQUIRED)**

The Graduate College requires that master's students completing a thesis (JOUR 910) submit the final, approved thesis for archiving. Students completing a master's report (JOUR 909) do **not** submit their work for archiving.

The online submission of the thesis is the last requirement for you once your committee chair has given final approval. The submitted thesis must meet the Graduate College's minimal formatting standards before the thesis is accepted for archiving and your degree is awarded. **Note: This process can take several weeks.**

### **1. Submit your thesis**

Please refer to the Thesis Formatting Guide at <http://grad.arizona.edu/gsas/dissertations-theses/dissertation-and-thesis-formatting-guides>

Upon final approval from your thesis committee, you may submit your thesis through the submission site maintained by ProQuest/UMI at <http://dissertations.umi.com/arizona>. Your degree counselor in the Graduate College will check your thesis formatting and will email you if edits are needed. Note: This email will be sent to the address in your ProQuest account.

There is no submission fee, but you do pay an additional fee to ProQuest/UMI if you choose Open Access publishing with its archive. (Note that the copy of your thesis stored in the UA Campus Repository will be available free of charge regardless of whether you pay ProQuest for open access or not.)

If you choose to file for copyright (optional), ProQuest/UMI will bill you a fee and file the copyright for your thesis in your name.

### **2. Distribution rights form**

Available on the Graduate College website at <https://arizona.app.box.com/v/grad-gsas-distrightsthesisdiss>. This form should be signed and dated. Use the current date unless you are delaying release of your archived thesis to the public. Submit the form to the GSAS office by emailing it to your degree counselor or delivering it to Administration 316.

### **3. Graduate exit survey**

Please complete the survey at [https://uarizona.col.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV\\_cxaoYeQAK42DR2t](https://uarizona.col.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_cxaoYeQAK42DR2t) Let your degree counselor know when you have done so.

### **Requests for technical help while submitting your thesis**

Degree counselors in the Graduate College can only help with questions about formatting requirements. For technical assistance in completing the online submission, please contact ProQuest/UMI at <http://www.etdadmin.com/cgi-bin/main/support>

You can find archived theses and dissertations in the UA Campus Repository (<http://arizona.openrepository.com/arizona/handle/10150/129649/>) or in the archive maintained by ProQuest/UMI (<http://www.proquest.com/products-services/dissertations/Find-a-Dissertation.html>).

## **COMPLETING YOUR DEGREE**

To qualify for graduation, you must complete **all** requirements for your degree by the Graduate College's deadline: <https://grad.arizona.edu/gsas/degree-requirements/important-degree-dates-and-deadlines> There are no exceptions to this deadline, so be sure you have completed all coursework, exams, defense of and final revisions to a thesis or master's report, or anything else your department requires so your degree can be awarded.

### **Final grade**

When your chair receives your final, revised thesis, he or she gives you a grade of "P" for pass or "S" for superior. To graduate, all other course work must be completed and your cumulative GPA must be at least 3.0.

### **Completion Confirmation form**

Your chair notifies the graduate coordinator when your revised thesis has been approved. The graduate coordinator submits the Completion Confirmation form in GradPath only after you have met ALL requirements. All coursework must be completed, with grades posted. Your degree is not awarded until the graduate coordinator has submitted the Completion Confirmation form.

## **CELEBRATE!**

You've worked hard. Now it's time to celebrate your success with your family and friends.

### **UA Commencement**

The university no longer holds a Fall Commencement. The Spring Commencement ceremony takes place each May. If you plan to attend, please RSVP using the online system on the Commencement website: <http://commencement.arizona.edu/> Master's graduates are honored as a group. Unfortunately, because of the large number of graduates, no individual recognition or hooding takes place.

### **SBS Convocation**

The SBS Convocation Recognition Ceremony takes place each May and December. Each graduate is allotted free tickets so family members and guests may attend the ceremony. Tickets will be available after you complete your online ceremony registration at <https://sbs.arizona.edu/convocation> This event is free, but guest tickets are required to attend the ceremony. Guest seating is on a first come, first served basis.

### **Diplomas**

Diplomas are **not** distributed at the SBS Convocation Recognition Ceremony. Your diploma is ordered when your degree auditor makes your degree award on your student record. The diploma is ordered from the printer (an outside company). It is printed and mailed directly to you. Most diplomas for spring graduates arrived by mid-June, while those for fall graduates arrive in the mail by mid-January. If your diploma does not arrive as expected, please check UAccess or contact your Graduate College degree counselor to ensure that your degree has been awarded.

If you have a diploma address in your UAccess record, the diploma will be mailed there. (Diplomas **can** be mailed to foreign addresses.) If there is no diploma address on your UAccess record, the diploma will be mailed to the permanent address on your record. Please check UAccess before the end of the semester to make sure your diploma will be mailed to the proper address.

### **QUESTIONS?**

#### **If you have a question about ...**

filling out your Master's Plan of Study  
archiving your thesis  
degree completion  
commencement  
your diploma

#### **Please contact...**

Abraham Cooper <mailto:aecooper@email.arizona.edu>  
Abraham Cooper  
Abraham Cooper  
Abraham Cooper  
Abraham Cooper

#### **If you have a question about ...**

signing up for classes  
changing classes  
taking a leave of absence  
completing your degree requirements

#### **Please contact...**

Debbie Cross <mailto:debbiecross@email.arizona.edu>  
Debbie Cross  
Debbie Cross  
Debbie Cross

#### **If you have a question about ...**

selecting courses  
deciding to do a project or thesis  
selecting your chair  
selecting your committee members

#### **Please contact...**

Maggy Zanger <mailto:zanger@email.arizona.edu>  
Maggy Zanger  
Maggy Zanger  
Maggy Zanger

\* The School of Journalism Graduate Committee would like to acknowledge that some of its recommendations are based on similar guidelines it reviewed from the School of Journalism and Mass Communication at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, the School of Journalism at the University of Missouri and the School of Journalism and Communication at the University of Oregon.

## PROJECT/THESIS PROPOSAL APPROVAL FORM

Student name \_\_\_\_\_

Title \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Check one: \_\_\_ Project \_\_\_ Thesis

\_\_\_\_\_

Approved:

\_\_\_\_\_

Student

\_\_\_\_\_

Date

\_\_\_\_\_

Committee Chair or Adviser

\_\_\_\_\_

Date

\_\_\_\_\_

Committee Member

\_\_\_\_\_

Date

\_\_\_\_\_

Committee Member

\_\_\_\_\_

Date

\_\_\_\_\_

Director of Graduate Studies

\_\_\_\_\_

Date



## PROJECT/THESIS FINAL APPROVAL FORM

Student name \_\_\_\_\_

Title \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Check one: \_\_\_ Project \_\_\_ Thesis

\_\_\_\_\_

Approved:

\_\_\_\_\_

Student

\_\_\_\_\_

Date

\_\_\_\_\_

Committee Adviser or Chair

\_\_\_\_\_

Date

\_\_\_\_\_

Committee Member

\_\_\_\_\_

Date

\_\_\_\_\_

Committee Member

\_\_\_\_\_

Date

\_\_\_\_\_

Director of Graduate Studies

\_\_\_\_\_

Date

