

**PLAN OF STUDY FOR STUDENTS ENTERING WITH  
A MASTER'S DEGREE, 2013**  
Department of Communication Studies  
University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Entry into Ph.D. Program \_\_\_\_\_

Adviser \_\_\_\_\_

***Summary***

*The plan of study*

The Ph.D. Plan of Study refers to the course of a student's overall graduate career.

This document addresses the student's career in two, related parts: Research and Teaching. The first part is intended to help students define primary research interests, identify appropriate coursework, and anticipate completion of qualifying exams and a dissertation. The second part is intended to help students correlate research with teaching interests with the aim of securing postdoctoral fellowships and/or university teaching positions.

*Treat this as a working document.* While it serves as a record of accomplishments, this document should be part of ongoing consultation with the student's interim/doctoral adviser. It should be revised and resubmitted annually (as part of the annual review process) to reflect students' developing research interests and course of study. Students are encouraged simultaneously to maintain *curriculum vitae* and teaching portfolios.

The doctoral program in the Department of Communication Studies at UNC Chapel Hill is a question-driven program. It requires students to pursue excellence in core study and to build on core courses with integrative coursework based on an evolving primary research question that will ultimately define the dissertation. *While working with this document, consider how each part relates to all others.* Ideally, the primary research question—which should change and become more refined over time—will be reflected in every aspect

***Basic requirements***

*Number of courses*

Doctoral students with an M.A. must complete a minimum of 48 hours of coursework:

4 core courses

700: Introduction to Research and Theory in Communication Studies

703a: Communication and the Social

703b: Communication and Discourse

703c: Communication and the Political

2 professional development courses:

702: Teaching in Communication Studies

907: Research Practicum in Communication Studies

10 research courses

Faculty

At least two research courses must be taught by faculty who are not home-based in the Department (although they may have adjunct appointments). In order to be exposed to a range of intellectual traditions, students must take courses (not including 700, 702 or 703) from at least 4 faculty in the Department whose teaching and research reflect different aspects of the discipline.

Additional course stipulations

Students should identify at least one course, to be listed among his/her research courses, in which he/she will develop appropriate methodological (archival, theoretical, interpretive, statistical, etc.) competence to pursue designated research question(s).

No more than 9 hours of independent study may count towards completion of required coursework.

600-level courses are considered bridge courses; they are open to graduate and undergraduate students. With the approval of their committees, doctoral students may take up to 9 hours of credit at the 600-level.

How to use this document

First: Identify a working research question. *What do you want to know or find out?*

Second: Break this question down into two primary lines of inquiry. *What are two questions you need to pursue in order to answer the guiding research question?* Each line of inquiry should reflect a central problematic or set of issues that a student must pursue in order to address the research question(s).

Third: Begin to identify courses that will help you to pursue those lines of inquiry. All courses should reflect a broad but integrative approach to each line of inquiry.

Fourth: Adjust your plan and anticipated schedule to include:

- Completion of core courses
- Achievement of methodological competence
- Achievement of language proficiency (*per consultation with adviser*)
- Optional minor/certifications
- Optional additional courses
- Completion a doctoral dissertation, including qualifying exams, dissertation proposal, and dissertation research hours
- Additional opportunities for professional development

A note on reading lists and qualifying exams

Two of the three reading lists for doctoral qualifying exams (to be developed by student in collaboration with his/her adviser and members of his/her doctoral committee) will be based on the designated lines of inquiry; the third (also to be developed in collaboration with the adviser and members of the doctoral committee) will ask the student in some way to locate his or her work in relation to the field of Communication Studies. See the Ph.D. Handbook for elaboration of the exam process.

**YOUR PLAN**

**PART ONE: COURSEWORK AND DOCTORAL STUDY**

**I. Core Courses**

*Semester Taken*

- 1. Comm 700 \_\_\_\_\_
- 2. Comm 703a \_\_\_\_\_
- 3. Comm 703b \_\_\_\_\_
- 4. Comm 703c \_\_\_\_\_

**II. Research Courses**

**A. Research Question(s)** (*what specifically do you want to know, learn, discover?*):

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**B. Lines of Inquiry**

**1. First Line of Inquiry** (*state as a question that directly reflects the primary research question*):

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*Describe.* What are the primary issues or sub-questions that define this line of research?

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*Courses*

Course title	Instructor/Dept	Semester taken	Relation to line of inquiry
1. _____	_____	_____	_____
2. _____	_____	_____	_____
3. _____	_____	_____	_____
4. _____	_____	_____	_____
5. _____	_____	_____	_____
6. _____	_____	_____	_____

**2. Second Line of Inquiry** (*state as a question that directly reflects the primary research question*):

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*Describe.* What are the primary issues or sub-questions that define this line of research?

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*Courses*

Course title	Instructor/Dept.	Semester Taken	Relation to Line of Inquiry
1. _____	_____	_____	_____
2. _____	_____	_____	_____
3. _____	_____	_____	_____
4. _____	_____	_____	_____

**C. Methodological Competence** (1 course required, cross-listed with research courses)

*Which of the courses listed above will help you achieve the methodological competence necessary to pursue your dissertation research?*

Course title	Instructor/Dept.	Semester Taken
1. _____	_____	_____

**III. Minor or Certifications**

*Unless otherwise stipulated by the program overseeing the minor or certification, courses may be cross-listed with the student's required research courses.*

Title of Minor or Certification Program \_\_\_\_\_

Program adviser (*as applicable*) \_\_\_\_\_

Courses	Instructor/Dept.	Semester Taken
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

Title of Minor or Certification Program \_\_\_\_\_

Program adviser (as applicable) \_\_\_\_\_

Courses	Instructor/Dept	Semester Taken
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

**IV. Language Proficiency**

Language \_\_\_\_\_

Date exam passed \_\_\_\_\_

**V. Professional Development Activities** (including for-credit courses and e.g. presentations in department and university colloquia; participation in research groups and professional development workshops or seminars; independent performance and media production; regional, national, international conference presentations)

1. \_702\_\_\_\_\_
2. \_907\_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_
6. \_\_\_\_\_
7. \_\_\_\_\_
8. \_\_\_\_\_
9. \_\_\_\_\_
10. \_\_\_\_\_
11. \_\_\_\_\_
12. \_\_\_\_\_
13. \_\_\_\_\_
14. \_\_\_\_\_

**VI. Dissertation**

Dissertation topic \_\_\_\_\_

Working title \_\_\_\_\_

Doctoral adviser \_\_\_\_\_

Dissertation Committee (*min. 5 members, including a majority from within the graduate faculty in the Department and 1 from outside the discipline*)

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_

Anticipated date for written qualifying exams \_\_\_\_\_

Anticipated date for submission of dissertation proposal \_\_\_\_\_

Anticipated date for oral defense of exams (within 6 weeks of exams) \_\_\_\_\_

Anticipated date for oral defense of dissertation proposal (may be the same as for the exams\*) \_\_\_\_\_

Anticipated date for oral defense of dissertation \_\_\_\_\_

*\*Note: Students wishing to defend their exams and proposal at the same meeting must distribute the final proposal to all 5 (min.) doctoral committee members no less than 10 days prior to the scheduled defense. All students should schedule a defense meeting prior to taking the exams.*

**PART TWO: CAREER GOALS AND YOUR TEACHING FOCUS**

Students completing the PhD in Communication Studies at UNC typically pursue research and/or teaching/research positions. While the PhD program in Comm. at UNC emphasizes interdisciplinary, integrative research, we encourage students to reckon with a highly variable job market, one that includes positions that are sub- and supra-disciplinary and that emphasize teaching to greater and lesser degrees. Students should continually reflect on how coursework and research correlate to career goals and visions. This portion of the Plan of Study is intended to support ongoing reflection and revision.

*1. Identify your preferred areas of teaching emphasis:*

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*2. Explain how courses you have taken and taught reflect and support your teaching focus.*

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*3. Identify particular courses you would like to teach upon completion of the PhD.*

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*4. What additional courses are you prepared to teach?*

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**PLAN OF STUDY REVIEW AND APPROVAL**

1. *Preliminary submission* date \_\_\_\_\_ initial/date \_\_\_\_\_  
student                  adviser          DGS

Total course hours at time of submission: \_\_\_\_\_

2. *Revised submission* date \_\_\_\_\_ initial/date \_\_\_\_\_  
student                  adviser          DGS

Total course hours at time of submission: \_\_\_\_\_

3. *Revised submission* date \_\_\_\_\_ initial/date \_\_\_\_\_  
student                  adviser          DGS

Total course hours at time of submission: \_\_\_\_\_

4. *Revised submission* date \_\_\_\_\_ initial/date \_\_\_\_\_  
student                  adviser          DGS

Total course hours at time of submission: \_\_\_\_\_