

MEDIA STUDIES

advisers, committee members and the graduate programs chair, and the students must pass a master's paper defense.

Degree Requirements

Master of Arts (M.A.)

Requirements listed here are in addition to Graduate Council policies listed under GCAC-600 Research Degree Policies. (<https://gradschool.psu.edu/graduate-education-policies/>)

The M.A. program seeks to integrate two areas of inquiry and analysis. The "Critical Studies" area centers on the expressive, creative, and linguistic dimensions of media as cultural processes. The "Political Studies" area focuses primarily on the political and economic dimensions of national and international communications systems and processes. The student is encouraged to combine courses from these and possibly other areas into a coherent package of course work culminating in either a thesis or a master's paper.

Degree Requirements

A minimum of 36 credits is required for the completion of the M.A. degree. Students in the thesis track must complete at least 18 credits at the 500 or 600 level, and the remaining credits may be at the 400 or 800 level. Students in the non-thesis track must complete 18 credits at the 500 level, and the remaining credits may be at the 400 or 800 level. There are 7 credits required in the following core courses:

Code	Title	Credits
Required Courses		
COMM 506 or COMM 511	Research Methods in Communications Qualitative Research Methods in Mass Communications	3
COMM 515	MA Proseminar in Mass Communications	3
COMM 590	Colloquium	1

Electives

Additional courses that will count as electives towards this degree can be chosen from a list of approved elective courses maintained by the graduate program office. Course work offered by departments outside the College of Communications may be scheduled as part of the student's program with prior approval of the student's academic committee.

Culminating Experience

Students choose to complete a thesis or a master's paper.

COMM 600 or COMM 610	Thesis Research Thesis Research Off Campus
COMM 596	Individual Studies (Master's Paper)

If the student chooses to write a thesis, at least 6 credits in thesis research (COMM 600 or COMM 610) must be taken. Students in the non-thesis track must write a satisfactory master's paper, while enrolled in COMM 596. In some cases, students may be required to take additional credits in order to make up deficiencies in undergraduate course work.

Students are required to schedule three separate, formal meetings with their advisers and the academic committees for (1) discussion and approval of the general program plan, (2) the thesis or master's paper proposal, and (3) the defense of the thesis or paper. In most cases, satisfactory completion of course work and thesis requires two years. A thesis must be accepted by the advisers and/or committee members, the head of the graduate program, and the Graduate School, and the student must pass a thesis defense. A master's paper must be accepted by the