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1. ORIENTATION AGENDA

*Welcome* to the Graduate Program in Communication at Simon Fraser University. The Fall term begins on Tuesday, 8 September 2015. Class schedules and outlines are available at [http://www.cmns.sfu.ca/graduate/courses/](http://www.cmns.sfu.ca/graduate/courses/). The first event of the semester is our Graduate Orientation:

**School of Communication Graduate Orientation**

**Date:** Thursday, September 10, 2015  
**Time:** 9:30 am – 4:30 pm  
**Location:** Mallinson Conference Room (K8652)

**AGENDA**

*Agenda*

9:00 – 9:30 am  *Arrival, coffee & snacks, mingling*

9:30 – 10:30 am  *Welcome and Introduction*

10:30 – 11:00 am  *Teaching Support Staff Union (TSSU)*

11:00 – 11:30 am  *Sylvia Roberts, CMNS librarian*

11:30 – 12:00 pm  *Health & Counseling Services*

12:00 – 12:30 pm  *CMNS Graduate Caucus*

12:30 – 2:00 pm  *Lunch with Graduate Student Reps, Chair and Staff*

2:00 – 2:30 pm  *Tour of the School*

2:30 – 2:45 pm  *Media Democracy Day (also 820)*

2:45 – 3:15  *Review of Fall/Spring Courses & other administrative issues*

3:15 – 3:35  *Set-up room for Reception*

3:30 – 4:30 pm  *Welcoming Reception (hosted by School Director)*

Please also note:

**Annual Fall Semester TA/TM Day**

**Date:** Friday, September 11  
**Time:** 8:30 am – 4 pm  
**Location:** Halpern Centre 126 (Burnaby campus)
2. GETTING SETTLED

2.1. GRADUATE OFFICES

Each graduate student has a mailbox in the School’s mail room, K9675 [access code: 4+5, 3, 1, enter]. If you are working as a Teaching Assistant (TA) in any given term, you will be assigned shared office space with phone access. The Administrative Assistant, Lucie Menkveld, assigns offices, provides key requisitions, mail room access codes, and code numbers to use the duplicating machine. Labs make space available to all research assistants.

Campus Tours run daily from the Administration Building—schedules advertised online http://students.sfu.ca/tour/. Library Tours are usually scheduled in the second week of September.

2.2. SFU COMPUTING NETWORK ACCESS

The first step is to get a computing network account number to set up your e-mail address and allow you to access computer labs across campus and in our School. Computing Ids are available online through SFU’s web-site: ☛ IT Services ☛ Students (http://www.sfu.ca/itservices/students/index.html). You must use your SFU ID for all University-related transactions. Computers for accessing e-mail and other work are available in the Graduate Common Room, and in each of the TA offices on Burnaby campus.

Key e-mail group addresses for the School are: cmns-grad (all grad students); and cmns-facgrad (cmns faculty and grad students). The Graduate Coordinator (gradcmns@sfu.ca) will use your new sfu email to ensure that you are included on these mail lists, so please check this account regularly.

Many faculty and graduate students use e-mail to communicate with each other and with colleagues all over the world, so it is imperative that you quickly set up your SFU e-mail address. Jason Levis, Dana Stewart, and Paul Bennett, the School’s technicians and general electronic wizards, are willing to help you, should you have any problems. IT Services also offers technical assistance. The help desk can be called at 778-782-3230.

2.3. BUILDING AN ACADEMIC COMMUNITY

Given the ease of computer-mediated communication, graduate students and faculty members spend an increasing amount of time on-line at home and do not need to come to campus as frequently as in the past. Because our teaching takes place on three campuses, the task of maintaining a coherent academic community is challenging. Students are encouraged to make the effort to engage in face-to-face interaction through shared participation in caucus meetings, study groups, lecture series, and workshops or through other on-campus activities. New students are encouraged to investigate the possibility of forming reading groups and to attend visiting speaker presentations.

Visiting lectures or speakers are presented from time to time. Graduate students normally organize an annual conference in mid-winter.
3. 2015 COHORT

The list of 2015 admissions is as follows:

3.1. MASTER OF ARTS

Name                      Interim Advisors
Anusha Ahmadi *(Summer 2015)*  Bob Anderson
Christine Ackerley          Ellen Balka
Christopher Chapman         Rick Gruneau
Yan Cheng                   Jan Marontate
Courtney Chu                Steve Kline
Véronique Emond-Sioufi     Enda Brophy
Ellen Engelsbel             Martin Laba
Takhmina Inoyatova          Yuezhi Zhao
Daniela Karrass             Shane Gunster
Vu Thuy Anh Phan            Peter Chow-White
Ayesha Renyard              Peter Anderson
Ali Sadik                   Martin Laba
Zachariah Williams          Zoë Druick

3.2. Ph.D

Name                      Interim Advisors
Layla Cameron              Zoë Druick
Abir Chaaban               Adel Iskandar
Andrew Hillan              Rick Gruneau
Lawrence Hislop            Shane Gunster
Felix Lo                   Frederik Lesage

3.3 MA DOUBLE DEGREE PROGRAM

Name                      Interim Advisors
Elizabeth Arnold           Stuart Poyntz
Artemisa Bega              Frederk Lesage
Malika Baratova            Alison Beale
Nicole Chow                Zhao Yuezhi
Camila Ferreira            Adel Iskandar
Zhuo Ya Li                 Zhao Yuezhi
Han Li                     Janet Marontate
Yiqian Liu                 Alison Beale
LinLin Lin Wang             Juan Pablo Alperin (MPub Faculty)
Wan Wan Sun                Zhao Yuezhi
Ye Xu                      Stuart Poyntz
Qinwen Yu                  Zhao Yuezhi
4. ADMINISTRATIVE ORGANIZATION AND GOVERNANCE

4.1. ADMINISTRATING GRADUATE STUDIES IN COMMUNICATION AT SFU

The Office of the Dean of Graduate Studies is responsible for administering regulations for degree requirements, and merit-based financial awards [http://www.sfu.ca/dean-gradstudies/].

During the course of your studies at SFU, please familiarize yourself with the following documents for reference purposes:

- Orientation 2015 (this document),
- Graduate General Regulations (http://www.sfu.ca/students/calendar/2015/fall/fees-and-regulations/grad-regulation.html)
- TSSU contract agreement (http://www.tssu.ca/).

Do not hesitate to consult with your colleagues, your Interim Advisor, the Graduate Program Chair or the Graduate Coordinator over the next days, weeks and months for advice.

The Principles and Procedures of Governance for the School of Communication, is available for viewing in the general office.

4.2. GRADUATE STUDIES COMMITTEE (GSC)

The Graduate Studies Chair and three faculty members are appointed by the Director. Three student representatives are appointed by the Graduate Student Caucus to exercise two votes, normally one to represent the Master’s program and one to represent the Doctoral program. The Chair's term is normally three years; other members normally sit for two years.

The composition of the 2015-6 GSC will be confirmed by mid-September.

Responsibilities of the Committee include graduate student recruiting, admissions, and orientation; graduate student advising, advice on teaching/research assistantship allocations; curriculum approval and review; responding to complaints; monitoring of supervisor-student relationship; review and assign scholarships over the course of a term. The GSC is also responsible for monitoring student progress and completion times.

Graduate Studies Committee full committee meetings are for processing admission applications, curriculum review; closed session meetings are for scholarship adjudication, situations of potential conflict of interest, supervisory relationships, and are to be attended by faculty members only. In all cases, the discipline of confidentiality will strictly be observed. Minutes of GSC meetings are recorded by the Graduate Coordinator and kept in that office.

Specific responsibilities of the Graduate Program Chair include:

(a) Chairs the Graduate Studies Committee [GSC] and presents regular reports on activities to the Committee of the Whole. Plans agenda to discuss curriculum, new course proposals, School regulations, admissions, and student concerns or suggestions for changes or improvements.

(b) Serves on the Director’s Advisory Group (DAG) and the DAG sub-committee to hire sessionals and TAs/TMs.

(c) Collaborates with the Director’s Advisory Group on establishing principles and procedures relating to graduate course allocation and rotation among continuing and contractually limited faculty.
(d) Meets with, and advises, current and prospective graduate students regarding academic performance, support needs, supervisory committee relations.
(e) Seeks to recruit, attract and retain graduate students; reviews the budget allocation for this function in the AGMs.
(f) Works closely with the Graduate Coordinator to ensure that graduate students are informed in a timely manner about opportunities, deadlines, University and School regulations and requirements.
(g) Makes recommendations to the Dean/Associate Dean of Graduate Studies regarding student or supervisor requests such as tuition waivers, course requirement waivers, deadline extensions for defenses or deferred grades due to extenuating circumstances.
(h) Manages grade appeals and academic dishonesty (with the Director’s office) subject to SFU Policy T.10.
(i) Meets with the Graduate Caucus at least once a term to discuss matters of interest or concern raised by either side.
(j) Adjudicates the School's ranking of applications for scholarships, fellowships, grants and awards. While such adjudication normally does not require consultation with the entire GSC, it should always involve consultation with other GSC members who are faculty members.
(k) Checks student progress with formal review of all graduate students. This involves reading the annual review forms submitted by students; monitoring supervisors each year and investigating unsatisfactory progress or student dissatisfaction with supervision, and intervening in delays beyond the expiry/last term of a student's program.
(l) Oversees the admissions process each year in the review of files by the members of the GSC and by prospective Senior Supervisors. Reviews data to determine School support available to admitted students.
(m) Plans, oversees the organization of, and hosts the orientation of new students at the beginning of the Fall term.
(n) Approves or rejects applications of Special Students who apply to enroll in School of Communication graduate courses.
(o) Approves and, if necessary, changes the composition the composition of Supervisory Committees by signing the necessary forms.
(p) Ensures that the guidelines for comprehensive exams are followed by the student and committee in defining the areas, finalizing the bibliographies, scheduling the exams, setting the questions, and conducting the oral defense.
(q) Reviews the manuscript and the abstract of theses and signs the necessary forms before submission to the Associate Dean of the Faculty of Communication, Art & Technology (PhD only) or the Dean of Graduate Studies.
(r) Sits on the Faculty of Communication, Art & Technology Graduate Studies Committee, and any other University committees as needed, as the School's representative in graduate program matters.
(s) Contributes to the graduate sections on three-year plans and self-study documents for the External Review process as needed.
4.3. GRADUATE STUDENT REPRESENTATION ON COMMITTEES

Graduate student representation in the School of Communication is as follows:
- one representative on the Committee of the Whole,
- three representatives on the GSC,
- one representative on the USC,
- one representative on any search committee as needed.

The Graduate Student Association’s executive selection procedures and other articles of governance for their constituencies are tabled in Appendix 6. The following objectives are taken from the Constitution of the School of Communication Graduate Student Association, ratified in January 1991:
- promote and represent student interests in and within the School of Communication;
- identify and promote the academic, intellectual and career concerns of the membership;
- provide social and recreational activities for the membership;
- undertake projects and activities to benefit the members [eg, Nelson Conference];
- undertake such other activities as the members may from time to time decide.

Membership in the Graduate Student Association shall be extended to all graduate students in the School of Communication. The Steering Committee shall consist of: chairperson; secretary; treasurer; and departmental graduate committee representative.

4.4. THE GRAD CAUCUS (CMNS GRADUATE STUDENT ASSOCIATION)

The objectives of the School’s Grad Caucus are to promote and represent graduate student interests in and within the School; identify and promote the academic, intellectual and career concerns of the membership; provide social and recreational activities for the membership; undertake projects and activities to benefit the members; and to undertake such other activities as the members may from time to time decide. The Grad Caucus is the main forum for students to discuss and formulate proposals for changes in policies, procedures, and practices, or make requests for redress of collective grievances.

Automatic membership is extended to all graduate students in the School. The Steering Committee consists of chairperson, facilitator, treasurer and the GSC rep.¹ The current Grad Caucus elected reps are:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Role</th>
<th>Name</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chairperson</td>
<td>Ben Anderson</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PhD Rep</td>
<td>Dylan Chandler</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MA Rep</td>
<td>Tiu Vaartnou</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Treasurer</td>
<td>Vacant*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secretary</td>
<td>Vacant*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TSSU Rep</td>
<td>Vacant*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GSS Rep</td>
<td>Vacant*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Representative to U Committee</td>
<td>Vacant*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

¹Vacant positions are to be determined at the first graduate caucus meeting in September 2015.

¹ Taken from The Constitution of the School of Communication Graduate Student Association ratified in January 1991.
New grad students are strongly encouraged to attend Grad Caucus meetings and get involved. The GSC depends on Grad Caucus input to design policies and programs—it assumes this input represents the interests of all grad students. If you have a problem or suggestion, often the most effective way to get action is to approach Caucus reps. Of course, any student can directly approach the Graduate Program Chair, the Director of the School, or any faculty member, but matters raised by Grad Caucus carry much weight because they are assumed to represent the views of a significant number of students.

Every TA should obtain a copy of the TSSU current agreement at http://www.tssu.ca/. Contracts are for the total term, so be sure to watch the projected division of time over the term. In certain circumstances, overtime can be compensated if the instructor goes to Lucie Menkveld, Administrative Assistant. Don’t let TA work take up all of your time—be disciplined, review your hours 2-3 times in the term. Leave time for your own coursework. You can do this by logging your hours on a TA Time-Use Guideline form with your Instructor and by making sure faculty or sessional instructors with whom you are working understand how long it takes to grade or prepare tutorials. Examples of these forms may be found in the forms section of the School of Communications website.

4.5. THE GRADUATE STUDENT SOCIETY (GSS) AND THE GRAD CAUCUS

The GSS’s fiscal year starts September 1st, at which point $1,200 is usually allocated to the CMNS Grad Caucus. These funds are primarily for hotel and accommodation for conferences. All GSS travel funds are reimbursements and you can only get reimbursed within the time period in which your travel took place (e.g., if you go to a conference in September, you can only request a reimbursement in the October allocation). Allocation guidelines set down by the Grad Caucus (April 1999) include:
- two six-month periods of funding so funds are not used up early in the year;
- funding requests accepted at the end of each six-month period;
- funds are distributed evenly among successful applicants in an amount not to exceed $75 each;
- priority for second-period funding is given to those not funded in the first round.

Special Grad Caucus meetings are called at the end of October and again in April to allocate the money.

Applicants for funding are required to attend these special grad caucus meetings and provide a brief synopsis of what you did, where the conference took place, etc. Caucus votes on the allocation, you provide receipts for travel, accommodations and conference fees, and SFSS sends you a cheque. Details will be sent to you by e-mail a few weeks ahead of the relevant Caucus meetings.

4.6. RELATIONS WITH INTERIM ADVISORS

Each incoming graduate student is assigned an interim advisor. We try to match students with advisors who have common interests. If you have not yet met your advisor, arrange to do so as soon as you can. Unfortunately, from time to time there have been a few students who did not meet with their interim advisors until many months after their arrival. Don't wait for him/her to contact you.

Interim advisors frequently become their students’ senior supervisors. This is advantageous inasmuch as you already know each other. However, there is no expectation or assumption that the interim advisor should be the senior supervisor or even a member of the thesis Supervisory Committee. During the first two terms, try to get to know as many other faculty members as possible. Ideally, try to enroll in a course with your senior supervisor, or work as a Teaching Assistant or Research Assistant, for the person you plan to choose as your senior supervisor, to allow you both to gain some familiarity with each other’s work.
Your interim senior supervisor is your principal resource for advice. However, you are welcome to come to the Graduate Program Chair and Coordinator with questions or concerns. With nearly 100 graduate students currently in the program and approximately 120-150 applicants making inquiries each year, you can imagine that it may not always be easy to get an appointment right away but we are available to help. We are also happy to help you find the appropriate contacts at SFU to seek advice about specific needs or questions.
5. COURSE PLANNING

5.1. REGULATIONS FOR REGISTRATION

Each of you should have a copy of the SFU Graduate General Regulations [see the Dean of Graduate Studies website at http://students.sfu.ca/calendar/for_students/grad_regulation.html]. This is your bible; read it carefully; there are many penalties for negligence [http://www.sfu.ca/dean-gradstudies/current/registration_dates_and_notices/]. For example: In the current term - September 19th is the last day to pay fall fees without incurring penalty costs of 2% per month.

There are three types of registration: full-time, co-op, and on-leave. Students are expected to register full-time every term (including the summer). Exceptions should be discussed with your senior supervisor or the Graduate Program Chair. Most students are expected to retain full-time status for their first 2 (MA) or 3 (PhD) years. Going on leave costs the School part of a graduate scholarship in funding allocation.

There is a fee for registering on-leave [forms available on Dean of Graduate Studies website], (something which some students do in order to work full-time off campus during the summer). If you do not register in the summer or any other term, you will be withdrawn from the program by the Registrar’s office, and once this happens, you must apply to the Graduate Studies Committee for reinstatement (which is not automatic) and pay a $100 reinstatement fee, plus a $75 application fee. If you plan to register for co-op or on-leave, please note that you will be responsible for paying full minimum fee for a degree, which is six full-time units (Master’s) or eight full-time units (Doctoral), irrespective of the number of terms of actual registration.

You are not registered if you fail to obtain the signatures of your senior supervisor or interim advisor and the Graduate Committee chairperson on your Co-op, or On-Leave form. If you run into difficulty paying fees or obtaining signatures, immediately consult with the Graduate Coordinator or the Graduate Program Chair. Don't wait until late fees are imposed. It is becoming increasingly difficult to ask for special consideration (waivers, exceptions, extensions, etc.) for our grad students. Many decisions cannot be approved at the School level and must go to either the Dean of Graduate Studies or the Registrar for Graduate Studies. There are more than 2000 graduate students at SFU and the Deans have been implementing stricter procedures for policy enforcement. The solution is to become familiar with the rules and follow them. Then, when we absolutely must ask for special consideration, we will be viewed as generally abiding by existing policies and have better chances for favorable consideration.

5.2. COURSE REQUIREMENTS FOR MA

All MA students are required to take the following Communication courses:

At least 4 graduate courses, normally completed before beginning a thesis, a project, or two extended essays, which must include the following, unless otherwise stipulated as a condition for admission:

- one course from Group 1 (History & Theory: CMNS 800, 802, 804)
- one course from Group 2 (Research Design & Methods: CMNS 801)
- two additional courses, at least one of which is selected from within the school; no more than one taken with the same instructor except by permission of the GSC.
- In addition, students must complete an original thesis or; an original project which, because of content or method, does not conform to the usual definition of a thesis; or extended essays: at least two extended essays in the form of research papers to be submitted and defended orally. These papers will
be bound and deposited in the University library. Procedures used in the supervision and examination of extended essays are the same as those used for theses (See section 6).

5.3. COURSE REQUIREMENTS FOR PH.D.

PhD students must complete 5 graduate courses. These courses are normally completed before taking the comprehensive examinations or beginning a dissertation and will include the following:

- Two courses from Group 1 (History & Theory: CMNS 800, 802, 804)
- One course from Group 2 (Research Design & Methods: CMNS 801)
- A minimum of 2 additional 5-credit courses for students entering with a master’s degree at least one of which is to be selected from within the School and may include other courses from Groups 1 and 2.
- PhD Students also complete Comprehensive Exams, a Dissertation Proposal, and a PhD Dissertation (See Section 7).

5.3.1 COURSES BY GROUP

Group 1 Courses: Surveys of History and Theory
CMNS 800, 802, 804

Group 2 Courses: Research Design and Methods
CMNS 801, 805

Group 3 Courses*: Research Area Courses
CMNS 815, 820, 830, 840, 845, 855, 856, 857, 858, 859

Group 4 Courses: Research Internship and Fieldwork
CMNS 881, 882

Group 5 Courses: Directed Readings and Studies
CMNS 850, 851, 880, 881

Group 6 Courses: Colloquia, Comprehensives and Theses
CMNS 860, 895, 899

* Several field intensives ranging from political economy (840), media theory (830), acoustic communication (859), social construction of technology (815), knowledge systems in development (845), and a range of special topics seminars.

Graduate students are invited to attend the first two weeks of each graduate course in the term to become familiar with the intent of the course. The end of the second week of classes is usually the last day to add courses online through the Student Information System. It is also the last day to drop courses without a notation on your transcript.

The schedule of graduate courses for 2015–2016 is below (see 5.7). Course Outlines are available on the School of Communication website at http://www.sfu.ca/communication/graduate/courses.html

5.4. PLANNING YOUR PROGRAM

Consult your interim advisor to discuss your course selections. In the first term, as a general rule, students are encouraged to take at least one core course from the theory fields (normally CMNS-800). In the second term, students are encouraged to take a core course from the methods or theory fields, and another elective. Summer terms are often used for directed readings courses developed with an instructor around a
student’s direct research interest and there are generally fewer courses offered during the summer. You will be able to register online for all courses except directed readings.

Examine the course catalogue carefully. Be aware that most courses are offered once every 6 terms and sometimes less often depending on instructor sabbaticals, etc. Keep a copy of the course calendar from the year you entered the program, because most university policy changes are covered by a grandmother clause. You will likely have the option of meeting either the requirements in force when you entered the program or when you leave it.

There may be terms in which you can find nothing or only one course you want or need to take. Please do not go on leave for this reason. First, look at graduate courses available in other departments or even at UBC to see if there is something that might be useful to you. There is no reason to assume that all your course work should be done in the School of Communication. Students are encouraged to consult with other disciplines to find courses to fit their research direction. Second, consider auditing a 400-level seminar in your area of interest and negotiate with the instructor to cross-list it as a graduate-level course. This may be done with the assistance of the Graduate Coordinator. Other graduate students are a reliable source of information about great courses available in other departments. For options under the Western Deans’ Agreement, please see the Dean of Graduate Studies website at http://www.sfu.ca/dean-gradstudies/forms/ You must however receive written permission from your senior supervisor and the Chair of Graduate Programs to use courses taken outside the School as a credit toward your degree.

5.5. COURSE LOAD

Although there is pressure on students to complete their programs in a timely fashion, it is rare for students in the School who are working as TAs, RAs or at outside jobs to be able to take more than two courses in any one term. For the first term in your program, it may be advisable to take just one course especially if you have not assisted in teaching before. Even students on scholarships rarely manage to do more than two courses within the term.

If you believe the reading or the writing assignments in any graduate class are unreasonably heavy, please speak with the course instructor. If you remain concerned following this discussion, please consult with the Graduate Program Chair.

5.6. DEFERRED GRADES

Make every effort to complete your coursework within the term undertaken. In exceptional circumstances (supported by third-party documentation, such as a medical note), the grade for a course may be deferred for a specified period determined by the instructor. This shall be entered as DE in the student’s record.²

It is an ill-advised practice to accumulate deferrals for course work uncompleted in the prior term. At best, your term breaks will be ruined because you’ll be writing papers. At worst, it causes intolerable stress completing papers from previous terms while doing reading assignments, or preparing oral presentations, preparing tutorials, or grading exams, or working on a research project for a professor. Financial support could be jeopardized as a result of carrying an extended deferral.

² If the grade is not received by the Assistant Director, Graduate Studies by the last day of the first month of the next term, the DE grade will automatically be converted to an F. When the grade for a course is not deferred and no grade is received by the Assistant Director, Grade Studies, the notation N will be placed in the student’s record. For the purposes of calculating the CGPA, N counts for 0 points.
5.7. **Course Offerings – Fall 2015 to Spring 2016**

**Fall 2015**
CMNS 800 – Alison Beale (HC)
CMNS 820 – co-taught by Robert Hackett & Stuart Poyntz (HC)
CMNS 830 – Zoë Druick (HC)
CMNS 844 – GlobalCMNS – Adel Iskandar (HC)

CMNS 857 – Andrew Feenberg (HC) – ST: Philosophy of Technology
CMNS 453/855 – Linda Harasim (HC) – ST: Digital Social Media
CMNS 487/858 G1 – Jan Marontate – ST: Public Memory & Discourse
CMNS 488/858 G2 – Jan Marontate – ST: Art Worlds

**Spring 2016**
CMNS 801 – Peter Chow-White and/or Murray? (Bby)
CMNS 802 – Rick Gruneau (HC)
CMNS 815 – Frederik Lesage
CMNS 840 – Dal Yong Jin (HC)
CMNS 848 – GlobalCMNS – Katherine Reilly (HC)

5.8 **Milestones of Course and Program Completion**

In general, full-time MA students will have finished 3 courses by the end of their second semester (which is usually the Spring). The summer may then be devoted to a reading course, which is often structured around your area of research for your thesis. At the very latest, all required courses must be completed by the end of your fifth semester. Intensive research on your thesis normally begins in the Fall of your second year, culminating in a defence which is normally scheduled for your sixth or seventh term.

Doctoral students will complete all required courses during their second year in the program. Comprehensive examinations are usually designed at the end of the second year (semester 6) and completed during the third year (in semester 7 or 8). Once comprehensive exams have been completed, doctoral students prepare a detailed dissertation proposal for approval of their supervisory committee. Dissertation research should be well underway by the end of the third year.

Additional information about expectations with respect to progress through the program can be found in section 9: Graduate Student Progress Report.

5.9 **External Funding Applications**

In addition to course work, the School strongly encourages all graduate students (both MA and PhD) to submit an application for graduate fellowships from the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC) or other Tri-Council awards as well as applications for other types of external funding in consultation with their Senior Supervisor and Supervisory Committee members. Foreign national students who may be ineligible for the SSHRC should seek opportunities to apply to another external funding agency. Seek advice about appropriate funding sources from your Senior Supervisor.

All SSHRC and other Tri-council applications for external scholarships are reviewed, evaluated and ranked by the Graduate Studies Committee. The SSHRC/other proposal process is supported by special workshops offered by the Dean of Graduate Studies and the School of Communication in the fall of each academic year. Successful students and prospective applicants are invited to participate in the School's fall workshop, which will be scheduled for a date early in the fall term. Internal deadlines for submissions will be announced when the Office of the Dean of Graduate Studies sets them.
5.10. Important Dates to Remember – Fall 2015


Tuesday, September 8, 2015  Fall term classes start.

Friday, September 11, 2015  TA/TM Day

Monday, September 14, 2015  4:30pm Deadline for submitting a U-Pass BC exemption request for Fall 2015.

Friday, September 18, 2015  End of Bursary application period (bursaries are awarded based on financial need; international students are eligible)

Monday, September 21, 2015  Last date to opt out or change your coverage in the Graduate Health Plan (see ihaveaplan.ca for details).
Last day for graduate students to enroll through self-service (late enrollment deadline)
Last day to drop with 100% refund of tuition. For refunds on U-Passes, please refer to the U-Pass website.
Last day to change from credit to audit grade basis.
Tuition and fees are due and payable. Every month after this date, a 2% penalty will be calculated and posted to your student account.

Monday, September 28, 2015  Last day to drop with no notation on transcript

Wednesday, September 30, 2015  Last day to drop with 75% refund of tuition. No refund of ancillary fees.
Last day for receipt of grades deferred from the summer term. Only applicable to new international students: Last day to opt out of Guard.Me@SFU (see medical insurance deadlines)

Thursday–Friday, October 8–9, 2015  Convocation for students who completed in Summer 2015. See www.sfu.ca/convocation for more information.

Monday, October 12, 2015  Thanksgiving Day. University closed.

Friday, October 30, 2015  Last day for a 50% refund of tuition for term withdrawals (and course drops for credit hour fee students). No refund of ancillary fees.
Monday, November 2, 2015  Tentative: Enrollment opens for Spring 2016 semester.  

Western Canadian Deans Agreement deadline for applying to take transfer courses at other western Canadian universities is 4–6 weeks before the beginning of the next term (depends on destination university).

November 3 - 20, 2015  Tentative: Work-study application period.

Tuesday, November 3, 2015  Last day for graduate students to drop classes with WD on their transcripts

Wednesday, November 11, 2015  Remembrance Day. All classes cancelled and offices closed.

Monday, December 7, 2015  Classes end for Fall term.  

Last day for graduate students to drop classes under special procedures applicable in extenuating circumstances (WE on transcript).

Wednesday–Sunday, December 9–20, 2015  Examination period.  

If you are a current TA and want to pay to extend your TSSU medical insurance for up to two terms, application forms are due by the end of the term. (See also: All HR forms.)

Friday, December 18, 2015  Deadline to apply on the Student Information System for graduation in the June 2016 convocation ceremonies, if you are completing degree requirements in Fall 2015 term.

Thursday, December 24, 2015, by 12 noon  Submission of all graduate degree requirements for 2015 Fall term (must be submitted by 12pm PST, see library submission deadline).

For academic dates calendar go to: http://students.sfu.ca/calendar/for_students/dates.html  
For full university calendar go to: http://students.sfu.ca/calendar/

5.11. Course Evaluation

As part of a curriculum review process, the GSC asked all faculty members teaching graduate courses to distribute a course evaluation form recommended by the Student Union and the Grad Caucus when inviting students to evaluate their courses. It focuses on criteria of student-teacher interaction that are different from what is expected at the undergraduate level. Such evaluations form part of the teaching dossier of faculty and are taken into account in determining tenure and promotion, and assessing overall faculty performance. Forms for an example of the Graduate Course an Instructor Evaluation form.
6. THE MASTERS’ PROGRAM

The School currently has approximately 50 MA students. As noted, the program requires the completion of four courses, and offers a thesis, two extended essays, or project option. More detailed information about the extended essays or project option (typically consisting of a project and one extended essay) can be obtained from the Graduate Coordinator and discussed with your interim supervisor.

In Fall 1998, the School introduced a Co-op program for M.A. students. For more details on our Co-op program, please visit http://www.sfu.ca/communication/co-op.html.

6.1. THESIS, ESSAY AND PROJECT REQUIREMENTS

Prior to entering the program, students indicate their choice of research area. This choice plays a role in the determination of the interim advisor. Admission to the program is contingent upon willingness of faculty members to supervise, in addition to academic merit.

It is common for first year MA students to pursue a reading course over the Summer term (their third term in the program) in an area related to the thesis topic. Independent study and reading courses can be designed to help complement much of the research towards the thesis. A Directed Study form must be completed in consultation with the professor and submitted to the Graduate Coordinator, who will then register you in the appropriate course.

Research on theses and projects is normally begun in the fourth semester, with completion and defence occurring in the sixth or seventh semester. Theses are expected to be 75 to 100 pages long. Extended Essays are no more than 40 pages each, while the length of projects (which may take different media forms, such as video documentaries) will vary. Projects normally include a written component of approximately 40 pages.

6.2 GUIDELINES FOR MA PROJECT AND EXTENDED ESSAY OPTIONS

The project and two extended essays options are designed to accommodate students who wish to pursue work that differs in format or style from that of the standard thesis. Once completed, the work is normally presented in a colloquium format rather than in a formal defense.

The project or essays option represents the culmination of the student's work in the MA program and thus serves as a major requirement for graduation. Graduate coursework should be organized, where possible, to provide conceptual, theoretical and practical background preparation for the research required for the project or essays. However, projects or essays completed as part of regular coursework must be significantly deepened or enhanced to meet this graduating requirement. Paid contract work, or work done during Co-op program placements, is not admissible. On the other hand, unpaid fieldwork, such as that undertaken as part of the CMNS 851 Internship course, may provide valuable experience that leads directly to, for instance, a project design or case study.
6.2.a. The Project

The project should be presented in a form consistent with the research direction undertaken by the student during the MA program. It may involve a format such as a website, video or audio documentary, on-line software development, or another technology-based format. It may also take a written form that differs from the normal thesis structure. Students should familiarize themselves with the facilities and technical support offered by the School and the University that can be accessed for completion of a thesis project. However, students are expected to have the necessary technical skills to undertake the project, equivalent to a senior undergraduate level, since basic technical skill training is unavailable within the School (although there are often opportunities for training workshops at SFU more generally). Students are also generally responsible for any direct costs incurred working on the project. In any event, students are always encouraged to apply for external financial support where possible.

All projects need to be documented in a written form, not to exceed 40 pages, determined in consultation with your senior supervisor. This documentation should include the rationale behind the project, a description of the research undertaken, as well as a description and evaluation of the project itself. A short summary of the project will function as an abstract for the Dean of Graduate Studies’ purposes. The written documentation may include an appendix of visual or other materials relevant to the project. A copy of this documentation, plus any audio-visual material involved in the project, is submitted to the Library in a manner similar to a thesis.

6.2.b. The Two Extended Essays

The two essays should represent two different aspects of the research direction undertaken by the student during the MA program. They may deal with completely different topics, or they may be related, such as a theoretical piece complemented by a case study. Each essay will normally be in the range of 25-35 pages, and will not exceed 40 pages. The topics and scope of each essay are determined in consultation with the senior supervisor. Care should be taken to prevent the essays from expanding to the length or scope of a thesis. Essays must be substantively different from papers submitted for course work evaluation. A short summary of each essay will function as an abstract for the Dean of Graduate Studies’ purposes, and the essays are submitted to the Library in a manner similar to a thesis.

6.3. Guidelines for the MA Thesis Option

While the thesis used to be the option most often recommended for those who intend to go on to doctoral studies, admission norms are changing at many doctoral programs in Europe and North America. The selection of the appropriate option, then, depends more on the nature of the research question and scope of the topic than on any other criteria. Discuss these options clearly at an early stage with your senior supervisor. The purpose of the MA thesis is to demonstrate a theoretical and applied mastery of intensive research in one selected topic in communication.

6.3.a. Thesis Scope

An MA thesis is expected to be between 75 to 100 pages, inclusive of all endnotes and bibliography. Usually, it is organized into a brief introduction, three chapters of about 20-22 pages, and a conclusion.
6.3.b. Thesis Examination Committee

The MA thesis Examination Committee is comprised of the senior supervisor who is a tenured or tenure-track member in the School of Communication, a second reader within the School, and an external examiner from another department/school in SFU or a local person with equivalent qualification. The external examiner is selected in consultation with the senior supervisor and student at the time of scheduling the defense.

6.3.c. Procedures for Oral Defenses

The senior supervisor is responsible for deciding if the thesis is ready for examination. The thesis is then circulated to the Supervisory Committee and a defense date set. The defense is chaired by a faculty member in the School. The defense involves a brief presentation by the student of the thesis work—normally not to exceed 15-20 minutes followed by a question period (consisting of at least two rounds) and a discussion. The defense is similar to a Graduate Seminar and open to the public.

6.3.d. Evaluation of Thesis

There are four options: pass with no revisions, pass with minor revisions, deferred, or fail.

6.3.e. Scheduling Thesis/Project/Extended Essay Completion

Defense dates must be determined at least 8 weeks in advance. Refer to the SFU Calendar for the Library deadline for submission of all thesis/project/extended essay requirements to ensure enough time has been allotted for post-defense revisions. As a rule of thumb, for example, if the date is August 26, the cut-off date for scheduling a defense would be June 17. The Student is responsible for meeting Library deposit dates.

It is the responsibility of the senior supervisor to review and approve the penultimate form of the thesis and state that it is ready to defend. The student should provide the final draft to the Supervisory Committee to ensure it is available to all Supervisory Committee members 8 weeks before the defense day.

The date/time/place for the defense is set in consultation with the senior supervisor and Supervisory Committee. The next step is to inform the Graduate Coordinator. The Graduate Coordinator will need your thesis/project/extended essay title, keyword research area and abstract of the thesis in order to complete an Approval of Examining Committee form which is signed by your senior supervisor and the Graduate Program Chair, for final approval by the Dean of Graduate Studies for entry into University records. This must be submitted at least 6 weeks in advance of the scheduled date of defense.

Unbound copies of the completed thesis/project/extended essay shall be distributed to all Committee members, and one copy shall be made generally available for inspection by interested faculty members and students. The completed thesis shall be distributed no later than 6 weeks before examination date.

Consult the University guidelines for the Preparation of Theses, Extended Essays, and Projects [available at http://www.lib.sfu.ca/help/writing/theses]. If clarification is required, please contact the Thesis Assistant [thesis_assistant@sfu.ca; ph 778-782-4747].
The Graduate Coordinator will prepare a document package for the defense day consisting of your results page, approval page, and a Recommendation for the Award of Degree form for your Supervisory Committee signatures.

After your defense, thesis revisions required by your Examining Committee must be approved by your senior supervisor. Please make an appointment with the Graduate Coordinator to obtain all required forms before taking your thesis to the Library.

Duplication and submission of your thesis (all copies) to the Library for binding is your responsibility. The School will pay for binding 2 copies: 1 for the School, and 1 for the student. You are responsible for additional binding costs if you want further copies.
7. DOCTORAL PROGRAM

The history of our doctoral candidates indicates stellar research, publishing and academic careers: Ellen Balka (SFU), Pat Howard (SFU), Sut Jhally (Massachusetts), Robin Mansell (London School of Economics), Manjunath Pendakur (Northwestern), Rohan Samarajiwa (Ohio State), Richard Smith (SFU) Nick Witheford (Western Ontario), Yuezhi Zhao (SFU). Since 1992, many of our doctoral graduates have gone on to teach and/or conduct research at universities and other research institutions:

Maria Bakarjieva-Risova – University of Calgary
Doris Baltruschat – Carleton University
Anouk Belanger – Concordia University
Beverley Best – University of Windsor
Nina Boulus – IT University of Copenhagen
Susan Bryant – University of Windsor
Florence Chee – Loyola University of Chicago
James Compton – University of Western Ontario
Greig de Peuter – Wilfred Laurier University
Monika Gagnon – Concordia University
Timothy Gibson – George Mason University
Sara Grimes – University of Toronto
Janin Hadlaw – York University, Atkinson College
Alison Hearn – North Eastern University, Boston
Yasmin Jiwani – Concordia University
Michael Karlberg – Western Washington University
Shamshad Khan – University of Texas in Arlington
Dorothy Kidd – University of San Francisco
Judith Kornelsen – University of British Columbia
Mark Lowes – University of Ottawa
Liane McLarty – University of Victoria
Margaret MacNeill – University of Toronto
Pascal Milly – Queen's University
Heather Morrison – University of Ottawa
Neil Narine – University of Toronto
Eileen Naughton – Western Washington University
Jason Ohler – University of Alaska
Rob Prey – University of Groningen
Pirongrong (Kwan) Ramasoota – Chulalongkcom University, Bangkok
E. Marie Riley – Mount St. Vincent University
Myles Ruggles – University of Windsor
William Santiago-Valles – Michigan University of Kalamazoo
Terrie Schauer – Université de Montréal
DeNel Sedo – Mount St. Vincent University
David Skinner – York University

The doctoral program requires five graduate courses and specialization in two fields of study for the purposes of comprehensive examinations. The comprehensive exams are normally completed in the third year of study. Comprehensive exam areas are designed by the student in collaboration with his/her comprehensive exam Supervisory Committee (consisting of three faculty members).
7.1. **PH.D. COMPREHENSIVE EXAMINATION GUIDELINES**

"Comprehensive" means a test of competence over a range of epistemological and methodological approaches within the study of communication. Written portions of the exam include a discussion of contending views, contradictions, convergences and other observations relevant to mapping a field of inquiry and analysis. Competence requires a more *extensive* than *intensive* treatment of the defined fields. Synthesis of an existing body of interdisciplinary literature rather than originality is the goal of the review. Historically, comprehensive exams have been intended to prepare doctoral students for developing fields of competence in teaching and research, as well as to orient the dissertation itself.

7.1.a. **Composition of the Comprehensive Committee**

The senior supervisor chairs the Comprehensive Committee and committee members work with the student to help shape the definitions of the areas to be examined. The Committee will normally be comprised of two faculty members including the senior supervisor, selected on the basis of expertise in the areas collaboratively defined. The members of the Committee usually, but not always, serve on the student’s Dissertation Supervisory Committee to maintain continuity of supervision from the early stages of the development of the dissertation proposal. The Comprehensive Committee will be established by the senior supervisor in consultation with the candidate *no later than one term in advance of the intended examination*. (See Section 8 for more details.)

7.1.b. **Number of Fields**

Doctoral students are required to prepare for two comprehensive fields. Fields may be related to the dissertation topic itself or carved out of an area of potential teaching competence. At least one examination shall survey a range of theoretical or methodological frameworks for the dissertation program of research within the study of communication to meet the breadth requirement. The Comprehensive Committee must ensure that the two areas are complementary, distinct from each other and the dissertation itself, neither too broad nor too narrow, and appropriate both to the students’ needs and the Committee’s competence, or for preparation for later teaching.

7.1.c. **Preparation for the Comprehensive Exams**

Preparation for the comprehensive exams often begins with the selection of courses, and may include a directed reading course to allow students to develop ideas for the definition of a comprehensive field. Many students begin a diary of comprehensive ideas from the start of their first course, continually refining them. Students often use a directed studies course in their second year to help begin preparations for their comprehensive exams. Some supervisors encourage students to take on topics for which they can already have foundations in literature they have already read. Comprehensive preparation is also aided by a continual refinement of the dissertation proposal statement beginning in the fourth term.
Preparation for the comprehensive term will include the following:

- A meeting with the senior supervisor in which the student presents ideas for the definition of the two areas.
- Meetings of the student with each of the Comprehensive Committee members to establish agreement regarding the parameters for the area to be defined and synthesized. Alternatively, the student may organize a meeting of the entire Committee to obtain agreement regarding these parameters. Meetings of the entire committee are especially advantageous when careful delineation of the boundaries between areas is needed.
- Preparation of the definitional or field essays that are prepared by the student and approved by the senior supervisor and one member of the comprehensive examination committee prior to the written examinations.

The design of comprehensive fields and drafting of the field definitions will normally be completed by the seventh semester and no later than the eighth semester in consultation with the Comprehensive Committee.

7.1.d. Definitions of the Comprehensive Fields

The student drafts two definitional essays (sometimes called field essays) that synthesize each of the areas for examination. These statements should not exceed 1000 words and should describe the field, delimit its scope and provide examples of the debates or sorts of questions that will frame the choice of readings.

To each definitional essay, the student will append a bibliography. Each bibliography contains between 30-35 titles in which there is a mix of books, journal articles and chapters most appropriate to covering central issues relevant to the field as defined. Most bibliographies contain titles already read, and still to be read. In some cases, exceptions to the scope of the reading list may be negotiated, if the field is more intensive theoretically or concentrated in its scope. Bibliographies arise out of careful negotiation between the student and supervisors. A balance between items familiar to the student and supervisor is to be struck: many supervisors counsel against reading in a totally new field, and some also prefer to seek some restriction on the items not known to the supervisor. Be sure to schedule early discussions with your senior supervisor and committee members to ascertain their expectations for the comprehensive exams.

Students are encouraged to consult the archived definitions to get a feel for the scope and type of synthesis required (available online at http://www.sfu.ca/cmns/grad/phd-comprehensive-exams/). While the definition of the field remains the intellectual property of the student, the bibliographies are in the public domain and may be used by others in designing their own lists.

The student then initiates a discussion of the comprehensive definitional essays with the Supervisory Committee members, who may suggest revisions, additions or deletions to the readings as deemed necessary or desirable to satisfy both the candidate and the Committee. If the candidate and relevant supervisor cannot agree, they turn to the senior supervisor to resolve the definition of scope. Normally, there are at least two editorial rounds of suggestions—the first on each field as developed and the second clarifying the fit between the two.

The schedule for the comprehensives is based on a two-term model. The process of definition, consultation and agreement regarding the final list should take no more than one term (usually the seventh in the program). The process of reading and synthesis in final preparation for the comprehensive exams should take no more than one term (usually the eighth, and no later than the ninth).
7.1.e. Registration

The student shall register in CMNS 895 during the term(s) in which the comprehensive exams are prepared and written (usually starting the eighth term). Note that students are eligible to apply for a Graduate Fellowship (GF) during their term of full time CMNS 895 enrollment and should plan ahead to make applications during the appropriate competitions. Deadlines for GF applications will be announced by the Graduate Coordinator.

7.1.f. Milestones for Completion

Comprehensive exams shall be completed by the end of the 10th term, barring extraordinary circumstance, such as health issues.

If the student has not completed the comprehensives by the end of the 10th term, then she/he must submit reasons in writing to the GSC by the end of the third week of the 11th term to present the plan for completion by the end of that term. Students should be aware that non-completion may have implications on eligibility for the school’s funding after the 11th term.

7.1.g. Submission and Scheduling

The senior supervisor negotiates the Comprehensive Committee’s final approval to the set of definitions/and reading lists. The student provides a signed copy of the definitional essays together with the projected examination dates to the Graduate Coordinator. The Examination schedule is set by the student in consultation with Comprehensive Committee.

7.1.h. Written Examination Procedures

The written examination will occur during a period mutually convenient to the student and Comprehensive Committee. Students will be asked to provide two written answers for each field, from a list of questions, the general contours of which have usually been identified in advance. Files of previous comprehensive questions are available in the graduate office and the Graduate Coordinator is working to make these available online. Students should note that the initial comprehensive definition often details the central debates to be addressed, and thereby, helps “set the agenda” for the supervisors’ likely questions.

Each Comprehensive Committee member normally prepares two to four examination questions on the students’ designated fields based on the approved comprehensive definitional essays and reading lists and submits them to the senior supervisor. The senior supervisor assembles and reviews the final questions for the examination, ensuring that they are sufficiently clear and distinct and that they are delivered to the student and copied to the Graduate Coordinator on time.

Students are granted seven days to write the two comprehensive examinations with the expectation of responses ranging between 2500-3000 words each on four questions. **Students are encouraged to take both exams in a single week (over seven days) so as to develop linkages across areas where possible and sustain the momentum of writing.** Alternatively, students may schedule the two examinations separately in a series, but the exams must be completed within the same term with each exam not exceeding three days, amounting to a six and not a seven-day period.

Students will submit printed copies of the exam questions and answers with full citations to all members of the Comprehensive Committee on the day the answers are due. Both paper and electronic submission are required.
7.1.i. Procedures for Oral Defense

The test for a good comprehensive is the quality of the dialogue during the oral defense. The expectation is that the oral exam elaborates an exchange of ideas between the student and Senior Supervisory Committee that has begun much earlier, in many cases in meetings and graduate courses with the committee members.

After submission of the written component for both comprehensive areas, an oral defense will be held with all the members of the Comprehensive Committee present. The oral component will normally occur within three weeks of submission of the complete written component. The senior supervisor chairs the defense in the presence of the other committee members and the student. The student will answer questions and address debates regarding the written answers in each area. Committee members will use this opportunity to seek clarification of the student’s answers and engage in dialogue about interpretation. Judgment of a student's performance (pass/fail) is achieved by a simple majority.

7.1.j. Evaluation

The senior supervisor will complete and submit the Comprehensive Exam Completion Form describing the Committee’s view of the student's performance on both the oral and written components within 10 days of the exam. This memo is copied to the student. Performance is judged to either pass or fail. In the event of failure to pass one or both of the two exams, clear areas for improvement will be set out. Rewriting of the failed examination(s) (which must contain the same questions) will be completed within three months following the initial examination and follow the same procedures.

7.1.k. Withdrawal

Failure to comply with the limits for terms registered in the comprehensive phase, or to obtain a pass a second time in the event of reexamination, may initiate a “Procedure for Review of Unsatisfactory Progress.” For further information regarding this procedure, please consult Graduate Regulation 1.8.2.

7.2. DISSERTATION PROPOSAL GUIDELINE

The dissertation proposal enables the student to develop a specific research question that will guide the subsequent production of the dissertation. A dissertation proposal is reviewed and approved by the student’s Supervisory Committee before the student begins full-time dissertation research. While there is no one model for a dissertation proposal, the aim of the proposal is to present the general/specific research question, problem or hypothesis; the position taken with respect to the key arguments in the field; and the expected contributions of the research (keeping in mind the central requirement that the dissertation make an original contribution to knowledge).

7.2.a. Description of Proposal Contents

The proposal must clearly demonstrate the relationship between the dissertation and existing scholarship in the study of communication as well as identify the methodological approach(es) and steps to be taken in the research process, including, for example, a time-line to indicate when documentary research, interviews or field work will be conducted and, where applicable, how media texts will be selected and interpreted. Influential theoretical and other literature sources are identified, the intended claim to originality cogently presented, and the intended method or methods appropriately described (with exemplars if applicable). Generally, a dissertation proposal is a written document of about 25-30 pages, including the following components:
• outline of the research question;
• a description of the study's contribution to the field (noting its significance to the field of communication studies, or its wider social/ and or political significance);
• methodological approach/es;
• steps in research and timeline for completion;
• chapter outline
• bibliography.

Preparation of the full proposal is normally in the ninth or tenth semester and the proposal must be completed and approved no later than the the 12th semester or three semesters after the comprehensive exams (whichever is sooner). When the Senior Supervisor finds the dissertation proposal ready for presentation it is circulated to all committee members for comment and may be discussed individually or by Committee, depending on the student and supervisor's preference.

7.2.b. Pointers on Committee Management

The onus is on the graduate student to initiate meetings as needed, and develop with the Senior Supervisor an appropriate way to coordinate appropriate feedback. Consult the orientation guide for tips on managing supervisory relationships.

7.2.c. Registration

To formally begin the dissertation phase, students must register in CMNS 899.

7.2.d Summary

Below is a table that provides a general outline of a doctoral student’s progress through the program. This outline is for illustration purposes only and students may deviate from the model offered here in several ways. For instance, some students will choose to take two courses in their first term rather than one. Hence the outline offers a mainly chronological presentation students might consult periodically as they prepare for the next phase of their doctoral studies in Communication. Students should also note that whereas the outline below suggests taking a graduate fellowship in the term during which the student is reading and preparing to write his/her comprehensive exams, some students might prefer to receive this funding in the term in which the exams are actually written. In either event, students should always remember that each student may only make one application for GF funding per academic year and appropriate planning is therefore crucial.

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<th>Year One</th>
<th>Year Two</th>
<th>Year Three</th>
<th>Year Four</th>
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<td>(1) Fall</td>
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<td>Senior Supervisor selected</td>
<td>Committee members selected</td>
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<td>(5) Spring</td>
<td>(6) Summer</td>
<td>(7) Fall</td>
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<td>Courses completed</td>
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<td>(9) Summer</td>
<td>(10) Fall</td>
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<td>Dissertation proposal completed</td>
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<td>(12) Summer</td>
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8. FINDING YOUR SENIOR SUPERVISOR

The Graduate Program Admissions Committee assigns an interim supervisor for each student entering the program. Students, however, must solicit the participation of faculty members for their Supervisory Committee who will decide on the basis of a description of the thesis, project, or essay topics. Students are free to approach any faculty member they wish. **Selection of a senior supervisor (and submission of signed form) should be finalized no later than the beginning of the second term of full time equivalent enrolment after the student begins the program. The senior supervisor must be a tenured or tenure-track faculty member of the School of Communication.**

Your interim advisor, other graduate students and the Graduate Program Chair can help you to investigate who might be the most appropriate faculty members to approach as possible members of your Supervisory Committee. The final selection should be a joint effort with your senior supervisor. At the MA level, normally at least one other member is from the School of Communication. Doctoral students must have at least two other Supervisory Committee members in addition to the senior supervisor. Faculty members from other departments at SFU and even from other institutions can be included with the approval of the Graduate Program Chair.

The remaining member or members of the supervisory committee must be approved by the senior supervisor in consultation with the student and forwarded to the Graduate Chair for approval. Normally, this recommendation shall be made during the same term in which the senior supervisor is appointed.

**A Thesis Topic Declaration form** (available on the Communication website at [http://www.sfu.ca/communication/graduate/current-students/forms.html](http://www.sfu.ca/communication/graduate/current-students/forms.html)) is filed with the School.

The current version of this form also states the intention to pursue the thesis, project or essay options, and a topic and brief description (not to exceed 150 words) is attached. This form must be signed by the senior supervisor and submitted to the Graduate Coordinator. In response to administrative transformations the forms may change in the future and students should use new forms as they become available.

Students are encouraged to take the initiative to request meetings of their supervisory committee or with the supervisor on a fairly regular basis. Consult with your supervisors to determine when they are available for meetings.

Different supervisors and supervisory committees have different styles and approaches to supervision. Different students have different needs and expectations for supervision. It is essential that both student and supervisor are both aware and comfortable with the specific details of the supervisory relationship (e.g. frequency of contact, level of assistance in professional development, etc), and that there are open lines of communication between students and supervisors. Miscommunication about those needs and expectations can lead to bigger problems in the future. If you have concerns about your relationship with your senior (or others on your committee) it is important to raise them as they arise. If you are unable to resolve those concerns, please speak with the Graduate Program Chair as early as possible.
8.1. Dean of Graduate Studies Supervisory Committee Guidelines

The Dean of Graduate Studies has proposed guidelines for supervisor-graduate student relations in the Graduate General Regulations (http://www.sfu.ca/dean-gradstudies/current/managing_your_progress/supervision.html)

8.2. School’s Graduate Studies Supervisory Committee Guidelines

8.2.a. Responsibilities of the Committee

1. To assist the student to formulate a specific thesis, project or essay proposal.

2. To advise the student with respect to relevant information, research, and background preparation (courses in other departments, at UBC, etc.)

3. To ensure that the student has access to appropriate resources (departmental and other).

4. To consult regularly with the student on the progress of the thesis and complete the annual progress report by April 30th each year ensuring that the student understands the basis for the evaluation.

5. To schedule the oral defense of the thesis, after obtaining the consensus of the full Supervisory Committee that the thesis is substantially satisfactory in theory, method, and substance, and ready for examination.

6. To arrange (at the Supervisor’s discretion) at least one meeting of the full Supervisory Committee and student at least one month in advance of the formal oral defense in order to apprise the student of any criticisms and reservations with respect to the thesis.

7. In consultation with the student, select a suitable External Examiner and Internal Examiner (Ph.D. only) and solicit their participation. The senior supervisor will obtain either a curriculum vitae or a short biography of the External Examiner and append this to the recommendation for a date for the oral defense and submit this to the Graduate Coordinator, 8 weeks (for Ph.D.) or 6 weeks (for MA) before the requested date of the defense.

8. To recommend a date for the oral defense and the composition of the Examining Committee to the GSC, a final draft of an abstract of no more than 150 words for MA and 350 words for PhD must be appended to the Approval of Examining Committee form [http://www.sfu.ca/dean-gradstudies/forms.html listed under “Examinations”] which must be submitted to the Graduate Coordinator 8 weeks before the proposed date of defense in the case of doctoral candidates and 6 weeks before the date of defense in the case of masters candidates. The Approval form with abstract and approvals from the School and Faculty must be delivered to the Dean of Graduate Studies ten weeks (Ph.D.) or eight weeks (MA) before the requested date of the defense. It is the senior supervisor's responsibility to ensure that the recommended date is convenient for all members of the Examining Committee.
8.2.b. Responsibilities of the Student

The procedural responsibilities of the graduate student in this relationship are:

1. To seek agreement from an appropriate senior supervisor before the end of the first term; after consultation with the senior supervisor; to approach potential Supervisory Committee members in the second term at the latest; and to ensure the satisfactory and timely preparation of documents accompanying the Approval of Supervisory Committee form found on the Communication website: (http://www.cmns.sfu.ca/graduate/students/forms/).

2. To initiate regular meetings with the senior supervisor on the progress of coursework and research; to initiate the annual review process by completing the Progress Report form [see Section 11.4 Forms] and submitting it to the senior supervisor; to respond to the senior supervisor's comments in order to clarify for the GSC whether there is consensus about the progress.

3. To furnish each member of the Supervisory Committee with draft copies of the thesis for a reasonable period in advance of Supervisory Committee meetings (see 8.2.a. step 5 in Procedural responsibilities of the Supervisory Committee above).

4. To ensure that she/he has responded to the major substantial and editorial comments of the full Supervisory Committee in the thesis submitted for examination.

5. To furnish each member of the Examining Committee\(^3\) with a copy of the unbound final thesis (including abstract) at least eight weeks for PhD and 6 weeks for MA, before the Oral Examination.

6. To complete any revisions required by the Examination Committee before final approval.

7. To consult with the Thesis Assistant, (thesis_assistant@sfu.ca) on the acceptability of the format of the thesis, thesis project, or essays.

8.2.c. When the Process Breaks Down

The initial Supervisory Committee is not a fixed, unchangeable structure. While most students retain their original Supervisory Committees, we recognize that some Supervisory Committees or senior supervisors may need to be changed (for example, if the direction of the thesis argument changes or if a faculty member leaves). Usually this can be worked out efficiently and alternative Supervisory Committee members selected on the advice of the senior supervisor or on the student's own initiative. However, if Supervisory Committee members are not fulfilling their responsibilities or when an impasse is reached, the student is encouraged to consult the Graduate Program Chair or the School Director. In the event that no satisfactory solution is found within the School, students may consult the Dean of Graduate Studies.

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\(^3\) Examining Committee comprises of: Supervisory Committee members, External (and Internal, Ph.D.), Examiner(s), and the Chair of the Examining Committee.
8.2.d. Changing a Senior Supervisor

The student may consult with the Graduate Chair for advice on changing a senior supervisor. The student must inform the incumbent senior supervisor and Chair of the change in a timely manner once an alternative senior supervisor is found. A new supervisory Committee form must be completed and submitted to the Graduate Coordinator. It will be used to notify the Dean of Graduate Studies of changes.
9. GRADUATE STUDENT PROGRESS REPORT

You will note from the Supervisory Committee Guidelines (see Section 8.2.a.) that all graduate students and supervisors must complete an annual review of their progress. The annual progress report is submitted to the School by **April 30th** each year. For this purpose, you are strongly advised to keep a careful record of the terms you are registered full-time or on-leave, the courses you take, the papers you present at conferences and/or publish, study groups you organize or participate in, research or travel conducted toward the thesis or in some way related to your program of studies, etc. You will be expected to report on your own progress annually and your interim advisor or senior supervisor will have to comment on your progress statement and assess if your overall progress is satisfactory, to be improved, or unsatisfactory. Anything other than satisfactory progress jeopardizes sources of financial support—that is, consideration for Teaching Assistantships, scholarships or other funding.

The following timetable should be used as a guideline to ensure satisfactory progress:

**MA students:**
- Senior supervisor must be selected (or the interim supervisor confirmed as your senior supervisor) by the end of semester 1.
- A committee must be selected by end of semester 2 using the Thesis/Project Topic Declaration Form which includes a brief topic description.
- All required courses should be completed after the student has been in the program for 4 regular teaching semesters (i.e. not including the summer given fewer course offerings during that semester).

**PhD students:**
- Senior supervisor must be selected (or the interim supervisor confirmed as your senior supervisor by end of semester 1.
- A committee must be selected by end of semester 2 using the Thesis/Project Topic Declaration Form which includes a brief topic description.
- All required courses should be completed by the end of semester 6.
- Comprehensive exam field essays should be approved by the end of semester 8.
- Comprehensive exam(s) are normally completed by the end of semester 10.
- A detailed dissertation proposal should be presented and approved 3 semesters after comprehensive exam(s) or by the end of semester 12 (whichever is sooner).

The Graduate Program Committee will review all unsatisfactory reports in accordance with the General Graduate Regulations (See Section 1.8). In such cases, the Graduate Program Committee, in consultation with the senior supervisor, will inform the student of the unsatisfactory progress and require the student to undertake specific actions within a specific time frame. A written description of these requirements shall be provided to the student with copies to the Dean of Graduate Studies and the Director, Admissions and Records. A follow-up review will be scheduled at a specified date to ensure that these requirements have been satisfied.
In the event of two unsatisfactory reports, a student may be asked to withdraw. In such cases, students will be informed, in writing, with copies to the Dean of Graduate Studies and the Director, Admissions and Records.

A student who is asked to withdraw may initially appeal to the Graduate Program committee. If such an appeal is unsuccessful, the student may then appeal to the Senate Graduate Studies Committee through the Dean of Graduate Studies. The student has the right to appear before the Committee when the case is heard. The decision of the Senate Graduate Studies Committee is final. We like to post notable accomplishments of our students on the School website. While publications in refereed journals are usually expected only of doctoral students (who should try to publish at least one by the time they apply for external scholarships such as the SSHRC award), other types of publications such as Op Ed pieces, work in alternative media, or other activities are encouraged. These may be included in the Progress Reports and shared to enhance collegial communications by members of the School.
10. FINANCIAL AID AND AWARDS

The School of Communication offers graduate funding for Masters and PhD students in the form of Teaching Assistantships ($5,200.00 - $6,200.00 per semester), Tutor Markerships ($5,200.00 - $6,200.00 per semester), and Graduate Fellowships ($6,500.00 per semester). These funding sources are all adjudicated at the School level. Masters Students are generally provided with funding for four out of six semesters in the form of TAships and Tutor Marker positions. For PhDs, the allotment for priority consideration during the fall and spring terms is seven out of nine semesters. Tutor Marker positions are offered through communication courses offered through and administered by the Department of Distance Education. For details on TA/TM appointment procedures please refer to the School’s policy. (During the summer there is a smaller number of TAships, and international students in the first four terms of the MA program or first seven terms of the Ph.D. program are given priority provided they are knowledgeable in the subject area.)

Doctoral candidates are also eligible to apply for sessional teaching appointments through the School of Communication, normally following completion of their comprehensive examinations.

All graduate students are eligible to apply for a Graduate Fellowship (GF) during the course of their study. Successful applicants are normally limited to a maximum of one GF at the MA level and two at the Ph.D. level. These awards are research grants usually tendered in the early thesis writing stage (for MA students) and during the first semester of the comprehensives (for PhDs), though their tenure is flexible. For details about the process of awarding graduate fellowships please refer to the School’s policy [http://www.cmns.sfu.ca/wp-content/uploads/2007/09/CMNS-GF-Criteria.pdf] (The number of Graduate Fellowships awarded to the School of Communication varies according to the University’s budget and allocations to the School take into account the completion times of our graduate students.)

Some funding in the form of Research Assistantships is also available under the supervision of faculty members holding research grants. You should speak directly to your supervisor about the possibility of being funded by your supervisor or another faculty member. This type of RA work usually involves work directly related to the funded research program.

The University offers a number of additional graduate awards. Some of these are adjudicated by graduate program subcommittees in the levels of the School, Faculty and University. More information on these can be found at the Faculty of Graduate Studies [http://www.sfu.ca/dean-gradstudies/current/funding/index.html]

Financial assistance is not guaranteed, but the School will make every effort to try to provide some support and share information about funding competitions.

**Both Masters and Doctoral students are strongly encouraged to apply for externally adjudicated doctoral fellowships from the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council [SSHRC].**

One thing that helps improve our ability to provide a wider number of students with support is to encourage students to apply for every possible fellowship or scholarship for which they are eligible.
10.1. PLANNING YOUR FINANCIAL SUPPORT
Most student financing comes in the form of teaching assistantships or tutor-markerships appointments at approximately $5,200-$6,200 each (although amounts vary with workload).

10.1.a. Teaching Assistantships and Tutor Markerships [TA/TMships]
Students must apply to the Administrative Assistant, Lucie Menkveld, for TA/TMships each term. Lucie Menkveld advertises available positions in the preceding term.

Instructional workshops are widely acknowledged to be invaluable, therefore the School strongly recommends TAs and TMs take the three-day Instructional Skills Workshop presented by the Learning and Instructional Development Centre. Information about these workshops can be found here: http://webserver.lidc.sfu.ca/tep/fall-10/progdesc.php?c_id=103 Upon successful completion, your tuition for these workshops is refunded. International students will be interested in the International Teaching Assistant workshops, which can be found online at: http://www.sfu.ca/cstudies/lang/ita/.

In applying for a TAship, students are asked to indicate which courses they would prefer. Preference for the first three courses is ranked. Every effort is made to match students with their preferences, but such matches are not always possible. TA/TM appointments are made by the Director, Administrative Assistant, Undergraduate Program Chair, Graduate Program Chair and Graduate Coordinator. To be eligible, you must be in good academic standing in your program. Priority is inversely related to length of time in the program: that is, new students take first priority over returning students. Financial need is also taken into account, so if you have met or exceeded your allotment of four of six terms as an MA or eight out of nine terms as a Ph.D., you will be ranked below those who have not. Each term, more applicants apply than can be employed.

In applying for a TAship, students must fill out the TA Time-Use Guidelines form with their instructor to ensure a clear understanding of workload demands.

Instructors must review the TA Evaluation form [Section 11.3] with their TAs at the beginning of the term and this should be revisited part way through the term. Included in this form are the Evaluative Criteria. This form is completed at the end of the term by your instructor, and it becomes part of your employment record. The feedback from evaluations is intended to enhance your teaching performance.

10.1.b. The Masters Cycle
Normally, MA students receive a TAship or TMship in each of their first two terms. Less support is available in the summer and priority will be given to international students in the first four terms of their programs because of visa restrictions on off-campus employment.

In October of the first year, MA students are encouraged to apply for a Tri-Council Grant (SSHRC or CIHR) and submit an application for Graduate Fellowship from the Dean of Graduate Studies to support one term of intensive thesis or project work during the second year of the program. MA students are also encouraged to apply for a TAship which covers the planning cycle. In the summer term of the second year, MA students are also encouraged to apply for private scholarships to supplement their income.
10.1.c. The Ph.D. Cycle

Most doctoral students may expect to be assigned TAships/TMships in the first three years for at least two out of three terms (since less support is available in the Summer term). Doctoral students are encouraged to apply for a Graduate Fellowship at the time of the comprehensive preparation.

In the Fall term of their first and second year, Ph.D. students are encouraged to apply for a SSHRC or CIHR scholarship, for private scholarships or other internal and external awards in their research areas. There are University and School workshops held in fall to advise students on preparation of their applications for the SSHRC scholarship. Students may also consult their interim and senior supervisors for advice.

10.2. Graduate Fellowships

The University awards each School a number of Graduate Fellowships annually, based upon completion rates. The school normally receives funding for approximately 20 - 24 such fellowships each year. These are ranked by the faculty members of the Graduate Studies Committee in consultation with the Graduate Coordinator and the Administrative Assistant on the basis of the following criteria: academic standing (grades, academic contributions, etc.), stage in the program, plans for the term (i.e. thesis research, comprehensive examination preparation, etc.) and other funding. [See the Dean of Graduate Studies website for a copy of the Application for a Graduate Fellowship – http://www.sfu.ca/dean-gradstudies/scholarships_and_awards/award_forms/ See the following link for the CMNS Graduate Fellowship criteria – http://www.cmns.sfu.ca/wp-content/uploads/2007/09/CMNS-GF-Criteria.pdf

10.3. External Awards

Historically, students in the School of Communication have been very successful in SSHRC Doctoral and Masters Scholarship competitions. All students are strongly encouraged to apply. SSHRC applications are due in October. Extensive training workshops are offered by the School to assist students in writing grant applications and it is fair to say that the competition has become very tough. Students in Communication must attend the SSHRC workshop offered by the Graduate Program in order to apply for the award. [You may be excused due to a scheduling conflict.] Applications must state a well-developed research question, rationale, methodology, and identify the contribution to the field. The faculty members of the Graduate Studies Committee rank internal applications which are then forwarded to the University SSHRC Supervisory Committee for further adjudication and then, finally, forwarded to SSHRC, which makes the ultimate decision on awards.

The School also has approximately $30,000 available annually in private scholarships from COGECO, CANWEST, Rogers Communications, Emergency Preparedness Award and a Graduate Award in Communication. Applications are due for these awards early in the summer term unless otherwise advised. Deadlines for the Shahrgon Award “Critical Independent Journalism Studies for the Promotion of Democratic Citizenship” are announced by the Office of the Dean of Graduate Studies. These awards are merit based and juried by faculty members of the GSC. See the Graduate Program Coordinator for more information about these.

NOTE: Students with grade deferrals on their records are not eligible to compete for scholarships—a good reason to avoid deferring grades, if at all possible. Further, you must be registered full-time to be eligible for most scholarships during the term of support.
10.4. RESEARCH ASSISTANTSHIPS

The School has a number of research centres and projects underway which hire graduate students as research assistantships from time to time. In some cases, professors or principal investigators provide a Research Assistantship that will be matched by the Dean of Communication, Art & Technology providing graduate fellowships—each year we receive three to four Dean’s Matching Fellowships.

Students are encouraged to take the initiative to let faculty members know you are interested in possible Research Assistantships.

10.5. GRADUATE TRAVEL AND RESEARCH AWARDS

The School of Communication encourages graduate students to present their research in academic venues. The Travel and Minor Research Awards support travel for research and scholarly presentations by providing funding for a portion of travel expenses, as well as support for the purchase of equipment (e.g. specialized software) required for research.

Awards of up to $350 may be given to support travel to scholarly conferences and/or for research purposes within North America.

Awards of up to $500 may be given to support travel to scholarly conferences and/or for research purposes outside of North America.

Application forms are available from the Graduate Coordinator and must include:

- A brief description of the relevance/importance of the research or scholarly conference to the applicant’s program of study.
- If applicable, a copy of the abstract of the paper to be presented.
- If applicable, a copy of the email/letter accepting the applicant’s paper for presentation.
- A brief budget describing the travel expenses, including airfare, accommodation and/or conference registration fees.
- A statement of support from the applicant’s senior supervisor.

The amount of individual awards depends upon a variety of factors including: the destination, the number of eligible applicants, the applicant’s access to other sources of funding and the number/amount of prior awards received by the applicant.

Applications for these awards will normally be accepted at three times during the year: February 1, June 1 and October 1. Completed applications should be submitted to the Graduate Coordinator.

Matching travel funding, up to a maximum of $350, is available from the Dean of the Faculty of Communication, Art and Technology. This amount is in addition to the Travel and Minor Awards described above, and is only granted for paper presentations at conferences. Additional funding may also be available from the Simon Fraser Students Society (SFSS) for conference and research travel and students are advised to explore those opportunities.
Students traveling abroad for research purposes may also apply for the Graduate International Research Travel Award. The award is valued to a maximum of $6,500 and is tenable only in the term in which the travel is occurring. Eligible students apply using the Graduate (International) Research Travel Award form and submit all required documentation to their department of enrollment. Departments are required to submit the top two ranked applications to the Dean of Graduate Studies in early February. The Senate Graduate Awards Adjudication Committee (SGAAC) makes the final decision on award amounts.
Additional Resources

**Campus Security**
Campus Security is committed to engaging our community to make SFU a safe and secure environment to live, learn, and work.

http://www.sfu.ca/srs/security.html (see web site for e-mail & phone numbers)

**Centre for Students with Disabilities**
The Centre for Students with Disabilities provides disability related information, support and counselling; reviews eligible students’ disability documentation and recommends reasonable academic accommodations; acts as liaison between students and faculty in the implementation of disability related services and accommodations; facilitates student growth, independence and leadership skills; and advocates on issues related to diversity, equity and academic achievement.

www.sfu.ca/students/disabilityaccess.html | csdo@sfu.ca | 778.782.3112

**Graduate Students Society**
The Graduate Students Society offers tools, resources, and other types of assistance to its members.

sfugradssociety.ca | info@sfugrasociety.ca | 778.782.3899

**Health and Counselling Services**
Health and Counselling Services operates two health clinics, one on the Burnaby campus and one at Harbour Centre (walk-in and appointment), and offers vaccinations, physiotherapy, and chiropractic services.

http://www.sfu.ca/students/health/ (see web site for e-mail & phone numbers)

**Human Rights and Equity**
The Human Rights website provides links to FAQs, guides, and protocols related to SFU's human rights policy. The policy covers rights and equity around such issues as discrimination, harassment based on a prohibited ground of discrimination, sexual harassment, and/or personal harassment.

www.sfu.ca/humanrights | betaylor@sfu.ca | 778.782.4446
**International Services for students**
The International Services for Students office provides support and services such as advising, international orientation, assistance with medical insurance and visas, and much more.

www.sfu.ca/international.html | sfu_international@sfu.ca | 778.782.4232

**Ombudsperson**
The Office of the Ombudsperson provides confidential, informal, independent, and neutral dispute-resolution advice and assistance to all members of the SFU community. The website provides an informative list of issues with which the office can and cannot help. It also links to a website with useful tips specifically for graduate students: www.sfu.ca/ombudsperson/tips_for_graduate_students.html.

www.sfu.ca/ombudsperson | jsolman@sfu.ca | 778.782.4563

**Student Learning Commons**
The Student Learning Commons assists with a wide range of academic writing, learning, and study strategies, which may be useful for you or for your students. The Research Commons www.lib.sfu.ca/research-commons offers support specifically for graduate students.

http://www.lib.sfu.ca/slc | learning-commons@sfu.ca | 778.782.4648

**The Teaching and Learning Centre**
The Teaching and Learning Centre (TLC) offers assistance to enhance teaching. The TLC also offers the Certificate Program in University Teaching and Learning.

www.sfu.ca/tlcentre | tlcentre@sfu.ca | 778.782.3910

**TSSU**
The Teaching Support Staff Union is the union representing TAs and sessional instructors from all SFU campuses.

www.cupe3906.org | tssu@tssu.ca | 778.782.4735