

GRADUATE STUDENT ADVISING MANUAL

Ph.D. in Media Communication



**JOURNALISM AND
MEDIA COMMUNICATION
COLORADO STATE UNIVERSITY**

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INTRODUCTION

► How to Use This Manual

This manual details requirements, policies, and guidelines for completing the Ph.D. in Media Communication at the Department of Journalism and Media Communication.

It is intended for use by faculty, students, and staff.

Note that this manual describes the typical Ph.D. program process, but **there are many ways to tailor your journey** to fit your specific needs while fulfilling requirements.

Your JMC advisor and the department's Graduate Program Committee are here to help you navigate the process.

See the [Graduate School](#) website for:

- CSU ID and RamWeb registration / records system
- Campus housing and campus life
- Financial resources
- Professional development and mentoring
- University policies and procedures
- Graduate School forms

This manual supplements the [Graduate and Professional Bulletin](#).

>>> PART ONE: Program policies and procedures

Learn about the degree process, program requirements, graduate assistantships, advising, the preliminary exam, the dissertation, and graduation.

>>> PART TWO: Support and resources

Look up department and CSU resources, professional development, research and publication, academic conferences, and student conduct. You can also find a list of required and other forms.



Additional information can be found on the department website at journalism.colostate.edu, including information about:

- JMC faculty and staff
- Current and recent graduate students
- Applying to the JMC graduate programs
- Graduate and undergraduate programs in JMC
- Departmental forms
- Internships and jobs
- JMC courses
- Student media
- Recent theses and dissertations from JMC students
- Alumni

Note that some of the procedures in this manual differ for international students. Please communicate directly with the [Office of International Programs](#) regarding immigration status requirements.

Program Summary

The Ph.D. in Media Communication at the Department of Journalism & Media Communication (JMC) features coursework in communication theory, research methods, and a cognate outside the department. It prepares students with high-level research skills, theoretical knowledge, and teaching excellence for careers in academia, while providing communication skills for consulting and research for positions in government, non-profit, and private organizations.

The Ph.D. is a 4-year program for students who already have a master's degree in a related field. It consists of 2½ years of course work, a written preliminary exam, and completion of a proposal and final dissertation. There are 9 required courses in the JMC department, and students take courses in JMC and across the university to fulfill other requirements.

Students select an advisor in their second year to oversee their dissertation research, which is a theoretically-grounded, rigorous, independent investigation into communication phenomena on a topic selected by the student. This work is supported through review and feedback in formal and informal meetings with a dissertation committee of the advisor, two additional JMC faculty, and one faculty member from outside the department.

Most Ph.D. students also serve as a Graduate Teaching Assistant (GTA) or Graduate Research Assistant (GRA) in a 20-hour per week position that pays tuition, some health insurance, and a stipend from mid-August to mid-May. Some advanced doctoral students serve as main instructor for their own class, and some teach a class or work as a GTA in summers, depending on department needs.

The department and university provide support through faculty and peer mentoring, office space and computer access, and a range of writing and professional development workshops.

CSU Principles of Community

The Colorado State University Principles of Community help us express what our community stands for and guides our expectations for creating a collaborative and vibrant community as a foundation for learning, critical inquiry, and discovery. They are:

Inclusion. We create and nurture inclusive environments and welcome, value and affirm all members of our community, including their various identities, skills, ideas, talents, and contributions.

Integrity. We are accountable for our actions and will act ethically and honestly in all our interactions.

Respect. We honor the inherent dignity of all people within an environment where we are committed to freedom of expression, critical discourse, and the advancement of knowledge.

Service. We are responsible, individually and collectively, to give of our time, talents, and resources to promote the well-being of each other and the development of our local, regional, and global communities.

Social Justice. We have the right to be treated and the responsibility to treat others with fairness and equity, the duty to challenge prejudice, and to uphold the laws, policies, and procedures that promote justice in all respects.

Detailed Program Timeline

Semester 1 (Fall)	Meet with your temporary advisor to plan your coursework and program. Register 3 classes (9 cr.); Typically: JTC 500, JTC 501, JTC 604 Forms <i>DG1 Temporary Advising Form</i> (JMC-GC) <i>DG4 Ph.D. Program Transfer Credit Approval</i> (JMC-GC)
Semester 2 (Spring)	Select a permanent advisor and begin developing your dissertation topic by semester's end. Out-of-state domestic students must establish CO residency. Register JTC 605 + three classes (10 cr.) Forms DG5 Ph.D. Coursework Approval & GS6 Planner. No submission.
Semester 3 (Fall)	Finalize your dissertation chair/advisor and your 3 other dissertation committee members. Register 3 classes (9 cr.) Forms <i>GS6 Program of Study</i> (RamWeb) – Required for 4th semester registration
Semester 4 (Spring)	Develop and refine your dissertation project with your advisor. Register 3 classes (9 cr.) Forms None
Semester 5 (Fall)	Develop your dissertation proposal and prepare an overview with your advisor for pre-exam meeting. Register JTC 798 and/or JTC 799 (3+ cr.) Forms <i>DG5 Ph.D. Coursework Approval & GS6 Planner</i> (JMC-GC) <i>Special Course Form</i> (JMC-GC) Meet: Pre-exam meeting with dissertation committee to present an overview of your dissertation project and determine committee member preliminary exam areas.
Semester 6 (Spring)	Prepare for and take your preliminary exams; finish your dissertation proposal and send to your committee with advisor approval for proposal defense. Register 799 (1+ cr.) or CR Forms GS16 Report of Preliminary Examination for the Doctoral Degree (RamWeb) (within 2 working days of final assessment) DG2 Thesis/Dissertation Proposal Approval (JMC-GC) Meet: Proposal defense with your dissertation committee.
Semester 7 (Fall)	Conduct your dissertation research and writing with supervision by your advisor. Register CR or JTC 799 (1+ cr.) Forms None
Semester 8+ (Graduation semester)	Complete your final dissertation draft for defense; make final edits after the defense for submission to the university with advisor approval. Register CR or JTC 799 (1+ cr.) (summer grads must register for summer CR or 1+ credit) Forms <i>GS25 Application for Graduation</i> (RamWeb) <i>GS24 Report of Final Examination Results</i> (RamWeb) <i>GS30 Thesis/Dissertation Submission</i> (RamWeb) <i>DG3 Graduate Degree Completion Checklist</i> (JMC-GC) Meet: Dissertation defense with your committee at least 1 month before graduation deadline; open to the public. Attend commencement (diplomas sent 6-8 weeks later).

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1 DEGREE PROCESS

The process you will follow to earn a Ph.D. starts with taking two and a half years of classes, selecting and working with an advisor and a dissertation committee, and identifying and refining a topic for your dissertation.

After passing a written preliminary exam, you will defend a written dissertation proposal, conduct research and analysis, and write a final dissertation that you defend orally in front of your dissertation committee.

See Part Two of this manual for a list of required forms. You can find detailed instructions and samples of [Graduate School forms](#) on the website.

► Forms

At each stage of the process there are key milestones that require approval forms. Forms required by the Graduate School have a “GS” prefix and are provided on your RamWeb. You initiate Graduate School GS forms in RamWeb, as your advisor cannot access these forms. Graduate School forms are sent to the relevant signatories electronically in sequence, including the Graduate Program Director and the Department Chair. If a form you submit is not completed within a reasonable timeframe, this may be because one person has not yet signed it. If needed, ask your advisor to reach out for a signature.

Forms required by the department have a “DG” prefix and are available on the JMC website and included at the end of this manual. You and/or your advisor send department DG forms via email to the Graduate Program Director and/or the Graduate Program Coordinator.

What are the Ph.D. requirements?

- Maintain a 3.0 GPA
- Complete the 73-credit program
- Pass a written preliminary examination
- Write and successfully defend a dissertation research proposal
- Write and successfully defend a dissertation
- Maintain satisfactory progress towards the degree

Degree Schedule

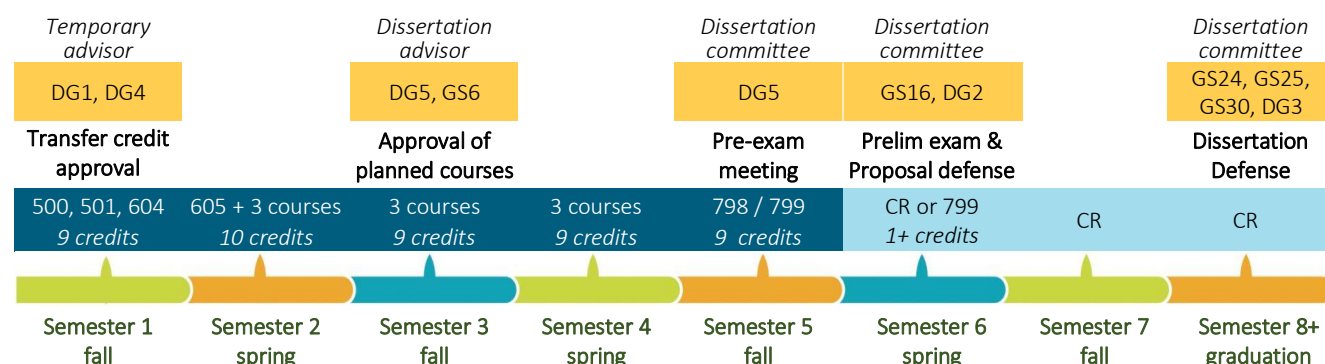
The time required to complete the Ph.D. program depends on your background, course load, and dissertation research. Full-time students take 9 or 10 credits (typically 3 classes) each semester for two years, followed by a semester of dissertation credits and/or the department’s proposal-writing class, JTC 798. Thereafter, you are required to register for Continuous Registration (CR) to maintain your student status.

Note that the university’s “full-time” student enrollment status is calculated differently for different purposes:

- **Regular course load:** full-time = 9+ credits per semester
- **Qualify for health insurance:** full-time = 5 credits per semester
- **Qualify for international student visas:** full-time = 6 credits per semester

► Typical Full-Time Schedule

The program generally takes four years to complete. This consists of 2½ full-time years in residence to complete course work, a semester for preliminary examinations and proposal, and one full-time year to complete the dissertation.



This chart shows the typical Ph.D. program process, but your actual timeline may vary depending on the nature of your prior work, your research topic, and other factors.

► For Part-Time Students

Part-time students typically take 1 or 2 classes each semester. Milestones are identified by number of credits completed rather than semester. If you take a semester off without classes, you must register for Continuous Registration (CR; see below).

► 10-Year Program Limit

Both full-time and part-time students are required to finish all degree requirements within 10 years of first enrollment into the Ph.D. program. Courses that are over 10 years old are considered to have “expired” and may no longer count towards the degree. This is because the expertise and training from such courses is considered out-of-date.

You can petition to extend the 10-year time limit only with strong evidence that you have maintained current theoretical and methodological expertise (see Required Forms in Part Two of this manual).

► Leave of Absence

Students may take a leave of absence from the program to account for extenuating circumstances that disrupt their degree progress. If you wish to do so, with your advisor, complete and submit a [Student Plan for Degree Completion](#) to the Graduate Program Director and Coordinator describing the start and anticipated end date of your leave, as well as a plan for progressing through the required milestones when you return.

Taking a leave of absence does **not** extend the 10-year expiration on coursework.

While taking a leave of absence, you must maintain your student status by enrolling each semester (fall, spring) in Continuous Registration (CR; see below).

If you do not enroll in CR credits, a non-refundable readmission fee is required for returning to the program. Apply for readmission by selecting the “returner application” link on the online Graduate Application Form; this involves submitting a new application and will require application review by the JMC Graduate Committee for availability of faculty to serve as advisor and on committee and

evidence of readiness and availability/time to complete the degree requirements. Deadlines

Registration, forms, and approvals have regular deadlines set each semester by the Graduate School and the department.

For the current year's deadlines, consult:

- Graduate School website for [forms deadlines](#)
- CSU [academic calendar](#) for class deadlines

Approximate major program deadlines for each 15-week semester (fall and spring) are:

Week 1-2	Meet with Temporary Advisor (1 st semester)	DG1
Week 3	Class add/drop ends	
Week 4	Application for graduation (graduation semester)	GS25
Week 5	Course transfer request (1 st semester Ph.D. only)	DG4
Week 6		
Week 7		
Week 8	Final draft of thesis/project/dissertation to committee (approx)	
Week 9		
Week 10	Final thesis/project/dissertation defense Class registration begins	GS24
Week 11	Final thesis/dissertation to CSU	GS30
Week 12	Thesis/dissertation formatting approved Class withdrawal period ends	
Week 13	Degree coursework plan (3 rd semester)	DG5 PhD DG6 MS
Week 14	Program of study form (3 rd semester)	GS6
Week 15	Classes end	

► Floating deadlines

The following deadlines are in relation to completion of program milestones rather than on specific dates in the semester.

Preliminary exam approval (Ph.D. only)	GS16	Within 2 days of when all results known
Committee approval of coursework (Ph.D. only)	DG5	After preliminary exam
Thesis/project/dissertation proposal approval	DG2	Within 2 days of proposal defense
Student Plan for Degree Completion		Before 1 st , 4 th , 8 th , and 10 th semester of CR
Final thesis/project/dissertation approval	GS24	Within 2 days of final defense
JMC degree checklist	DG3	After thesis/project/dissertation final defense
Submit to Journalism & Mass Comm. Abstracts (MS Plan A and Ph.D. only)		Within 2 weeks of final thesis/dissertation submission

Satisfactory Progress Towards the Degree

You are expected to make adequate progress toward the degree by meeting two standards:

1. Maintain a 3.0 GPA
2. Complete key milestones in a timely fashion: course work, preliminary examination, dissertation proposal defense, and dissertation defense
3. To guarantee and satisfy continuous academic progress, students are required to maintain scholarly integrity. Coursework, research, preliminary exams, and dissertations should reflect the student's intellectual contribution. Any work submitted in draft or final form to your advisor or committee is subject to this requirement. Unauthorized scholarly behavior includes plagiarism, falsification, cheating using generative AI or other prohibited assistance misrepresenting work done by someone or something else as your own. Read over the Academic Integrity policy in this manual for more information.

Milestones are in place to help create an environment in which most students can successfully complete their degree given: department funding availability, the availability of your advisor and committee members to mentor you and newly admitted students, advances in the field affecting the timeliness of knowledge gained during your coursework, the Graduate School's 10-year limit on degree completion, and for international students, requirements to maintain valid Visa status. While there is certainly some flexibility, continued progress, accountability, and communication are important. For full-time students, the milestones suggest a 5-year timeline for completion, but students may finish sooner (4 years is typically the minimum).

► Review of progress toward degree

In December of each year, the department's Graduate Program Committee requests a status report from each student's advisor to assess whether students have completed the following key milestones in a timely manner:

Milestone	Full-time*	Part-time*
Permanent advisor selected	End of 3 rd semester	Completion of 19 credits
Dissertation committee selected	End of 3 rd semester	Completion of 19 credits
Coursework completed	End of 5 th semester	Varies
Pass preliminary exam	Within 6 months of completing coursework (before 7 th semester)	Within 1 year of completing coursework
Defend dissertation proposal	Within 6 months of passing preliminary exam	Within 1 year of passing preliminary exam
Defend final dissertation	Within 18 months of proposal defense	Within 2 years of proposal defense

*For milestones, the department defines full-time and part-time status differently from your official university enrollment status. This is because after completing coursework, students take fewer credits, typically JTC 799, so they have time to dedicate to their preliminary exam and dissertation. A student is considered part-time if they start out in the PhD program on a reduced courseload (typically 1-2 classes per semester) prior to completing their coursework OR if they are no longer on assistantship or fellowship funding *and* are

only enrolled in Continuous Registration (CR). A full-time student converts to a part-time student once they are only enrolled in CR.

To determine if students are progressing through the program in a timely and successful manner, the Graduate Program Committee discusses any delays or extenuating circumstances that have influenced progress, which may include but are not limited to major illness, Student Disability Center accommodations, family emergencies, parental leave, bereavement, starting a new fulltime job once you're ABD status (passed preliminary exam), and/or particularly unique (i.e., rare) opportunities or inhibitors delaying your research. Students who have extenuating circumstances are encouraged to work with their advisors to write up a plan for addressing their progress in light of their situations, which may include requesting a leave of absence. Should potential delays arise sooner than the annual review period, you are encouraged to discuss how to best tailor your milestones and timeline with your advisor sooner. You may elect to have your advisor submit a Progress Plan to the Committee sooner than January.

Each year, full-time students in their third semester (fifth semester for part-time students) and beyond will receive a letter from the Graduate Committee on their degree progress according to the milestones above. If a student is behind, as noted in this letter, they will need to submit a *Progress Plan* approved by their advisor and then the Graduate Committee. Adherence to this plan will be factored into next year's evaluation and may be reported earlier to the Graduate Committee, at the advisor's discretion. The Progress Plan is intended to help students maintain progress in the program, and it may also note any other factors encouraging or impeding potential for future academic success and/or progress. Should the prescribed milestone(s) not be met by the next Graduate Committee review according to your advisor's progress report, the Graduate Committee will deliberate on next steps, which will either require a new Progress Plan or evoke procedures for not making satisfactory progress toward the degree [as outlined in the Graduate and Professional Bulletin](#).

Progress Plan Required for 5th Year and Beyond (*effective fall 2025*)

The 10-year degree completion limit set by the Graduate School is not extendable for any reason, and applies to part-time students, too. As such, the Graduate Committee requires a Progress Plan for every PhD student in their 5th year and every year thereafter in the program. Catching up to milestones does not extend the 10-year degree completion time limit. All students, no matter when they started the program, are subject to this requirement.

Common Questions About the Degree Process

What if I want to take different courses than I put on my GS6?

You are welcome to make changes to the courses you listed on your GS6 with approval from your advisor. After submitting the GS6, you will no longer have access to it, and you do not need approval from the Graduate School to make changes to your course plan. Instead, update the courses you actually completed when you apply for graduation at the end of your program on the *GS25 Application for Graduation* form through RamWeb.

How much can I customize my progress through the program?

There are sometimes reasons you need to change some of the time, order, or approaches to completing the steps to your degree. Although some steps can be more difficult to adjust than others, there is flexibility in the program to make sure you get everything you need to complete the degree. Talk with your advisor or a faculty mentor if there are specific changes to the typical process you want to make. In many cases there are forms to make changes, petitions to the Graduate School or to the department, or accommodations for extenuating circumstances you can use to complete all the requirements. The most common adjustments to the process that students make is adjusting the amount of time that it takes to complete the proposal and final dissertation. Should delays arise before the annual review period, you are encouraged to discuss how to best tailor your milestones and timeline with your advisor sooner. You may elect to have your advisor submit a Progress Plan to the Committee sooner than January.

How is my degree progress evaluated?

For degree progress other than grade point average, the Graduate Committee evaluates students in their 3rd semester and beyond based on an annual report from the advisor and review of other documentation (e.g., transcripts and/or other official university communication and records). Evaluation typically takes place in December with letters sent to students in January. The first time you're noted to be behind in completion of the milestone requires you to submit a Progress Plan to the Graduate Committee in consult with your advisor. The following year's evaluation will include consideration of adherence to the prior year's Progress Plan. From there, if progress to the milestone is still behind, the Committee will recommend either a new Progress Plan or follow the steps outlined in the [Graduate and Professional Bulletin](#) for not making satisfactory progress toward the degree.

What if I'm not making "satisfactory progress" towards my degree?

A student who does not maintain a 3.0 GPA is subject to probation and dismissal by the Graduate School, as outlined in the [Graduate and Professional Bulletin](#). You can petition for an exception to this requirement, but approval is rare. In consult with your advisor and committee (for those that have one), the Graduate Committee makes a determination of "unsatisfactory progress" and follows [the Graduate School's steps](#). If you anticipate an extended delay in your timeline, you can request a leave of absence with approval from your advisor. Note, though, that many students need an extra month or two at times during their degree process. Short delays, though may be noted through the evaluation process, are not usually a concern. If they do cause concern, details will be shared with you through the evaluation process and your advisor.

What if I pass the 10-year program time limit and my courses "expire"?

The simplest way to address expired classes is to re-take them. If this is not feasible, you can appeal the time limit for expired courses in rare cases, but this is difficult. Work with your advisor to identify courses for which you have evidence that you have remained up-to-date in your knowledge and expertise in the academic theories and methods relevant to the class. This must be done for each expired class separately, and the petition must be approved by the Graduate School. You should wait to submit the petition during the semester in which you plan to graduate since they are only valid for that semester. If your graduation is delayed, you'll need to file a new petition for additional expired courses. Processes for submitting petitions to the Graduate School are available on its [website](#).

2 COURSE REQUIREMENTS

To complete your Ph.D., you must earn 73 credits made up of classes transferred from your master's degree and courses taken at CSU. Your courses must fulfill requirements in research methods, communication theories, and a cognate. Eligible courses must be mostly graduate level, which at CSU are numbered 500 and above.

Meet with your advisor each fall and spring semester to discuss your options, identify the most appropriate classes for you, and receive your advising code for the next semester's registration.

Any type of registration requires a current advising code, including dissertation credits and Continuous Registration (CR).

What are the credit requirements?

- 73 total credits
- Up to 30 credits transferred from master's
- Up to 10 transferred post-master's
- 32+ at CSU after admission
- Minimum 21 credits level 500+
- 18 credits in methods
- 25 credits in theory
- 12 credits in a cognate
- 9 credits of electives
- 9 credits dissertation (or proposal class + dissertation credits)

► Course Approval Forms

- Work with your advisor to use *DG4 Transfer Credit Approval* in your **1st semester** to transfer your master's credits.
- Use the *DG5 Coursework Planner* to plan your Ph.D. coursework in **semesters 2 and 3** with your advisor.
- Fill out the *GS6 Program of Study* on RamWeb for course plan, advisor, and committee approval by the Graduate School by the end of your **3rd semester**.
- Use the department *Special Course Proposal Form* to register for dissertation credits (JTC 799) in your **5th semester** and beyond as needed for your GRA/GTA appointment or visa status.
- In approximately **semester 4 or 5**, use the *DG5 Coursework Planner* again to list all courses completed and submit it to your dissertation committee at your preliminary exams.
- **After coursework** is completed, register for Continuous Registration (CR) each fall and spring until you graduate. If you are employed as a graduate teaching or research assistant, you must register for at least 1 graduate-level credit (JTC 799) that semester instead.

Required Courses

To complete the 73 credits required for the Ph.D., you will transfer up to 30 credits from your master's degree and complete at least 43 additional credits. All your courses must fit into a series of requirements that train you in research methods, communication and other theories, and a cognate area outside the department. All first-time GTAs must complete an orientation by the Teaching and Learning Institute and GTAs in a [gtPathways](#) course must complete *E608: Integrating Writing in the Academic Core*.

► Course Areas

Methods Courses	Total Credits: 18 Required Courses: JTC 500, JTC 664, JTC 665 Courses with learning objectives focused primarily on research methods and analysis. The methods taught must be relevant to social science and/or humanities research. Additional courses: JMC's rotating topics methods seminars (JTC 793). Many departments in CLA and in the School of Education also offer social science methods courses.
Theory Courses	Total Credits: 25 Required Courses: JTC 501, JTC 601, JTC 602, JTC 604, JTC 605 Courses focused on theories in communication or closely related fields in social science. Additional courses: Most JMC graduate courses, <i>except</i> for methods classes and those in the department's MCMM program. Most departments in CLA offer relevant theory courses.
Cognate Area Courses	Total Credits: 12 Required Courses: None. An integrated series of courses on an area of focus that will further your understanding of communication and media contexts, such as health, wildlife, technology, art history, or agriculture. Your advisor must approve the focus and courses of the cognate. Eligible courses: Most graduate courses at CSU, excluding MCMM, with departmental approval.
Electives	Total Credits: 9 Required Courses: None. Electives may be on any topic. These courses do not need to fit into the cognate area, but they should contribute meaningfully to the degree. These are generally graduate-level, but some undergraduate courses may be eligible (request advisor approval). Eligible courses: Most graduate courses at CSU, with departmental approval.
Research	Total Credits: 9 Required Courses: JTC 799 (1-9 credits) Credits taken in increments of 1-9 per semester while working on the proposal or dissertation. JTC 799 has no assigned time or syllabus. The structured course JTC 798 (proposal research and writing) may be taken instead of 3 of the dissertation credits.

Independent Study Criteria

Note: You may count a maximum of 6 credits of JTC independent study (JTC 695/796) courses toward your 73 credit degree requirements

Requesting Additional Credits

If a student wishes to count additional JTC independent study credits toward their degree, they must discuss this with their advisor. The advisor can then submit a request to the graduate committee

Requests must include:

- The independent study syllabus
- A brief explanation for the exemption to the policy

Such **rare** exceptions may be considered for:

- Part-time students or students that took a leave of absence, and due to course offering cycles and a lack of available substitution from another department, need an independent study.
- PhD students who transferred only 3 credits to replace JTC 501 (theory) and need 1 extra theory credit

Course Rotation

Most graduate courses are determined semester-by-semester, but some are offered on a standard rotation:

- **Every fall semester:** JTC 500, JTC 501, JTC 604, JTC 698/798
- **Every spring semester:** JTC 605
- **Every spring semester in odd years:** JTC 602, JTC 614, and JTC 664
- **Every spring semester in even years:** JTC 601, JTC 630, and JTC 665
- **Most fall semesters:** JTC 793 (special topics methods courses)
- **Most spring semesters:** JTC 792 (special topics theory courses)

► Replacing Required Courses

Under special circumstances, students may be able to replace a required core course with an alternative course. You must get approval from the Graduate Program Committee and from your advisor with a written petition that details the rationale and supporting evidence for replacing the course.

► JTC Course List for Each Credit Area

The following table identifies which JMC courses count for each course type (methods, theory, cognate, or elective). Note that MCOMM courses in the grey-filled rows can be used for credit toward the Ph.D., but they are **not covered by program GRA/GTA funding**. Required courses are indicated in bold.

Course	Methods	Theory	Cognate	Elective	Notes
JTC 300 – 499 courses			✓	✓	Advisor approval
JTC 500 Comm. Research and Evaluation Methods	✓				
JTC 501 Process and Effects of Comm.		✓			
JTC 505 Advanced Professional Writing				✓	Not funded
JTC 511 Corporate Media Ethics and Issues				✓	Not funded
JTC 517 Advanced Information Graphics				✓	Not funded
JTC 526 Digital Media Writing and Production				✓	Not funded
JTC 535 Electronic Media Regulation and Policy				✓	Not funded
JTC 536 Organizational and Commercial Photography				✓	Not funded
JTC 540 Corporate Digital Video Editing				✓	Not funded
JTC 544 Corporate and Institutional Media Production				✓	Not funded
JTC 545 Organizational Media Production				✓	Not funded
JTC 550 Public Relations				✓	Not funded
JTC 555 Advertising and Marketing Comm.				✓	Not funded
JTC 560 Managing Comm. Systems				✓	Not funded
JTC 568A Journalism for HS Advisors: Journalism				✓	Not funded
JTC 568B Journalism for HS Advisors: Newspapers				✓	Not funded
JTC 568C Journalism for HS Advisors: Yearbooks				✓	Not funded
JTC 569 Advising Student Media for K-12 Educators				✓	Not funded
JTC 570 Political Economy of Global Media		✓	✓	✓	
JTC 571 Digital Media Research and Evaluation Methods				✓	Not funded
JTC 572 Corporate Web Design and Management				✓	Not funded
JTC 573 Strategic Digital Comm.		✓	✓	✓	
JTC 601 Cognitive Comm. Theory		✓	✓	✓	
JTC 602 Social and Cultural Comm. Theory		✓	✓	✓	
JTC 604 Colloquium--Grad/Teaching/Learning/Research		✓	✓	✓	1 st yr colloquium
JTC 605 Colloquium in Comm. Research		✓	✓	✓	1 st yr colloquium
JTC 614 Public Comm. Campaigns		✓	✓	✓	

JTC 630 Health Comm.		✓	✓	✓	
JTC 640 Public Comm. Technologies		✓	✓	✓	
JTC 650 Strategic Comm.		✓	✓	✓	
JTC 660 Comm. and Innovation		✓	✓	✓	
JTC 661 Information Design		✓	✓	✓	
JTC 662 Communicating Science and Technology		✓	✓	✓	
JTC 664 Quantitative Research in Comm.	✓		✓	✓	
JTC 665 Qualitative Methods in Comm. Research	✓		✓	✓	
JTC 670 Comm. in the Social Processes of Risk		✓	✓	✓	
JTC 684/784 Supervised College Teaching			✓	✓	
JTC 687 Internship			✓	✓	Advisor approval
JTC 690/790 Workshop	✓	✓	✓	✓	Advisor approval
JTC 695/796 Independent Study	✓	✓	✓	✓	Advisor approval
JTC 698/798 Research					Research
JTC 699/799 Thesis/Dissertation					Research
JTC 792A-F Seminar (special theory topics)		✓	✓	✓	
JTC 793A-F Seminar (special methods topics)	✓		✓	✓	

Transferring Prior Courses

To fulfill the 73 credit Ph.D. program requirement, you will transfer up to 30 credits from a master's degree earned prior to enrollment. These may be transferred from a different university or from a degree earned at CSU, including from the JMC Master's of Science.

Transfer credits must be approved by the department and Graduate School.

Use the *DG4 Transfer Credit Approval* form to list master's courses approved by the JMC Graduate Committee for transfer into your Ph.D. program as theory, methods, and cognate courses.

If you transfer a course to fulfill the JTC 500 course requirement, you might only have 3 credits for this class. You may take an additional methods course, or you may complete an appropriate 1-2 credit independent study (JTC 795) to fulfill the required number of credits.

Transfer Credit Rules

- All transferred courses must be approved by the JMC Graduate Program Committee.
- Up to 30 credits can transfer from the master's degree.
- No more than 18 transfer credits can be used to meet theory and methods requirements.
- Up to 10 additional credits earned following the master's degree can be transferred.
- Undergraduate credits from the master's degree may be transferred if they counted toward that degree.
- At least 37 of the required 73 credits must be level 500 or higher.

Continuous Registration (CR)

Continuous Registration is a non-credit status you register for via RamWeb after you have completed all credit-bearing courses in order to maintain your student status. Continuous Registration (CR) status includes a fee but no course credit costs. You will only register for CR if you are **not** serving as a GTA/GRA that fall or spring and you are not registered for any other credits.

Once you complete your coursework and GTA/GRA position, you must register for Continuous Registration (CR) each fall and spring until you graduate. Summer graduates only must also register for CR the summer semester they graduate. (GTAs/GRAs register for 1+ credits of JTC 799 instead.)

Registering for CR requires a registration code from your advisor each semester, but does **not** require a *Special Course Form*. In your **1st, 4th, and 8th semester of CR**, the Graduate School also requires you to submit a [Student Plan for Degree Completion](#) to your advisor and the Graduate Committee.

If you take a leave of absence, you must still enroll in CR while you are gone in order to maintain your status. If you lapse in CR registration, the Graduate School will ask you to re-apply to the program.

CR students may choose to purchase CSU student health insurance and/or access the [CSU Health Net-work](#) for an additional fee.

You are limited to 10 semesters (5 years) of CR, and you must enroll in CR or at least one course credit in the semester you plan to graduate.



International students must be enrolled full-time (6+ credits) in classes or thesis credits (JTC 799) each semester to maintain F-1 or J-1 immigration status. You will **not register for CR**. See the [Office of International Programs](#).

Common Questions About Course Requirements

How do I get my advising code?

Meet with your advisor every semester to receive your code for the upcoming registration period. You need this code for any registration, including Continuous Registration after your coursework is complete.

Can I take more than 73 credits while enrolled in the Ph.D. program?

Yes, you can take extra classes if you wish. There are no limitations on taking more credits other than ensuring you are making sufficient progress towards your degree milestones. You should always consult your advisor before taking additional courses. Typically, tuition for the standard course load of 9 – 10 credits is covered by a full-time GTA/GRAsip (50% FTE/20 hours per week), and more credits will not increase the tuition owed. However, you should check with your advisor and consult the most recent [tuition and fee schedule](#) to determine the amount of fees you will need to pay based on your credit load.

What if a class I need isn't offered during a semester I can take it?

Some required courses are offered every other year, so be sure to register for these when offered: 601, 602, 664, and 665. If you cannot take a course you need, you have several options: 1) Work with your advisor to identify an alternative class that addresses the same topics and concepts; 2) Take the course when it's next offered after your coursework period is over (e.g., your 6th or 7th semester); 3) Develop an independent study on the specific content in the needed course and find faculty to supervise it. The Graduate Program Committee must approve any alternative courses.

Do I have to take statistics?

PhD students are strongly encouraged to take at least one dedicated graduate-level statistics class, but confer with your advisor and committee. They count towards methods requirements. The best ones are offered by the [statistics department under the STAR prefix](#). They fill quickly! Register early.

What if I fail a required course?

If you do not pass a course you need to complete the program, you can re-take that course or take an equivalent that fulfills the requirements with approval by your advisor and dissertation committee.

What happens if I get an incomplete in a class?

You can request an [incomplete](#) from the course professor when the reasons are circumstances beyond your control. If you receive an incomplete, work with the professor to set up a timeline for completing the required work. The professor has discretion to grant the incomplete and the written terms that will determine completion of the course and the timeline for doing so. The professor will change your grade when satisfactory work is complete and graded. If it takes longer than 1 year to complete the work, the "I" on your records will automatically turn into an "F."

What if I missed a semester registering for CR?

Make sure you register for CR for the current semester and discuss the issue with your advisor. It will be necessary to reapply to the program if you miss a semester.

What if I need more than 10 semesters of CR?

After 10 semesters of CR, there will be a hold on your registration from the Graduate School. This may be petitioned by your advisor following their [General Petition Instructions](#) and by filling out the [Student Plan for Degree Completion](#) along with the petition to the Graduate School for review. Note, too, that there is a maximum of 10 years (20 fall/spring semesters) allowed for completion of the graduate degree.

3 GRADUATE ASSISTANTSHIPS

The department offers funding to doctoral students, typically for four years, although the program does not guarantee this funding. Funded students are appointed to quarter-time (10 hours per week, 25% FTE) or half-time (20 hours per week, 50% FTE) graduate teaching assistantships (GTA) or graduate research assistantships (GRA). These appointments are based on your skills and the department's needs and budget.

GTAs and GRAs receive a monthly stipend, a contribution toward the university's health insurance and fees, and tuition remission. The Graduate School has the [most recent information](#) about benefits.

To be eligible for GTA or GRA support, you must be registered for at least 1 course credit (*not* a CR credit), making satisfactory progress toward your degree, fulfilling your job duties to the satisfaction of your supervisors, and meeting any Graduate School requirements for holding assistantships.

Graduate Assistantships

What is it?

A paid position in the department to assist a faculty member as a teaching (GTA) or research assistant (GRA) for 10 or 20 hours per week during the semester.

When do I do it?

From the start of classes through finals week starting your 1st semester and usually extending through the 4th year, with some opportunities for summer work.

What forms do I need?

None! Assistantships are appointed via a memo from the Graduate Program Coordinator.

Graduate Assistantships

► Graduate Teaching Assistantships

This position is a 10- or 20-hour per week role supporting a faculty teaching a department class. GTAs are typically assigned to work with faculty who teach JTC 100 (*Media in Society*), JTC 211 (*Computer-Mediated Visual Communication*), JTC 300 (*Strategic Writing and Communication*), or LB 300 (*Specialized Professional Writing*). Some additional courses use GTAs on an occasional basis. GTA duties may include attending lectures, holding office hours, grading papers, assisting in test preparation and proctoring, and leading recitation/laboratory sections. You are assigned a GTA position depending on department needs, your areas of expertise, and your interests.

Teaching Assistants must meet oral [English proficiency requirements](#) as defined in the Graduate Bulletin. Students required to demonstrate English proficiency for acceptance are also evaluated for their ability to communicate orally in English by their department.

To prepare for the position, reach out to the instructor of the class for schedule and expectations. If you're not sure who the instructor is, you can ask the JMC Graduate Program Coordinator. All first-time GTAs are required to complete an orientation by the Teaching and Learning Institute. GTAs teaching a [gtPathways](#) course must complete [E608: Integrating Writing in the Academic Core](#).

► Graduate Research Assistantships

Graduate students may have the opportunity to serve as a research assistant who supports faculty in a funded research project. GRA positions are typically funded through grants obtained by faculty members from outside agencies. Faculty members have been awarded grants from the National Institutes of Health, National Science Foundation, Environmental Protection Agency, Intelligence Advanced Research Project Activity, and the U.S. Department of Agriculture, among others.

To prepare for a GRA position, reach out to the sponsoring faculty member to learn about schedule, expectations, and any background training you might need. If you're not sure who might have available GRA positions, you can ask the JMC Graduate Program Director.

► Summer Opportunities

Some opportunities to serve as a GTA, GRA, or Instructor of Record (teaching independently) in the summers are available. PhD students finishing up their 1st through their 4th year in the program will be eligible for up to 3 summers of teaching support, although we cannot guarantee summer teaching positions. Summer teaching opportunities are limited and competitive.

If you would like to teach a course in the summer, apply through the department, generally in late spring semester. You must apply each year you wish to be considered, and you must also submit a Graduate Teaching Evaluation Form filled out by faculty who have supervised you in a current or former GTA position. The Graduate Program Director will issue a call for applications via the department's graduate student listserv.

We also encourage all students looking for summer work on campus to look for opportunities on CSU's employment system, Handshake, which can be accessed through the [CSU Career Center](#).

Department Financial Support

Most admitted students receive financial support as part of the program, although this is not guaranteed. Visit the [Office of Financial Aid](#) for details on student loans, due dates, and paying your bill. The department HR/Fiscal Officer manages graduate student pay and can answer your questions.

► GTA and GRA Funding

Students with a GRA or GTA appointment receive funding for:

- **Tuition remission** – 9+ credits per semester (100% for half-time, 50% for quarter-time appointments) at the resident tuition rate
- **Stipend** – A monthly salary from mid-August through mid-May
- **Health insurance** – If also registered for 5+ credits, GTA/GRAs receive a [health insurance contribution](#)
- **Additional benefits** – Including parental leave and community mental health resources
- **A portion of student fees** – Includes general fees and facility fees

Out-of-state domestic graduate students must formally establish Colorado residency in their 1st year for full tuition remission in years 2+. See the Office of Financial Aid [residency guidance](#).

You are responsible for paying the remainder of required fees while holding this appointment as applicable. See Part Two of this manual for a full list of fees or to learn more about [current fees](#).

► Conference Funding

All graduate students are eligible for some funding towards expenses for attending academic and professional conferences. If you have been accepted to present a paper or talk at an academic or professional conference or meeting, the department will provide some funding toward your registration and travel expenses. Note that these are only available for trips associated with an accepted paper or talk, and may not cover guest lectures or other guest speaking engagements. Conference funding that comes from GRA appointments may have different requirements; consult the faculty supervisor of your GRA position.

For all conference funding of any kind, you **must fill out a pre-trip form** and have it approved by the department before your travel.

See more about conferences and forms in Part Two of this manual. Consult the Graduate Program Committee for current funding amounts and details.

► Outside Employment

Students holding a half-time (20 hour) GTA or GRA assistantship are not permitted to be employed by the university elsewhere on campus without special permission. CSU employment regulations do not allow more than 20 hours of employment for students in a full-time program. Part-time students or those not in coursework should consult with the JMC Graduate Committee to ensure they are permitted to receive additional pay from the university.

In addition, students employed by an off-campus entity must also acknowledge departmental expectations. This is because coursework and GTA/GRA positions are considered full-time work and additional employment may interfere substantially with the degree program.

Please fill out the DG1b Additional Work Commitment Acknowledgement Form (available on the JMC website) and discuss with your advisor. This form outlines the expectations of taking on additional work, whether on- or off-campus.

► Key information about GTA/GRA positions

- Final appointment of assistantships is contingent upon completion of all the necessary formal documents, certification of the assistantship appointment by the Graduate School, and formal University approval.
- For PhD students, assistantships are renewable each semester for a total of 4 years, pending the availability of funds, satisfactory progress toward your degree, and your compliance with program and university guidelines including the [Student Conduct Code](#).
- You must maintain a 3.00 graduate grade-point average and be enrolled in at least 1 credit hour to keep GTA/GRA appointments.
- Please note the CSU [Terms and Conditions of Graduate Assistantship Appointments](#).
- Contractual obligation occurs at the time of appointment or reappointment.
- Graduate assistants must be [reappointed](#) each semester based on appropriate progress.
- This position is at will and depends upon successful completion of a background check.
- The Graduate School supplements first-year tuition costs for half-time domestic out-of-state GTAs/GRAs and for some international students. After this, domestic graduate students are required to apply for residency.
- The stipend is treated as taxable income, although tuition disbursement is not.

Note that in order to serve as a GTA or GRA, you must be registered for at least one course credit from a regular class or JTC 799 dissertation credits.

Common Questions About Graduate Assistantships

Am I required to work as a GTA or GRA?

You are not required to be a GTA/GRA in order to be in the Ph.D. program, but you are required to be one in order to receive tuition remission and a stipend.

What responsibilities are expected of me as a GTA?

Exact details depend on the course you're assisting with, but GTAs generally grade student papers, help prepare and distribute course materials, and independently run small, weekly recitation sessions or labs if the course includes them. Most instructors also ask GTAs to attend class lectures to ensure that you are familiar with all the relevant content and in-class activities, especially the first semester you assist with that particular course.

What if there's a problem with my payment?

Speak to the department Fiscal Officer and the JMC Graduate Program Coordinator to sort out any issues with your stipend or other funding from the department.

What do I do if there's a problem with a student or my class isn't responding to me?

It can certainly be challenging to oversee a class independently for the first time, especially if you're not much older than your undergraduate students. Remember that you are there to support and guide students, and that you have the authority to require them to complete the assignments and exercises. Speak to your class instructor or other faculty mentors if you need help clarifying your role or if there are any serious problems with a student. Chatting with experienced GTAs can really help, as they have probably faced similar challenges. There are also pedagogy resources available at CSU's The Institute for Teaching and Learning ([TILT](#)) with advice and examples that many students have found helpful.

What if my GRA/GTA position isn't working out?

If you're having troubles in a GTA or GRA position, speak to your advisor and/or with the Graduate Program Director to learn about your options for reassignment. This is not always possible, but the department will do its best to make sure your working environment is suitable for you.

What if I want to change to a different GTA or GRA assignment for next semester?

You are always welcome to request a change in the class you GTA for or see if there are current GRA opportunities. Only certain classes have GTAs, and GRA positions depend on external funding, so your options might be limited. The Graduate Program Coordinator will communicate how to let the department know of your preferences.

What if I find a job outside CSU before I'm finished with my degree?

If you are employed outside CSU, you may not be eligible for a GTA/GRA position. In addition, full-time or close to full-time outside employment is likely to interfere substantially with your degree progress, as getting a Ph.D. is a full-time job! Discuss your work expectations with your advisor to come up with a plan to finish the program if you must work outside the department during the fall/spring semesters.

4 ADVISOR & COMMITTEE

Your advisor is a faculty member in the JMC department who helps you plan your coursework and dissertation research. The permanent advisor you select in your 3rd semester oversees your dissertation project and serves as the chair of your dissertation committee.

The dissertation committee consists of 4 people: your advisor, and two additional JMC faculty, and one faculty member from outside the department. You select your committee members in your 3rd semester.

To learn more about JMC faculty as you explore possibilities for an advisor and committee members, go to the list of faculty on the JMC faculty page on the department website. There you can find information about our faculty's background, research and publications, courses they teach, and more.

You can also visit faculty office hours to ask faculty about their work, explain your own interests, and get to know them.

Advisor & Committee

What is an advisor?

A JMC faculty member who guides you throughout the program and works closely with you on your dissertation development and research.

What is a committee?

Your advisor plus 2 JMC faculty and 1 faculty outside the department. Your committee administers your preliminary exam and approves your coursework, proposal, and final dissertation.

When do I pick them?

In your 3rd semester, you must select a permanent dissertation advisor and 3 other committee members.

What forms do I need?

DG1 Temporary Advising Form; and
GS6 Program of Study

Program and Coursework Advising

Upon admission to the program, you are assigned a temporary faculty advisor to help you with initial course selection and to answer questions about program requirements and procedures. The temporary advisor is assigned to you based on your interest area before you begin the program. Many students select a different faculty member to be their permanent dissertation advisor. Never assume your temporary advisor will become your permanent advisor; a formal conversation is required.

Contact your temporary advisor soon after you have been admitted to the program so they can answer any questions you might have and help you select your fall coursework. At that meeting, fill out the *DG1 Temporary Advising Form* to start this process.

Dissertation Advising

The permanent advisor takes over helping you plan your coursework and other program logistics, and is the same as your dissertation advisor, also called your dissertation committee chair.

Before the end of your 3rd semester, select a permanent advisor using the *GS6 Program of Study*.

Your permanent advisor must be a current member of the department's tenure-track faculty at the rank of Professor, Associate Professor, or Assistant Professor. See the [Graduate School explanation](#) for details.

Throughout your graduate career, your advisor is a primary source of advice and mentorship; consequently, you should seek an advisor with whom you can maintain a close, professional relationship. Equally important, your advisor should have an advising/mentoring style that complements your preferred learning approach, an academic background that suits your research interests, and who is interested in your proposed research.

Once you have some ideas about which faculty might be a good fit for your research interests and work style, meet with them to discuss their availability. It's helpful to have an idea of the general topic area of your dissertation, including some ideas about possible research methods.

Faculty members have the right to decline a student's request to serve as a permanent advisor. This may occur for a number of reasons, such as when faculty members have heavy advising loads, are slated for sabbaticals at inopportune times based on the student's graduation timeline, see only a tangential relationship to the student's research interests, or have heavy workloads in other areas.

Meet regularly with your permanent advisor throughout the program. There are some stages of the process when you might meet weekly or bi-weekly, and others when you meet less often.

Change advisors or committee members using *GS9A Petition for Committee Member Changes* on RamWeb if needed.

Dissertation Committee

The dissertation committee, led by your permanent advisor, is the group of people who will read your dissertation, give you feedback, and determine whether it meets department and university standards for conferring a degree. They are responsible for upholding these standards, and they must sign forms approving your progress in the proposal defense, preliminary exams, and final dissertation. They provide guidance and suggestions about proposal and dissertation content and have the right to require appropriate adjustments and changes to your project and documents.

You should meet with each member of your committee at least once before you submit your proposal and again before you submit your final dissertation.

► Dissertation Committee Membership

Your dissertation committee is made up of four people: Your chair (the permanent advisor you select), two faculty from within JMC, and one faculty outside JMC. Committee members other than your chair can be faculty of ranks other than tenure-track with department permission.

You should choose committee members who have theoretical and/or methodological expertise that will help you conduct your research and who are interested in your research topic. You are responsible for recruiting your own committee members.

In rare cases, non-CSU individuals may serve as members of dissertation committees, with approval from the Graduate School and department. The proposed member must have an academic degree that is equivalent to the one sought by the student. Per [Graduate School requirements](#), this non-CSU committee member serves as an *inside-department committee member*. However, the department will count this non-CSU committee member as an outside-department committee member.

NOTE: Students who began the doctoral program prior to Fall 2026 can choose to have four or five members if they have not yet taken prelims or finalized their committees as of the start of FA26.

- This includes students from previous cohorts who will finalize their committees, submit the GS6 to the Grad School, and schedule the preliminary exam meeting during AY26-27 (or later).
- This does not include students who have already formed their committees as of the start of Fall 2026, submitted the GS6 to the Grad School, and have had preliminary exam meetings but have not yet taken the exam. They will follow previous committee and exam procedures: five member committee, written exam only with the option to substitute a publishable manuscript in lieu of one question.
- Students who choose a four-member committee will be required to complete a written exam and oral defense to pass the prelims.

► Changing Advisors or Members of a Dissertation Committee

You have the right to change members of your dissertation committee, including your advisor, at any time, but this is not recommended unless there are specific problems or issues. The most common reason people change committee members or advisors is because faculty leave the university or the student's area of study changes.

Do not put committee members on your GS6 without talking to each of them first to get their permission!

To change your permanent advisor or committee members, fill out the *GS9A Petition for Committee Member Changes* on RamWeb.

Duties and Responsibilities

► Student Responsibilities to Advisor and Dissertation Committee

You are responsible for:

- completing your work in a timely manner
- keeping track of program requirements and deadlines
- submitting Graduate School and department forms
- asking questions when you need to know something
- gathering your own literature and resources
- conducting and writing your own research
- following policies for academic integrity and conduct

You should maintain regular contact with your advisor and committee members. If six months or more has passed since you last contacted your advisor or committee members with an update, you shouldn't assume that faculty members have time to continue devoting to your project. In these cases, faculty members may not be able to continue in their advising or committee member capacities, and you might have to replace them. An advisor may resign from their role at their discretion, and it is the student's responsibility to secure a replacement.

► Advisor and Dissertation Committee Responsibilities to Students

Your advisor is responsible for overseeing your progress through the program and your dissertation research. They should guide you on how to write your proposal and dissertation, on designing and

conducting research, and they should provide support and guidance when issues and challenges arise in your work, classes, or research. Your advisor and committee together are responsible for holding you to appropriate academic and professional standards in your work and ensuring the final documents you produce meet these standards. They are not responsible for suggesting or creating your research area, topic, or relevant literature lists. Advisors and committees can refer you to available CSU services for mental and physical health.

Advisors should respond with reasonable promptness to your inquiries and provide feedback on appropriate documents in a timely manner. If advisors cannot answer a question or address an issue relevant to the program, they should suggest resources for you to find additional guidance.

Common Questions About Advising and Committee

Can I switch my temporary advisor before I find a permanent one?

Yes. Just talk to the JMC Graduate Program Director to request a change to your temporary advisor.

Does my advisor have to have expertise in the same things I'm interested in studying?

Not always. Your advisor does not have to have an academic focus exactly aligned with your area of research. However, sharing areas of interest and research approaches can be helpful, especially similarities in research methods. Most importantly, remember that your relationship with your advisor is a close one that is influential during the program as well as long after you graduate. Pick someone you respect, like, and value. A perfect academic match will not compensate for personality conflicts.

How do I find my ideal advisor?

The best approach is to make appointments with faculty in JMC whom you think would be a good match and talk to them about your interests and ideas. Ask some specific, relevant questions directly to be sure you will get what you need, such as:

- How often do you usually like to meet with your advisees?
- Do you generally like advisees to come to you with more developed work, or to come with only initial thoughts to be discussed with you?
- How much feedback do you like to give on drafts of chapters? Do you prefer to see each chapter while it's being developed, or do you like to wait until a chapter is complete to provide feedback?
- When you give feedback on written documents, do you usually make mostly broader comments and guidance, or do you provide close line edits?
- Is there anything else about your particular advising style that you think I should know?

Can I change my permanent advisor?

Absolutely. Early in the process, changing your advisor is simple and just requires having a conversation with your current advisor and the new one. Once you submit your GS6 in your third semester, you will have a permanent advisor. Therefore, as you progress through the program, it does become more challenging to change advisors. But if things aren't working out, you are permitted to make this change. Use the GS9A form on RamWeb once you have discussed your decision with your out-going and new advisor. Be sure to thank your previous advisor for their help!

How do I pick my outside committee member(s)?

Your outside committee members are not as closely involved in the writing and reviewing process, but they are an important part. It helps to select people you know from courses you've taken outside the department or through some other work you have done with them, but this is not required. Most important to selecting outside committee member(s) is that their expertise is a) relevant to your project; and b) it represents perspectives not fully represented by your other committee members.

Browse the faculty lists on individual department websites to learn about your options for committee members. It is best to have a clear area of focus selected for your dissertation before you contact potential outside committee members. Once you find someone you like, then you should:

1. Ask your advisor if the outside faculty member is a good choice, then...
2. Write an email to the outside faculty member explaining your project in brief and requesting a meeting to explain your project and potentially have them on your committee.
3. Meet with the faculty member to learn about their ideas and perspectives on your project.
4. If they seem like a good fit, email them asking them to be on your committee (cc your advisor).
5. Add their name to your GS6 form.

What if I want an extra person on my committee?

You can have an extra person on your committee beyond the 4 required if your advisor approves. This additional member can be from inside or outside CSU. Some students even include someone from industry as an additional outside member. Check with the JMC Graduate Coordinator about how to fill out the paperwork. A GS9A will be required if you have already submitted a GS6.

How do I “work with my committee”?

This depends in part on your preferences, the committee member preferences and availability, and your advisor’s preferences. Committee members, as opposed to your advisor, might have only a few conversations with students before the proposal defense. Make an appointment to talk with your outside members early in the process, take good notes, and then bring their suggestions and insights back to your advisor for discussion. Note that it is uncommon to send drafts of chapter text to committee members. They do not have to approve or provide feedback on work in progress - that’s your advisor’s job. Most often, you work closely with your advisor and do not send a draft of the proposal/dissertation to anyone until your advisor has told you it is ready for distribution (and defense). A good approach is to meet with your committee members twice while you prepare the proposal and then twice more while you prepare the final thesis or dissertation. Talk to your advisor about how to best work with your committee members.

5 PRELIMINARY EXAMINATION

Doctoral students who have finished their coursework (except 799 dissertation credits) take a 4-question, written preliminary exam and an oral defense to assess the breadth and depth of their understanding in the discipline and their research area. It qualifies them to proceed to the dissertation.

Schedule the exam once you have a well-developed idea for your dissertation theories and method(s), but before you submit a proposal for your dissertation. About two months before the exam, meet with your committee for project feedback and to determine the focus area for each exam question.

► Examination Committee

Most often, your preliminary examination committee consists of the four members of your dissertation committee. In rare cases, students haven't finalized their dissertation committee when they wish to take their preliminary exam. In that case, your advisor helps you form a separate preliminary exam committee.

Exam Preparation

► Pre-Preliminary Exam Meeting

After completing your coursework (except JTC 799 and/or JTC 798), meet with your dissertation committee to plan the preliminary exam and get early feedback on your dissertation project. We recommend you start proposal development before your preliminary exams so that the preliminary exam question area for each committee member aligns with your dissertation. Discuss appropriate timing and meeting content with your advisor.

The pre-exam meeting is generally about an hour long and includes all committee members. You present a short summary of your dissertation project, its theoretical foundations, key concepts, and proposed methods. These need not and should not be finalized for this meeting. However, the clearer you can be with the details of your proposed project, the better the committee feedback will be.

At that meeting, the committee will also determine the topic area for each member's question for your preliminary exam, and they will review and sign the *DG5 Ph.D. Coursework Planner* for approval.

The Preliminary Exam

What is it?

A 5-day written exam consisting of one question asked by each of your committee members plus an oral defense. Passing the exam qualifies you to proceed to the dissertation and confers you with the title of "Ph.D. Candidate" and "ABD" (*All But Dissertation*).

When do I do it?

After coursework is completed and after holding a pre-preliminary exam meeting, but before the proposal defense.

What forms do I need?

DG5 Ph.D. Coursework Planner for the pre-exam meeting; and *GS16 Report of Preliminary Examination for the Doctoral Degree* for the exam.

► Examination Questions

The examination consists of four questions, one from each member of your committee. The questions are usually crafted to be relevant to your dissertation topic, and they draw on the expertise of the committee member writing the question. Committee members most often identify the specific topic and scope of their own question. You will not be told the exact nature of the question.

The four questions must include:

- One question about **theory**
- One question about **research methods**
- One question about your selected **cognate**
- One question about **any** of the above (theory, methods, or cognate)

Committee members provide their questions to the dissertation committee chair at least two weeks before the exam date. Your advisor may seek clarification or refinement of the questions.

► Preparing Assigned Resources

For each question on the preliminary exam, you work with a committee member to develop a list of academic books and articles to be used to write a response to the member's question. This is usually between 10 and 20 items, depending on the length of the items or your needs for the question.

1. Determine the specific area of focus for each committee member in the pre-exam meeting.
2. Meet with each committee member to discuss the topic area of the articles/books you will need.
3. Develop an initial list of academic articles and books that address the focus area and send to the committee member.
4. The committee member will review and edit the list, with your input, until it is finalized.
5. Email each completed list of references to your advisor, who will ensure they reflect appropriate expectations for the department's exam format and suggest adjustments if necessary.

Prepare for the exam by reading each of the references on your list carefully, taking notes, and reflecting on how they fit into your planned dissertation research area.

Taking the Preliminary Exam

► Written Examination Timing

Preliminary exams are taken after coursework is completed (except 798/799) and after the pre-exam meeting is completed, but before you defend your proposal. Work with your advisor to set an examination date about two months after the pre-exam meeting. As you work to set the written exam dates, also work with your advisor to schedule the oral defense with your committee members approximately two to three weeks after the completion of the written exams.

Days of the written examination must run consecutively, but may cross over a weekend (e.g., Wednesday-Thursday-Friday and Monday-Tuesday).

Additionally, the Graduate School requires that at least **two full terms (spring, summer, or fall) must transpire between the completion of the preliminary exam and the defense of the final dissertation.**

► Written Examination Format

You will take the exam in person at the department. You have two options for your examination format: open resource or closed resource. The same format must be used for all questions.

Open Resource (8 hours)	Session: An 8-hour block, generally 8:00 a.m. – 4:30 p.m., with full access to your notes, books, and journal articles (hardcopy or electronic copy). No Internet access. Answer: It is recommended the written response not exceed 15 double-spaced pages (with 1-inch margins and 12-point type), excluding bibliography and any figures or tables.
Closed Resource (4 hours)	Session: A 4-hour block, generally sometime between 8 a.m. and 4:30 p.m., with no access to notes or articles except the citations for your list of readings for that question. No internet access is allowed. Answer: It is recommended the written response not exceed 8 double-spaced pages (with 1-inch margins and 12-point type), excluding bibliography and any figures or tables.

For all formats:

- **The examination must be solely the work of the student.**
- No internet access is allowed in either exam format.
- You may not communicate with other people in any way about any topic related to the question or answer you are writing during the exam sessions.
- Automated text or image generation tools such as ChatGPT are not permitted for any aspects of the exam, including for drafting, outlining, topic generation, or composing text.
- Grammar and spell-checkers built into MS Word are allowed.
- Only one examination question may be completed per day.
- Work should be carefully written and referenced using in-line citations in APA style. Your evaluators understand that time limits prevent you from copyedited and polished prose.
- Trips (physical or digital) to the library are not allowed during the session.
- You may include references that do not appear on your prepared resource list if desired.
- Bibliographies are not required when you submit your responses. Prepare your bibliography for each committee member. You will share it with them at the beginning of the oral defense.

► Permitted Materials & Notes for Open Resources Format

In addition to full copies of all books/articles on your list, you may have:

- 2-3 pages (~1,200 words) of supplementary notes per question each day
- Article/book annotations (brief, e.g., 300-500 words per article, more for longer books)
- Formatted reference list of books/articles on your list

You are welcome to highlight, bookmark, underline, etc. your books/articles. Books/articles may be in digital or paper format, or both.

You will submit all materials to your advisor at least 4 business days before the first date of your exams for approval, and your advisor will provide them to the exam proctor for each day.

NOTE. Minor exceptions to any of the above limits must be approved by all JMC committee members via request **at least 2 weeks in advance** of the first exam date.

► Prohibited Materials for All Formats

- Pre-written responses to anticipated exam questions and materials not reviewed by advisor
- Any device that can access a cellular data connection or Internet or one that runs a generative AI program locally (i.e., without Internet), including phones, smart watches, smart glasses, or the like.

► Allowed Equipment/Supports for All Formats

- External computer peripherals such as a larger monitor, mouse, and keyboard are allowed. Arrange with your proctor to test these devices work with the examination laptop **~1 week in advance of your exams' start date**. You're responsible for having all necessary cables/adapters and extension cord for those items. Please understand that you will not get extra time on your exam if you start late trying to troubleshoot your computer peripherals.
- You may use a music device only if it does not have Internet access, such as an iPod or radio. If the device has Internet access, even if disabled/turned off, you are not permitted to bring it in the room. If you have other creative ideas for this, let us know!
- Need something else? Just ask your advisor. So long as it's not accessing the Internet or running a local generative AI app, it's likely fine to bring!

► Students: On the Day of the Exam

- You will take the exam in the location on campus designated by the proctor. You will use Microsoft Word on a provided Windows-based laptop that cannot access the Internet containing your approved materials.
- Only the reviewed and approved materials will be accessible during the exam for open resources format. Each examination day, the Proctor and/or your advisor will provide you the following:
 - Paper copy of the exam question
 - Paper copy of your 2-3 pages (~1,200 words) of notes
 - Any physical reading materials from your approved reading list that you have provided to your advisor 4 business days in advance of the first exam date.
 - For open resources format, on the laptop you'll use, there will be a folder with: 1) your digital materials from your approved reading list for the day, 2) a digital file of the exam question(s) for that day, and 3) the reference list you provided.
- A video camera is used to monitor the exam instead of having a proctor present in the room. Your laptop screen must be viewable by the camera at all times; an area on the desk/table will be marked. A recording will be saved for later review should any concerns arise regarding the use of unauthorized resources. After exam results are shared, the recording will be deleted.
- The Proctor will hold onto any belongings not permitted in the room, which include any Internet/data-enabled device such as a phone, smart watch, smart glasses, etc.

- Breaks: Bathroom or short walk breaks inside or outside near the building and a 1-hour lunch break are permitted. The time for the exam is limited to 8 hours, including breaks. There is not a set limit on breaks, but you do not get more time. Check in/out with Proctor.
- Phone access: You are permitted to access your phone for a maximum of 20 minutes during your lunch break.
 - If you would like anyone to reach you in the event of an emergency, they can call the proctor. Thomas' number is 970-491-2860.
- Finish early? You're welcome to let your Proctor know and leave.

► Directions for Proctors and Advisor/Chair of the Exam

Who Can Proctor (in order of most appropriate to least)?

1. Committee Chair/Advisor or JMC Graduate Coordinator
2. Others as arranged by the Committee Chair/Advisor
 - a. Committee members
 - b. JMC administrative assistant (but not work-study/part-time staff)
 - c. Graduate Program Director
 - d. Graduate Committee Chair
 - e. Another tenured faculty member in the department

NOTE. More than one proctor may be used.

Proctor Instructions

1. Obtain preliminary exam laptop (kept usually with Thomas, but front office may have it).
2. Ensure access to room for all dates and duration of exam, as it may be locked by someone else.
3. Each exam day, drag and drop the dated folder of their approved materials from the advisor onto the laptop desktop. The student should only have access to that date's folder/questions.
4. Obtain camera; test it 24 hours in advance of first exam date. Extension cord may be needed.
5. Set up camera to have wide view of room and view of the screen.
6. Arrive at least 20 minutes before the exam start time to set up the laptop and room with their materials and the camera. Ensure the laptop is plugged in.
7. To login to the laptop: Hit the enter key.
8. Take student's belongings that are not permitted: phone, smart watch (the laptop has the time), any other Internet-enabled device, and large bags.
9. Start camera recording once the student is ready to begin.
10. Remind the student about the camera and instruct them to always keep the screen in view.
11. Remind the student to double-check their work is being saved as they go along.
12. If the laptop they're using fails before or during the exam, and an alternative department laptop is not available, contact the advisor to arrange plans to re-take that day's exam.

13. You must remain in the building for the duration of the student's exam, barring teaching obligations. Let the student know if you will be away teaching a class and identify a person they could connect with during that time in the building, if needed. If your class is longer than 90 minutes, secure a temporary Proctor in the building during that time, and ensure they have the student's cell phone in case they want to use it over lunch break.

Advisor/Chair Instructions

1. You are responsible for securing an exam proctor in your place. Thomas Gallegos is often available, but committee chairs (or committee members by request of the chair) should be available to serve in the role for any dates/times another suitable proctor is unavailable.
Reach out to Thomas as soon as you identify potential dates to arrange proctor, location, and any other needs.
2. Review committee members' questions at least 1 week or more in advance of the first exam date. You can ask committee members to clarify or adjust questions if they appear outside of the scope or general expectations for the 8-hour exam.
3. Obtain permitted materials at least 4 business days in advance of first exam date, including any printed resources, from the student.
4. Review permitted materials to ensure they meet parameters. Confirm the student's preference for digital or printed resources. (For any printed readings/books, the student is responsible for printing and providing those to you.)
5. **Physical Materials to Print and Provide Proctor**
To be provided 2 business days in advance of first exam date

Print and organize/label for each exam date:

- Exam questions
- 2-3 pages of supplementary notes (~1,200 words)

Reminder: Do NOT print readings for students

Physical readings: Provide any printed articles or books the student submitted that you've reviewed

6. Digital Materials to Provide Proctor

Delivery method: OneDrive or USB drive with folders named "[Date] [StudentLast-Name]" for each exam date

Each Dated Folder Includes:

- Approved readings
- Reference list
- Exam questions

NOTE. If the student is taking the exams during a period of time in which you are not in Fort Collins, arrange plans with the Proctor for any printed and physical materials.

► Oral Defense Format (Required for Fall 2026 and Future Cohorts)

The oral exam will take place in-person within two-to-three weeks of the written exam depending on the dates. Some exceptions to in-person defenses may be necessary (sabbatical, travel, etc.), but every effort should be made to hold an in-person defense during the academic year (Fall or Spring).

Students should schedule at least **two hours** for the oral defense. During the exam, committee members will ask students to clarify or expand upon their written responses to show further aptitude/knowledge of the 'fields' covered in their respective reading lists.

At the beginning of the defense, students will share their bibliographies with each committee member that includes only the sources they cited in their written responses, not the full reading list. All committee members will then ask student questions stemming from the written exam responses. After questions, the committee members will discuss results of the written and oral responses to determine pass-fail for their written and oral questions. Students must pass all the written responses and oral defense to pass prelims. In the event of a failure, the committee members will discuss the process for re-evaluating the student. (See Examination Evaluation section below.)

► At a Glance: JMC Preliminary Exam Timeline

	Student	Advisor/Chair	Proctor
Timeline	Responsible Party	Action Required	
2-3 months prior to first exam date	Student	- Finalize and gain approval for a reading list with each committee member - Confirm your committee is correct on record with the Graduate School or file the GS9 to update	
1-2 months prior to the first exam date	Student	Work with your advisor to schedule times for the 4-day written exam and the two hour oral defense	
2+ weeks before first exam date	Student	OPTIONAL: Submit request for minor exceptions to materials limits (must be approved by all 3 JMC committee members)	
1+ week before first exam date	Advisor/Chair	Review committee members' questions; can request clarifications or adjustments if needed	
~1 week before first exam date	Student	Meet with proctor or Thomas to test and set up any computer peripherals you'd like to use (extra monitor, mouse, keyboard)	
4 business days before first exam date	Student	Submit ALL materials to advisor for approval: - Supplementary notes (2-3 pages per question/day) - Annotated digital files of articles/books - Reference list - Physical annotated reading materials (if desired)	

3-4 business days before first exam date	Advisor/Chair	Begin reviewing student's submitted materials to ensure they meet parameters
2 business days before first exam date	Advisor/Chair	Provide proctor with: • Printed exam questions (organized by date) • Printed supplementary notes (2-3 pages per day) • Physical books/articles (if student provided) • Digital materials via OneDrive or USB drive
24 hours before FIRST exam date	Proctor	Test camera equipment and ensure it's working properly. Confirm access to room (key or entry).
20 minutes before exam start	Proctor	Arrive early to transfer the day's folder of digital materials to the laptop, set up printed materials for the day, and camera
Timeline	Responsible Party	Action Required
Exam day start	Proctor	Login to laptop (hit enter key) Take student's belongings that are not permitted (e.g. phone, smart watch, extra books/readings, bags) Inform student of any plans to be away from your office for longer than 20 min or temporary Proctors Hit record on camera
During exam (up to 8 hours)	Student	Keep laptop screen visible to camera, take breaks as needed, use phone max 20 min. during a lunch break Check in/out with Proctor for breaks
During exam	Proctor	Remain in building (except for teaching obligations <90 min.) or secure temporary Proctor, inform student
End of each exam	Student	Turn in all materials to Proctor and gather your belongings
End of each exam	Proctor	Stop camera recording, transfer the video file to a secure folder and delete from camera storage. Transfer student's exam answer file and that day's folder from the laptop to your computer. Email the exam answer to the Chair/Advisor.
2-3 weeks after the written exam	Student, Advisor, Committee	Oral defense of the written questions. Committee members will determine the results of the exam and any necessary re-takes during this meeting

After exam results shared	Proctor or Advisor	Delete exam recording
Within 2 business days of exam result date	Student	File GS24 and ensure your advisor enters the date your exam result was known or enter that as “date of exam”

**Over the summer or extended breaks, getting your final exam results may be longer. Communicate with your advisor to set expectations.*

Key Exam Day Details:

- **Duration:** Maximum 8 hours including breaks. No extra time for troubleshooting the student’s computer peripherals.
- **Location:** On-campus room designated by proctor
- **Emergency Contact for Student’s Family to Reach the Student:** Proctor (usually Thomas: 970-491-2860)
- **Phone Access:** 20 minutes maximum during lunch break only

► Examination Scheduling & Logistics

Schedule your written exam and oral defense for two to three months after your pre-exam meeting, typically in your 6th semester of the program. Days of the examination must run consecutively, but may cross over a weekend (e.g., Wednesday-Thursday-Friday and Monday-Tuesday). Exams cannot take place over university holiday, fall, spring, or winter breaks. Breaks cannot be used to extend time in between consecutive business days. They can take place during the summer with advisor permission and available proctor; however, every effort should be made to complete the exam **during the Fall or Spring semesters**.

You will take the exam in person at the department in a private workspace. Work with the Graduate Program Coordinator to schedule the room, which is generally a conference room or office in JMC. Exams are scheduled for 4- or 8-hour blocks between 8:00 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. on each exam day, depending on the format you select. For 8-hour formats, you will have a 1-hour lunch break.

JMC faculty or staff will proctor the exams. The proctor will meet you at the beginning and end of each exam day to give you that day's question in the morning and make a copy of your answer in the afternoon. The proctor will email your responses to your advisor.

Two weeks after the written exam, you will complete an oral defense of your written responses with your committee members.

Note: The Graduate School requires that at least **two full terms (spring, summer, or fall) must transpire between the completion of the preliminary exam and the defense of the final dissertation**.

► Examination Equipment

A Windows-based laptop without internet or network connections will be provided. Bring your own flash drive. For closed-resource exams, this storage device should only have your reference lists; for open-resource exams, you are permitted to have full articles and notes on your storage device.

Save your work often to **both** your flash drive **and** to the computer desktop to lessen the chances of work being lost.

During testing sessions, save your answer to both the external storage device and to the laptop, in case of technical difficulties. At the end of each testing session, the proctor will use the file on your external storage device to email your answer to your advisor.

No other devices, except from something like a radio or ipod shuffle if you wish to listen to music, are allowed in the room. You are permitted to bring snacks and beverages into the exam as desired. You will leave your phone and all other belongings with the proctor.

Examination Evaluation

To pass the preliminary examination, the department requires that students pass **all** examination questions and the oral defense.

Committee members have authority to determine pass/fail on their question and defense only, based upon their own evaluation of the answer and oral response, and they may consult with the advisor if they wish. Committee members are expected to read the student's response prior to the oral defense and come to the defense with questions to ask the student.

If a committee member unable to review the responses or attend the defense, then the advisor can temporarily appoint a department faculty member to fill in for the missing member.

Written responses are assessed based on expectations for an essay written in 8 or 4 hours, depending on the format, and should take into account the limitations of time, length, and content of the assigned citations list. High-quality exam answers are clearly written, reflect a solid understanding of the question topic area and assigned citations list, and make an effective argument.

Committee members should provide a brief written rationale for their decision (generally between 300 and 600 words) and be prepared to share those with the advisor during the oral defense.

After the oral defense, you are responsible for submitting *GS16 Report of Preliminary Examination for the Doctoral Degree* via RamWeb for committee member signatures. This form must be completed **within two days** after the results of all questions on the exam are known.

► Failed Questions

During the oral defense, the committee members will determine the most appropriate process for re-attempting the exam. Your committee decides whether you are permitted one attempt at re-writing and re-defending your answer to each question you do not pass. The question used for the re-write may be the original question asked or an adjusted closely related one, determined by your advisor and the relevant committee member.

According to Graduate School rules, a reexamination on any failed questions must be held no later than 12 months after the first examination. Further, the reexamination cannot be held earlier than two months after the first examination, unless the student agrees to a shorter time period (note that in JMC, students commonly choose to do their second attempt shortly after the first assessment).

Students may not change committee members in response to failing a question. Failure to pass the preliminary examination after one re-administration will result in dismissal from the Graduate School.

► Doctoral Degree Candidate

Upon passing the preliminary examination, students achieve the status of *Ph.D. Candidate* as well as *ABD* ("All But Dissertation"), and may formally use these designations.

Common Questions About Preliminary Exams

How do I pick the readings for my exam list?

A good way to start developing your list of references for a question is to look through syllabi from courses you've taken with the relevant committee member if possible. You are looking for readings that address both foundational ideas and current issues in the topic area of each question. It's also a good idea to include one or two overview articles, such as meta-analyses or comprehensive literature reviews that cover a range of ideas, approaches, or perspectives related to the topic. Edited volumes of essays are also a good resource, as are textbooks with summaries of communication theories and methods.

How do I know I have the right number of items on my references list?

We recommend between 10 and 20 items for your list, depending on the length of each item. 20 books is definitely too many! Each faculty member will help you identify the items and number of items for your list. However, you might personally want more or fewer references than is typical – maybe you feel more comfortable with a few extra articles to draw on; or maybe you want fewer items so that you feel less overwhelmed. As long as the committee member agrees, calibrating the list to your preferences is just fine!

Can I use the same readings on more than one exam question list?

Yes, you can, but there shouldn't be too much overlap in the references you have. Some foundational readings, such as a book with summaries of communication theories or methods, may be useful for multiple questions, but more focused studies should have minimal overlap.

How much should I study for my preliminary exams?

We recommend giving yourself about two months between finalizing your list of readings for each question and sitting for your exam. You are not expected to memorize information, but you should be very familiar with all the listed readings and feel comfortable writing about the question area using academic language and ideas. It's important not to burn yourself out studying for your exam, but you should feel very comfortable with the content and nuances of all the materials on the list of citations you develop with each committee member.

What happens if I do not pass all my exam questions?

If you do not pass a question, your committee members will determine the process for re-attempting the exam. They will decide if you will have a chance to re-write and re-defend your answer or write and defend an answer to a similar question. You have two chances to pass each question, but if you do not pass any single question on the second try, you will not be able to continue in the program.

If I fail a prelim question, should I be worried?

Failing one question on a preliminary exam isn't that uncommon. Sometimes you don't quite understand the question, or you miss something vital in your response. Discuss the reasons why you didn't pass with your advisor to think through what the specific problems were, and know that when you do pass, you have demonstrated your knowledge, even if it took you two tries.

What happens if I do not pass on the second try and I'm not able to continue in the program?

If you have to leave the program, you will work with your advisor and the Graduate Program Director and/or department chair to determine how to wrap up any on-going responsibilities you have, such as GTA/GRA positions or involvement in other work.

6 PROPOSAL & DISSERTATION

A key requirement for the fulfillment of the Ph.D. degree is writing a theory-driven, independent research-based dissertation.

The dissertation is developed in two major steps: a comprehensive proposal and a final dissertation, each of which is defended orally in front of your dissertation committee.

The Graduate School requires the final dissertation defense to be open to the campus community and announced at least two weeks prior to the defense date.

Consult the Graduate School for [semester-by-semester deadlines](#).

The Proposal	The Dissertation
What is it? A 30- to 60-page document detailing your project's theories, methods, analytical approaches, and references.	What is it? A 60+ page document with everything in your (updated) proposal plus your project's results, discussion, and conclusions.
When do I do it? After coursework and preliminary exams.	When do I do it? After defending the proposal.
What forms do I need? <i>DG2 Thesis/Dissertation Proposal Approval</i>	What forms do I need? <i>GS24 Report of Final Examination Results; and GS30 Thesis/Dissertation Submission</i>

The Dissertation Process

► Proposal Development and Defense

After successfully completing your preliminary exams, you will finalize your proposal with your advisor. Then you will meet with your dissertation committee for an oral proposal defense.

A dissertation proposal is a written document generally between 30 and 60 pages long that has an introduction, comprehensive literature review with theoretical framework, a detailed methods section, a description of your analytical approach, and a full bibliography. The proposal defense is not required to be public. We recommend using the [Graduate School's formatting guidelines](#) (see below).

The proposal defense is usually a 90-minute meeting with your dissertation committee where you present your proposal in a 20- to 30-minute talk. Committee members will ask you questions about the project and discuss how to refine and improve it. The proposal defense is not required to be public. Email the *DG2 Thesis/Research Project/Dissertation Proposal Approval* **within two days** to the Graduate Program Coordinator.

After the oral proposal defense, make any required changes and submit them to your advisor for approval. Occasionally, committee members will also ask to see the requested updates. **Note:** Per Graduate School rules, students must wait at least two full semesters after completing their preliminary examinations before holding their final dissertation defense.

► Dissertation Development and Defense

Once the proposal has been successfully defended and all changes requested by your committee have been made, you can begin your data collection and analysis for the dissertation.

The final dissertation is a written document generally between 60 and 150 pages that includes the updated content of your proposal, plus the results and analysis of your research (see below). Work closely with your advisor throughout the data collection, analysis, and writing process to ensure you are reaching standards in the field for rigor, accuracy, and research ethics.

You must follow [Graduate School's guidelines](#) for the document's formatting and layout (see below).

The dissertation defense is generally a 90- to 120-minute meeting with your full committee and is required by the Graduate School to be open to the public, announced at least 2 weeks prior. Many students invite friends, colleagues, and family members to their defense. You present your research in a 20- to 30-minute talk and then answer questions from the public and from your committee. Submit *GS24 Report of Final Examination Results* **within two working days**.

After the oral defense, you will make any required changes and submit your final dissertation with the required formatting to the Graduate School using form *GS30 Thesis/Dissertation Submission*.

Conducting Dissertation Research

Dissertation research generally involves data collection or collecting materials for analysis. Graduate students are considered researchers affiliated with Colorado State University, and as such, they are subject to federal regulations concerning research using human participants. Before you begin data collection, but after the proposal defense, you are required to receive human participants approval from the CSU's Institutional Review Board (IRB). For details, visit [CSU's IRB website](#).

The IRB helps ensure that all research conducted at CSU meets principles of ethical conduct specified in the [Federal Policy for the Protection of Human Subjects](#), including freely given and informed consent and other safeguards. It also helps ensure that all research on human participants, is planned, reviewed, and carried out under uniform standards.

Although not all JMC research involves human participants, most does.

IRB regulations apply to research conducted for theses and dissertations, for classes, and for independent projects. Research intended only for private use and not shared publicly does not require IRB review, but it's always a good idea to contact the IRB to confirm you are complying with regulations.

- Before conducting any research, **all researchers must first complete the IRB [researcher training course](#)** for "Social Behavioral Research" (online).
- All research that involves human participants or data generated by human participants **must be formally approved** by the university's IRB **before any data are collected**.

All JMC graduate students, regardless of their intent to use human participants in their research, complete [IRB researcher training](#) during their first semester of coursework, typically as part of JTC 604/605 and/or JTC 500. The training certificate is valid for three years and must be updated by taking an online refresher course before it expires.

Violations of IRB requirements in any research conducted may result in dismissal from the program.

Dissertation Formatting

Your final dissertation must meet the very exacting requirements for formatting detailed by the Graduate School for final submission to the university. See the Graduate School's [Thesis and Dissertation Formatting Guide](#). These requirements address front matter (cover page, table of contents, abstract, etc.), chapter headings, font, line spacing, margins, and similar elements.

The Graduate School is extremely precise in document formatting requirements and will send back your final submission if there are any violations of their requirements. We recommend you submit your dissertation at least three days before the final deadline so you can make any needed changes.

Some formatting not required by the Graduate School is determined by the department. Use the current edition of the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association* (APA) as the style manual for in-text citations, references, bibliographies, tables, and figures. Consult with your advisor if you wish to make minor adjustments to standard APA guidelines. It is recommended but not required that you also follow these formatting guidelines for your proposal. For resources and advice on formatting, contact the Graduate Program Coordinator.

► Typical Content in a JMC Proposal and Dissertation

The structure of your dissertation will depend on the nature of your research. For example, some dissertations use multiple literature review chapters, and it is common in qualitative work to combine results and discussion into a single chapter. Work with your advisor to determine the best approach. A typical proposal and dissertation have the sections listed below.

Chapter	Description	Proposal	Dissertation
Introduction	Overview and background for the project	✓	✓
Literature Review	Relevant literature and theoretical framework for the project; research question(s) and hypotheses (if used)	✓	Usually updated
Methods	Detailed description of research design and rationale; steps in data collection; sampling, recruitment, and/or study cases; key variables, factors, or themes; project validity/reliability or transferability	✓	Extensively updated
Results/Analysis	Summary of research results and analysis; data tables and/or participant quotes; interpretation of results	✗	✓
Discussion	Discussion and interpretation of the implications of results, especially as related to relevant theories and prior research	✗	✓
Conclusions	Summary and implications of the study, including limitations and future research recommendations	✗	✓
References	Full list of all literature referenced in the text in APA style	✓	Updated as needed
Appendices	Supporting research materials such as recruitment and consent forms, survey or questionnaire instruments, stimulus materials, reference images, etc.	✓	Updated as needed

Common Questions About Proposals and Dissertations

What goes in my proposal?

The proposal is a narrative document that has an introduction, a comprehensive literature review, a detailed methods chapter, and often, an indication of analytical approaches you plan to use. It includes a full bibliography.

How is a proposal different than my final dissertation?

Your final dissertation uses an updated version of much of the content from your proposal (intro, literature review, methods) and then adds the results/analysis and discussion chapters, as well as a conclusions chapter. You will need to update what you wrote for the proposal, especially the methods chapter, to be sure everything is accurate and to integrate any current or missing literature. Some final dissertation documents are very similar to the proposal, but in other cases you will have to make a lot of changes to the initial chapters.

How do I schedule my proposal and/or dissertation defense meeting?

Once your advisor tells you that you're ready to schedule your proposal or final dissertation defense, work with them to identify times you are both available, and then email your committee members to find a time that works for everyone. Send a final draft of the completed proposal in an editable format (e.g., in MS Word) to your committee **at least two weeks before** the scheduled defense date, and ask the JMC Office Manager to help you find an available room for the defense meeting. Defense meetings last about 90 minutes. It's a good idea to send a reminder about the defense a day or two before the meeting, too.

If my committee has lots of changes for my proposal or my dissertation, does that mean I failed?

Not at all! For proposals especially, defense meetings are intended to identify ways to improve your project and ensure your work is of the highest quality. No one leaves a proposal defense (and almost never leaves a final dissertation defense) without at least some changes requested by the committee. Most often, committee members will ask for additions or adjustments to the literature review to ensure all the relevant literature is discussed clearly and/or adjustments to the methods chapter to ensure feasibility and rigor.

Then how do I fail a proposal defense? And what happens if I do?

You don't really "pass" or "fail" a proposal defense, but if there are changes required by the committee that are very substantial (especially to your methods) you might need to re-convene your committee to present an updated proposal. This is very uncommon, as most changes to proposals are supervised by your advisor after the defense. Make sure your final dissertation text reflects all the changes requested by your committee and advisor.

How do I fail a dissertation defense? And what happens if I do?

It's possible that your dissertation will not meet the standards set by the department and the Graduate School (represented by your outside committee members). In that case, you may need to substantially re-write your document, or, in some cases, return to analysis or even data collection to make the required changes. If your committee agrees, you may be permitted to make changes and conduct a second defense of the dissertation. If this happens, discuss with your advisor if and how to proceed, as a second defense opportunity is not guaranteed. If they do not allow a second defense, you will have to leave the program.

7 COMPLETION & GRADUATION

Successful completion of the Ph.D. program requires accomplishing each milestone and completing the required forms. These are summarized in the table below, and details can be found in the previous sections of this manual. Additional information is available on the [Graduate School website](#).

Requirement	Form	Approved by...
Maintain a 3.0 GPA and satisfactory progress toward degree	n/a	JMC, Graduate School
Complete the JMC requirements for the 73-credit program	DG5	JMC Graduate Committee
Complete the CSU credit requirements	GS6	Graduate School
Pass an extensive, written preliminary examination	GS16	Dissertation committee
Write and successfully defend a dissertation research proposal	DG2	Dissertation committee
Complete and successfully defend a written dissertation	GS24	Dissertation committee
Apply for graduation	GS25	Graduate School
Submit dissertation to CSU	GS30	Graduate School
Complete <i>Journalism & Mass Communication Abstracts</i>	Email	n/a
Complete Survey of Earned Doctorates	Online	n/a
Complete the JMC graduate degree checklist	DG3	JMC Graduate Coordinator

Department and Other Awards

► Department Thesis & Dissertation Awards

Graduate students are eligible for the annual Department of Journalism & Media Communication Engaged and Emerging Scholarship Dissertation and Thesis Awards. Our graduate students work hard to complete their degree programs and their theses and dissertations are the culmination of their work. Thus, the department wishes to recognize the outstanding research and creative accomplishments of our graduate students.

All faculty committee members, especially advisors, are encouraged to nominate exceptional theses and dissertations from students who completed their degrees in the prior academic year. Both Plan A and Plan B projects are eligible for these awards.

The committee looks to award projects that exemplify:

- An innovative/original query with a sound qualitative or quantitative research design
- Public connections that address significant social issues or community concerns
- A solid contribution to the discipline and/or profession
- Sound written and/or visual storytelling

Award recipients are recognized during a formal annual graduate student gathering in fall or spring.

► CSU Awards

CSU offers awards for outstanding work by graduate students, including several at the [Graduate Student Showcase](#). The [Graduate Council](#) also offers a Professional Development & Supply Award for funding towards conference, materials, or other expenses that support your graduate work.

There are also some teaching awards through the College of Liberal Arts and through CSU that graduate students may be eligible for. The Excellence in Teaching Award includes a category for Graduate Teaching Assistant and for Non-Tenure Track Faculty, for which some students may be eligible. CLA also offers, among other awards:

- Outstanding Engaged Scholarship Award
- Distinction in Curricular Innovation Award

► Other Awards

Conferences organizations such as ICA, NCA, AEJMC, and others have awards for outstanding dissertations and top papers, including separate awards for student papers. Some of these automatically include all papers submitted to a specific division, others require a separate submission process. See conference websites for details and your eligibility. A list of conferences commonly attended by JMC faculty and students can be found in Part Two of this manual.

The Graduation Ceremony

The CSU Graduate School holds a graduation ceremony at the end of each spring and fall for friends, family, and colleagues. Ph.D. graduates traditionally participate in a hooding by their advisor at the graduation ceremony.

To walk in the graduation ceremony, you do not need to fill out any specific paperwork. Simply come to the event at the appointed time in your Ph.D. regalia (see below). If you wish to be listed in the printed program for the graduation ceremony, you must have all your Graduate School paperwork completed for the degree (GS25, GS24, GS30) by the deadline.

You may walk at the ceremony closest to when you complete your final dissertation defense, which may be shortly before the defense, with the permission of your advisor.

The [CSU Commencement](#) website has the dates, location, and all other details about graduation.

► Ph.D. Graduation Regalia

You will be able to purchase the required regalia (robe, cap, and hood) for the graduation ceremony through the [commencement office at CSU](#). You can also order higher quality robes, caps, and hoods with CSU colors from regalia providers such as [Jostens](#). CSU also offers financial assistance for regalia if needed.

Doctoral regalia is distinct from master's and bachelor's regalia. The robe has velvet lapels with three velvet stripes on the arms, and the cap is a soft tam instead of the flat cap of the bachelor's and master's regalia. Doctoral regalia also includes a "hood," which is a shawl-like garment that is worn around the neck and drapes down your back. It usually has a lining in the colors of your university.

Common Questions About Graduation

Can I walk in graduation before my dissertation is defended?

Yes, but you should consult with your advisor about when is the best time to do so. Because Ph.D. graduation ceremonies include your advisor performing a “hooding” on you, it is important to coordinate. You’ll also feel a lot better about the commencement ceremony if you’re done or very close to done with your dissertation.

What if I don’t get my final paperwork done by the Graduate School deadlines in the semester I want to graduate?

Graduate School deadlines generally require completing the defense about 6 weeks before the end of the semester, so you might not be ready to submit your dissertation by the official due date for that semester. This does not change anything about your process, and is very common. You will just need to re-apply for graduation with form GS25 on RamWeb, but you do not need to change your plans otherwise. You can re-apply for graduation multiple times as needed.

What if my advisor can’t come to the graduation ceremony?

You can ask a committee member or department faculty mentor to stand in for your advisor if they can’t come to the ceremony to perform the doctoral hooding.

Why is my advisor’s robe/hood different than mine?

Many people purchase their graduation regalia, especially if they enter academia. It is tradition to wear regalia from your alma mater (where you got your Ph.D.) when it is called for, even when you work at a different institution. For this reason, many Ph.D. students purchase rather than rent their regalia.

What happens if I walk in commencement and then I don’t finish until a while later?

The university and Graduate School do not monitor this. If you get delayed in completing all the degree requirements and paperwork, you could actually just walk again in the next appropriate commencement ceremony. But if that feels strange, you don’t need to.

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8 DEPARTMENT & CSU RESOURCES

Department People and Resources

► Department Roles and Committees

JMC Department Chair

A JMC faculty member who leads department administration including: set and manage budgets; teaching assignments for faculty and graduate students; faculty/staff performance reviews; department activities and initiatives; faculty and student disputes. Many department forms require the chair's signature.

JMC Graduate Program Director

A JMC faculty member who leads the Graduate Program Committee. In consultation with the Graduate Committee, they coordinate graduate admissions and approve student progress forms, transfer credits, and other forms.

JMC Graduate Program Coordinator

A JMC staff member who helps process graduate student paperwork, records, and other administrative issues.

JMC Office Manager

A JMC staff member who oversees the department main office, including room scheduling, travel forms and reimbursements, and student and faculty records.

JMC Fiscal Officer/HR Liaison

A JMC staff member who manages financial and personnel paperwork and processing, including stipends, health insurance, and external funding payments.

JMC Program Graduate Committee

A group of 5 – 7 graduate advising faculty responsible for developing and maintaining department policies and procedures for the graduate program. They make decisions on student admittance, transfer credits, student progress, and other program processes.

JMC Graduate Program Committee Student Representative

A JMC graduate student selected by the Graduate Program Committee, generally but not always a Ph.D. student, who attends meetings of the Graduate Program Committee to reflect graduate student perspectives.

JMC Diversity Committee Student Representative

A JMC graduate student who attends and contributes to the department committee focused on equity and inclusion.

Graduate Council Representative

A JMC graduate student who participates in the [CSU Graduate Council](#) at the university level, which consists of graduate students who represent and advocate for CSU graduate and professional students within the university.

► Department Resources for Graduate Students

Graduate Student Offices

The department provides doctoral and master's students office space and access to a computer. There are also some common areas that can be used for meetings and other gatherings.

Software

Desktop computers in graduate student offices have Microsoft Office products (Word, Excel, etc.) on Windows machines. They also have the statistical analysis software SPSS and the qualitative analysis software NVivo. Students who wish to purchase software licenses for their personal computers should seek out student- and/or university-pricing at [RamTech](#).

Participant Recruitment System - SONA

SONA is the department's IRB-approved participant management system for recruiting undergraduate student participants for research data collection. Undergraduate students are able to sign up to participate in your research project through the online platform. Participants are compensated with extra credit in some JTC courses. The system is available for your thesis/dissertation research or for other studies you conduct at CSU. IRB approval is required before use.

► Finding What You Need

The most important source of support when questions arise is your advisor, but they may not have all the answers. In JMC, here's where to go with questions.

If you have questions about...	Start by asking the JMC...
Grades or other issues in a course Course content and overrides	Course professor
Program forms and paperwork Graduate School forms and requirements Registration overrides/permissions Travel forms	Graduate Program Coordinator
GTA/GRA assignments Program requirement exceptions	Graduate Program Director
Facilities, meeting rooms, offices Reimbursements for travel and other expenses	Office Manager
Funding, stipend, pay, employee benefits	Fiscal/HR Officer
Selecting courses Career advice	Your advisor
Research processes Your research and writing Publication, conferences, and talks Conduct problems or reports (see <i>Conduct & Integrity</i> below)	Your advisor and/or faculty mentors
Grievances or disputes	Graduate Program Director, Department Chair

Still have questions? Consult your advisor or the JMC Graduate Program Coordinator.

Department Financial Support

Most admitted students receive financial support as part of the program, although this is not guaranteed. Students who serve as a graduate assistant for teaching or research (GTA or GRA; see Part One of this manual) receive funding from the department for tuition, a stipend, and contribution towards the required health insurance. The department Fiscal Officer manages graduate student pay and can answer any questions. See the [Graduate School website](#) for more details about benefits.

In addition, all graduate students are eligible for some funding towards expenses for attending academic and professional conferences. Consult the Graduate Program Committee for current amounts and details.

Key information about funding:

- GTAs/GRAs must be registered for at least one course credit during the semester they work (CR does not qualify)
- The stipend is taxable income, although tuition disbursement is not

A half-time (20 hours/week) Graduate Assistantship consists of:

- A monthly stipend
- Full-tuition remission at the resident tuition rate. (Quarter-time (10-hour) students have half their tuition covered)
- Access to additional [benefits](#), including parental leave and mental health resources
- Graduate assistants with at least a 10-hour appointment and registered for 5 credits or more also receive a [health insurance contribution](#)
- A portion of required student fees

You are responsible for paying the remainder of the fees. The current [graduate tuition and fees](#) are available from the Office of Financial Aid. Fees include:

- General fees
- University technology fee
- University facility fee
- University alternative transportation fee
- There may be additional CSU Health Network and University Counseling Center fees for partial fee-paying students (5 credits or less).

Visit the [Office of Financial Aid](#) for details on student loans, dates, and paying your bill.

Domestic students from out-of-state

If you are a domestic student who is not a resident of Colorado, the difference between resident and non-resident tuition will be provided as an additional benefit for the first year only. Domestic students are expected to establish residency by the beginning of their second year at CSU. Information on establishing Colorado residency can be found on the Office of Financial Aid [website](#).

For International students

CSU extends the Tuition Premium Program to international students for the length of their tenure in their graduate degree program as long as they are enrolled in a minimum of five resident-instruction credits fall and spring semesters.

CSU Graduate School

The [Graduate School](#) provides the leadership for graduate education at Colorado State University. It sets university-wide standards and requirements for degree completion, including credit hours, thesis/dissertation committee structure, examinations and defenses, thesis/dissertation submission, registration requirements, leave, and health insurance.

The Graduate School must approve many of the required forms for your JMC program. Graduate School forms are available on RamWeb. Appeals to program requirements or policies generally go with your advisor's signature to the Graduate School for final review and approval.

The Graduate School website has well-written, detailed information about many of the logistics of pursuing a graduate degree, including new student orientation, a list of required forms, deadlines, thesis and dissertation formatting for submission, commencement, health services, financial resources, and more. You can also find resources for graduate student professional development, mentoring, academic and professional workshops, and writing support.

See graduateschool.colostate.edu for more.

► Graduate School Financial Resources

The [Graduate School website](#) has resources for financial considerations and answers to common questions. There you can find information about:

- [Graduate tuition rates and fees](#)
- Types of financial support (scholarships, grants, loans)
- Health costs
- Student Employee Retirement Plan (SERP)
- Information on managing your finances as a graduate assistant is available [here](#).

You can also visit the [Office of Financial Aid](#) for details about how to apply for loans, important dates, and paying your bill.

► Graduate Mentoring

The Graduate School provides workshops, talks, meetings, and other resources around [mentoring and inclusion](#) for graduate students. These include regular events throughout the semester and a range of initiatives such as support groups, writing groups, and training. Open to all graduate students, these programs emphasize community building, including supporting student groups that provide a space for underrepresented students.

► Graduate Student Council

The Graduate Student Council (GSC) represents and advocates for CSU graduate and professional students within the university and beyond. Additionally, the GSC provides professional development and social opportunities, procures funds for graduate student organizations, and provides quarterly awards for supply and travel.

Each department can have up to two graduate student representatives who help with and can vote on GSC activities. See gsc.colostate.edu for more.

Academic Support and Wellbeing

► International Student Resources

International Student and Scholar Services (ISSS) provides services and resources to assist international students and scholars with cultural adjustment, academic integration, professional growth, and personal support. They oversee new international student orientation and arrival, regulatory compliance, immigration services, sponsor services, and events, and act as a liaison to the U.S. government.

On their website at international.colostate.edu/issv you can find the following and more:

- Maintaining your immigration record
- Financial aid
- Spouse and family services
- Learning and writing, including tutoring and writing workshops
- Cultural Mentor Program that facilitates peer mentors for new international students at the graduate and undergraduate levels
- Campus events
- Graduation resources

Note that for international students, “full-time” status to fulfill visa requirements is **6+ credits per semester until graduation**. Your final (graduating) semester, you may register for 1 credit.

► Writing Center

The [CSU Writing Center](https://writingcenter.colostate.edu) is a free service offering inclusive, cooperative feedback on academic, personal, and professional writing projects. Their consultations are available to CSU students, faculty, staff, and affiliated community members. They offer three types of consulting sessions:

- Face-to-face consultations in the Writing Center in Eddy Hall or in Morgan Library
- Real-time online consultations for students whose home or work demands make it difficult to meet on campus
- Written responses to drafts via their online draft response queue

They also provide access to writing guides and textbooks as well as regular workshops and writing sessions, including specifically for graduate students.

See writingcenter.colostate.edu for more information.

► Graybill Statistics and Data Science Laboratory

The [Graybill Statistics and Data Science Laboratory](https://graybill.colostate.edu) provides general statistical consulting to researchers at CSU. They offer advice ranging from the planning and design of experiments to the analysis and interpretation of experimental results. There is no charge to CSU faculty, staff, and graduate students for general consultation. They do **not** consult on material or assignments related to courses.

► Morgan Library

CSU’s campus library, [Morgan Library](https://morgan.colostate.edu), provides electronic and paper-based materials along with study and meeting spaces to support CSU’s equitable access to knowledge. Use the library website to find academic materials held by CSU, including access to the academic journals to which the university subscribes. Login to their website to access electronic copies of articles from off or on campus.

Staffed with experts in data management, archiving, and special collections in various scholarly areas, the library provides many services to students, faculty, and staff including:

- **Information literacy:** Librarians and archivists are available to help students develop research skills and engage in critical inquiry
- **Data services:** Expert consultations for data management and Open Access support
- **Interlibrary loan:** Allows you to request items not in CSU's library from other libraries
- **Technology checkout:** Laptops, iPads, video cameras, chargers, and more
- **Archives and Special Collections:** Collections of unique materials with a particular commitment to Water Resources in the West, Agricultural and Natural Resources, and the University

► Student Disability Center

The [Student Disability Center](#) (SDC) provides support for students with both permanent and temporary disabilities. This can encompass physical disabilities, chronic illness/health conditions, mental health conditions, learning disabilities, and temporary disabilities. They provide accommodation services, support, education, and consultation for the campus community to ensure people with disabilities have a greater opportunity to achieve social justice and equity.

The SDC provides letters of accommodation for students with disabilities. Accommodations include testing accommodations such as extended time, breaks, or assistive technologies; accessible texts with font and auditory options; classroom accommodations such as assistive technology for note-taking, sign language interpreters, and course transcribers; and attendance and deadline flexibility. If you would like to request a letter of accommodation, schedule an appointment with a specialist at the SDC to discuss your needs.

Note that a letter for accommodation must be requested **every semester**.

Your accommodation letters are generated by the SDC and emailed to your professors with you copied on the email. You must request the letters before you will be able to use the accommodation (such as scheduling an exam).

► Career Support

Support for seeking a career in academia or industries related to the field of communication is available from the JMC faculty, including your advisor. Advisors can help you develop your resume or CV, write cover letters, and identify jobs that match your interests inside and outside academia. Students interested in academic careers also have opportunities to practice their job talk presentations in department colloquia.

The College of Liberal Arts and the CSU [Career Services](#) center can help graduate students with preparing for future careers, especially outside academia. They provide support for developing a resume or CV, cover letters, job searches, networking both on- and offline, interview skills, and salary negotiation, among other services.

► Safety, Health, and Wellbeing

CSU offers a range of health and wellness services for students and their families. For some of CSU's health and wellness services for students, see the following units:

CSU Health Network

The CSU Health Network provides general and some specialty medical services, including mental health services, to all CSU students. All students have full access to their wide range of services, regardless of their insurance plan. They also support the online health program [You@CSU](#) that provides personalized wellness services. Note, the CSU Health Network only provides a limited number of counseling sessions; those who want or need to be seen more than every few weeks are referred to services in the community.

Student Case Management

Case Management provides crisis prevention and intervention services. In difficult situations such as medical, mental health, behavioral, personal or family crisis, illness, or injury, a student or family may find it difficult to navigate the resources and services available. Student Case Managers consult with students, faculty, staff, families, and providers to offer guidance on the next best steps.

Student Resolution Center

SRC aims to assist, educate, and support CSU students through two processes: Conflict Resolution – voluntary, neutral, confidential process to assist students when conflicts, disputes or issues arise, and Student Conduct – one-on-one meetings to discuss alleged violations of the Student Conduct Code, hear student perspectives, explore personal responsibility, hold students accountable, and provide educational and restorative outcomes when appropriate.

Tell Someone

You can use the online form or call (970) 491-1350 to discuss concerns about any member of the CSU community. Referrals will be made to campus resources that can develop strategies and use resources to discreetly help students and employees who may be in distress. Referrals may also be made using the online Health and Safety Referral Form.

Student Cultural Programs and Services

Linked are a selection of programs and services designed to support students in a variety of ways and provide opportunities to successfully participate in, and contribute to, the diverse campus environment. While each office listed may emphasize a specific segment of the student body, services and programs are available to benefit all students at CSU.

9 CONDUCT & INTEGRITY

There are a range of CSU resources for students, faculty, and staff to address issues and challenges that arise, including reporting systems and support related to health and wellbeing, harassment, academic integrity, student conduct, and conflict resolution.

If you have a problem with another graduate student, a student in your classes, a faculty or staff member, or any other member of the CSU community, you can use CSU's reporting systems to get support and guidance. Support for problems with non-CSU individuals is also available.

If you have or observe a serious issue and don't know where to start, contact [Tell Someone](#) online or by calling (970) 491-1350.

They can guide you to the appropriate offices and resources for any issue.

Student Conduct

The Department of Journalism & Media Communication follows the policies for student conduct as determined by Colorado State University. The [Student Conduct Code](#) details CSU's expectations related to student behavior, their rights, and responsibilities.

Behaviors prohibited by the university as listed in the Student Conduct Code include, among others:

- Academic misconduct, such as cheating, plagiarism, and falsification in any academic work
- Abusive behavior such as threats, intimidation, coercion, hazing, or violence; sexual misconduct; stalking
- Discriminatory harassment based on identity or personal characteristics
- Disruptive behavior such as that which interferes with educational interactions or infringes on the rights of others
- Misuse of alcohol or drugs
- Retaliation, including bullying, threat, or interfering with another individual or group who submits a report of a conduct violation

In cases of conduct violations, a report is filed and reviewed. In some cases the university will hold a hearing and then notify the relevant parties of a resolution process which may include disciplinary suspension, expulsion, or withholding the degree.

Students have the right to appeal decisions made by the university by following the procedures outlined in the Student Conduct Code.

The Graduate School does not become involved in cases of student misconduct unless the alleged misconduct results in a lack of satisfactory progress toward the student's degree.

This summary does not include the full policies for student conduct. Please consult the [Student Conduct Code](#) and [CSU Policy library](#) for official policy language and parameters.

Academic Integrity

Academic misconduct includes cheating, plagiarism, unauthorized possession or disposition of academic materials, falsification, and facilitation of any act of academic misconduct, according to the CSU Student Conduct Code. Graduate students are also subject to general CSU policies, including around research misconduct. Falsification also includes submitting texts or images inspired or created by generative artificial intelligence (AI) tools such as ChatGPT without full, detailed disclosure and prior permission.

Prior to using any generative AI tool, even those embedded in common software, you must always first ask your instructors, advisor, committee members, and/or supervisors what is permissible and how to disclose use to support any part (outlining, creation, writing/editing, remixing, etc.) of your coursework, GTA- or GRA-related work, publications, thesis/dissertation, preliminary examination, or anything you create in your role as a CSU student.

Generative AI permission for one use case or by any one person is NOT transferrable to others. Always ask first, adhere to boundaries, clarify before assuming, *and* disclose/cite.

► Plagiarism

Plagiarism is defined by CSU as, “the copying of language, structure, images, ideas, or thoughts of another, and representing them as one’s own without proper acknowledgment, and is related only to work submitted for credit. Disciplinary action will not be taken for academic work in draft form.”

Work submitted outside the classroom context such as for papers or other writing intended for public distribution, thesis/dissertation proposals, or final thesis/dissertations must also follow guidelines around academic integrity, including plagiarism, as per the [CSU Policy: Research and Research-Related Misconduct](#). As per this policy, “This policy and all related procedures apply to every person who, at the time of the alleged research misconduct or research-related misconduct, was employed by, was an agent of, or was affiliated by contract or agreement with the University.”

Detailed descriptions of the definitions and guidance around checking your work for plagiarism can be found at the [CSU Writing Center](#).

Access confidential plagiarism detection at libguides.colostate.edu/ithenticate.

Plagiarism and other forms of academic misconduct are grounds for failure in all classes and work applied toward the degree.

Students are responsible for being familiar with and adhering to the university’s academic integrity policies.

► Academic Misconduct Reports and Appeals

When a student is punished by a faculty member for academic misconduct through the grade on an individual assignment or the final grade for a course, the details of the incident must be conveyed in writing to Student Conduct Services at the university’s [Student Resolution Center](#) and to the department’s Graduate Program Director for placement in the student’s departmental file.

In extraordinary cases of academic dishonesty, a majority of the department’s Graduate Program Committee or a majority of the student’s dissertation committee may vote to recommend program

dismissal or other sanctions by referring the matter to Student Conduct Services at the Student Resolution Center. Such cases include but are not limited to: plagiarism in a final, submitted draft of a thesis/project/dissertation proposal or final thesis/project/dissertation; plagiarism in work submitted for publication, conferences, or other external distribution; data falsification; and second offenses of other forms of academic misconduct.

Students have the right to appeal such actions by requesting a formal hearing by Student Conduct Services as per the [Student Conduct Code](#) and [Graduate and Professional Bulletin](#).

Students are responsible for notifying the Graduate Program Director concerning any actions taken as a result of a hearing in order to update the student's departmental file.

Conflict Resolution and Incident Reporting

CSU has a range of ways you can address problems, issues, conflicts, inequities, biases, or violations. These may be on your own behalf, or on the behalf of your students or colleagues. When paid as GTAs, GRAs, or instructors of record, graduate students are also eligible for CSU employee support services.

Offices on campus that can support you when problems arise include:

- [CSU Police](#) – Crime and personal danger reporting as well as non-emergency and anonymous reporting
- [Student Resolution Center](#) – Assists, educates, and supports the CSU community through conflict resolution services and student conduct services
- [Office of Equal Opportunity](#) (OEO) – Investigations into complaints of discrimination and harassment
- [Office of Title XI Programs and Gender Equity](#) – Sexual misconduct, gender discrimination, and gender-based violence
- [Risk Management & Insurance](#) – Worker's compensation for employees for accident or injury in the scope of employment
- [Office of the Ombuds](#) – A confidential resource for CSU employees who voluntarily seek help in resolving workplace concerns and conflicts

Specific reporting systems at CSU include:

- [Tell Someone](#) (Student Services) – Comprehensive office where you can report anything that threatens your safety or the safety of others in the university community. Provides guidance and advice for any CSU community member
- [Case Management](#) (Student Services) – Reporting student personal crises – medical, mental health, alcohol/drugs, behavioral
- [Student Conduct Reports](#) (Student Affairs) – Submit an Incident Report (violation of the conduct code) or Academic Misconduct Incident Report (cheating, plagiarism, stealing work, etc.)

Mandated Reporting

All CSU employees and volunteers including faculty, staff, and students acting in their employment or volunteer roles, are designated as *Responsible Employees*.

As such they are required to report as early as possible any and all information related to incidents of sexual misconduct and/or interpersonal violence to the CSU Office of Title IX Programs and Gender Equity.

See the definition of relevant acts on the [CSU Title IX website](#).

- **Bias Reporting** (Office of Inclusive Excellence) – Report perceived bias-related incidents connected to CSU you have experienced or witnessed firsthand
- **Victim Assistance Team** (Women & Gender Advocacy Center) – Support for students and family/friends who have experienced sexual assault, dating/domestic violence, or stalking on or off campus
- **Compliance Reporting** (CSU System) – Employee misconduct; violation of law or CSU policy; abuse of authority; public safety, animal welfare, and research misconduct

Common Questions about Student Conduct & Integrity

Can I use generative AI tools like ChatGPT or other emerging generative AI tools to outline, inspire, re-mix/rewrite, write, summarize literature, and/or otherwise improve or assist my work as a graduate student?

Currently, unless you have explicit permission from your instructor, supervisor(s) of your GRA or GTA position, advisor and committee, you are not to use these tools to outline, inspire, re-mix/rewrite, write, summarize literature, and/or otherwise improve or assist your work as a graduate student. Basic grammar and spell-checkers and thesauruses are fine, but if it's using generative AI to rewrite sentences, it may cross the line of falsification. You must first ask and identify necessary disclosure and any boundaries for its use. Also, if one instructor gives you permission for a particular assignment or use case, that permission is NOT transferrable to any other assignment, class, or use case. In other words, you must always ask first and then abide by boundaries and disclosure they require.

Please always feel welcome to show and ask faculty about ways you want to explore its use! We invite experimentation and discussion and will support you to act with integrity. If you want to use it, it's YOUR responsibility to initiate the conversation early and to seek clarity throughout the process with faculty and/or supervisors for which you are producing the work.

What if my issue isn't resolved after I report it?

Talk to your advisor and/or the Graduate Program Director and/or the department chair if a reported problem is not resolved. Some issues are difficult to resolve quickly, and others may not get resolved in a way that you feel was helpful. We encourage you to talk to your support network and consult the CSU Ombuds for confidential guidance and advice. The Ombuds has no power to take action but can provide valuable support and resources to help you.

What if I have a problem with my advisor?

If you have an issue you can't discuss with your advisor related to student conduct, biases, discrimination, or other work-related issues, you may speak to the department chair, the Graduate Program Director, or you can go directly to the CSU offices charged with addressing these issues such as Conflict Resolution, the OEO, Title IX, or the Ombuds. You can also talk to other faculty in the department or in other departments for guidance.

What if a student, friend, or colleague comes to me about a serious issue?

It depends on the issue and your relationship with that person. As an employee, and especially as a GTA or instructor at CSU, you are a "Responsible Employee," which means you are required by university policy to report any "incidents of sexual misconduct and/or interpersonal violence" that you are told about *in your role as an employee*. However, this does not apply to private conversations with personal friends outside of the work context. You are welcome but not required to report any information shared with you as a friend. If the issue is bias or mistreatment that is **not** "sexual misconduct and/or interpersonal violence," you are not required to report it in any context, but you are strongly encouraged to do so.

10 PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT & CERTIFICATES

Professional Development Training and Workshops

There are many opportunities at CSU to engage in professional development training to gain skills in inclusive pedagogy, leadership, writing, grant applications, professional well-being, career paths, and more. These are not courses, but instead are 1- to 3-hour sessions that address specific professional skills unrelated to an academic discipline. They are generally free of charge.

Professional development sessions open to graduate students at CSU include:

- **[The Graduate School](#)** – A range of workshops and talks specifically for graduate students through their Professional Development Series.
- **[The Institute for Learning and Teaching \(TILT\)](#)** – Pedagogy training focused on specific challenges for faculty, staff, and graduate students, including active learning, syllabus design, online teaching, critical thinking, and more.
- **[Office of Inclusive Excellence](#)** – A series of employee trainings for faculty, staff, and graduate students offered a la carte focusing on diversity, equity, and inclusion topics such as uncovering bias, intercultural communication, understanding oppression, and more.

Graduate Certificates

Graduate certificates are 9 – 15 credit (3 – 4 course) programs that earn you a transcribed certificate in a specific area of study. Certificates provide training in that area and can be a helpful indicator of your expertise, especially for non-academic careers.

They are offered in online and offline formats, depending on the certificate. Most certificates are offered through a specific department and the required courses are traditional department offerings at the graduate level.

► Graduate Teaching Certificate

Many JMC graduate students choose to enroll in the [Graduate Teaching Certificate of Completion](#), offered by CSU's The Institute for Learning and Teaching (TILT). These are especially helpful for those serving as a GTA or planning on a career in academia. Students attend several short pedagogical workshops or certificate courses, create a teaching portfolio, and complete 20 hours of teaching or mentoring. See the [TILT website](#) for details on enrollment and requirements.

► Other Certificates

Browse more than 50 department-based certificates on the [Graduate School website](#). Check course requirements in the [CSU General Catalog](#) under the specific department offering the certificate.

Important things to know about certificate programs:

- All certificate courses must be completed at CSU, and **often some of these courses will not count** towards your JMC degree.
- In most cases, earning a certificate requires **additional courses** beyond the requirements for the M.S. or Ph.D., which can **extend your coursework**.
- Many certificates (especially in the sciences) require courses with **discipline-related pre-requisites**, and may not be feasible for all JMC students.
- Some courses for online certificates **may not be funded by the in-residence M.S. or Ph.D. programs** – check with the Graduate School and the Registrar’s office for details

Graduate certificates completed by previous JMC graduate students include:

- [Gender, Power and Difference](#) (Ethnic Studies)
- [Conservation Actions with Lands, Animals, and People](#) (Fish, Wildlife, and Conservation Biology)
- [Adventure Tourism](#) (Human Dimensions of Natural Resources)
- [Communications for Conservation](#) (Human Dimensions of Natural Resources)
- [Human-Centered Design Thinking](#) (Nancy Richardson Design Center)
- [Data Analysis](#) (Statistics)

To enroll in a certificate program, check the host department’s website for application deadlines and procedures.

Common Questions about Professional Development and Certificates

Do I have to complete a certificate or professional development during my degree program?

You do not have to do any professional development or certificates. But if you're interested in serving as a GTA or in a teaching career, the department recommends the TILT teaching certificate as an excellent way to get necessary training in foundations of pedagogy. Professional development sessions are particularly helpful to address specific skills and are low-investment of only a few hours, so we recommend a few of those, too.

What's the difference between a certificate and professional development?

A certificate is a formal, transcribed program (it goes on your CSU transcript) that is intended to provide advanced academic training in a specific discipline and/or area. You take traditional graduate classes for them. Professional development sessions are much more informal, mostly free, and are usually only a few hours each. These are good places to get some tips, guidance, and discussion about different professional skills.

What's the benefit in the long term of doing professional development or certificates?

Regardless of the level of formality, trainings and certificates can all go on your CV and give employers concrete evidence of your training in important skills for your future academic and non-academic work. They show dedication to improving your skills, and most employers find them impressive!

I'm really interested in a certificate in a subject I've never studied before. Can I complete it?

In many cases, department-specific certificates require graduate level training in a field somewhat closely related to the certificate topic. These courses often have pre-requisites that you may not have completed. For example, the certificate "Conservation Actions with Lands, Animals, and People" through the Fish, Wildlife, and Conservation Biology Department includes courses that require you to have taken an ecology or wildlife management course. Some certificates have fewer pre-requisites, though, and most pre-requisites are undergraduate-level courses, so many people find they are eligible. Check the CSU General Catalog before you assume you won't qualify!

What is a CV?

CV stands for "curriculum vitae," and it's just an academic-y way to say "resume." Generally, academic CVs are longer and include different sections than a professional resume. A CV lists every published paper or other manuscript and every conference or other talk related to your scholarship. It includes more detail about specific classes taught and separates service to the department and university from other kinds of employment or volunteer work. Your academic CV should look very different than one you use to apply for jobs in industry, but you can and should put your academic accomplishments on an industry resume in an appropriate format. The [CSU Career Center](#) offers templates, review, and guidance for creating a CV or resume for academic and non-academic positions.

11 RESEARCH & PUBLICATION

Students are encouraged to develop papers and projects, including through their courses, for publication in academic and professional outlets such as journals and conferences. This is especially important for doctoral students with either academic or non-academic career goals. Publications contribute meaningfully to evidence of your training and expertise, and conferences provide a valuable opportunity to share your work in a public setting, which is of value to future employers both inside and outside academia.

Pursuing Research & Publication

Especially if you are seeking a career in academia or are a master's student going on to a Ph.D., you should start submitting papers for conferences and publication as early as possible in your program.

Successful completion of your coursework and dissertation should always take priority.

Major conferences and journals in the field of communication are listed in the appendix of this manual, but conferences and journals focused on other related fields are commonly attended by our graduate students and faculty. Discuss potential outlets for your work with your advisor.

Authoring and Co-Authoring

Authorship in the social sciences is an important signal of your work and leadership. Being the sole author on papers you publish or present at conferences helps build recognition and your academic reputation. In addition, many papers are co-authored among two or more colleagues, especially those that come out of larger research projects.

All authors are assumed to have contributed to the writing of the paper beyond editing or conceptual guidance.

In most social science journals, the first author is considered the project or paper lead who takes the most responsibility for its conceptualization and writing. If duties are shared equally on a project, sometimes co-authors will use a footnote to indicate this. Other times, you might plan to develop two or more papers from a project and set a plan to rotate first authorship among collaborators.

► Co-Authoring with Faculty

Faculty members can be expected to provide a reasonable level of coaching and editing assistance on papers developed for publication or conferences as part of their advising duties. Such support does **not** require including the faculty member as a co-author on the paper.

Student/faculty co-authorships are appropriate when faculty contribute significantly to the paper's research and/or writing beyond what is considered reasonable in an advising role. For example, a faculty member might be listed as a co-author when the student conceptualized the project but drew heavily on ideas or a program of ongoing research by the faculty member, or when the faculty was primarily responsible for revising and submitting the manuscript with the concurrence of the student.

Some faculty include students in their work as an additional author, such as when the student serves as their research assistant. This is not always the case, however, and being a research assistant does not guarantee student authorship on papers that come from a project.

Academic Conferences & Talks

Graduate students are strongly encouraged to submit manuscripts to conferences. Submitted manuscripts can be based on class papers, research conducted with faculty or colleagues, thesis/dissertation research, or independent projects.

Conferences provide opportunities to share your work with the field and connect with other scholars and practitioners for collaboration, mentorship, and support. Conferences have somewhat less stringent acceptance standards than academic journals, and are well-suited for getting feedback on work you can later develop for publication.

► National and International Conferences

Academic and professional conferences are generally 1- to 5-day annual meetings of an academic or professional organization that hosts panels and poster sessions where scholars present their work. Some conferences require submitting a full paper, others require an abstract only. Conference attendance most often has a fee, but nearly all offer a discounted rate for students. Some conferences also offer additional graduate student funding, so check their websites carefully.

Conferences are generally held at a hotel or conference center. Those accepted to the conference present their paper in a panel or poster session to an audience of academic and/or professional colleagues. See conference websites for submission requirements and conference details.

When you submit a paper to a conference, you select a specific division or working group that aligns with the topic of your paper. These are created based on common sub-areas within the field of communication, and they differ somewhat for each conference. Discuss the best options for your paper with JMC faculty.

The largest conferences JMC faculty and graduate students attend on a regular basis are:

- [International Communication Association](#) (ICA) – held late May; submission Nov. 1
- [National Communication Association](#) (NCA) – held late Nov.; submission Mar. 25
- [Association for Education in Journalism & Mass Communication](#) (AEJMC) – held mid-Aug.; submission Apr. 1
- [Broadcast Education Association](#) (BEA) – held mid-April; submission Dec. 1

See the appendix of this manual for a more comprehensive list of recommended academic and professional conferences, including field-specific conferences focusing on public relations, science, health, games, the internet, the environment, and more.

► Campus and Other Talks

You may also have opportunities to submit or be invited to give talks about your research on CSU's campus or elsewhere. You are encouraged to pursue these opportunities as part of your involvement in the field and as a chance to share your work with colleagues for feedback. Opportunities to share your work at CSU include:

- [Graduate Research Showcase](#)
- [Symposium for Inclusive Excellence](#)
- [International Symposium](#)
- [Women in Science Symposium](#)

► Conference Funding

JMC offers some funding for graduate students to attend conferences in their field to present their work. This funding may not cover all conference expenses. To be eligible for conference funding through the department, you must have an accepted paper or presentation at a relevant conference.

To request conference funding:

1. Consult with your advisor to ensure the proposed trip is eligible.
2. Fill out the department's Pre-Trip Travel Form for approval by the Chair *before you make any reservations*. Make sure to include conference registration fees as part of your budget.
3. Once approved, book any necessary airline tickets through the agencies listed on the pre-trip form (these are often paid directly by the department instead of reimbursed).
4. Make hotel reservations on your own.
5. Register for the conference, which often requires also becoming a member of the host organization (check conference organization fee schedules for student rates).
6. Within 1 week of returning from your trip, submit hotel, registration, taxi, and eligible food receipts for reimbursement to the JMC Office Manager.

Publishing in Journals and Other Publications

Students are encouraged to develop their work for submission to academic journals for publication, especially those seeking a career in academia. Submitted manuscripts can be based on class papers, research conducted with faculty or colleagues, thesis/dissertation research, or independent projects.

Most papers suitable for journal publication are theoretically-grounded, include a robust analysis, and are between 4,000 and 8,000 words in length including tables and references.

Papers for academic journals are held to rigorous standards for theoretical contribution, methodological strength, and contribution to the field. Academics in the field volunteer to serve as reviewers of submitted papers to assess quality, accuracy, and rigor and determine acceptance or rejection.

Sometimes rejections are made by the journal editor without sending the paper for external review – a “desk reject” – due to a lack of fit with the journal's scope or requirements. Read the journal's description carefully to reduce the chance of a desk rejection. Sometimes desk rejections are also issued when submitters do not follow formatting or length guidelines.

Journals rarely have specific submission deadlines, with the exception of “special issues” that focus on a particular topic. Submission must follow each journal's exact formatting, citation, and style guidelines carefully; these are often based on APA, MLA, or Chicago Style.

Watch out for fees

Journals in communication and related fields almost never charge a fee for submission or publication.

If a journal you find charges a fee, it may be a **predatory journal** (see below).

Many of the flagship journals in the field of communication are run by the major conference organizations (ICA, NCA, AEJMC). See the appendix of this manual for a list of quality journals in communication.

► Predatory Journals

Since 2010, there has been an increase in what are called “predatory journals,” which are publications that accept articles for publication without performing promised quality checks for issues such as plagiarism or ethical (IRB) approval. They often charge fees to authors.

WARNING

Many researchers across all academic fields have been duped into submitting to predatory journals, in which their work can be overlooked.

Predatory journals and publishers are defined as, “entities that prioritize self-interest at the expense of scholarship and are characterized by false or misleading information, deviation from best editorial and publication practices, a lack of transparency, and/or the use of aggressive and indiscriminate solicitation practices.” [Read more](#) to learn how to check if a journal is predatory.

It's a good rule of thumb that if a journal seems to personally invite you to submit your work for publication, it is likely predatory.

Common Questions about Research & Publication

If someone helps me with a paper, when should I be the sole author and when should I include them as co-authors?

Single authorship is appropriate when you conceptualize a project, conduct the research, and write all of the manuscript. Use the paper's "acknowledgements" to note assistance from colleagues or advisors. If another scholar contributes to the writing beyond suggested edits, they can be a co-author. If you conceptualize and implement a research project with a colleague, it's important to share authorship on any papers that come from that project, unless your colleague does not want to be included. Do not ever add an author to a paper without discussing it with them well before submission to publication! Being listed on a paper is considered an indication that the person contributed meaningfully to the writing beyond edits and advice.

What kinds of papers can I submit to a conference?

There is a wide range of papers that can be appropriate for submitting to a conference. Many conferences allow papers in progress, conceptual papers with or without data, and literature reviews. With some editing, many class papers can be good candidates for conference submissions. Your advisor or class professor may be able to help you identify recommended edits or updates for submission.

Can I submit the same paper to multiple conferences?

No, you cannot. However, you can submit related papers or significantly edited ones, as long as the title, details, and text are **all unique** to that submission. Using paragraphs from previously presented papers is considered self-plagiarism. If a paper is rejected, then you **can** submit it to another conference.

What kinds of papers can I submit for journal publication?

Publication standards are generally more strict than conference standards. That means that papers for academic journals should be highly polished, carefully edited, and robust in theory and methods. Class papers rarely fulfill journal requirements without substantial editing and often, additional data collection and analysis. You can identify expectations and standards best by reading the scope, submission guidelines, and previously published papers on the journal's website.

Can I submit the same paper to multiple journals or conferences?

Not at the same time, no. In nearly all social science journals and conferences, you must submit each paper to only one journal or conference at a time. Violating this rule can get your paper rejected and damage your reputation. You must submit a paper, wait for it to be reviewed, and if it is rejected, only then may you submit the same paper to a different journal with or without changes to the text.

Can I submit the same paper I presented at a conference to a journal?

Yes! It is common in our field to present a paper at a conference for feedback, make appropriate updates, and then submit the paper to a journal for publication. Generally journal submission is done after the conference takes place, but this is not a firm rule. Papers submitted to journals can use the same text and titles as those presented at conferences, but check with the journal about their policies if the full conference paper is made available by the conference on their website or in proceedings.

What if my conference trip is funded by a grant?

Externally-funded travel must go through the same approval process using the Pre-Trip Travel form and must be approved by the relevant faculty and the department chair. Budget restrictions on externally-funded travel come from the project budget, not JMC, so consult the relevant faculty on the project to determine what you can spend.

APPENDIX A CONFERENCES & JOURNALS IN COMMUNICATION

Students are encouraged to develop papers and projects for publication in academic and professional outlets such as journals and conferences. Publications contribute meaningfully to evidence of your training and expertise, whether you are pursuing a career in academia or elsewhere. Conferences provide a valuable opportunity to share your work in a public setting, which is of value to future employers both inside and outside academia.

Major conferences and journals in the field of communication are listed here, but conferences and journals focused on other related fields are commonly attended by our graduate students and faculty. Discuss potential outlets for your work with your advisor.

Academic Conferences in Communication

Conference Name	Month Held	Submission Deadline (approx.)
<i>National/Global</i>		
International Communication Association (ICA)	May	November 1
National Communication Association (NCA)	November	March 25
Association for Education in Journalism & Mass Communication (AEJMC)	August	April 1
Association of Internet Researchers (AoIR)	October	March 1
International Association for Media & Communication Research (IAMCR)	June	February 9
American Association for Public Opinion Research (AAPOR)	May	December 1
Broadcast Education Association (BEA)	April	December 1
<i>Regional</i>		
Western States Communication Association (WSCA)	February	September 1
Pacific Chapter of Association for Public Opinion Research (PAPOR)	December	October 1
<i>Specialty Areas</i>		
Society for Risk Analysis (SRA)	December	May 23
Conference on Communication and the Environment (COCE)	June	October 15
Kentucky Conference on Health Communication	April	December 14
International Public Relations Research Conference (IPRRC)	March	November 1
PRSA Educators Academy	October	Early June
American Public Health Association (APHA)	October	February
Association for Practical and Professional Ethics	February	November 3
Digital Games Research Association (DiGRA)	July	October 15
Popular Culture Association	April	September 15
National Agricultural Communication Symposium	February	October 10
American Association for Agricultural Education	May	January 15
American Academy of Advertising	March	October 1

Principle Academic Journals in Communication

General

[Annals of the International Communication Association \(ICA\)](#)
[Asian Journal of Communication](#)
[Atlantic Journal of Communication](#)
[Canadian Journal of Communication](#)
[Chinese Journal of Communication](#)
[Communication & Critical/Cultural Studies \(NCA\)](#)
[Communication & Sport](#)
[Communication Booknotes Quarterly](#)
[Communication, Culture, & Critique \(ICA\)](#)
[Communication Methods and Measures](#)
[Communication Monographs \(NCA\)](#)
[Communication Quarterly \(ECA\)](#)
[Communication Reports \(WSCA\)](#)
[Communication Research](#)
[Communication Research Reports \(ECA\)](#)
[The Communication Review](#)
[Communication Studies \(CSCA\)](#)
[Communication Theory \(ICA\)](#)
[Communications—The European Journal of Communication Research](#)
[European Journal of Communication](#)
[Howard Journal of Communications](#)
[Human Communication Research \(ICA\)](#)
[International Journal of Communication](#)
[International Journal of Listening \(ILA\)](#)
[Journal of Applied Communication Research \(NCA\)](#)
[Journal of Communication \(ICA\)](#)
[Journal of Communication & Religion \(RCA\)](#)
[Narrative Inquiry](#)
[Qualitative Research Reports in Communication \(ECA\)](#)
[Review of Communication \(NCA\)](#)
[Southern Communication Journal \(SSCA\)](#)

[Visual Communication](#)

[Visual Communication Quarterly](#)
[Western Journal of Communication \(WSCA\)](#)

Communication & Technology

[Information, Communication, & Society](#)
[The Information Society](#)
[Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication \(ICA\)](#)
[Game Studies](#)
[Games & Culture](#)

Communication Education

[Basic Communication Course Annual](#)
[Communication Education \(NCA\)](#)
[Communication Teacher \(NCA\)](#)
[Journal of Communication Pedagogy \(CSCA\)](#)

Discourse Analysis/Language and Social Interaction

[Critical Discourse Studies](#)
[Discourse & Communication](#)
[Discourse & Society](#)
[Discourse Processes](#)
[Discourse Studies](#)
[Language and Intercultural Communication](#)
[Research on Language & Social Interaction](#)
[Text & Talk](#)

Gender Communication

[Feminist Media Studies](#)
[Women & Language](#)
[Women's Studies in Communication](#)

Health Communication

[Health Communication](#)
[Health, Risk, & Society](#)
[Journal of Communication in Healthcare](#)
[Journal of Health Communication](#)
[Journal of Healthcare Communications](#)
[Rhetoric of Health & Medicine](#)

Intercultural/International Communication

[Asian Journal of Communication](#)
[Chinese Journal of Communication](#)
[Communicatio](#)

[Communications—The European Journal of Communication Research](#)

[European Journal of Communication](#)
[Global Media and Communication](#)
[Howard Journal of Communications](#)
[International Communication Gazette](#)
[International Communication Research Journal](#)

[International Journal of Communication](#)

[Journal of Asian Pacific Communication](#)

[Journal of Intercultural Communication Research](#)

[Journal of International Communication](#)

[Journal of International & Intercultural Communication \(NCA\)](#)

[Language and Intercultural Communication](#)

[Middle East Journal of Culture and Communication](#)

Interpersonal/Small Group Communication

[Journal of Family Communication](#)
[Journal of Social and Personal Relationships](#)

[Small Group Research](#)

Mass Communication / Media Studies

[The Agenda Setting Journal](#)
[The Communication Review](#)
[Communications—The European Journal of Communication Research](#)

[Continuum: Journal of Media & Cultural Studies](#)

[Convergence](#)

[Critical Studies in Media Communication \(NCA\)](#)

[Explorations in Media Ecology](#)

[Feminist Media Studies](#)

[Global Media and Communication](#)
[International Journal of Media Management](#)

[International Journal of Press/Politics](#)

Journal of Broadcasting & Electronic Media
Journal of Media & Religion
Journal of Media Economics
Journal of Media Ethics
Journal of Radio & Audio Media
Journalism & Mass Communication Quarterly
Journalism Practice
Journalism Studies
Mass Communication & Society
Media, Culture, & Society
Media Psychology
New Media & Society
Popular Communication
Social Media + Society
Television & New Media
Journal of Communication Management
Management Communication Quarterly
Organizational Communication
Liminalities: A Journal of Performance Studies
Studies in Theatre and

Performance
Text & Performance Quarterly (NCA)
Political Communication
First Amendment Studies (NCA)
International Journal of Press/Politics
Political Communication
Rhetoric & Public Affairs
Public Relations/Strategic Communication
Case Studies in Strategic Communication
International Journal of Strategic Communication
Journal of Communication Management
Journal of Public Relations Research
Public Relations Inquiry
Public Relations Journal
Public Relations Review
Rhetorical Studies
Advances in the History of Rhetoric
Argumentation & Advocacy

Journal of Contemporary Rhetoric
KB Journal
Philosophy & Rhetoric
Quarterly Journal of Speech (NCA)
Relevant Rhetoric
Rhetoric & Public Affairs
Rhetoric of Health & Medicine
Rhetoric Review
Rhetoric Society Quarterly
Rhetorica
Voices of Democracy
Ag/ Risk/ Science/ Environmental Communication
Applied Environmental Education & Communication
Environmental Communication
Health, Risk, & Society
Journal of Contingencies & Crisis Management
Journal of Applied Communications (ag., natural resources)
Public Understanding of Science
Risk Analysis
Science Communication
Technical Communication Quarterly

This list was compiled by the National Communication Association and retrieved October, 2022 from <https://www.nacacomm.org/academic-professional-resources/research-and-publishing-resource-center/journals-publishing>.

APPENDIX B FORMS

Graduate students must submit various forms throughout their course of study at CSU. Forms required by the Graduate School have a “GS” prefix and area accessed in your RamWeb. See [Graduate School forms](#) for detailed instructions and samples. GS forms are automatically sent to signatories in sequence. If a form you submit is not completed, this may be because one person has not yet signed it. If needed, ask your advisor to reach out to the relevant person to request a signature.

Forms required by the department have a “DG” prefix and are available on the JMC website and at the end of this manual. You and/or your advisor will send department forms (DG) via email to the Graduate Program Director (GPD) and the Graduate Program Coordinator (GPC).

► Required Forms

Form name	Purpose	Due	How to submit
Program Planning			
DG1a Temporary Advising Form	Establish contact w/ temp. advisor	Early in 1 st semester	Email to GPD, GPC
DG1b Additional Work Commitment Acknowledgement Form	Understand guidance for accepting additional work besides assistantship	Early in 1 st semester	Email to GPD, GPC
DG4 Ph.D. Program Transfer Credit Approval	List all courses to transfer from master’s degree	Early in 1 st semester	Email to GPD, GPC, advisor
GS3 Transfer Credit Evaluation	Evaluation of previously earned graduate-level course credits or Master’s degree to count	Anytime before GS6 is submitted	RamWeb
GS6 Program of Study	List planned courses, dissertation committee and advisor	Mid-3 rd semester	RamWeb
DG5 Ph.D. Coursework Planner	List updated planned courses to fulfill degree requirements	End of 3 rd semester	No submission
Preliminary Exams & Dissertation			
GS9A Petition for Committee Member Changes	Change advisor or committee members after the GS6 processed	Variable	RamWeb
GS16 Report of Preliminary Examination for the Doctoral Degree	Results of preliminary exam	Within 2 days of final assessments	RamWeb
DG2 Thesis/Research Project/ Dissertation Proposal Approval	Committee approval of proposal defense	Within 2 days of proposal defense	Email to GPC
Student Plan for Degree Completion	Establish degree plan completion	1 st , 4 th , 8 th , and 10 th semester of CR	Email to GPD, GPC, advisor
GS24 Report of Final Examination Results	Committee approval of dissertation defense	Within 2 days of dissertation defense	RamWeb
Graduation			
GS25 Application for Graduation or Reapplication for Graduation	Required application for CSU graduation	Semester you plan to graduate	RamWeb
GS30 Thesis/Dissertation Submission	Submission of final dissertation to CSU	After final edits	RamWeb
Abstract to <i>Journalism & Mass Communication Abstracts</i>	Register your thesis/dissertation	After final edits	Email to GPC
Survey of Earned Doctorates	Complete the NSF survey	Before graduation	Online
DG3 Graduate Degree Checklist	Department checklist	Before graduation	Email to GPC

Other Helpful Forms

► Other Department Forms

These forms are available from the front office staff or Graduate Program Coordinator.

- **Pre-Trip Travel Request Form** – For permission from the department and university for sanctioned travel. Must be completed before you travel on a department- or grant-supported trip.
- **Special Course Proposal Form** – Used to register for variable credit courses including Supervised College Teaching (JTC 684), Independent Study (JTC 795), and thesis or dissertation credits (JTC 699/799). CR registration does **not** need this form.
- **Graduate Teaching Evaluation Form** – For applying for summer teaching positions, filled out by you and a faculty member who has supervised you as a GTA or has a deep knowledge of your teaching.

► Other Graduate School Forms

These forms are accessed via your RamWeb. See [Graduate School Forms](#) for details.

- **GS7 Request for Change of Department and/or Degree Program** – Use this to change from one department or program to another.
- **GS9A Petition for Committee Member Changes** – Change advisor/committee after GS6 is processed.
- **GS11 Study Abroad Transfer Credit Request** – Submit if you take coursework abroad as part of your program and want the coursework to be officially transferred to CSU.
- **GS52 Discrepancy Clearance Response** – Resolve course discrepancies (if applicable) that were not addressed on your GS25 Application for Graduation.
- **Late Registration Request** – For making registration changes past the registration deadline but within the same semester as the original registration.
- **Registration Appeal** – You can request a drop, withdrawal, or retroactive registration changes for a previous semester or for any course where the drop/withdrawal deadlines for the current semester have passed. See [Petitions to the Graduate School](#).

Petitions or Requests Not Addressed by Existing Forms

In some cases, you may need to request an exemption or other resolution to a policy or procedure due to extenuating circumstances beyond your control. Work with your advisor or the JMC Graduate Program Director to develop a memo addressing the issue. Your department head or advisor must include the following information in a petition emailed from a CSU affiliated (@colostate) email address to: gradschool@colostate.edu.

1. What policy are you requesting an exception to or what procedure was not followed?
2. What is the student's extenuating circumstance prompting this request?
3. What is the proposed date that the requirements will be completed, if applicable?
4. The extenuating circumstances must be documented. (no medical records)
5. Steps department has taken to assure compliance with policies and procedures in the future.

Each petition is reviewed on a case-by-case basis, and the Graduate School may request additional information. See the [Petitions page](#) on the Graduate School website for more information.