

Michigan State University  
College of Communication Arts & Sciences  
Department of Media and Information  
**Master's Program Handbook**



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## Welcome

We want to give you a warm welcome to the media and information studies master's program. This is one of the leading programs in this field. The faculty and staff are dedicated to a standard of excellence, and demonstrate this through their cutting edge research, dedicated teaching, and service to their areas of expertise. Media and Information studies encompasses a wide variety of applications that impact systems that are foundational to today's world. This is an exciting and dynamic field to study, but will require a deep commitment by you, as a learner, to take responsibility and pursue excellence and integrity in your own work.

The information in this handbook is in addition to requirements set by Michigan State University as well as The Graduate School.

- Academic Programs Catalog <https://reg.msu.edu/AcademicPrograms/Text.aspx?Section=111>
- Graduate Students Rights and Responsibilities <https://grad.msu.edu/gsrr>
- Research Integrity <https://grad.msu.edu/researchintegrity>
- Guidelines for Graduate Student Advising and Mentoring Relationships <https://grad.msu.edu/sites/default/files/content/researchintegrity/guidelines.pdf>
- MSU/Graduate Employees Union Contract <https://hr.msu.edu/contracts/documents/GEU2015-2019.pdf>

## Program Overview

### Aims of the Master of Arts Program

This handbook describes the Master of Arts (M.A.) program in the Department of Media and Information (MI) at Michigan State University. The Department is a unit of the College of Communication Arts and Sciences (CAS).

The aim of the M.A. program is to prepare individuals for professional positions in a broad range of positions in information and media industries. It also prepares students for continuing study in a Ph.D. program. Graduates of the program are expected to master the professional competencies required for success in these areas.

Students can customize their program to focus on any area of their choosing. Students have several options to customize their program of learning, ranging from more in-depth programs on serious games to preparation for Ph.D. studies.

The Department is a community of scholars that attracts students from around the world who, together with our faculty, celebrate ethnic, cultural, and gender diversity for the benefit of all. Students are expected to be an active part of the intellectual life of the Department and to maintain collegial relations with their faculty and with other students.

## Areas of Focus

The growing areas of games, usability and UX design, and the information and media policy are creating exciting new careers in the information age. The Master of Arts programs in the Department of Media and Information at Michigan State University prepares you to have the skills to lead research and design in these dynamic areas. The following are some of the areas of focus that our students can pursue. Faculty have set up a sequence of classes in these areas that include necessary skills and knowledge needed to excel in these fields. Students are not limited to these areas of study and can tailor their own studies to pursue their own focus under the guidance of their advisor.

### Games Design + Study

Digitally based games are used widely in everything from entertainment to education. They can be used for health and fitness to entertainment. Understanding how games are designed, how they impact individuals, and the roles they have in society all are topics addressed in our program. Our professors have wide experience in the gaming industry as well as deep understanding of their impact(s) on society. The game design + study track gives students a basic understanding of the game industry. Students are encouraged to take additional classes in addition to the MI required track to develop further in their specific focus of interest.

### User Experience

"User experience" (UX) design is a growing field that encompasses all aspects of the end-user's interaction with information, products, and services made available through information and communication technologies. UX approaches also take into account the organization's goals and objectives, and aim to inform or optimize the design of interactive systems through theoretically-informed, empirically validated best practices. UX design deeply integrates user research throughout all phases of the iterative design process (strategy, execution, and assessment). UX design considers quantitative and qualitative, formative and summative methods, user motivations, behaviors, and experiences, principles and processes involved in the design of interactive systems, including both interface and content.

Students focusing in this area will be able to understand user needs, generate technology designs, bring them to life, and understand their impact. We are training future information professionals to work at the intersection of cutting edge technology and social change. Career paths include user experience researcher, designer, analyst, or lead; usability tester; interaction designer; information architect; web application front-end developer.

### Information Policy and Society

Information Policy, and Society focuses on understanding the social and economic implications of new media and information technologies and services. It introduces students to current theories and ways of studying media and information, both in the US and from a global perspective, in order to inform research, policy making, and practice. It is ideal for students seeking to pursue doctoral level study or to use media and information for business, government, nonprofits, and society as a whole.

## Special Certification Options

### Graduate Certificate in Serious Game Design & Research

This three-course graduate certificate is intended for game industry professionals, educators, and media specialists, who want to better understand serious game design, theory, and player research. This certificate is open to both degree granting and non-degree granting students and is transcriptable. This certificate can be completed entirely online and does not require being admitted to the overall MI master's program.

## Special Admissions Conditions

### Provisional Status

Students admitted to provisional status are so identified in their acceptance letter. All requirements listed in the admission letter must be completed in order to have the provisional status removed.

### Dual Enrollment Status

Dual enrollment provides an opportunity for academically talented undergraduate students to enroll in graduate courses and conduct research toward a graduate degree while completing the last two years of their bachelor's degree(s) programs.

To be considered for dual enrollment, the student must first file an Application for Admission to Graduate Study, as indicated under Application Procedure in this section of the catalog and be admitted into a graduate program. Subsequent to the admission to a graduate program in regular status, the student must complete a Request for Dual Enrollment Status form, available from the Office of the Registrar. A student who is accepted for dual enrollment can be admitted to both the undergraduate and graduate degree program upon reaching junior standing.

Within the first semester of dual enrollment, the student's graduate degree program advisor must be identified and the appropriate graduate degree guidance committee established. The advisor and committee assist the student in developing a program of study for the graduate degree. Admission to graduate study must be approved before work to apply toward a graduate degree program is undertaken. Credits completed prior to admission to graduate study *cannot* be applied toward a graduate degree program.

A student will be classified as an undergraduate until the minimum number of credits required for a first bachelor's degree is completed. When the student is classified as a graduate student, eligibility begins for graduate assistantships, other forms of graduate student financial aid, or those services and prerogatives normally reserved for graduate students.

A student pays undergraduate tuition up to the total number of credits required for a first bachelor's degree(s) in his/her major(s), at which point graduate tuition is applicable and students are eligible for graduate fellowships and assistantships. If approved by the graduate program, a maximum of nine credits, at the 400-level or higher, from the undergraduate degree program can be applied toward the requirements for the graduate degree program for credits completed after admission to graduate study.

In semesters when the student is dually enrolled, federal financial aid designated for the first bachelor's degree (Federal Pell Grant and Federal Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grant (SEOG)) will be determined based upon the number of undergraduate credits only. Awards will be manually adjusted as necessary once the student is registered. A student is not eligible for financial aid as a graduate student until the semester after the minimum number of credits required for the first bachelor's degree have been earned.

**\*\*International students should be aware that in addition to their TOEFL scores meeting the minimum standards set by the Department of Media and Information, all admitted International students are required to take the English Language test** provided by Michigan State University upon arrival. International students are required to take this test prior to enrolling for courses, and placement into courses will be done so according to the test results. **The department requires a minimum score of 85 in each one of the sub-categories.** If a student does not pass the test, s/he will be required to take a semester of English Language courses at their expense, and may not be able to enroll for any additional academic courses. Once the student has successfully completed the English Language courses, their status will be switched from provisional to regular. More information about the ELC test is available on [www.elc.msu.edu](http://www.elc.msu.edu). Up-to-date information on tuition and fees is available on <http://www.ctr.msu.edu/COStudentAccounts/TuitionCalculator.aspx>.

English Language Testing: MSU Policy Affecting International Teaching Assistants (ITAs)  
MSU candidates for TA appointments who were required to demonstrate English proficiency as a condition for regular admission to Michigan State University must also demonstrate that they meet a minimum standard of proficiency in spoken English before they can be assigned teaching work that involves oral communication with undergraduate students. Those ITAs who received a waiver of the TOEFL or of other accepted tests of English proficiency for admission, must also meet the requirement of proficiency in spoken English before they are assigned to teaching work that involves oral communication with undergraduate students. To meet this requirement, those ITAs may use any of three options listed below:

- Presenting a TOEFL iBT speaking section score of 27 or higher.
- Receiving a score of 50 or higher on the [MSU Speaking Test](#)
- Taking [AAE 451 or AAE 452](#) (ITA language support courses) and receiving a score of 50 or higher on the [ITA Oral Interaction Test \(ITAOI\)](#).

Individual exceptions from these requirements (on a case-by-case basis in rare circumstances) will be considered by the Graduate School in consultation with the ELC upon the request of the department and with the endorsement of the Associate Dean of the College

## **Graduation Plan Options: Two Tracks**

Our master's program has two tracks for graduation.

The first (Plan A) is geared for students who plan on pursuing a Ph.D. or further graduate studies. This includes writing a thesis based on the student's original research and successful defense of this research to a committee. This includes enrollment in 4-6 credits of MI 899 (Thesis research).

The second (Plan B) is geared for students who are going into industry, business, or research consortium positions. This includes enrollment in 4-6 credits of MI 898 (MA Project) and production of a project or poster. The project is defended to the master's committee and a poster is defended to the poster committee. Students that do an internship or independent study can often work with their advisor to develop their work into a poster or project. Students that want to develop an application, game, or similar product will often do a project.

## **Plan A - Master's Thesis**

### **Forming a Thesis Committee**

The student chooses the Chairperson of the thesis and two other faculty members to form the Thesis Committee. The thesis Chairperson and one committee member must be regular faculty or an academic specialist from the Department of Media and Information. The second committee member may be regular faculty from anywhere in the university. With a general topic in mind, the student asks the faculty members if they are willing to serve on this committee. Media and Information faculty interests and research are listed online at the departmental website at <http://mi.msu.edu>. The Academic Advisor is not necessarily a member of the Thesis Committee if other members of the faculty are more appropriate for the student's selected topic and method. The Thesis Committee and the Director of Graduate Studies must sign-off on a thesis proposal form to which the thesis proposal is attached for their review.

### **Thesis proposal**

An M.A. thesis is original research that makes a significant contribution to knowledge and is prepared according to the Graduate School guidelines and published. This is a challenging undertaking, hence the need for the student to first develop a proposal. The proposal typically consists of a research statement that includes both the research question(s) and the motivation guiding the thesis, a review of relevant literature and a deduced theoretical foundation, a proposed theoretical model, the envisioned research and data analysis methods, and the implications of the thesis for both theory and practice. It is important to have a detailed proposal, so as to avoid any potential subsequent disagreement among members of the group (i.e. the student and the three advisors). Once the proposal is deemed by the chairperson of the committee to be "ready," it is sent to the other members of the committee and an oral examination date in defense of the proposal is scheduled, with at least 2 weeks' lead time for the committee to review the work. At the examination, the student is expected to give a brief presentation about the thesis. The committee members will ask questions, and either approve the proposal, approve with required revisions, or reject the proposal; in the latter case, the process is initiated again from the start.

If the research uses human subjects it must go through MSU Human Research Protection Program Internal Review Board (IRB) <https://hrpp.msu.edu/click/index.html> approval. The primary advisor will file the application and the student will do the research under their guidance. The student must also have completed required Responsible Conduct of Research (RCR) training <https://grad.msu.edu/rcr>

## Thesis credits

An M.A. thesis requires enrollment in 4 to 6 credits (MI 899). No more than 6 thesis credits can count toward the required 30. A student may sign up for thesis credits in any semester. If the thesis is defended in a fall or spring semester the student needs to be enrolled in at least one credit of classes. If they defend in the summer they do not need to be enrolled in a class if they were enrolled in at least one credit the previous semester.

## Preparation of Thesis

All drafts of the thesis must be clearly written, observing American English language grammar, usage and style. The student is expected to write the thesis themselves. However, the content of one or more chapters of a thesis may come directly from paper(s) already published with multiple authors in addition to the student author of the thesis. To do so, however, the following are required:

- These chapters must be introduced with the list of all authors, citation for the publication, and include a copy or notation of the written permission from the publisher (who generally holds the copyright) to reprint the article; and
- If multiple articles make up the document, these must be "tied together" with a required general introduction and summary/discussion.

## Oral examination

After the thesis is completed, but before it is edited in final form and bound, the Thesis Committee will conduct an oral exam over the thesis. After the student has passed this exam, all members of the committee will sign a form verifying the outcome, or may hold the form until revisions suggested by the committee have been completed. The form is also signed by the Director of Graduate Studies, and filed in the student's folder.

## Publication of the thesis

After the thesis has been approved by the Thesis Committee, it must be submitted to the Graduate School for formatting. Please allow at LEAST two weeks for checking formatting before publication deadlines for graduation in a specific semester.

<https://grad.msu.edu/etd/etd-deadline-dates>

## Plan B - Master's Project

### Forming a Project Committee

Once you have developed a general topic you need to choose a chairperson to serve on your examination committee. The student chooses the Chairperson of the Project and one other faculty member to form the Project Committee. The thesis Chairperson must be regular faculty or an approved faculty member from the Department of Media and Information. Once you have selected your chairperson, work with him/her on refining your concept, developing a draft, and ultimately refining a proposal.

The second committee member may be regular faculty from anywhere in the university. With a general topic in mind, the student asks the faculty members if they are willing to

serve on this committee. Media and Information faculty interests and research are listed online at the departmental website at <http://mi.msu.edu>. The Academic Advisor is not necessarily a member of the Project Committee if other members of the faculty are more appropriate for the student's selected topic and method. The Project Committee and the Director of Graduate Studies must sign-off on a Project proposal form to which the Project proposal is attached for their review.

The student will then need to finalize forming the full committee and defining the Project's topic by submitting the MI 898 M.A. Project Approval Form. This must be submitted and approved by the committee and Director of Graduate Studies prior to enrolling for any MI 898 credits. The committee for a project must consist of two members, i.e. a Chairperson and a Member of the Project Committee. This Chairperson must be regular faculty or an academic specialist from the Department of Media and Information. The second member may be regular faculty from anywhere in the university.

### **Project proposal**

The content of a Project proposal is developed by the student and should be the culmination of the student's

M.A. work. It should incorporate what the student has learned throughout the program. It should be different, better, more substantial than what s/he could have created before entering the program. The Project is the student's primary portfolio piece, the project s/he spent the most time and best showcases his/her abilities. However, the expectation of the time spent would include a majority of time creating the media work, with a minority of time writing the project report. If the project report includes research involving human subjects, then University regulations require that [Human Research Protection Program \(IRB\)](#) approval be obtained prior to conducting that research. Students whose focus is primarily on production would normally choose the Project option. The media product is the primary showpiece, supported by a paper about the project.

### **Project credits**

An M.A. project requires enrollment in 4 to 6 credits (IM 898). No more than 6 project credits can count toward the required 30. A student must turn in a signed and approved Project Proposal form in order to enroll for Project Credits.

### **Preparation of Project**

To earn an M.A. degree using the Master's Project option, it is necessary to pass a final examination of their project. Such a Project could be centered on a design task, a creative game, or an ICT project. A written component is required, which must be high quality and meet committee approval. The student's choice of topic and decision on doing a project should take into account their own career goals. If there is a particular industry and industry role the student is preparing for, the project should be an impressive showpiece of the student's abilities related to that career choice. Once the Project committee has been formed, and with guidance from the chairperson of the project committee, the student proceeds with the production, research, and writing of the project. The other committee member may be involved if he/she has a particular skill area that the student needs on the project. However, the primary relationship is between the chairperson of the committee and the student.

## Oral examination of the M.A. Project

When the production and written component are deemed by the chairperson of the committee to be "ready," the project is sent to the other member of the committee and an examination date is scheduled, with at least 2 weeks' lead time for the committee to review the work. At the examination, the student is expected to give a brief presentation about the project. The committee members and others in attendance will ask questions. The committee then confers to decide whether the project should be accepted as is, accepted with revisions, or rejected. They will also decide upon a grade for the project. Note: See MSU's code on Integrity of Scholarship and Grades: Plagiarism will be grounds for failure. Students who fail by reason of plagiarism will not be allowed to retake the exam and will be terminated from the M.A. program.

## Plan B - Master's Poster

### Poster Advisor and Evaluation Committee

The student works under the supervision of his/her Academic Advisor on a Poster that describes the critical portions of a research or practical experience completed concurrently with the student's enrollment in courses. Posters will be evaluated by an evaluation committee consisting of three members: two regular faculty members from the Department of Media and Information, and the Director of Graduate Studies for said Department.

### Poster content

During the semester of graduation (fall or spring), the student must prepare a poster that describes the critical portions of a research or practical experience completed concurrently with the student's enrollment in courses. Examples of experiences suitable for poster presentations include, but are not limited to, independent study, research experiences or design projects outside of coursework, internships, course projects that have been expanded and taken further than the course allowed for, etc. Similar to the Thesis and Project, the Poster is a Completion Requirement through which a student's mastery of the subject matter can be demonstrated.

### Poster credits

Students who intend to create and present a poster for this Plan B option must also be registered for at least one credit during the semester in which he or she intends to complete the culmination experience unless they defend their poster in the summer. If the poster is defended in the summer the student does need to be enrolled in at least one credit in the semester immediately prior to the defense.

## Preparation of Poster

The printed and laminated poster should be of the following dimensions: 40 in. wide by 32 in. tall. There are many resources available on the Internet that provide advice and guidelines for creating effective posters. Here are links to a few suggestions:

- <http://urca.msu.edu/poster-samples>
- <http://www.ncsu.edu/project/posters/>
- <http://hsp.berkeley.edu/sites/default/files/ScientificPosters.pdf>

The table below provides suggestions regarding the poster's content:

Research or Design Project Poster	Internship Poster
<b>Title</b> (Research title, student name, faculty mentor name. <i>If the project was a team effort, list team members and clearly explain the presenting student's role</i> )	<b>Title</b> (student name, business name/business focus, location of internship, mentor & faculty name)
<b>Abstract</b> - concise summary of what was done and what was learned	<b>Abstract</b> - concise summary of what was done and what was learned
<b>Introduction</b> - one or two paragraphs explaining why the work was done and the purpose. Alternatively, the purpose may be covered in a brief section titled "objectives."	<b>Learning objectives</b> - list of the objectives the student planned to achieve by completing the internship ... why did the student pursue the internship?
<b>Method</b> - a summary of the method used to gather and analyze the data, or the process or steps followed to produce the design.	<b>Description of responsibilities/activities</b> - a summary of the major responsibilities and activities during the internship
<b>Results/Findings</b> - a brief discussion of major findings or important features of the design or product, using bullet points or numbered sentences, and whenever possible, appropriate visuals (mockups, wireframes, tables, charts and/or graphs, etc.). All visuals should include titles and/or legends. This is the most important focus of the poster.	<b>Special project description</b> - a brief discussion of the special project completed as part of the internship. Describe the objective of the project, activities necessary to complete the project and specific outcomes of the project.
<b>Implications for practice</b> - a paragraph or two of suggestions for how the results, design, or product could help/affect practitioners and/or other designers, and suggestions for future research.	<b>Application of content learned in graduate courses</b> - how did information learned in class help with the internship ... what are specific class "learnings" that could be applied during the internship?
<b>Lessons learned</b> - what did you learn about the research, design or development process, the research question, etc. and what would you do differently on this or another project?	<b>Lessons learned</b> - what did you learn about the industry, the company, the career process, yourself?

## Oral examination of the M.A. Poster

Posters will be presented at a poster session that will take place no later than the Friday before commencement (fall or spring). Poster presentations are expected to last 10-15 minutes, with 5-10 minutes for a question and answer period. As mentioned above, posters will be evaluated by an evaluation committee consisting of three members: two regular faculty members from the Department of Media and Information, and the Director of Graduate Studies for said Department. The responsibility for serving on the evaluation committee will rotate among the faculty members of the department, so the student needs to ensure the work - vis-a-vis the poster - is communicated effectively among a Committee that may not be experts in the student's specific area of work being presented.

Students must attend the poster session in real-time (i.e., not pre-recorded), either in person or via live video conference, to interact with the evaluation committee and present the poster. Students will dress professionally and appear with their poster to answer questions from the evaluation committee and invited guests (faculty, internship company representatives, family members). Non-attendance is grounds for automatic failure.

Posters will be evaluated on a pass-fail basis. Criteria for evaluation will include dimensions related to the content (i.e., originality; relevance; grounding; comprehensiveness; appropriateness of methods/approach and analysis/implementation; interpretation/significance), its organization (i.e., visual design and layout for both aesthetic appeal and informativeness), and its delivery (i.e., professional language; ability to articulate both what they did and why they did it in a clear and effective spoken presentation; ability to respond to questions effectively). While not recommended, students choosing to present work that was done as part of a team must take extra care to ensure that their poster adequately communicates the student's individual efforts and contributions.

The evaluation committee will provide written feedback to students completing the Plan B Poster Presentation. If a student fails the poster evaluation, he or she will be provided comments that include a rationale and explanation for why the student failed. The student may present a revised version of the poster that corrects areas of the poster or presentation that were deemed insufficient by the committee in the first attempt, in the following Fall or Spring semester. Students may ONLY attempt the poster presentation twice. In cases where the more modest revisions or extensions of the work are required by the Committee, a conditional pass ('satisfactory pending revisions') may be assigned; in these cases, the Chair of the evaluation committee will communicate the required revisions to the student via email along with a deadline. Once the revisions have been completed, the student will communicate said revisions along with a cover letter that outlines how the required revisions were implemented, via email to the Chair of the evaluation committee. Assuming the revised work was deemed satisfactory by the evaluation committee, a 'pass' grade will be awarded.

## Plan of Study

Each M.A. student in the Department of Media and Information must file a [Plan of Study](#). The form may be obtained in the M.A. Office or online at <http://gradstudies.mi.msu.edu/academics/requirements-resources/>. The plan of study is intended as a guide for the student to follow in successfully completing the degree requirements and to ensure

that the academic program is appropriate for the student's needs. Incoming M.A. students must meet with their advisor during their first week in the program and develop a Plan of Study.

**M.A. students are required to complete and submit their plan of study to the M.A. Office by the end of the 2nd week of their first semester of enrollment**, where it will be filed with the student's other academic records. Failure to submit a completed and properly signed form by this deadline will result in an academic hold being placed on the student's record. This hold will prevent a student from enrolling in future classes until the Plan of Study form has been received by the M.A. Office.

Modifications to the plan of study must be approved by the student's advisor and the Director of Graduate Studies. Modifications are treated as submitting an entirely new plan of study. If a student changes concentrations, then his/her core requirements, required electives, and prerequisites may also change. The student is responsible for prerequisites on record, which are appropriate to the new course of study chosen. The M.A. Office has forms to request a change of concentration, these are also available online on our gradstudies website.

Violation of the rules and procedures regarding the M.A. program may result in the student being dis-enrolled; such action would require a majority vote of the M.A. Committee and constitute a recommendation to the department chair.

Please note: It is the student's responsibility to fulfill all of the requirements for the degree in accordance with this manual and any changes that are announced. If a waiver is requested, it is the student's responsibility to be sure that the waiver is properly signed and in the student file. **Students are strongly advised to keep the student copy of all documents related to the requirement categories and to monitor progress in those requirements.** Faculty advisors should be used to help in academic and career planning, and to clarify requirements if necessary, but not to count credits in the various requirement categories, nor monitor progress in those requirements. If the student wants to review their progress, they can contact the Academic Program Coordinator as they can give a full account of degree requirements.

It is the responsibility of the student to make sure that all components of the degree: required classes, classes sufficient for degree completion, required RCR training, and completion plans are completed in compliance for the "final certification" of the degree.

To create the plan of study a student should become familiar with the content of-

- The MI MA studies Handbook
- The MI Master's Plan of Study
- MSU's current [Schedule of Courses](http://schedule.msu.edu) (<http://schedule.msu.edu> )
- MSU's <http://splife.studentlife.msu.edu/> , which details student rights and responsibilities and many programs and services to help students.
- The University's current Graduate Studies Catalog <https://reg.msu.edu/AcademicPrograms/Programs.aspx?PType=GR> which lists all graduate-level courses in the University and describes University, College, and Department requirements for the M.A. degree
- Any provisional prerequisites specified in the letter of acceptance (if any).
- Any English language classes to achieve fluency needed for taking MI 800 level

classes do not count towards completion of the master's degree.

Students should also complete the plan of study:

- At least tentatively, choose between Plan "A" and Plan "B."
- Select from course listings of the Department and the University courses, which seem most relevant.
- Arrange courses in a semester-by-semester schedule and enter it on the Plan of Study form.

## Degree Requirements

### General Requirements for the Master of Arts Degree in Media and Information

A minimum of 30 credits is required for the master's degree in Media and Information under either Plan A or Plan B.

1. Select a Minimum of 5 Courses from Below (15 credits):

MI	803	Introduction to Quantitative Research Methods	3
MI	820	Theories of Media & Information	3
MI	830	Foundations of Serious Games	3
MI	831	Theories of Games & Interaction Design	3
MI	839	Game & Film Design Studio I	3
MI	841	Understanding Users	3
MI	844	Interaction Design	3
MI	845	Interactive Usability & Accessibility: Design & Evaluation	3
MI	846	Game & Film Design Studio II	3
MI	850	Media & Information Policy	3
MI	851	Understanding & Managing Social Media	3
MI	852	Media & Information Economics	3
MI	861	Media & Information Technologies in Organizations	3
MI	862	Managing Digital Enterprises	3
MI	875	Information & Communication Technology for Development	3
MI	877	Global Media & Communication	3

4. Additional elective course work at the 400-level or above to meet the 30 credits required for the degree. The course work must be approved by the student's Academic Advisor and at least 16 credits in the degree must be at the 800-level or above. Only 1 credit from Thesis or Project may count towards the 16 credit minimum.

### Additional Requirements for Plan A

MI 899 Master's Thesis Research 4 to 6

### Additional Requirements for Plan B

MI 898 Master's Project 4 to 6 (towards completion of a poster or project and associated oral examination)

### Optional Information Policy and Society Cognate

Students may organize their coursework so as to complete the following *Information, Policy and Society Cognate* (9 credits):

A. Both of the following courses (6 credits):

MI 803 Introduction to Quantitative Research Methods

MI 820 Theories of Media & Information

B. One of the following courses (3 credits):

MI 850 Telecommunication and Information Policy

MI 852 Economic Structures of Telecommunication Industries (as an independent study)

## Other Requirements

### English Language Requirement

All international students are required to report to the [MSU English Language Center](#) (ELC) immediately upon their arrival on campus for assessment of their English language ability. The ELC may require students to take remedial course work in English language writing, speaking, and oral comprehension. The number of courses an international student will be allowed to take outside the ELC depends on their ELC course performance.

### MI 800-Level Classes Requirement

A minimum of 16 credits must be taken at the 800 level or above in the Department of Media and Information courses. Unless joint-listed, other Departments' courses do not count in the 16 credits, but these can be part of the 30-credit requirement. **Only ONE thesis or M.A. project credit is allowed to be counted toward the 16- credit requirement.**

### Requirements for Acceptable Academic Standing

The MSU grading scale is 4.0, 3.5, 3.0, 2.5, 2.0, 1.5, 1.0 and 0.0. Credit is awarded at a minimum of 2.0 for graduate students. **However, when a student receives a grade below 3.0 in more than two courses taken for graduate credit at MSU, he/she is automatically removed from candidacy for that degree.** A graduate student who has been withdrawn under this regulation is required to wait a minimum of one calendar year from date of the withdrawal before being eligible to apply for readmission to a graduate program in the College of Communication Arts and Sciences. The student may be readmitted contingent upon repeating one of the three courses in which a grade below a 3.0 was earned, and earning a 3.0 or better grade in the course. The course to be repeated may be specified by the department. Following readmission, any additional grade below 3.0 in any course numbered 400 or higher will result in permanent dismissal. All courses taken at the 400

level or higher are to be considered as graduate courses and will be subject to the "Grades Below 3.0 Rule". There is a special situation in the case of the graduate student who has been given graduate credit for a course at the 300 level. When this situation arises, we treat such a course as a graduate course, and any grade received below 3.0 will be held against the student and counted as part of the "Grades Below 3.0 Rule".

Graduate students taking courses below the 400 level are doing so because these courses are prerequisites to other courses in the program, or for remedial purposes. Since a grade of 2.0 is considered "satisfactory" in the undergraduate grading system, the graduate student should not have a grade of 2.0 or 2.5 used against him/her. Grades below 2.0 are "unsatisfactory" and will be considered as falling within the "Grades Below 3.0 Rule". This means that the students can accumulate grades of 2.0 or 2.5 in any courses taken below the 400 level without risking dismissal.

When a graduate student receives a grade, which falls below the acceptable standard, he/she is issued a warning letter from the Office of the Dean. Upon receipt of this letter the student should consult with his/her Academic Advisor with respect to the progress the student is making.

### **Responsible Conduct of Research (RCR) Training**

The College of Communication Arts and Sciences supports the federal requirements for training set forth in the Competes Act and by the Graduate School, which teaches the responsible conduct in research, scholarship, and creative activities, which is fundamental to the integrity of every graduate program. As a graduate student you will be required to complete the appropriate training. You can find resources to help fulfill these requirements here: <https://comartsci.msu.edu/responsible-conduc-tresearch-rcr>

### **Department Prerequisite Courses**

Specific prerequisite courses may be assigned at the time of admission to the program, in which case they would be listed in the letter of admission to the M.A. program. Since many of the courses contain material necessary for adequate preparation for required courses, students must take them first, as early in the program as possible. The department fully expects that students with remaining prerequisite requirements will be enrolled in these courses if they are currently being offered. If a student is not completing outstanding prerequisites, he/she will not be allowed to register.

### **Waiver of Prerequisite Requirements**

Students who do not have the academic equivalent of an assigned prerequisite course, but who believe that they have equivalent competence through professional practice or individual study may seek a waiver. Students do not receive credit for any course that is waived. Waivers may take place in two formats:

Students may take an examination that covers the prerequisite course material. A person who teaches the course will be designated by either the Director of Graduate Studies or the Department Chairperson to administer the examination. The designated faculty member will determine whether the student passes and attach a copy of the exam to the completed waiver form.

A student who believes he/she has sufficient experience or knowledge to waive a prerequisite course may petition the M.A. Committee to reconsider its recommendation. That petition should be made in writing and contain supplemental information and/or materials the student believes were not available at the time of application.

All petitions and examinations to waive prerequisite course requirements must be made within the first two semesters of enrollment. A waiver form (accompanied by the appropriate documentation) must be signed by the student's Academic Advisor, by the faculty member who administers the course, the Director of Graduate Studies, and by the Chairperson of the Department and placed in the student's file. Waiver forms are available in the M.A. Office or online: [Waiver Request Form](#).

## Options for Credit

### Independent Study

MI 890 (Independent Study) is an arranged study under a faculty member that permits the student to follow an individualized investigation into some particular topic or subject area selected by the student. Students are limited to no more than a total of 6 credits in Media and Information independent study (MI 890) and internship (MI 893) courses, combined. MI 890 credits are not intended to be substitutes for regular course content and **cannot** be used to substitute for undergraduate courses included in provisional requirements, which themselves do not carry graduate credit. Students desiring MI 890 and MI 893 credit must fill out a special Department form during the term preceding the intended registration for this course. M.A. students may not enroll for MI 490 (undergraduate Independent Study). Independent Study forms are available in the M.A. Office or online at <http://www.reg.msu.edu/read/pdf/indestudyapp.pdf>.

If human subjects are involved, students must follow IRB guidelines and get prior approval for human subject research. (<http://hrpp.msu.edu/>)

### M.A. Internship

The arrangements for the internship should be handled by the student in consultation with the student's advisor. The internship project must be approved by the Department of Media and Information. M.A. Internships count as MI 893 credits under the departmental limit of 6 credits of such coursework. The course work is graded on a Pass/No Pass basis. M.A. Internship forms are available from the MA Office or online: <http://www.reg.msu.edu/read/pdf/indestudyapp.pdf>.

If human subjects are involved in research, students are expected to follow IRB guidelines (see: <http://hrpp.msu.edu/>).

### Special Topics

The Department and College often offer courses on topics that vary from semester to semester. These courses will appear in the [Schedule of Courses](#) as MI 891 and CAS 892. Notification of the courses may also be publicized through posters and e-mail, so students are advised to be attentive to such communications.

## Courses Below the 800 Level

M.A. students can receive graduate credit for approved 400-level courses, except - as noted above - for MI 490, which is not available to graduate students. Please check with your advisor, or the Academic Program Coordinator, or the Graduate Director before enrolling in a 400 level course to make sure it is appropriate.

Graduate credit for 300 level courses is rarely given. It requires approval by the Dean of the College of Communication Arts and Sciences, which you should seek by a written petition submitted through your Academic Advisor, the Director of Graduate Studies and Department Chairperson. In this case, the following policy pertains:

No MI 300 level courses may be taken for graduate credit by Media and Information students.

300 level courses outside the Department will be approved for graduate credit only if the following are all true:

- There is a demonstrated need for this course in the student's program
- The student has not had a previous course in the field which includes the course in question
- The student has previously taken no more than one 300 level course for graduate credit

## Repeating a course for which the Grade was Lower than 3.0

To repeat a course for which the grade was lower than a 3.0, approval is required by the instructor of the course, the student's Academic Advisor, the Chairperson of the Department of Media and Information, and the Associate Dean for Graduate Studies of the College of Communication Arts and Sciences. Only one such course may be repeated during your program. Earning a 3.0 or higher the second time you take the course does not eliminate the first earned grade as one of the two grades below 3.0 discussed in the preceding section but will change your graduate course grade average.

## Annual Evaluation Procedures

The student's Academic Advisor will review at least once a year the graduate student's progress as well as plans for work in the coming year (GSRR 2.4.8). The review will also include those aspects of the students' performance, which pertain to professionalism and scholarly integrity. A report on the results of this review will be signed by the advisor and by the graduate student. This report will be filed with the M.A. Studies office and will be placed in the graduate student's file, together with any response that the graduate student may attach to the report.

Upon request, the Director of Graduate studies will meet with each graduate student to review all aspects of the annual progress report. At this occasion, the graduate student has the opportunity to discuss with the Director any aspects of his or her studies that seem relevant for successful completion of the graduate program, including problems that may hinder progress, and any appeal of the Academic Advisor's evaluation (see above). Recommendations based on this review will be communicated in writing to the Academic Advisor and the graduate student within two weeks of the meeting, and that report will be

placed in the graduate student's file.

### Student Records

A file is maintained for each student in the office of the graduate program coordinator. The file includes copies of the student's annual evaluations, and copies of written correspondence directed to the student pursuant to the provisions of this handbook. Students have a right to view their files in the graduate program coordinator's office during the hours that person is present. They may request copies of their files, a nominal fee may be charged to defray copying expenses. Students may challenge the accuracy of the information in their file in a letter addressed to the director of M.A. studies, who will discuss the problem with the student. Henceforth, the letter will be placed in the student's file.

### Duration of the Program

The maximum time for completing the program is five calendar years from the date of first enrollment. There is no minimum time for completing the degree. A student may petition the Associate Dean of Graduate Studies of the College for an extension if it appears likely that the degree can be completed within a short period of time after the five years have elapsed.

## Making Progress

### Year-by-Year Synopsis

In **year one**, students complete a plan of study and take all of their basic courses and prerequisite courses. They also should complete their RCR training and often use the summer semester to do an internship or independent study. In **year two** they complete courses that help complete their research focus and complete their Plan A or Plan B exit requirements.

### Timeline and Checklist

The following are suggested completion dates for important milestones in the M.A. program. All forms may be found online at

<http://gradstudies.mi.msu.edu/academics/requirements-resources/>:

Semester	Week	Action	Form
1	1	Attend Orientation Select Concentration	Plan of Study Advisor Transfer
1	2	Complete Plan of Study	<a href="#">M&amp;I M.A. Plan of Study</a> Including Specialization, Certificate, and Cognate options
2	15	Complete Prerequisite Courses	
3	1	Select Thesis/Project Chair	
3	1	Complete Thesis/Project Proposal	<a href="#">Project Proposal</a> <a href="#">Thesis Proposal Approval</a>
4	1	Complete Poster Proposal	Poster Proposal
4	12	Oral Defense of Thesis /Project/Poster	<a href="#">Thesis Oral Defense Results</a>
4	1	Apply to graduate	<a href="#">Application for Graduation</a>
4	15	Final Thesis submission	Final Thesis Approval

## Choosing Completion Plan Options

M.A. graduate students have the choice between Plan A (thesis) or Plan B (project). Both can lead to further graduate study (e.g., the Ph.D.) or going on to career track options, so there are many factors to consider. The primary factor should be what is the best way to carry out and share the findings of one's research findings. The Thesis is the more academic of the two options. The expectation of time allocation on a project would normally range from about equal time on the written and media components, while the thesis would have more time spent on the research and writing.

If a student's research question is more complex, or requires several steps, the thesis is usually the best choice. It allows the student to share detailed findings from all steps of the research process. The thesis also works as an artifact to share with future employers or other higher educational institutions the quality of work that the student can perform.

If a student is looking to work in the media & information field a project can show their creativity and experience in different types of research. If a student already has a job and is looking to open up their ability for advancement in a field the poster is a good way to demonstrate how they have applied their learning from the master's program in a practical research application.

Here is a comparison of the two options:

Item	Thesis	Project
# Credits	4 to 6	4 to 6
# MSU faculty committee members	3	2
Minimum # committee members from MI Department faculty	1	2
Needs IRB approval if it includes research on human subjects	yes	yes
Must meet grad school thesis requirements	yes	no
For stronger production emphasis		X
For stronger research emphasis	X	
Major focus on the written component	X	
Prepares student for Ph.D. studies	X	
Course number	899	898

The normal expectation is that the M.A. thesis or project will take 2 semesters to complete while the poster is often completed in 1 semester.

### Selection of your graduate advisor

When students are admitted to the program, they are assigned an advisor based on their declared interests and background in their application materials, and faculty availability. Often, during the first year of graduate studies as a student starts to focus on their thesis or graduate project they may find that their research ties more closely with a different faculty member. It is quite common when the student starts their actual thesis or project to file the form to change advisors to better fit their research focus.

## Student-Advisor Relationships

Students should select their thesis/project advisor at the beginning of their second year, but no later than the end of their third semester. The thesis/project proposal form is submitted at that time to formalize the selection of the thesis advisor.

The thesis/project chair is expected to form a mentoring relationship with the student consistent with the advisor following the guidelines set forth by the Graduate School <https://grad.msu.edu/sites/default/files/content/mentoring/MSU%20Guidelines%20for%20OGraduate%20Student%20Mentoring%20and%20Advising.pdf>. Any research must also follow guidelines for responsible research <https://grad.msu.edu/rcr>

The advisor may suggest an alternative advisor if the student does not fulfill their obligations for moving forward on their research. Also, if the advisor's work load changes they can request the student be reassigned. If a change in chair becomes necessary, the student must file a new proposal form signed off by all three committee members.

Should students wish to change their advisor at any time they should so indicate by filling out the Change of Advisor Form and sending it to the Director of Graduate studies after consulting with the intended new advisor.

## How to Get an M.A. Thesis Started

The first step is to produce an acceptable thesis proposal, a process that should begin in the first year. Many thesis topics emerge from disciplinary course work as students discover interesting issues in course readings or wish to expand their treatment of a research paper. From the outset of their programs, all graduate students should be alert for potential thesis topics and discuss them with their instructors. When a student thinks he or she has a promising original topic, they are encouraged to discuss them with their Academic Advisor or with a faculty within the Department who may be interested in participating in the thesis work. If you hope to go on to pursue a Ph.D., make sure your thesis incorporates design research or social effects research in meaningful ways

The best way to discover an original topic is to read deeply into an area of research that interests you. Online resources such as ProQuest (using the peer reviewed search option), Web of Science, and Google Scholar are excellent starting points, working with key words of topics that interest you or that you have become familiar with in your coursework. Your professors are also excellent sources of topics, but it is best to approach them after you have defined a general interest area, having done some preliminary reading. The discussion sections of papers are particularly helpful since they often identify unanswered questions and make suggestions for further research.

"Original" covers a lot of ground, though. Ideally, you would come up with a new theory or method, but that is best left to Ph.D. candidates with years to spend. If you are doing an empirical thesis, you might propose a new variable for an existing theory, or integrate variables from competing ones. Old theories or established methods applied to unique new contexts are another possibility. If your thesis is interpretive and critical rather than empirical, you might look for a new context in which to apply and extend an existing thesis, or further propound a thesis in an already established context. Policy researchers might

apply an existing doctrine of law to a new area or critique the application of a doctrine in a current context. But not every idea that is new to you is original. Original contributions are not made by simple replications of previous studies or by papers that merely summarize existing interpretative or policy frameworks. Original thinking and analysis, new both to you and to the community of scholars in your field, is expected.

Once an original topic has been identified, the student chooses the Thesis Advisor and two other faculty members to form the Thesis Committee. The Academic Advisor is not generally a member of the Thesis Committee if other members of the faculty are more appropriate to the topic and method. With a general topic in mind, the student asks the faculty members if they are willing to serve and for their advice about further development of the topic. They will also provide advice about the originality of the topic and the feasibility of examining it. Sometimes the faculty will have suggested topics of their own as well. Usually the members are from the Department of Media and Information faculty, but a committee member could be selected from another department. Media and Information faculty interests and research are listed online at: [mi.msu.edu](http://mi.msu.edu).

When a prospective Thesis Committee agrees that the student has a viable thesis topic, the student should write and submit a proposal to that committee. The content of the thesis proposal is specified by the Thesis Committee. It typically consists of a research statement that includes both the research question(s) and the motivation guiding the thesis, a review of relevant literature and a deduced theoretical foundation, a proposed theoretical model, the envisioned research and data analysis methods, and the implications of the thesis for both theory and practice. It is important to have a detailed proposal, so as to avoid any potential subsequent disagreement among members of the group (i.e. the student and the three advisors). Generally, a proposal of 5- 10 pages will be sufficient, but this is something that students should discuss with their thesis advisors. Once the proposal is deemed by the chairperson of the committee to be "ready," it is sent to the other members of the committee and an oral examination date in defense of the proposal is scheduled, with at least 2 weeks' lead time for the committee to review the work. At the examination, the student is expected to give a brief presentation about the thesis. The committee members will ask questions, and either approve the proposal, approve with required revisions, or reject the proposal; in the latter case, the process is initiated again from the start.

An example of a thesis proposal for M&I could include the following:

- A clear statement of the scholarly problem or question to be answered by the thesis.
- A review of the relevant literature from the candidate's areas of concentration. The review should establish that the thesis question has not already been satisfactorily answered, and explain how the published literature is related to the question.
- A justification for the thesis that establishes that the question is worth answering.

An explanation of the approaches that will be used to answer the question, If research involving human subjects (including interviews or surveys) is contemplated, the prospectus must include a section describing steps to be taken to comply with university policies and guidelines set forth by the Human Research Protection Program (IRB). For these policies, see <http://hrpp.msu.edu/>.

Once the student has written the proposal the Thesis Committee and the Director of Graduate Studies must sign a thesis proposal form to which the thesis proposal is attached.

The Thesis Proposal Form is available at the M.A. office or online.

### **How to Get an MA Project Started**

A project is usually centered on an app or game production or a prototype of a game or application. A written component is required, and it must be high quality and meet committee approval. However the expectation of time spent would include a majority of time creating the media work, or prototype, with a minority of time writing the project report. If the project includes research involving human subjects, then university regulations require that IRB approval be obtained prior to conducting that research. Students whose focus is primarily on production would normally choose the project option. The media product is the primary showpiece, supported by paper about the project.

Your project (or thesis) is the culmination of your M.A. work. It should incorporate what you have learned throughout the program. It should be different, better, more substantial than what you could have created before you entered the program. The thesis/project is your primary portfolio piece, the project you spent the most time and best showcases your abilities.

Your choice of topic and decision whether to do a project or thesis should take into account your career goals. If there is a particular industry and industry role you are preparing for, make sure your project will be an impressive showpiece of your abilities related that career choice.

The project can also be a rare opportunity to work on what you most care about rather than what a client wants. Balance your personal interests and career goals and choose accordingly.

A project includes a written component which includes any IRB as well as committee approvals.

### **How to get an MA Poster Started**

Posters are often started as a result of research driven changes made during an internship or job. A poster may be driven first by the needs of a client - helping a professor with a research project, working for a client to develop a communication tool or a training video. The client plays a central role in defining the project concept and parameters.

The student will likely conduct design research to understand users more specifically, perhaps including persona analysis and/or ethnography, and/or focus groups. The poster can be very creative, but it should follow overall academic expectations that include giving the background of the problem, the changes made as a result of the student's master's training, and the results of these changes.

### **Formation of the Guidance Committee**

The guidance committee for the project/thesis will be formed in consultation with the student's thesis/project advisor at the time the student's project/thesis proposal is submitted for approval to the Director of Graduate Studies. Guidelines for the composition of the committee are found in the preceding section. The composition of the committee may be changed by resubmitting the thesis/project approval form.

## Possible approaches to designing a thesis or project

Five possible approaches to conceptualizing a project or thesis are described below. These are listed to help stimulate students' thinking about what is possible. The list is not exclusive, it is not intended to rule out other creative approaches.



### Design from the Inside-Out

This approach might start with a specific application or interface that is already in use. UX design could take the existing product and test it to find ways to improve usability or production. This could include focus groups or usability testing.

### Design from the Outside-In

Designing projects from the outside-in requires a deep understanding needs of client or customers drive production decisions. Projects that develop from internships often fit into this level of understanding.

### Content Driven Thesis/Project

Content-driven projects start with a particular theme of great interest to the student, such as the impacts of a specific game or aspect of a game on participants. Deep proponents of design research would advocate that some preproduction research may be conducted to understand the audience, but often no pre-production design research is conducted. The primary research component of a content-driven project is likely to be content research or psychological or societal impacts.

### Competitive Analysis

Competitive analysis systematically examining similar productions on the same or closely related topics helps the student get ideas about techniques that work well and also help show areas where the student project could innovate.

Often at the end of the production project, a small survey is conducted either of media creation experts assessing the quality of the project or of target audience members assessing their reaction to the product.

## Exploration/experimentation thesis/project

Sometimes a student may choose to explore the potential of a new medium, or explore a particular aspect of an existing medium to solve a particular problem or meet a particular goal. For example, a student might start with the problem, how might QuickTime VR be used to improve graduate teaching about the canine skeleton. Or, how might radio frequency tags (RFID), augmented reality, and 3D be incorporated into a museum experience? Or, can I create a 3D interface which is better for navigation than a typical 2D menu system? Technology (hardware or software) may be the starting point for a project or thesis concept.

Preproduction research on users such as persona analysis or observational ethnography may be conducted to help make design decisions. Mid production usability testing may occur. Post production user testing may be conducted to see how the media product impacts or is used by users. Typically a project will focus on pre and mid-production research or else on post-production research, but for the sake of time, usually not all three.

## Administrative Milestones

### *Determine the general research goals and choose a chairperson*

Students should decide upon a general research focus and what kind of research or project they want to conduct. Refining that topic usually occurs through brainstorming with the faculty member or members of the student's choosing. As the topic and approach are narrowed, the student formally seeks out a committee chairperson (i.e. the Thesis / Project Advisor) whom they want to work with and who wants to work with them.

### *Refine and expand the concept, draft proposal*

The committee chairperson and student refine the thesis concept. Usually the student conducts competitive analysis and some secondary research. A proposal is drafted. Typically the proposal describes the project's rationale, planning, design research, design, and production process.

### *Formalize full committee, obtain proposal approval*

At this point the student completes formation of the committee - two MSU faculty members for a project, and three for a thesis. With a thesis proposal the committee chairperson and student have together decided is "ready," the student approaches other committee members with the proposal, invites them to serve on the committee, and the chair and student together request feedback on the proposal. If required, changes are made. If no changes are needed, the committee signs off, approving the proposal.

### *Complete the project or thesis*

With guidance from the chairperson, the student proceeds with production, research, and writing. The other committee members may be involved, if they have particular skill areas the student needs on the project. But the primary relationship is between chair and student.

### *Submit, present, and defend the project/thesis*

When the written component and production are deemed by the chairperson to be "ready," they are sent to other members of the committee and a defense is scheduled, with at least two weeks' time for committee members to review the work. Normally the student gives a brief presentation about the project at the defense. The committee

members and others in attendance ask questions. The committee then confers to decide whether the project should be accepted as is, accepted with revisions, or rejected. They also decide upon a grade for the project.

## **Thesis Defense and Final Oral Examination**

The graduate student will present the results of the thesis/dissertation in a seminar open to the community. To ensure fairness in the examination procedure and maintenance of academic standards, the dean of the college or the chair/director of the academic unit may appoint an outside member to the examining committee. The outside member of the committee will read and critique the thesis, will participate in the oral part of the exam, and will submit a report to the dean of the college and/or the chair/director of the academic unit. Guidelines for the nature and scope of the thesis may be found in Section V, where the parameters of acceptable thesis proposals are discussed. Grading policies are covered in the following section. A list of recent theses may be obtained from the MSU Graduate School.

### **Final Certification for the Degree**

By a date announced in the calendar of the Schedule of Courses each semester, the Registrar needs--from the Director of Graduate Studies--a list of all certified candidates who expect to graduate that semester. By this date, Plan "B" students should have passed their oral examinations, and Plan "A" students should have submitted approved copies of their theses to their thesis advisors. To graduate a student must have a 3.0 grade point average in courses taken for graduate credit.

Students should submit an "Application for Graduation" by the first week of the semester the student expects to complete his/her degree requirements. This form can be found online at the Office of the Registrar's website at <http://www.reg.msu.edu/StuForms/GradApp/GradApp.asp>.

A student who does not complete the requirements for graduation during the semester in which he/she applied for must reapply for graduation for the appropriate semester that he/she will complete the degree requirements.

Students must be registered for at least one credit during the semester in which they complete their degree requirements, e.g., complete their required courses and either secure approval for their thesis or pass their project / poster oral examination. Even if they have previously registered for all of their 30 credits, they must register for one more credit in their final semester. Consequently, it is prudent for Plan "B" students to save at least one of their courses for the semester in which they take their oral exam, and for Plan "A" students who expect to complete their theses after their last semester of classes to reserve at least one credit of TC 899 for the semester in which they expect to defend the thesis.

Assuming that other requirements are met, compliance with the deadline will enable the Plan "A" degree to be granted at the end of the semester when the official copies are submitted to the Graduate School. Should these copies be submitted after the deadline but before the end of the semester, the degree can be granted at the close of the following semester without the student needing to enroll for that following semester. (The

student will, however, need to apply for a diploma at the beginning of that following semester.) If approval of the thesis should be withheld that semester, he/she will need to enroll for an additional credit of TC 899 during a subsequent semester when it is likely that the approval will be granted. Plan "B" students who are taking their oral examinations for a second time may meet the registration requirements by enrolling for one credit of TC 890 (Independent Study).

MSU only accepts electronic theses and dissertations submitted via ProQuest. The instructions for electronic submissions are available from <http://grad.msu.edu/etd/>.

The target date for the FINAL APPROVAL of an electronic Thesis to the Graduate School for graduating the semester of that submission is FIVE working days prior to the first day of classes for the next semester (see future target dates below). Be aware that a submission via ProQuest does not mean that the document has been ACCEPTED. The review process is interactive and final approval can take anywhere from a few hours to weeks, depending upon the extent of the necessary revisions and how diligent the author is when making the necessary revisions.

Graduation on the semester of the electronic submission is only guaranteed if the document is APPROVED on or before the target date for that semester. Deadline dates for final approval of an electronic thesis to the Graduate School are around the middle of the final month of an academic semester, but precise dates can be found at <https://grad.msu.edu/etd/etd-deadline-dates>.

## Grading for Qualifying Exams

### M.A. Thesis Oral Exam

Note: The student receives a numerical grade for MI899 credits, but the credits are not awarded until the student passes the oral exam.

The student may:

**Pass** the examination without reservation by demonstrating mastery of core course content as it relates to the topic of the thesis.

**Pass** the examination *conditionally* and subject to revisions stipulated by the Committee. In this case, final evaluation is deferred until the Committee has received the updated Thesis manuscript along with a cover letter that outlines how the required revisions were implemented.

**Fail** the examination. In the event of a fail, the student may retake the exam in a subsequent semester provided that the 5-year time limit on the degree is not exceeded. The final outcome on the retake is an unreserved pass or fail. If the student fails the exam a second time, the student will be dropped from the program. A person who has failed the exam will receive a feedback sheet, but graders are not identified.

### M.A. Project Oral Exam

Note: The student receives a numerical grade for MI 898 credits, but the credits are not awarded until the student passes the oral exam.

The student may:

*Pass* the examination without reservation by demonstrating mastery of design concepts as they relate to the project.

*Pass* the examination *conditionally* and subject to revisions stipulated by the Committee. In this case, final evaluation is deferred until the Committee has received the updated Project manuscript along with a cover letter that outlines how the required revisions were implemented.

*Fail* the examination. In the event of a fail, the student may retake the exam in a subsequent semester provided that the 5-year time limit on the degree is not exceeded. The final outcome on the retake is an unreserved pass or fail. If the student fails the exam a second time, the student will be dropped from the program. A person who has failed the exam will receive a feedback sheet, but graders are not identified. After failing the examination, a student **may not** change to Plan "A" (the thesis option).

### M.A. Poster Oral Exam

The student may:

*Pass* the examination without reservation by demonstrating mastery of design concepts as they relate to the poster.

*Pass* the examination *conditionally* and subject to revisions stipulated by the Committee. In this case, final evaluation is deferred until the Committee has received a document, which includes the requested updates/revisions, along with a cover letter that outlines how the required revisions were implemented.

*Fail* the examination. In the event of a fail, the student may retake the exam in a subsequent semester provided that the 5-year time limit on the degree is not exceeded. The final outcome on the retake is an unreserved pass or fail. If the student fails the exam a second time, the student will be dropped from the program. A person who has failed the exam will receive a feedback sheet, but graders are not identified. After failing the examination, a student **may not** change to Plan "A" (the thesis option).

### Exit Survey

A short online exit survey for all students graduating with a Plan A or Plan B masters. Only students who have applied for graduation will have access to the survey. The survey asks questions about educational experiences in MSU graduate programs, as well as about immediate professional plans. The Graduate School uses data from this survey when reviewing graduate programs and to guide decisions about services and initiatives for graduate students.

## Departmental Policies: Integrity and Safety in Research

### Academic Integrity

Plagiarism means presenting, as one's own, the words, creative work or opinions of someone else. You commit plagiarism if you submit as your own work:

- Part or all of an assignment copied from another person's manuscript or notes, spoken words, sounds, or images.
- Part or all of an assignment copied or paraphrased from a source, such as a book, magazine, journal, Web page, or creative product.
- The sequence of ideas, arrangement of ideas or images, or pattern of thought of someone else, even though you express them in your own words, sounds or images. Plagiarism occurs when such a sequence of ideas is transferred from a source without the process of digestion, integration and reorganization in the writer's mind, and without acknowledgement.
- A paper written for you by someone else.
- An entire work or substantive part of a work that you submitted for another course to a second course without the permission of BOTH of the instructors involved.

You are an accomplice in plagiarism and equally guilty if you:

- Allow your paper or creative project, in outline or finished form, to be copied and submitted as the work of another.
- Prepare an assignment for another student and allow it to be submitted as his or her work.
- Keep or contribute materials to a group project with the clear intent that these be copied and submitted as the work of anyone other than the author. (The student who knows that his or her work is being copied is presumed to consent to its being copied.)
- The penalties described in the [Academic Rights and Responsibilities](#) shall apply.

You can avoid plagiarism by:

- Clearly identifying anything you copy directly from another source (e.g., by using quotation marks).
- Citing or otherwise acknowledging all ideas that are not your own, including anything that you copy directly or that you paraphrase, modify or "sample."
- Including appropriate acknowledgments or citations throughout the body of your work, as opposed to merely listing general sources at the end.
- Never "downloading" anything from the Internet into your work product without acknowledging the source.
- Consulting the helpful hints at <https://www.msu.edu/unit/ombud/academic-integrity/plagiarism-policy.html>
- Asking your instructor to register your course at Turnitin.com: <http://www.turnitin.com/>
- You should also familiarize yourself with the [Guidelines for Integrity in Research and Creative Activities](#), found on the Graduate School webpage at: <https://grad.msu.edu/sites/default/files/content/researchintegrity/guidelines.pdf>, and reprinted below from Michigan State University, *Research Integrity, Vol. 7 No. 2 Spring 2004*

## Guidelines for Integrity in Research and Creative Activities

The conduct of research and creative activities by faculty, staff, and students is central to the mission of Michigan State University (see Note 1, below) and is an institutional priority. Faculty, staff, and students work in a rich and competitive environment for the common purpose of learning, creating new knowledge, and disseminating information and ideas for the benefit of their peers and the general public. The stature and reputation of MSU as a research university are based on the commitment of its faculty, staff, and students to excellence in scholarly and creative activities and to the highest standards of professional integrity. As a partner in scholarly endeavors, MSU is committed to creating an environment that promotes ethical conduct and integrity in research and creative activities.

Innovative ideas and advances in research and creative activities have the potential to generate professional and public recognition and, in some instances, commercial interest, and financial gain. In rare cases, such benefits may become motivating factors to violate professional ethics. Pressures to publish, to obtain research grants, or to complete academic requirements may also lead to an erosion of professional integrity.

Breaches in professional ethics range from questionable research practices to misconduct. (see Note 2) The primary responsibility for adhering to professional standards lies with the individual scholar. It is, however, also the responsibility of advisors and of the disciplinary community at large. Passive acceptance of improper practices lowers inhibitions to violate professional ethics.

Integrity in research and creative activities is based not only on sound disciplinary practice but also on a commitment to basic personal values such as fairness, equity, honesty, and respect. These guidelines are intended to promote high professional standards by everyone- faculty, staff, and students alike.

### Key Principles

Integrity in research and creative activities embodies a range of practices that includes:

- Honesty in proposing, performing, and reporting research
- Recognition of prior work
- Confidentiality in peer review
- Disclosure of potential conflicts of interest
- Compliance with institutional and sponsor requirements
- Protection of human subjects and humane care of animals in the conduct of research
- Collegiality in scholarly interactions and sharing of resources
- Adherence to fair and open relationships between senior scholars and their coworkers

#### **Honesty in proposing, performing, and reporting research.**

The foundation underlying all research is uncompromising honesty in presenting one's own ideas in research proposals, in performing one's research, and in reporting one's data. Detailed and accurate records of primary data must be kept as unalterable

documentation of one's research and must be available for scrutiny and critique. It is expected that researchers will always be truthful and explicit in disclosing what was done, how it was done, and what results were obtained. To this end, research aims, methods, and outcomes must be described in sufficient detail such that others can judge the quality of what is reported and can reproduce the data. Results from valid observations and tests that run counter to expectations must be reported along with supportive data.

#### **Recognition of prior work.**

Research proposals, original research, and creative endeavors often build on one's own work and also on the work of others. Both published and unpublished work must always be properly credited. Reporting the work of others as if it were one's own is plagiarism. Graduate advisors and members of guidance committees have a unique role in guiding the independent research and creative activities of students. Information learned through private discussions or committee meetings should be respected as proprietary and accorded the same protection granted to information obtained in any peer-review process.

#### **Confidentiality in peer review.**

Critical and impartial review by respected disciplinary peers is the foundation for important decisions in the evaluation of internal and external funding requests, allocation of resources, publication of research results, granting of awards, and in other scholarly decisions. The peer-review process involves the sharing of information for scholarly assessment on behalf of the larger disciplinary community. The integrity of this process depends on confidentiality until the information is released to the public. Therefore, the contents of research proposals, of manuscripts submitted for publication, and of other scholarly documents under review should be considered privileged information not to be shared with others, including students and staff, without explicit permission by the authority requesting the review. Ideas and results learned through the peer-review process should not be made use of prior to their presentation in a public forum or their release through publication.

#### **Disclosure of potential conflicts of interest.**

There is real or perceived conflict of interest when a researcher has material or personal interest that could compromise the integrity of the scholarship. It is, therefore, imperative that potential conflicts of interest be considered and acted upon appropriately by the researcher. Some federal sponsors require the University to implement formal conflict of interest policies. It is the responsibility of all researchers to be aware of and comply with such requirements.

#### **Compliance with institutional and sponsor requirements.**

Investigators are granted broad freedoms in making decisions concerning their research. These decisions are, however, still guided, and in some cases limited, by the laws, regulations, and procedures that have been established by the University and sponsors of research to protect the integrity of the research process and the uses of the information developed for the common good. Although the legal agreement underlying the funding of a sponsored project is a matter between the sponsor and the University, the primary responsibility for management of a sponsored project rests with the principal investigator and his or her academic unit.

#### **Protection of human subjects and humane care of animals in the conduct of research.**

Research techniques should not violate established professional ethics or federal and state

requirements pertaining to the health, safety, privacy, and protection of human beings, or to the welfare of animal subjects. Whereas it is the responsibility of faculty to assist students and staff in complying with such requirements, it is the responsibility of all researchers to be aware of and to comply with such requirements.

### **Collegiality in scholarly interactions and sharing of resources.**

Collegiality in scholarly interactions, including open communications and sharing of resources, facilitates progress in research and creative activities for the good of the community. At the same time, it has to be understood that scholars who first report important findings are both recognized for their discovery and afforded intellectual property rights that permit discretion in the use and sharing of their discoveries and inventions. Balancing openness and protecting the intellectual property rights of individuals and the institution will always be a challenge for the community. Once the results of research or creative activities have been published or otherwise communicated to the public, scholars are expected to share materials and information on methodologies with their colleagues according to the tradition of their discipline.

Faculty advisors have a particular responsibility to respect and protect the intellectual property rights of their advisees. A clear understanding must be reached during the course of the project on who will be entitled to continue what part of the overall research program after the advisee leaves for an independent position. Faculty advisors should also strive to protect junior scholars from abuses by others who have gained knowledge of the junior scholar's results during the mentoring process, for example, as members of guidance committees.

### **Adherence to fair and open relationships between senior scholars and their co-workers.**

The relationship between senior scholars and their coworkers should be based on mutual respect, trust, honesty, fairness in the assignment of effort and credit, open communications, and accountability. The principles that will be used to establish authorship and ordering of authors on presentations of results must be communicated early and clearly to all coworkers. These principles should be determined objectively according to the standards of the discipline, with the understanding that such standards may not be the same as those used to assign credit for contributions to intellectual property. It is the responsibility of the faculty to protect the freedom to publish results of research and creative activities. The University has affirmed the right of its scholars for first publication except for "exigencies of national defense". (see Note 3) It is also the responsibility of the faculty to recognize and balance their dual roles as investigators and advisors in interacting with graduate students of their group, especially when a student's efforts do not contribute directly to the completion of his or her degree requirements.

### **Misconduct in Research and Creative Activities**

Federal (see Note 4) and University (see Note 2) policies define misconduct to include fabrication (making up data and recording or reporting them), falsification (manipulating research materials, equipment or processes, or changing or omitting data such that the research is not accurately represented in the record), and plagiarism (appropriation of another person's ideas, processes, results, or words without giving appropriate credit). Serious or continuing non-compliance with government regulations pertaining to research may constitute misconduct as well. University policy also defines retaliation against whistle blowers as misconduct. Misconduct does not include honest errors or honest differences

of opinion in the interpretation or judgment of data.

The University views misconduct to be the most egregious violation of standards of integrity and as grounds for disciplinary action, including the termination of employment of faculty and staff, dismissal of students, and revocation of degrees. It is the responsibility of faculty, staff, and students alike to understand the University's policy on misconduct in research and creative activities (see Note 2), to report perceived acts of misconduct of which they have direct knowledge to the University Intellectual Integrity Officer, and to protect the rights and privacy of individuals making such reports in good faith.

### **Resources**

"Guidelines on Authorship", Endorsed by the University Research Council, January 15, 1998 (<http://www.msu.edu/unit/vprgs/authorshipguidelines.htm>)

"Integrity in Scientific Research: Creating an Environment that Promotes Responsible Conduct", National Academies Press, Washington, D.C., 2002, 216 pp (<http://www.nap.edu/books/0309084792/html>)

"Research Data: Management, Control, and Access Guidelines", Endorsed by the University Research Council, February 7, 2001 ([http://www.msu.edu/unit/vprgs/research\\_data.htm](http://www.msu.edu/unit/vprgs/research_data.htm))

### **Notes**

Michigan State University "Mission Statement" approved by the Board of Trustees on , 2008, (<https://president.msu.edu/initiatives/index.html>)

MSU Faculty Handbook, Chapter VI, "Research and Creative Endeavor-Procedures Concerning Allegations of Misconduct in Research and Creative Activities"

<https://hr.msu.edu/policies-procedures/faculty-academic-staff/faculty-handbook/>

Office of Science and Technology Policy, "Notice of Final Policy", 65 CFR 76260.

### **Ethical Treatment of Human Subjects**

Students are required to obtain a faculty sponsor and seek the approval of the [University Committee on Research Involving Human Subjects](#) prior to beginning any research or creative projects involving human beings (this includes any internships or independent studies). They must also register as investigators with [IRB](#) and take an on-line certification course. Additionally, students should consult their advisors before undertaking *any* creative or research project to determine if [IRB](#) clearance is required. Such clearances may take 1-7 weeks, or more, to obtain and are specifically required for theses and projects. Directions and application forms are available at <http://hrpp.msu.edu/>.

### **Student Conduct and Conflict Resolution**

#### **Student Conduct**

Students, faculty and staff are expected to exhibit intellectual curiosity, good cheer, cooperation, and professional demeanor toward each other at all times. They should treat each other with mutual consideration while recognizing the differences between individuals and cultures that we in Media and Information all celebrate.

<https://www.deanofstudents.msu.edu/student-conduct-0>

## Grievances

Grievances, and conflicts of interest between students and their advisors, students and other faculty, students and staff, or between students will be referred first to the Director of Graduate Studies for resolution. Requests for conflict resolution may be made in person during the Director's office hours or via email. All such requests will be handled in confidence. Appeals of the Director's decisions may be made to the Chair of Media and Information and from there to the Dean of the College of Communication Arts and Sciences and/or to the university ombudsman, as appropriate, for referral to the appropriate grievance committees.

At the departmental level, the procedures are described in Article 9 of the departmental bylaws (as adopted by department faculty on December 13, 2013). The Department follows University guidelines and procedures for addressing grievances as described in the Graduate Student Rights and Responsibility Conflicts and by the Office of the MSU Ombudsman <https://ombud.msu.edu/>.

### Office of the University Ombudsperson

Conflicts, disagreements, and issues sometimes arise during the course of a graduate program. If you find yourself in this situation and have exhausted the internal resources for resolving the issue, you may contact the Office of the University Ombudsperson.

The Office of the University Ombudsperson provides assistance to students, faculty, and staff in resolving University-related concerns. Such concerns include: student-faculty conflicts; communication problems; concerns about the university climate; and questions about what options are available for handling a problem according to Michigan State University policy. The University Ombudsperson also provides information about available resources and student/faculty rights and responsibilities. The office operates as a confidential, independent, and neutral resource. It does not provide notice to the University - that is, it does not speak or hear for the University.

Contact the Ombudsperson at any point during an issue when a confidential conversation or source of information may be needed. The Ombudsperson will listen to your concerns, give you information about university policies, help you evaluate the situation, and assist you in making plans to resolve the conflict.

Contact information:

Office of the University Ombudsperson 129 N. Kedzie Hall  
(517) 353-8830  
ombud@msu.edu

## **Graduate Student Participation in Academic Government**

### **Council of Graduate Students (COGS)**

The Council of Graduate Students (COGS) represents the graduate student population to the rest of the University (<http://cogs.rnsu.edu>). We encourage students to take an active interest in its activities.

### **Graduate Students Rights and Responsibilities**

Rights and responsibilities as a graduate student at Michigan State University are explained at <https://grad.msu.edu/gsrr>

### **Work Related Policies**

Teaching assistants are referred to the current Graduate Employees Union <http://geuatmsu.org/>. To see the GEU Handbook, rights and responsibilities and benefits.

Research and teaching assistantships are awarded based on merit and departmental research and teaching needs. They are renewable on a semester-by-semester basis depending upon performance, departmental needs, and the availability of funds. The student's faculty supervisor provides a written evaluation each semester. M.A. students are eligible for assistantships for two years following their acceptance in the program. The term of eligibility may be extended on a case-by-case basis, but to no more than three years, based on performance and departmental needs. Assistantships may be terminated at any time and pay reduced for gross negligence, such as failure to perform assigned duties or, for teaching assistants, any dereliction of the Code of Teaching Responsibility. Faculty supervisors may require students to keep time cards and/or maintain regular office hours, at their option.

Teaching and research assistants are expected to report for duty at least one week prior to the beginning of classes and to remain on duty until at least the day after final grades are submitted each semester. Half-time teaching assistants are expected to devote an average of 20 hours per week to their duties across the entire term of their appointment, up to a total of 360 hours per semester. Sick leave requires documentation from a licensed physician and assistants are responsible for arranging, in advance, with their faculty supervisors for the completion of their duties while on sick leave. Permission for late arrival or early departure or for temporary leave (such as to attend a professional conference) must be obtained in writing, in advance, from the student's faculty supervisor who will forward the request to the Chair for approval.

Outside work for pay is permitted as long as it does not interfere with the student's regularly assigned assistantship duties or academic progress.

Teaching and research assistants will have shared office spaces and access to telephones in CAS 409 for placing and receiving local calls. Mailboxes are provided. All students are required to have their own computers. Students are expected to furnish their own office supplies and reimburse the department for photocopying, except as directly related to their teaching or research responsibilities.

All international teaching assistants are required to take and pass the SPEAK test at the minimum required level of 50 prior to the semester in which they are assigned as a teaching

assistant (see Academic Programs for the minimum all-University standard of English proficiency).

## **University Resources**

### **MSU Graduate Student Life and Wellness**

<https://grad.msu.edu/wellness>- Whether you're pursuing a masters, doctoral or graduate professional degree, graduate school can be one of the most exciting, challenging, and rewarding experiences you undertake in your life. To help you navigate your way, the Office of Graduate Student Life & Wellness and this website act as a handbook to graduate student life and wellness at Michigan State University. Here you will find the tools, resources, and programs to not only help you succeed, but have a great experience overall.

### **MSU Health Care**

<https://olin.msu.edu/> - MSU offers health services at five locations across campus. The Olin Health Center has health professionals to deal with a wide variety of issues. For an appointment, call (517) 353-4660.

On-site services include radiology, a laboratory, a retail pharmacy, and some Health Promotion services. Access to services offered by Olin Health Center is facilitated by our Phone Information Nurse, Pharmacy Delivery Service, and round-trip transportation provided by a Courtesy Van.

Students enrolled in MSU classes are eligible for three prepaid medical office visits each academic year. Lab, X-ray, medical procedures and other ancillary services are not considered part of the prepaid visits and charges will apply. Charges for these services can be billed to insurance, and charges not covered by insurance are billed to the student. There are no charges for most Health Promotion department visits.

### **MSU Counseling and Psychiatric Services**

<https://caps.msu.edu/> MSU offers a wide range of services, many of them free of charge. We are here to help. Our team is committed to providing and connecting you to a wide array of services and resources to address your concerns. These may include short-term individual counseling, group counseling, medication, or referrals to other services on or off-campus. (Drop-down or list at right offers a full list of services.)

Incoming students, and students new to MSU, may find our Mental Health Services Transition of Care Guide (PDF) helpful when determining whether to stick with a provider from home or transfer care to the East Lansing area.

Getting started is easy - just drop-in to CAPS at Olin Health Center located on the 3rd floor to receive a same-day screening appointment during our available hours. No appointment is needed.

### **MSU Library**

<https://lib.msu.edu/> -The library has extensive resources to help you with your research. The subject librarians can help guide you in narrowing your research topic and help you find databases with further resources. The 24/7 chat support can help you access books or digital resources any time you need a source.

## MSU Writing Center

<https://writing.msu.edu/> -The Writing Center at MSU operates with a broad vision of collaboration in the MSU community; peer-to-peer consultations with students, faculty, and the community allow us to expand ideas of literacy and composing beyond traditional models and geographic boundaries.

With this vision for both the academy and the global community in mind, The Writing Center is committed to

- Working with and developing multiple literacies
- Encouraging and facilitating collaboration
- Supporting interdisciplinary methods of thinking, writing, and researching
- Promoting diverse understandings of writing and the disciplines in which they are situated
- Utilizing new technologies in pedagogically responsible ways

We believe this expansive view of writing, literacy, and pedagogy enables us to meet the ever-changing needs of a diverse constituency and challenges us to continually grow as The Writing Center at MSU.

MSU students are allowed up to two sessions a week with a peer writing assistant and the length of the session depends on the location of the appointment.

## MSU Center for Statistical Training and Consulting

<https://cstat.msu.edu/> Each graduate student can have up to 9 free appointments with a statistician during their graduate school program. The consultant can help with all areas of statistical design, analysis and understanding the analysis for students' final research projects.

## MSU Culinary Services

<https://eatatstate.msu.edu/> Too busy to cook? No problem. MSU has award winning culinary services. Many halls have dining rooms with healthy and tasty options. Graduate students can buy meals in 10 pack options that give you hearty meals and extremely reasonable prices.

## Department Research Centers

To enrich your master's experience, you can volunteer to be on various research projects. This is where you can learn how research in your area of interest works in labs and on grants and special projects. The following research hubs of our department use students in volunteer and part-time paid capacities and as graduate assistants. They may also provide opportunities for observation and some kinds of research:

### Behavior, information, and technology Lab (BITLAB)

<https://bitlab.cas.msu.edu/> The BITLab brings together a group of social science / technology researchers. Collectively, we conduct research at the intersection of behavior, information, and technology. The Lab is located in room 251 of the Communication Arts and Sciences building.

### Games for Entertainment and Learning Lab (GEL Lab)

<https://gamedev.msu.edu/gel-lab/> The mission of the Games for Entertainment and Learning (GEL) Lab at Michigan State University is to design innovative prototypes, techniques, and complete games for entertainment and learning and to advance state of the art knowledge

about social and individual effects of digital games. The GEL Lab is an association of game research and design faculty and students at Michigan State University, primarily in the College of Communication Arts and Sciences. The lab does externally funded research and development work and employs several graduate and undergraduate students.

### Quello Center Media & Information Policy

<https://quello.msu.edu/> This organization, named for an MSU graduate who served for 23 years as an FCC Commissioner and Chairman of the Commission, conducts research and conferences on telecommunication matters. This includes such issues as: the impact of the digital divide, social media impacts, cybersecurity challenges, and algorithm impacts. Frequently the Quello Center hosts internationally known speakers to discuss breaking topics that impact policy aspects of the Internet.

### Radio and Television Stations

WDBM-FM	Student operated radio station <a href="http://www.impact89fm.org">www.impact89fm.org</a>
WKAR-AM/FM	Public radio stations <a href="http://www.wkar.org">www.wkar.org</a>
WKAR TV	Public television station <a href="http://www.wkar.org">www.wkar.org</a>

WDBM-FM and WLFT-AM, The campus radio network - is managed and operated entirely by students (mainly volunteer). It consists of a carrier current service to all residential hall complexes; the network station WMSN and two dormitory satellites. The main offices and studios are located at in the basement of Holden Hall. Students interested in doing volunteer work at the station and network should apply at the office M-F, 9 a.m. - 6 p.m.