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Welcome and Introduction

The faculty of the School of Journalism welcomes you to our Master of Arts degree program. We are among the top graduate programs in the nation. Our faculty of outstanding professionals and scholars has made important contributions in both the academic and media worlds. We are committed to making your graduate program successful.

A successful graduate program requires students who are both committed to excellence in their work and knowledgeable about the requirements for the degree. This handbook is meant to help graduate students in the School of Journalism to know, understand and complete the requirements of their master’s degree program.

The information below complements university regulations. Students must meet all university as well as School of Journalism requirements. Students should also consult the following publications for guidance:

2. Graduate Students Rights and Responsibilities (https://grad.msu.edu/gsrr)
4. Guidelines for Graduate Student Advising and Mentoring Relationships (https://grad.msu.edu/sites/default/files/content/researchintegrity/guidelines.pdf)
5. Research Integrity (https://grad.msu.edu/researchintegrity)

Students are also encouraged to consult their assigned academic adviser and committee faculty members for advice and interpretation of the requirements and information in this handbook.
School of Journalism Master’s Program Overview

Program Goals

The master’s degree program is designed to serve students who want scholarly training for an academic career and those students who want applied professional training for communications-related employment. The program, therefore, provides academic courses that stress both scholarly research and professional journalistic-related competencies courses.

Role of Graduate Studies Director and Master’s Graduate Committee

The School of Journalism Graduate Studies Director and Graduate Studies Committee administer the master’s degree program of the School of Journalism; together they recommend graduate program policy and curriculum to the faculty. The Director of the School of Journalism designates the Graduate Director who oversees the day-to-day operation of the program. The Graduate Studies Director and Committee select students for admission into the program and select faculty advisers to students based on the student’s interests.

Each academic year in April or May, students must meet with their adviser to discuss their progress in advancement in their program. After the student and his or her adviser complete the Annual Progress Report (See Appendix 4) and gives it to Nancy Ashley. The Graduate Studies Director will write students a letter, informing them of their progress toward their degree.

Role of Graduate Studies Adviser

The Director and the adviser must review the JRN MA Required Checklist and sign by the eighth week of the M.A. student’s first semester (see Appendix 1). Go to https://schedule.msu.edu/ to search for MSU graduate courses. College courses are available in Journalism (JRN), Advertising (ADV), Media & Information (MI), Communication (COM), College of Communication of Arts and Sciences (CAS) BA-MA LinkedIn students must submit this course checklist when they accept their acceptance letter.

The Adviser and M.A. student must also meet by the third week in May to complete the Annual Progress Report (see Appendix 4).

The Director and Committee assigns each accepted student a temporary adviser who consults with students as they work toward their degree. Students may, at any time in their program, request to change their academic adviser.

There are two ways to do this:
1. **A student has a specific adviser to which they wish to be reassigned:**
   a. Student obtains a Change in Adviser Form, has the new adviser sign the form and returns the form to Nancy Ashley.
   b. The request is reviewed/approved by the Director of Graduate Studies and changes to access the student’s records are made in Electronic Student Academic File (ESAF) and noted in the student’s file.

2. **A student does not have a specific adviser:**
   a. The student makes a formal request to the Director of Graduate Studies to change his/her academic adviser.
   b. Based on the student’s area of study and faculty load availability, the student is assigned a new adviser.
   c. Requests to changes in ESAF access are made and noted in the student’s file.

**Requirement: Responsible Conduct of Research (RCR) and Scholarship Training**

In order to graduate, M.A. students are required to complete a minimum of 4 training RCR sessions and will be responsible for documenting the completion of their training: [https://grad.msu.edu/rcr](https://grad.msu.edu/rcr)

Plan A master’s students are required to participate in 3 additional RCR courses. See the expectations explained: [https://grad.msu.edu/researchintegrity](https://grad.msu.edu/researchintegrity)

1. **Master’s Plan B and Grad Professional**

   *CITI Modules Year 1*
   - Introduction to the Responsible Conduct of Research
   - Authorship
   - Plagiarism
   - Research Misconduct

   6 hours discussion-based training (by completion of the degree)

2. **Master’s Plan A students**

   *CITI Modules Year 1*
   - Introduction to the Responsible Conduct of Research
   - Authorship
   - Plagiarism
   - Research Misconduct

   6 hours discussion-based training (by completion of the degree)

3. **Master’s Plan A students**

   *CITI Modules Year 2 (complete 3 additional from specific list)*
   - Introduction to the Responsible Conduct of Research
   - Authorship
   - Plagiarism
   - Research Misconduct

   6 hours discussion-based training (by completion of the degree)
4. **Doctoral students**
   
   **CITI Modules Year 1**
   - Introduction to the Responsible Conduct of Research
   - Authorship
   - Plagiarism
   - Research Misconduct

   6 hours discussion-based training (by completion of the degree)

5. **Doctoral students**
   
   **CITI Modules Year 2 (complete 3 additional from specific list)**
   - Introduction to the Responsible Conduct of Research
   - Authorship
   - Plagiarism
   - Research Misconduct

   6 hours discussion-based training (by completion of the degree)

6. **Doctoral students**
   
   **Year 3 forward (3 hours of annual refresher training)**
   - Introduction to the Responsible Conduct of Research
   - Authorship
   - Plagiarism
   - Research Misconduct

   6 Hours discussion-based training (by completion of the degree)

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**Course Core Requirements**

One course, JRN 815, *Media, Society and Theory*, in the School of Journalism is required for ALL students, with additional courses required for either the Plan A (research) and Plan B (professional). The core course is meant to help students develop a broad and theoretical understanding of the process and effects of mass media in the nation and world.

**Overall Degree Requirements**

The program requires that students earn **30 credits** in 400-level and 800-level courses. Master’s degree students may also satisfy the credit requirement with 900-level doctoral courses appropriate for their programs.

Students take a specified mix of 800-, 900- and 400-level courses in the master’s program. Eighteen of the 30 credits required for the master’s degree must be at the 800 or 900 level in courses offered in the School of Journalism. Students are **limited to four 400-level** courses. The four required courses in Plan A (with thesis) and the four required courses in Plan B (without thesis) count toward the 18 credits. The requirements are outlined in Table 1.
A minimum of 30 credits is required for the master’s degree in journalism in either Plan A or Plan B.

Requirements for Plan A (with thesis)

1. All of the following courses (13 to 15 credits):
   - JRN 815 Media, Society and Theory 3
   - JRN 825 Journalism History and Qualitative Methods 3
   - COM 803 Introduction to Quantitative Research Methods 3
   - JRN 899 Master’s Thesis Research 4-6

2. Complete 15 to 17 additional credits of elective course work approved by the student’s adviser and Graduate Studies Committee.

Requirements for Plan B (without thesis)

1. All of the following courses (12 credits):
   - JRN 800 Multiple Media Reporting I 3
   - JRN 801 Multiple Media Reporting II 3
   - JRN 815 Media, Society and Theory 3
   - JRN 816 Applied Research Methods in Journalism 3

2. Complete one of the following courses (3 credits):
   - JRN 808 Journalism Education Visual Topics 3
   - JRN 821 Social Media News and Information 3
   - JRN 873 Environment, Science and Health Journalism Seminars 3
   - JRN 875 Global Affairs Reporting 3

3. One of the following courses (3 credits)
   - JRN 493 Journalism Professional Field Experience (Internship) 3
   - JRN 896 Journalism Professional Project 3

Complete 12 additional credits of elective course work approved by the student’s adviser and the Graduate Studies Committee. The additional credits may include a 9-credit transcriptable concentration in Environmental, Science and Health Journalism; Scholastic Journalism; or International Journalism.

Journalism 800 or 801 may be waived for students with appropriate background for students who have taken a similar course or who have gained the skills learned through professional experience. Students interested in waiving a course must write a letter by the end of their first semester of enrollment to the Graduate Director requesting the waiver, proving how they’ve met the appropriate academic and/or professional experience. To support their letter, students must submit their resume, the course descriptions, syllabus of the similar courses and/or links to their multimedia work.
**Specialization**

The following concentrations will fulfill elective requirements in either Plan A or Plan B. You must notify Nancy Ashley to add the specialization to your transcripts.

**Environmental, Science and Health Journalism**
All of the following courses (9 credits):

- JRN 872 Environment, Science and Health Reporting Topics 3
- JRN 873 Environment, Science and Health Journalism Seminars 3

Any adviser-approved environmental, science, health or risk course.

**Journalism Education**
All of the following courses (9 credits):

- JRN 808 Journalism Education Visual Topics 3
- JRN 809 Journalism Education Advising Topics 3

Any adviser-approved education course.

**International Journalism**
Select 9 credits from the following:

- JRN 475 International News and Government Regional Dynamics 3
- JRN 875 Global Affairs Reporting 3
- JRN 887 Journalism Study Abroad Topics 6

Any adviser-approved international course.

**Minimum/Maximum Credit Load**

Graduate students may carry up to 16 credits each semester, but it is NOT recommended. Most students take 9 credits per semester. A student load above 16 credits requires approval by the Dean.

All students using University services for graduate work must be registered each semester. Minimum registration consists of one course of 1 credit.

In order to be considered full-time for academic purposes, financial aid and assistantships, etc., master’s students must carry the minimum of 9 credits per semester.

**400-level Undergraduate Courses**

Courses taken at the 400 level also count toward the program, as do courses at 800- and 900-levels in other departments. Students will have to use the override request process to enroll in 400 level courses. For courses in our college, use this website: http://override.cas.msu.edu. Please follow the guidelines below:

1. No 400-level course for which there is an 800-level equivalent will be allowed as an elective (e.g., a student could not receive credit for both JRN 492 and JRN 892).
2. Courses from other units that duplicate the content of any of the core courses will not be allowed.
3. Students cannot have more than 12 credits in 400-level courses toward their graduate coursework.
4. Not more than 6 credits combined in the JRN independent study (JRN 890) or internship (JRN 493) courses may be counted toward the 30 credits.
Independent Study

Independent Study is an option for students who wish to research a specific topic in more depth than a particular course allows or to research a topic not available in an established course. Therefore, students usually do not approach faculty members until at least the second semester of enrollment. Faculty members must agree to work with the student on an Independent Study. Students wishing to enroll for Independent Study credits must complete an Independent Study form (https://reg.msu.edu/read/pdf/indestudyapp.pdf) in collaboration with the instructor with whom they will be working.

Once the form is completed with signatures of both the Instructor and the student, the student must also get the signature of his/her academic adviser. Once the adviser signs the form it should be turned into the Grad Office (340 Com Arts) for further processing.

Remember students are allowed to take up to 6 credits of Independent Study, with no more than a combination of 6 credits between Independent Study and Internship credits. A typical Independent Study is between 1 to 3 credits.

Program Timetable

The required core courses are offered annually. JRN 815 and JRN 800 are offered each fall, and JRN 801, JRN 816 and JRN 825 are offered each spring. COM 803 is offered every fall, spring and summer. Specific course requirements, therefore, should be completed in the student’s first two semesters.

Students can normally complete the program in three to four semesters. This will depend, however, on the number of courses taken each semester. Program duration also will depend on whether students take courses during summers.

For example, a “regular” student who takes three, 3-credit courses each semester in the academic year would complete the last three credits in the fourth semester. That student who takes four, 3-credit courses each semester in the academic year would complete the last six credits in the third semester.

Annual Evaluation

You are required to meet with your adviser in April or May to discuss your academic progress. You and your adviser are required to fill out the progress report and submit it to Nancy Ashley. See Appendix 4.

Following your evaluation with your adviser, the Graduate Affairs Director provides written evaluations annually to every student in the program. Official university transcripts and other information such as the Annual Progress Report are used as the basis for the evaluation. The evaluation addresses the number of credits completed toward the degree, the satisfaction of core course requirements, and the documentation needed for thesis or project options. In addition, the evaluation cautions the student in the event of substandard course performance or failure to make timely progress in the program. The evaluation also notes (and praises) outstanding performance and progress in the program, and calls to the student’s attention options available to complete the degree.
**M.A.-ven Hour**

A maven is “a person who knows a lot about a particular subject,” as described by Merriam-Webster. Each semester, the J-School will host a M.A.-ven Hour, an event that will showcase the work of master’s students who graduated the previous semester or plan to graduate that semester. It’s an opportunity for students, faculty, family and friends to learn about the student’s thesis, profession project or internship. **All M.A. students are required to attend the event.**
Options for Completing the Program

**Thesis/Professional Project/Internship Options (Year 2)**

Students should begin their final project during the first semester of their second year or earlier. Beyond specific course requirements, students choose the courses and degree-completion option that best fit their career goals. Master’s degree students who seek teaching and/or research careers following their programs, or whose eventual goal is to earn a doctorate in preparation for university employment, ordinarily take a greater number of 800-level courses both within and outside the school that help them develop a specialization. Students who conclude the program with “Plan A” thesis or “Plan B” professional project or internship options must follow school procedures for obtaining approval and successfully completing their work (see Appendices 2 and 3). Students must register for thesis (JRN899), professional project (JRN896), or internship (JRN493) credits and select a committee of faculty members for their professional project or thesis.

Future PhD applicants or research career students are advised to conclude their program with a “Plan A” master’s degree thesis demonstrating the capability to conduct research that contributes to our knowledge of the media-society relationship. A thesis helps to prepare students for actual scholarly research and provides them with a credential that will distinguish them when applying for doctoral programs. Students in the “Plan A” are encouraged to produce scholarly research and participate on research teams during their program.

Master’s degree students who seek professional careers following their programs or who seek to enhance the professional skills they already possess ordinarily take a greater number of competency courses that develop their capabilities to work in a range of media careers. These students may be advised to conclude their program with a “Plan B” professional project or internship that advances their journalism skills. Students in the “Plan B” option are urged to demonstrate professional commitment and achievement by working in internships and/or publishing their work in professional publications during their program.

**Thesis/Professional Project Process**

- **Topic**
  Students should decide by the end of their first semester of enrollment if they will pursue Plan A or B, and they need to decide by the beginning of their second academic year the topic of their thesis or project.

- **Chair selection**
  Faculty members must supervise the work of students who select the “Plan A” thesis or “Plan B” project options. Students must select their chair during the beginning of their second academic year or earlier. School of Journalism faculty members who are tenure-stream or full-time with a terminal degree may serve as a chair of a student’s thesis committee and any full-time School of Journalism faculty member may serve as a chair of a professional project committee. In the event that a thesis or project committee
chair cannot serve to the completion of the work, the student may ask one of the other committee members to act as chair. The student may also ask the Journalism Graduate Director or their adviser to participate in finding a new chair for the committee. Students should schedule a meeting with their chair to discuss the selection of two additional committee members (see Appendix 2 and Appendix 3).

- **Committee Selection**
  Students will then share their proposal idea with two potential committee members requesting their participation on their committee. Ideally, a student’s committee includes people with a diversity of backgrounds who can advise him or her on the final project. One faculty member from outside the School of Journalism may serve on a student’s thesis or professional project committee. The committee membership must be reviewed and approved by the Graduate Affairs Committee.

- **Oral Proposal Defense**
  The thesis or project committee must meet at least twice with the student. One meeting is needed for approval of the student’s proposal for a thesis or project. A proposal defense should include both a written and oral defense of their written proposal in which students detail their project, literature review, and method to their committee. Committees may meet more frequently as necessary or desirable to review a student’s progress toward thesis or project completion.

- **Oral Final Defense**
  The graduate student will present the results of the thesis or project at a meeting open to the community. While members of the public may attend the meeting, they may not participate in the discussion or remain for the committee’s decision about the work. The student should schedule their oral defense date and then send their thesis or professional project to committee members two weeks prior to their defense date. Oral defenses are approximately an hour long in which the student presents and defends their work to the committee. The student’s thesis or project committee will review the final project, suggest any amendments and assess whether it should receive final committee approval. The thesis or project must be submitted to committee members at least two weeks prior to the meeting.

  Following an oral defense, the committee will meet privately following the presentation to decide to accept the work, to accept the work conditionally, or to reject the work. Work that is considered to be acceptable has met the stated goals set out in the thesis or project proposal. Work that is considered to be acceptable conditionally has failed to meet all the proposal goals, but adheres enough to proposal specifications so that the student can revise it successfully by following committee guidance. Unacceptable work has failed completely to adhere to stated proposal goals, and cannot be successfully revised absent major undertakings by the student to bring the work into line with the approved proposal.
The decision will be made by majority vote, with each committee member’s decision recorded. In the event that a majority cannot be obtained for one of the three options, the committee will meet again no later than two weeks later to continue its deliberations.

Should the committee pass the student’s thesis or project, the committee will designate the committee chair to oversee any minor or stylistic revisions before the work is finalized. If the committee gives the student’s work a conditional pass, the entire committee must review the revisions before a final decision is made on approval. If the committee rejects the work, the committee chair will provide reasons in writing within one week, along with options the student has to complete the program and/or challenge the decision.

Once the committee approves the thesis, students must adhere to the Graduate School’s formatting guidelines, then submit the finished thesis to the Graduate School electronically. The website for submission of a thesis is http://grad.msu.edu/etd/.

(Note: If you choose to complete Plan B with an internship, you do NOT need to create a committee.)

**Thesis/Project Standards**

A master’s thesis and a professional project must demonstrate excellence that both draws on the courses making up the program and displays the student’s original work. Obviously, each thesis or project will be unique, and the standards for evaluation of its merit will be specific to the goals set out in the approved proposal and the degree to which those goals have been met. In general, a thesis and project will also differ importantly in both focus of that goal and the audience for which they are relevant.

**Thesis**

Students taking the thesis option (Plan A) must allocate four to six credits to the thesis, depending on the number needed to reach the required 30 credits. Students must be registered for at least one credit at the time of their thesis completion.

A thesis is ordinarily a more traditional, scholarly work that draws on previous research to define a problem that the thesis can address with new knowledge or insights. Most thesis will focus on some aspect of the media-society relationship, attempting to describe that relationship and define influences on it. Consequently, a thesis is aimed at a scholarly audience attentive to research in the field for which the thesis is relevant. Therefore, the standards of evaluation applied to the thesis are those used to assess a work for a peer-reviewed, scholarly convention or publication.

Students who plan to write a thesis are strongly encouraged to review the Graduate School’s formatting guidelines (http://grad.msu.edu/etd/) prior to beginning the research project.
**Professional Project**

Students selecting the professional project options (Plan B) must allocate at least three credits to a professional project. Students must be registered for at least one credit at the time of their professional project completion.

A professional project similarly defines a problem, but one relating to social issues or developments that can be explored journalistically through the use of more advanced methods of news-gathering and dissemination. These methods may include research, the use of online databases and document searches, with the goal of interpretation and investigation. Dissemination may be through print, visual, digital or other means that demonstrate a student’s mastery of the chosen medium. Consequently, professional projects are aimed at a wide public audience. Therefore, the standards of evaluation applied to the professional project are those used in a medium to assess whether commitment should be made to disseminate a work because it could importantly influence a potentially wide audience.

**Internship**

For the internship application form to enroll in JRN 493, please see https://comartsci.msu.edu/journalism-internships-credit. Note, you will not be required to take JRN 200 prior to applying for JRN 493.

The internship option is intended to assist students in their professional careers by offering them an opportunity to gain professional experience during their master’s training. Presently, internship-option students register for JRN 493 (minimum of 3 credits, 16+ hours per week for one semester). Students fill out an internship application for a media/communications/journalism internship and the employer confirms their internship. Some internship placements include MSU Communication and Brand Strategy, Powers 96.5FM, Duet Digital Media Production, MSU Athletic Communications, GM Financial International, Lansing City Pulse, Unodeuce, WEY-TV, Society for Health Communication, Lansing Lugnuts, and HOMTV. Following the completion of the internship, employers fill out on a form to evaluate the student (https://comartsci.msu.edu/journalism-internships-credit). The internship coordinator reaches out to the employer twice during the semester to assess student progress. At the end of the semester, the internship coordinator passes/fails the student.
Special School of Journalism Programs

In addition to the regular master’s degree, the School of Journalism offers two special programs related to master’s-level work – the Linked Bachelor’s-Master’s program and the Journalism Graduate Certificate.

Linked Bachelor’s-Master’s Program in Journalism

The linked bachelor’s-master’s program allows undergraduates to use 9 credits of qualifying (journalism courses preferred) 400-level courses toward the 30 credits required for a master’s degree. The undergraduate courses should be completed the semester before they begin their master’s program. The start of linked master’s program begins the earliest semester in which they have transfer their courses from their undergraduate program. No 400-level courses with a grade lower than 3.0 will count toward the master’s degree. Credit obtained from 400-level pass/fail courses and internships will not count toward the degree. Undergraduate students who apply to the linked program must have at least 86 credits and apply prior to their final semester as a journalism major. Credits applied to the Linked Bachelor’s-Master’s Program are not eligible to be applied to any other graduate degreeprogram. Accepted students must get their course schedule plan approved during their first semester.

Admission:
1. A minimum overall undergraduate GPA of 3.5
2. Completion by graduation with a cumulative 3.0 GPA in these courses:
   JRN 108, 203 or (CAS 110, 111 and 112), 200, 300, 400 and 430
3. A completed online application that includes academic goals and personal statement such as applicant’s background. Note: the Graduate Record exam is NOT required.
4. Resume
5. A list of at least three references, two must be J-School faculty who can fill out a one-page reference form.

Journalism – Graduate Certificate

The Graduate Certificate in Journalism is designed to help students understand the fundamental processes of gathering, organizing, presenting and disseminating news and information in various text and visual forms for different news media platforms. Students learn how to use innovative media technologies and apply critical perspectives in understanding the influence and effects of media in society.

Admission:
To be considered for admission into the Graduate Certificate in Journalism, applicants must have completed a bachelor’s degree. The Certificate can be earned by students who are enrolled in a graduate program at MSU or by students who take the credits through Life-Long Education. For information about applying, contact Nancy Ashley(ashleyn@msu.edu)

Students are required to complete all of the following courses (9 credits):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course Code</th>
<th>Course Title</th>
<th>Credits</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>JRN 800</td>
<td>Multiple Media Reporting I</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JRN 815</td>
<td>Media, Society and Theory</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JRN 821</td>
<td>Social Media News and Information</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Policies on Academic Performance and Implications on Financial Aid

To graduate and to continue to receive financial aid, students in the master’s degree program in the School of Journalism need to maintain a minimum 3.0 grade point average. If a GPA dips below a 3.0, the student will need to either re-take a course or courses that resulted in a 2.5 or lower or enroll in a new course or courses to improve the GPA. Graduate students who receive financial aid will have one semester to improve their GPA to a 3.0 or higher to continue to receive the aid. If the student fails to improve the GPA, he or she will need to appeal for continued financial aid by going through the Satisfactory Academic Process in the Office of Financial Aid.

In addition, consistent with college policies, a student who obtains a 2.5 or lower in three or more courses, will be dismissed. A student withdrawn under this regulation is required to wait a minimum of one calendar year from the 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 2.5 or lower was received, 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 2.5 or below in any course numbered 400 or higher will result in permanent dismissal. Courses below the 400 level may also be included under this regulation at the discretion of the individual academic unit. While permission may be granted by the student’s academic unit chair and the associate dean of the College to repeat a course in which a grade of less than 3.0 has been earned, subsequently earning a grade of 3.0 or higher does not eliminate the first earned grade in the course as one of the two allowed under this regulation.

Students are also expected to complete their degree programs in the five-year limit set by the Graduate School. A student who exceeds that time limit must apply for a program extension with the Graduate Studies Director of the School of Journalism. Examples of valid reasons for extending the program beyond five years include family or medical emergencies and extraordinary work or study opportunities that relate to the graduate program. The Graduate Studies Director provides a recommendation on program extension to the associate dean for graduate education in the college, who makes the final decision (https://reg.msu.edu/AcademicPrograms/Text.aspx?Section=118#s1157).

File Access and Privacy

Students may be granted access to their files. The student may bring to the attention of the committee any errors in the file or information not in the file at the time the evaluation was made. Letters documenting the error may be addressed to the Graduate Affairs Committee and will be placed in the student’s file. Recommendation letters that have explicitly mandated confidentiality will be removed from the file before it is examined by the
student. In addition, any correspondence in the file concerning the student must be explicitly released to the student by the author(s) of those correspondences.

**Grief Absence Policy for Students**

For master’s (Plan A), master’s (Plan B) with research responsibilities, it is the responsibility of the student to: a) notify their advisor/major professor and faculty of the courses in which they are enrolled of the need for a grief absence in a timely manner, but no later than one week from the student’s initial knowledge of the situation, b) provide appropriate verification of the grief absence as specified by the advisor/major professor and faculty, and c) complete all missed work as determined in consultation with the advisor/major professor and faculty. It is the responsibility of the advisor/major professor to: a) determine with the student the expected period of absence—it is expected that some bereavement processes may be more extensive than others depending on individual circumstances, b) receive verification of the authenticity of a grief absence request upon the student’s return, and c) make reasonable accommodations so that the student is not penalized due to a verified grief absence. If employed as a RA or TE, the graduate student must also notify their employer. Both employer and student will swiftly communicate to determine how the student’s responsibilities will be covered during their absence. Graduate teaching assistants (TAs) should refer to the bereavement policy in the MSU GEU CBU Article 18. Students in the graduate professional colleges (CHM, COM, CVM, LAW) with their own grief absence policies are excluded from the above and should follow their own policies. Students who believe their rights under this policy have been violated should contact the University Ombudsperson.
Standards for Integrity


These policies encompass cheating and plagiarism, as well as the expectation and demand that graduate students conduct themselves with respect and consideration for faculty and students in the program. Cheating, plagiarism and conduct that is dangerous to the health and safety of others are all grounds for dismissal from the program.

In addition, students must conform to all college and university policies relevant to privacy, confidentiality and concern for harm in any work in the program involving animals, adult human subjects or children. Failure to follow these policies will result in immediate suspension of the work, the rectification of any harm done, and the review and appropriate revision of the student’s program. Such errors made in ignorance or good faith are not considered criteria for the student’s removal from the program. However, willful neglect or violation of such policies or repeated violations of such policies are considered criteria for removal from the program. Students should familiarize themselves with the Graduate School’s guidelines for Research and Scholarly Integrity at [http://grad.msu.edu/researchintegrity/](http://grad.msu.edu/researchintegrity/). In addition, MSU has provided access to "Ithenticate," the anti-plagiarism software that is available on Desire 2 Learn ([https://d2l.msu.edu/](https://d2l.msu.edu/)) as part of the "Turn-It-In" package. Ithenticate is set up so that faculty, postdocs, and graduate students can check their manuscripts for unintentional plagiarism before submitting them. Read more at: [http://tech.msu.edu/ithenticate/](http://tech.msu.edu/ithenticate/)
Student Conduct and Conflict Resolution

All university and college policies on resolving conflicts with students are followed by the School of Journalism. The university policy is detailed in Article 5, Adjudication of Cases Involving Graduate Student Rights and Responsibilities, in the document Graduate Student Rights and Responsibilities at Michigan State University, and can be found at http://splife.studentlife.msu.edu/graduate-student-rights-and-responsibilities/article-5-adjudication-of-cases-involving-graduate-student-rights-and-responsibilities. The School of Journalism policy on graduate student grievance procedures was passed in 2015. The procedures can be found in the Appendix. In general, the School seeks to resolve disputes as quickly and directly as possible. However, formal mechanisms can be created if a graduate student believes the informal resolution is impossible or undesirable.

Informal ways to correct grievances consist of conversations with faculty and/or staff over the nature and source of the grievance. In addition, the graduate student may talk with the director of the School of Journalism, with the chair of the graduate affairs committee and the committee as a whole (if desirable). The student may also talk with the university ombudsman in an attempt to resolve grievances. The functions and services of the Office of the Ombudsman is in the Appendix 6.

If the student wishes a more formal hearing on grievances within the School of Journalism, please consult the procedures in Academic Grievance Procedures for Master of Arts Students in the School of Journalism. (Please see the Appendix 7).
Work-Related Policies

Graduate students employed in teaching, research or other capacities in the School of Journalism are expected to perform their duties in accord with acceptable standards. This includes meeting all classes or attending all work hours required, handling the work professionally and competently, and providing adequate notice in the event that illness or emergency makes performance of duties impossible.

Teaching assistants are referred to the Graduate Employees Union website http://geuatmsu.org/ and the current GEU contract http://geuatmsu.org/geu-proposals/full-contract/ and to GSRR Article 4 http://spline.studentlife.msu.edu/graduate-student-rights-and-responsibilities/article-4-graduate-student-support for work-related policies and details of their health care plan.

Appointments

Any half-time and quarter-time assistantships appointment offers are normally made in spring or at the time that admission to the program is offered. Research and teaching assistantships are awarded based on merit and school research and teaching needs. They are renewable on a semester-by-semester basis depending upon performance, school needs and the availability of funds.

The J-School director will obtain a written evaluation of the student's assistantship each semester. When a student has the principal responsibility for teaching a course or section of a course, the director shall appoint one faculty member to supervise the teaching assistant each semester of the appointment. The faculty supervisor should visit the classroom at least once during the first semester the student teaches the course. Following the visit, the faculty member should meet with the assistant to discuss strengths and weaknesses in teaching. Whenever a student teaches a course, student evaluation forms are presented to the school director at the end of the term. When a student assists a faculty member in teaching a course, separate written term-end reports by the faculty member should be prepared and discussed by the two.

If an assistantship involves research responsibilities, the supervising faculty member should evaluate the student’s work. Unacceptable performance can result in loss of a student’s assistantship. Students and departments should consult university guidelines for further information.

The University requires that departments notify their graduate assistants that their appointments either are or are not being renewed for the following semester. The student’s faculty supervisor provides a written evaluation each semester. 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 serious 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.

Graduate students may be appointed to assistantships on a quarter-time, half-time, or three-quarter-time basis. Graduate assistants must be registered each semester in which
they hold an assistantship. Graduate assistantships are available only to students who are actively pursuing graduate degree programs and who are making satisfactory progress toward their degrees. The determination of what constitutes satisfactory progress is made by the Graduate Affairs Committee or by a student’s guidance committee as appropriate. Failure to maintain minimum academic standing requires no committee action to determine if work is unsatisfactory.

Work Rules

Minimum Work Hours

Normally during a semester, the weekly hours of graduate assistant duties will average:

- Quarter-time: 10 hours/weeks
- Half-time: 20 hours/weeks
- Three-quarter-time: 30 hours/weeks

Minimum Credit Registration

- Quarter-time: 6 credits
- Half-time: 6 credits
- Three-quarter-time: 3 credits

Maximum Credit Registration

- Quarter-time: 16 credits
- Half-time: 12 credits
- Three-quarter-time: 8 credits

Registration Standards:

No deviation from minimum registration is allowed except in summer sessions, when students must register for a minimum of three credits. Graduate assistants must be enrolled in graduate level courses unless the Graduate Affairs Committee has granted written permission otherwise. Visitor credits do not count toward the minimum. Any deviation from the maximum credit load rule must have the approval of the graduate affairs committee, the director of the school and dean of the college prior to registration for the semester in which additional hours are to be taken.

Grief Absence Policy for RAs, TEs and TAs

If employed as an RA or TE, the graduate student must also notify their employer. Both employer and student will swiftly communicate to determine how the student’s responsibilities will be covered during his or her absence. Graduate teaching assistants (TAs) should refer to the bereavement policy in the MSU GEU CBU Article 18. Students who believe their rights under this policy have been violated should contact the University Ombudsperson.
**Mandatory Training**

All TAs and RAs must complete the on-line training about the Relationship Violence and Sexual Misconduct Policy. To Access the training, login to the ORA training website at: [http://goo.gl/pLh01o](http://goo.gl/pLh01o). Click "Register," "Complete Registration" and then "Launch" to begin the Relationship Violence and Sexual Misconduct (RVSM) Policy - Faculty, Staff Training. (If it indicates that you have already registered, use "In Progress Training", then "Launch."). You will want to reserve approximately 30 minutes to complete all assignments. If you need assistance, contact the Helpdesk at 517-884-4600 or train@ora.msu.edu.

**Terms of Appointment and Leave**

Teaching and research assistants are expected to report for duty one week prior to the beginning of classes and to remain on duty until the day after final grades are submitted each 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 of for temporary leave must be obtained in writing, in advance, from the student’s faculty supervisor who will forward the request to the director for approval.
Tuition and Funding

1. Tuition Calculator [http://ctlr.msu.edu/COStudentAccounts/TuitionCalculatorFall.aspx](http://ctlr.msu.edu/COStudentAccounts/TuitionCalculatorFall.aspx)
2. In-state tuition eligibility [http://www.reg.msu.edu/ROInfo/FAQRO.aspx#InStateTuition1](http://www.reg.msu.edu/ROInfo/FAQRO.aspx#InStateTuition1)
5. Emergency Funds [https://grad.msu.edu/emergency-fellowship-funding](https://grad.msu.edu/emergency-fellowship-funding)
6. Council of Graduate Students Travel [https://cogs.msu.edu/resources/funding/conference-award/](https://cogs.msu.edu/resources/funding/conference-award/)
7. Graduate Office Fellowship (GOF): GOF funds are available through the 13 MSU colleges with graduate programs. Student must be enrolled in a degree-granting program, be enrolled in the semester they are to receive the funds, and be in good academic standing. The Associate Dean for Graduate Education of each college decides how these funds are dispersed. A number of different models are used. For acceptable practices used in your department, please contact your Director of Graduate Studies. Examples of how these funds have been used by departments in the college in the past include – but are not limited to: conference travel to support paper presentations, research support, merit, emergency funding and recruitment. Students who are requesting funding for travel to conferences should complete the Graduate School Travel Funding Request form ([https://grad.msu.edu/sites/default/files/content/fellowships/Travel%20funding%20application.pdf](https://grad.msu.edu/sites/default/files/content/fellowships/Travel%20funding%20application.pdf) The forms and all supporting documentation should be turned into the Grad Office (340 Com Arts). Students who are requesting funding for items other than travel should email the Director of Graduate Studies with their specific request. **Students should cc: the Grad Office at ashleyn@msu.edu**

8. Assistantships
   a. Information in regard to Graduate Assistantships can be found at the Grad School at [http://grad.msu.edu/assistantships/](http://grad.msu.edu/assistantships/)
   b. Assistantships are rarely awarded to M.A. students because priority is given to Ph.D. students.
      i. MA students interested in obtaining a Teaching Assistantship should send their resume and a cover letter to the department chair.
      1. MA students interested in obtaining a Research Assistantship should be directed to send their resume/vita and cover letter to faculty members actively participating in areas of research related to the student’s interest
Appendices
Appendix 1

JRN MA Required Courses Checklist

Directions: A completed and fully approved form must be turned into Grad Studies Coordinator, Nancy Ashley in the M.A. Studies Office (room 304) by the end of the 8th week of your first semester.

Note:
1. You must complete at least 30 credits in Plan A or B to graduate.
2. At least 18 of the 30 credits must come from 800- or 900-level JRN courses. (MSU requires at least 16 credits at the 800 or 900 level; the J-School requires 18 credits).
3. Thus, you can have a maximum of 12 credits from 400-level courses.
4. You can take a maximum of 12 credits outside the JRN program as approved by your adviser.
5. Also note, you can only take a maximum of 6 credits combined in an independent study (JRN 890) and/or internship (JRN 493).
6. If this checklist changes, please submit a new form to Nancy Ashley.

Requirements for Plan A (with thesis)
1. All of the following courses (13 to 15 credits):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Semester/Year</th>
<th>Course No.</th>
<th>Course Title</th>
<th>Credits</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>JRN 815</td>
<td>Media, Society &amp; Theory</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>JRN 825</td>
<td>Journalism History &amp; Qualitative Methods</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>COM 803</td>
<td>Intro to Quantitative Research Methods</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>JRN 899</td>
<td>Master’s Thesis Research</td>
<td>4-6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2. Complete 15 to 17 additional credits of elective course work approved by your adviser and the Graduate Studies Director. The additional credits may include a 9-credit transcriptable concentration in Environmental, Science and Health Journalism; Scholastic Journalism; or International Journalism.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Semester/Year</th>
<th>Course No.</th>
<th>Course Title</th>
<th>Credits</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Requirements for Plan B (without thesis)

1. All of the following courses (12 credits):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Semester/Year</th>
<th>Course No.</th>
<th>Course Title</th>
<th>Credits</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>JRN 800*</td>
<td>Multiple Media Reporting I</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>JRN 801</td>
<td>Multiple Media Reporting II</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>JRN 815</td>
<td>Media, Society &amp; Theory</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>JRN 816</td>
<td>Applied Research Methods in JRN</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Journalism 800 & 801 may be waived for students with appropriate background

2. Complete one of the following courses (3 credits):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Semester/Year</th>
<th>Course No.</th>
<th>Course Title</th>
<th>Credits</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>JRN 808</td>
<td>Journalism Education Visual Topics</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>JRN 821</td>
<td>Social Media News &amp; Information</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>JRN 873</td>
<td>Environmental Science &amp; Health JRN Seminars</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>JRN 875</td>
<td>Global Affairs Reporting</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3. Complete one of the following courses (3 credits):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Semester/Year</th>
<th>Course No.</th>
<th>Course Title</th>
<th>Credits</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>JRN 493 *</td>
<td>Journalism Professional Field Experience (Internship)</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>JRN 896</td>
<td>Journalism Professional Project</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4. Complete 12 additional credits of elective course work approved by your adviser and the Graduate Studies Director. The additional credits may include 9-credit transcriptable concentration in Environmental, Science and Health Journalism, Scholastic Journalism, or International Journalism.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Semester/Year</th>
<th>Course No.</th>
<th>Course Title</th>
<th>Credits</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Optional Concentrations

The following concentrations will fulfill elective requirements in either Plan A or Plan B.
Environmental, Science and Health Journalism
All of the following courses (9 credits):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Semester/Year</th>
<th>Course No.</th>
<th>Course Title</th>
<th>Credits</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>JRN 872</td>
<td>Environment, Science &amp; Health Reporting Topics</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>JRN 873</td>
<td>Environment, Science &amp; Health Journalism Seminars</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Any adviser- approved environmental, science, health or risk course.</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Journalism Education
All of the following courses (9 credits):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Semester/Year</th>
<th>Course No.</th>
<th>Course Title</th>
<th>Credits</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>JRN 808</td>
<td>Journalism Education Visual Topics</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>JRN 809</td>
<td>Journalism Education Advising Topics</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Any adviser-approved journalism education course.</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

International Journalism
Select 9 credits from the following:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Semester/Year</th>
<th>Course No.</th>
<th>Course Title</th>
<th>Credits</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>JRN 475</td>
<td>International News Govern Regional Dynamics</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>JRN 875</td>
<td>Global Affairs Reporting</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>JRN 887</td>
<td>Journalism Study Abroad Topics</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>JRN 492 / 892</td>
<td>Seminar in Journalism – Summer Study Abroad</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Any adviser-approved international course.</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix 2

Michigan State University School of Journalism

Instructions
Plan A Thesis Option

To fulfill the thesis requirements under Plan A, you must:

1. Meet with your academic adviser not later than the second semester of study to review possible thesis topics and thesis committee members.

2. File Form A-1 with graduate secretary after receiving approval from three faculty members to serve on thesis committee. Designate committee chair.

3. File Forms A-2 and A-3 with the graduate secretary upon receiving written approval of the thesis proposal from the thesis committee and final approval of the thesis for the thesis committee. Students may enroll in JRN 899 Thesis credits only after the Graduate Affairs Committee has approved the proposal. Note: The proposal should conform to the style outlined by the Graduate School http://grad.msu.edu/etd/. Allow two weeks for the committee to review the proposal. The School of Journalism subscribes to the university, college and school guide lines on academic honesty as explained in this Handbook. Violation of these guidelines could result in dismissal from the program.

Write a thesis proposal that includes:

1. a title page and a statement explaining the proposed study, its significance to the literature of journalism and/or mass media, the availability of primary and secondary research materials and sources, and the proposed methods of the study.

2. an outline of the proposed study.

3. a brief explanation of your educational and/or professional background, showing how this background establishes competency for undertaking the proposed research.

4. a preliminary bibliography of research materials and sources dealing with the specific subject matter.

Upon approval of thesis proposal (see Form A-2):

1. Conduct thesis research and write thesis under the supervision of your thesis director and Committee.

2. Submit copies of a draft of the thesis and an abstract to the committee members at least two weeks before the oral examination for comments and direction. The draft shall conform to the style outlined by the Graduate School http://grad.msu.edu/etd/.

3. Select a date, time and place for an oral examination acceptable to thesis committee members. Call the graduate secretary to schedule a room for the oral defense. Note: the oral examination deadline is prior to the seventh week of the semester in which you expect to graduate. Public notice shall be given of the defense.

4. Undergo an oral defense of your thesis. The thesis committee may approve or reject the thesis, or approve the thesis on condition that revision be made under the direction of the thesis director. (See Form A-3)

5. Meet the due dates and deadlines for the semester in which the degree is to be conferred. (See Schedule of Courses for the appropriate semester.)

6. Register during the semester in which thesis is defended. (You must minimally register for JRN 899.)

File an Application for Graduation Form with the Registrar’s Office no later than the fourth week of classes the semester before expected graduation date.
Appendix 2

Form A-1

School of Journalism Michigan State University

Designation of Thesis Committee

Student: ___________________________ Date: ______________

Examining Committee Requested by Student*

Proposed Chair: __________________________________________

Approved: ____________________________

Signature

Proposed 2nd Reader: __________________________________________

Approved: ____________________________

Signature

Proposed 3rd Reader: __________________________________________

Approved: ____________________________

Signature

Graduate Affairs Committee Approval

Director ____________________________

Member ____________________________

Member ____________________________

Member ____________________________

*Please attach abstract of research proposal

copies: student file
Appendix 2
Form A-2

School of Journalism Michigan State University

Approval of Thesis Proposal

Name: _______________________________________________________

Date: _______________________________________________________

Working Title of Thesis: ________________________________________

Thesis Director: _______________________________________________

Approved: ___________________________________________________

Signature

2nd reader: ___________________________________________________

Approved: ___________________________________________________

Signature

3rd reader: ___________________________________________________

Approved: ___________________________________________________

Signature

Proposed Starting Date: ________________________________

Proposed Completion Date: ________________________________

copies: student file

Revised 8/2018
Appendix 2
Form A-3

Michigan State University
Thesis Defense Report

Student’s name: ______________________________________________

Thesis title: ____________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________

Guidance Committee Signatures:

____________________________________________________________________
Thesis Director

____________________________________________________________________
2nd Reader

____________________________________________________________________
3rd Reader

____________________        Pass ____     Provisional Pass ____   Fail ____
Date of thesis defense

If provisional pass, indicate conditions:

____________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________

____________________        Pass ____     Provisional Pass ____   Fail ____
Date of second defense

__________________________________________________
Signature of Thesis Director

copies: thesis director
           student file

Revised 8/2018
Appendix 3

School of Journalism Michigan State University

Instructions
Plan B Project Option

To fulfill the project requirements under Plan B, you must:

1. Schedule an appointment with your academic adviser no later than the second semester, to review possible project topics and committee members.
2. File Form B-1 with graduate secretary after receiving acceptance from three faculty members to serve on your project committee. Designate a committee chair.
3. File Forms B-2 and B-3 with the graduate secretary upon receiving signed approval of the project proposal by your committee and final approval of the project from the Project Committee. Students may enroll in JRN 896 project credits, only after the committee has approved the proposal.

Write a project proposal that includes:

1. A title page and a statement explaining the proposed project, its significance to a definable public, the method that will be used and the media through which the work would be disseminated.
2. An outline of the proposed project.
3. A brief explanation of your educational and/or professional background, showing how this background establishes competency for undertaking the proposed project.
4. A preliminary bibliography of research materials and sources dealing with the specific subject matter.

Note: The proposal should conform to the style outlined by the Graduate School [http://grad.msu.edu/etd/](http://grad.msu.edu/etd/). Allow two weeks for the committee to review the proposal.

Upon approval of project proposal,

1. Conduct project research and write project under the supervision of your project director and committee.
2. Submit copies of a draft of the projects and an abstract to the committee members at least two weeks before the oral examination for comments and direction. The draft shall conform to the style outlined by the Graduate School. [http://grad.msu.edu/etd/](http://grad.msu.edu/etd/)
3. Select a date and time acceptable to the project committee members, for an oral examination. Call the graduate secretary to schedule a room for the oral defense. Note: the oral examination deadline is prior to the last class week of the semester in which you expect to graduate. Public notice shall also be given of the defense.
4. Undergo an oral defense of your project. The project committee may approve or reject the project, or approve the project on condition that revision be made under the direction of the project director. (See Form B-3)
5. Meet the due dates and deadlines for the semester in which the degree is to be conferred. (See Schedule of Courses for the appropriate semester)
6. Register during the semester in which project is defended. (You must minimally register for one credit of JRN 896).
7. File an Application for Graduation Form with the Registrar’s Office no later than the 4th week of classes the semester before expected graduation date.

NOTE: The School of Journalism subscribes to the university, college and school guidelines on academic honesty as explained in this Handbook. Violation of these guidelines could result in dismissal from the program. Revised 8/2018
Appendix 3
Form B-1

School of Journalism Michigan State University
Designation of Project Committee

Student: ________________________________ Date: ______________

Examining Committee Requested by Student*

Proposed Chair: ________________________________

Approved: ________________________________
Signature

2nd Reader: ________________________________

Approved: ________________________________
Signature

3rd Reader: ________________________________

Approved: ________________________________
Signature

Graduate Affairs Committee Approval

Director: ________________________________

Member: ________________________________

Member: ________________________________

Member: ________________________________

* Please attach abstract of project proposal for Graduate Committee’s review.

copies: student file

Revised 8/2018
Appendix 3
Form B-2

School of Journalism Michigan State University

Approval of Project Proposal

Name: _________________________________________ Date: __________________

Working Title of Project: ___________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

Project Director: ___________________________________
Approved: ___________________________________ 
Signature

2nd reader: ___________________________
Approved: ___________________________ 
Signature

3rd reader: ___________________________
Approved: ___________________________ 
Signature

Proposed Starting Date: ______________________________________________________

Proposed Completion Date: __________________________________________________

copies: student file

Revised 8/2018
Appendix 3
Form B-3  School of Journalism Michigan State University
Project Defense Report

Student’s name: ____________________________________________________________

Project title: _____________________________________________________________

___________________________________________________________________________

Guidance Committee Signatures: _____________________________________________

Project Director

___________________________________________________________________________

2nd Reader

___________________________________________________________________________

3rd Reader

___________________  Pass ____  Provisional Pass ____  Fail ____
Date of project defense

If provisional pass, indicate conditions: ____________________________________________

___________________________________________________________________________

___________________________________________________________________________

___________________  Pass ____  Provisional Pass ____  Fail ____
Date of second defense

___________________________________________________________________________

Signature of Project Director

copies: project director
student file

Revised 8/2018
Appendix 4

Annual Progress Report for Plan A Master’s Students (Thesis Track)

Name: _______________________________  Student PID Number: __________

Portion Completed by the Major Professor

Academic Performance

1. Has the student made acceptable progress during the evaluation period? Please comment below.

2. Please comment on the overall academic performance of the student, including teaching experience, if applicable.

_______________________________________________________

Student

Your signature below indicates that you have discussed the contents of this progress report with your major professor.

Student: _______________________________  Date: _________________

Major Professor

Your signature below indicates that you have discussed the contents of this progress report with the student.

Major Professor: _______________________________  Date: _________________

Dept/School Chair/Director

Date: _________________

When both the major professor and student have reviewed and signed this progress report, copies of the report should be given to the student and the major professor. The original progress report should be placed in the student’s file in the department/unit office. Students who wish to appeal any part of the major professor’s evaluation may do so in writing to the department chair/school director.

**Note:** Department/Units may choose to use this form for annual or academic year evaluations.
Appendix 4

Michigan State University
Annual Progress Report for Plan B Master’s Students
(Project/Internship Track)

Name: ____________________________________  Student PID Number: _____________

Portion Completed by the Student

**Academic Progress**

A copy of the current program of study should be attached to this report.

Date of entrance into program* ____________  Anticipated completion date ____________

*If admitted under provisional status, date provisional status removed: ____________

Date or anticipated date of certifying exam or evaluation
(Evaluation methods may differ across departments/units): _______________________

Are all program requirements completed?  _____ Yes  _____ No

If no, what requirements remain?

Most recent contact with the guidance committee/academic advisor: ______________________

Current GPA: _____________  Number of credits below 3.0: ___________________

Professional Performance and Potential

The student should attach the following information:

1. Professional goal statement for the year (noting both academic and career goals)
2. Goal statement for the next year
3. Vitae including
   • Presentations at professional conferences or meetings
   • Service to the department/school/college, if any
   • Any publications for lay or professional audiences
   • Participation with faculty on research projects or similar endeavors
   • Participation with faculty on community projects, workshops or other outreach efforts
4. Other

Comment briefly on your progress in achieving your academic goals during the past year. Note areas in which you are experiencing any difficulty.

Comment briefly on your progress toward achieving your career goals during the past year. If you feel you are not making progress, explain why. Include perceived department/school obstacles that hinder your program.
REQUEST TO CHANGE ADVISER

__________________________________________
requests __________________________________ as their adviser.
(print Student’s name)  (print new adviser’s name)

________________________________________________________________________
(Student’s signature)  (date)

________________________________________________________________________
(Adviser’s signature)  (date)

APPROVED:

________________________________________________________________________
(Graduate Director, School of Journalism)  (date)

Cc: Student
    Student File
REQUEST FOR CHANGES IN PLAN OF STUDY  
(coursework)

____________________________  _____________________  ______
(print Student’s name)  (signature)  (date)

I. Coursework - specify changes and rational:

_________ replace with _________ Rational: _______________________________

_________ replace with _________ Rational: _______________________________

_________ replace with _________ Rational: _______________________________

_________ replace with _________ Rational: _______________________________

_________ replace with _________ Rational: _______________________________

_________ replace with _________ Rational: _______________________________

________________________  _______________________  ______
(print adviser’s name)  (adviser’s signature)  (date)

APPROVED:

________________________________________  ______
(Graduate Director, School of Journalism)  (date)

Cc: Student
    Student File
Appendix 7

Academic Grievance
Procedures for Master of Arts
Students in the
School of Journalism
College of Communication Arts & Sciences Michigan State University

Each right of an individual places a reciprocal duty upon others: the duty to permit the individual to exercise the right. The student, as a member of the academic community has both rights and duties. Within that community, the student’s most essential right is the right to learn. The University has a duty to provide for the student those privileges, opportunities, and protections which best promote the learning process in all its aspects. The student also has duties to other members of the academic community, the most important of which is to refrain from interference with those rights of others which are equally essential to the purposes and processes of the University. (GSRR Article 1.2)

The Michigan State University Student Rights and Responsibilities (SRR) and the Graduate Student Rights and Responsibilities (GSRR) documents establish the rights and responsibilities of MSU students and prescribe procedures to resolve allegations of violations of those rights through formal grievance hearings. In accordance with the SRR and the GSRR, the School of Journalism’s M.A. program has established the following Hearing Board procedures for adjudicating graduate student academic grievances and complaints. (See GSRR 5.4.)

I. JURISDICTION OF THE School of Journalism M.A. PROGRAM HEARING BOARD:
   A. The Hearing Board serves as the initial Hearing Board for academic grievance hearings involving graduate students who allege violations of academic rights or seek to contest an allegation of academic misconduct (academic dishonesty, violations of professional standards or falsifying admission and academic records). (See GSRR 2.3 and 5.1.1.)

       B. Students may not request an academic grievance hearing based on an allegation of incompetent instruction. (See GSRR 2.2.2)

II. COMPOSITION OF THE HEARING BOARD:
   A. The Program shall constitute a Hearing Board pool no later than the end of the tenth week of the spring semester according to established Program procedures. Hearing Board members serve a one-year terms with reappointment possible. The Hearing Board pool should include both faculty and graduate students. (See GSRR 5.1.2 and 5.1.6.)

       B. The Chair of the Hearing Board shall be the faculty member with rank who shall vote only in the event of a tie. In addition to the Chair, the Hearing Board shall include an equal number of voting graduate students and faculty. (See GSRR 5.1.2, and 5.1.5.

       C. The Program will train hearing board members about these procedures and the applicable sections of the GSRR. (See GSRR5.1.3.)
III. REFERRAL TO THE HEARING BOARD:

A. After consulting with the instructor and appropriate unit administrator, graduate students who remain dissatisfied with their attempt to resolve an allegation of a violation of student academic rights or an allegation of academic misconduct (academic dishonesty, violations of professional standards or falsifying admission and academic records) may request an academic grievance hearing. When appropriate, the Department Chair, in consultation with the Dean, may waive jurisdiction and refer the request for an initial hearing to the College Hearing Board. (See GSRR 5.3.6.2.)

B. At any time in the grievance process, either party may consult with the University Ombudsperson. (See GSRR 5.3.2.)

C. In cases of ambiguous jurisdiction, the Dean of The Graduate School will select the appropriate Hearing Board for cases involving graduate students. (See GSRR 5.3.5.)

D. Generally, the deadline for submitting the written request for a hearing is the middle of the next semester in which the student is enrolled (including Summer). In cases in which a student seeks to contest an allegation of academic misconduct and the student’s dean has called for an academic disciplinary hearing, the student has 10 class days to request an academic grievance to contest the allegation. (See GSRR 5.3.6.1 and 5.5.2.2.)

E. If either the student (the complainant) or the respondent (usually, the instructor or an administrator) is absent from the university during that semester, or if other appropriate reasons emerge, the Hearing Board may grant an extension of this deadline. If the university no longer employs the respondent before the grievance hearing commences, the hearing may proceed. (See GSRR 5.4.9.)

F. A written request for an academic grievance hearing must (1) specify the specific bases for the grievance, including the alleged violation(s), (2) identify the individual against whom the grievance is filed (the respondent) and (3) state the desired redress. Anonymous grievances will not be accepted. (See GSRR 5.1 and 5.3.6.)

IV. PRE-HEARING PROCEDURES

A. After receiving a graduate student’s written request for a hearing, the Chair of the Department will promptly refer the grievance to the Chair of the Hearing Board. (See GSRR 5.3.2, 5.4.3.)

B. Within 5 class days, the Chair of the Hearing Board will:
   1. forward the request for a hearing to the respondent;
   2. send the names of the Hearing Board members to both parties and, to avoid conflicts of interest between the two parties and the Hearing Board members, request written challenges, if any, within 3 class days of this notification;
   3. rule promptly on any challenges, impanel a Hearing Board and send each party the names of the Hearing Board members. If the Chair of the Hearing Board is the subject of a challenge, the challenge shall be filed with the Dean of the College, or designee. (See GSRR 5.1.7.)
   4. send the Hearing Board members a copy of the request for a hearing and the written response, and send all parties a copy of these procedures.

C. Within 5 class days of being established, the Hearing Board shall review the request, and, after considering all requested and submitted information:
   1. accept the request, in full or in part, and promptly schedule a hearing.
2. reject the request and provide a written explanation to appropriate parties; e.g., lack of jurisdiction. (The student may appeal this decision.)

3. the GSRR allows the hearing board to invite the two parties to meet with the Hearing Board in an informal session to try to resolve the matter. Such a meeting does not preclude a later hearing. However, by the time a grievance is requested all informal methods of conflict resolution should have been exhausted so this option is rarely used. (See GSRR 5.4.6.)

D. If the Hearing Board calls for a hearing, the Chair of the Hearing Board shall promptly negotiate a hearing date, schedule an additional meeting only for the Hearing Board should additional deliberations on the findings become necessary, and request a written response to the grievance from the respondent.

E. At least 5 class days before the scheduled hearing, the Chair of the Hearing Board shall notify the respondent and the complainant in writing of the (1) time, date, and place of the hearing; (2) the names of the parties to the grievance; (3) a copy of the hearing request and the respondent’s reply; and (4) the names of the Hearing Board members after any challenges. (See GSRR 5.4.7.)

F. At least 3 class days before the scheduled hearing, the parties must notify the Chair of the Hearing Board the names of their witnesses and adviser, if any, and request permission for the adviser to have voice at the hearing. The chair may grant or deny this request. The Chair will promptly forward the names given by the complainant to the respondent and visa versa. (See GSRR 5.4.7.1.)

G. The Chair of the Hearing Board may accept written statements from either party's witnesses at least 3 class days before the hearing. (See GSRR 5.4.9.)

H. In unusual circumstances and in lieu of a personal appearance, either party may request permission to submit a written statement to the Hearing Board or request permission to participate in the hearing through an electronic communication channel. Written statements must be submitted to the Hearing Board at least 3 class days before the scheduled hearing. (See GSRR 5.4.9c.)

I. Either party to the grievance hearing may request a postponement of the hearing. The Hearing Board may either grant or deny the request. (See GSRR 5.4.8.)

J. At its discretion, the Hearing Board may set a reasonable time limit for each party to present its case, and the Chair of the Hearing Board must inform the parties of such a time limit in the written notification of the hearing.

K. Hearings are closed unless the student requests an open hearing, which would be open to all members of the MSU community. The Hearing Board may close an open hearing to protect the confidentiality of information or to maintain order. (See GSRR 5.4.10.4.)

L. Members of the Hearing Board are expected to respect the confidentiality of the hearing process. (See GSRR 5.4.10.4 and 5.4.11.)

V. HEARING PROCEDURES:

A. The Hearing will proceed as follows:

1. **Introductory remarks by the Chair of the Hearing Board:** The Chair of the Hearing Board introduces hearing panel members, the complainant, the respondent and advisers, if any. The Chair reviews the hearing procedures, including announced time restraints for presentations by each party and the witnesses, and informs the parties if their advisers may have a voice in the hearings and if the proceedings are being recorded. Witnesses shall be excluded from the proceedings except when testifying. The Chair also explains:
   - In **academic grievance hearings** in which a graduate student alleges a violation of academic rights, the student bears the burden of proof.
In hearings in which a graduate student seeks to contest allegations of academic misconduct, the instructor bears the burden of proof.

All Hearing Board decisions must be reached by a majority of the Hearing Board, based on a "clear and convincing evidence." (See GSRR 8.1.18.) (See GSRR 5.4.10.1 and 8.1.18.) For various other definitions, see GSRR Article 8.

2. If the complainant fails to appear in person or via an electronic channel at a scheduled hearing, the Hearing Board may either postpone the hearing or dismiss the case for demonstrated cause. (See GSRR 5.4.9a.)

3. If the respondent fails to appear in person or via an electronic channel at a scheduled hearing, the Hearing Board may postpone the hearing or hear the case in the respondent's absence. (See GSRR 5.4.9-b.)

4. If the respondent is absent from the University during the semester of the grievance hearing or no longer employed by the University before the grievance procedure concludes, the hearing process may still proceed. (See GSRR 5.3.6.1)

5. To assure orderly questioning, the Chair of the Hearing Board will recognize individuals before they speak. All parties have a right to speak without interruption. Each party has a right to question the other party and to rebut any oral or written statements submitted to the Hearing Board. (See GSRR 5.4.10.2.)

6. Presentation by the Complainant: The Chair recognizes the complainant to present without interruption any statements relevant to the complainant’s case, including the redress sought. The Chair then recognizes questions directed at the complainant by the Hearing Board, the respondent and the respondent’s adviser, if any.

7. Presentation by the Complainant’s Witnesses: The Chair recognizes the complainant’s witnesses, if any, to present, without interruption, any statement directly relevant to the complainant’s case. The Chair then recognizes questions directed at the witnesses by the Hearing Board, the respondent, and the respondent’s adviser, if any.

8. Presentation by the Respondent: The Chair recognizes the respondent to present without interruption any statements relevant to the respondent’s case. The Chair then recognizes questions directed at the respondent by the Hearing Board, the complainant, and the complainant’s adviser, if any.

9. Presentation by the Respondent’s Witnesses: The Chair recognizes the respondent’s witnesses, if any, to present, without interruption, and statement directly relevant to the respondent’s case. The Chair then recognizes questions directed at the witnesses by the Hearing Board, the complainant, and the complainant’s adviser, if any.

10. Rebuttal and Closing Statement by Complainant: The complainant refutes statements by the respondent, the respondent’s witnesses and adviser, if any, and presents a final summary statement.

11. Rebuttal and Closing Statement by Respondent: The respondent refutes statements by the complainant, the complainant’s witnesses and adviser, if any, and presents a final summary statement.

12. Final questions by the Hearing Board: The Hearing Board asks questions of any of the participants in the hearing.

VI. POST-HEARING PROCEDURES

A. Deliberation:

After all evidence has been presented, with full opportunity for explanations, questions and rebuttal, the Chair of the Hearing Board shall excuse all parties to the grievance and convene the Hearing Board to determine its findings in executive session. When possible, deliberations should take place directly following the hearing and/or at the previously scheduled follow-up meeting. (See Section IV.D above.)
B. Decision:

1. In grievance (non-disciplinary) hearings involving graduate students in which a majority of the Hearing Board finds, based on a "clear and convincing evidence," that a violation of the student's academic rights has occurred and that redress is possible, it shall recommend an appropriate remedy to the Department Chair or School Director. Upon receiving the Hearing Board's recommendation, the Department Chair or School Director shall implement an appropriate remedy, in consultation with the Hearing Board, within 3 class days. If the Hearing Board finds that no violation of academic rights has occurred, it shall so inform the Chair or Director. The Chair of the Hearing Board shall promptly forward copies of the final decision to parties and the University Ombudsperson. (See GSRR 5.4.11.)

2. In grievance (non-disciplinary) hearings involving graduate students in which the Hearing Board serves as the initial hearing body to adjudicate an allegation of academic dishonesty and, based on a "clear and convincing evidence," the Hearing Board finds for the student, the Hearing Board shall recommend to the Department Chair or School Director that the penalty grade be removed, the Academic Dishonesty Report be removed from the student's records and a "good faith judgment" of the student's academic performance in the course take place. If the Hearing Board finds for the instructor, the penalty grade shall stand and the Academic Dishonesty Report regarding the allegation will remain on file, pending an appeal, if any to the College Hearing Board within 5 class days of the Hearing Board's decision. If an academic disciplinary hearing is pending, and the Hearing Board decides for the instructor, the graduate student's disciplinary hearing before either the College Hearing Board or the Dean of The Graduate School would promptly follow, pending an appeal, if any, within 5 class days. (See GSRR 5.5.2.2, 5.4.12.3, and 5.5.2.2)

C. Written Report:

The Chair of the Hearing Board shall prepare a written report of the Hearing Board's findings, including recommended redress or sanctions for the complainant, if applicable, and forward a copy of the decision to the appropriate unit administrator within 3 class days of the hearing. The report shall indicate the rationale for the decision and the major elements of evidence, or lack thereof, that support the Hearing Board's decision. The administrator, in consultation with the Hearing Board, shall then implement an appropriate remedy. The report also should inform the parties of the right to appeal within 5 class days following notice of the decision, or 5 class days if an academic disciplinary hearing is pending. The Chair shall forward copies of the Hearing Board's report and the administrator's redress, if applicable, to the parties involved, the responsible administrators, the University Ombudsperson and the Dean of The Graduate School. All recipients must respect the confidentiality of the report and of the hearing board's deliberations resulting in a decision. (See GSRR 5.4.12 and 5.5.2.2)

VII. APPEAL OF THE HEARING BOARD DECISION:

A. Either party may appeal a decision by the Hearing Board to the College Hearing Board for cases involving (1) academic grievances alleging violations of student rights and (2) alleged violations of regulations involving academic misconduct (academic dishonesty, professional standards or falsification of admission and academic records.) (See GSRR 5.4.12.)

B. All appeals must be in writing, signed and submitted to the Chair of the College Hearing Board within 5 class days following notification of the Hearing Board's decision. While under appeal,
the original decision of the Hearing Board will be held in abeyance. (See GSRR 5.4.12, 5.4.12.2 and 5.4.12.3.)

C. A request for an appeal of a Hearing Board decision to the College Hearing Board must allege, in sufficient particularity to justify a hearing, that the initial Hearing Board failed to follow applicable procedures for adjudicating the hearing or that findings of the Hearing Board were not supported by the "clear and convincing evidence." The request also must include the redress sought. Presentation of new evidence normally will be inappropriate. (See GSRR 5.4.12.1, 5.4.12.2 and 5.4.12.4.)

VIII. RECONSIDERATION:
If new evidence should arise, either party to a hearing may request the appropriate Hearing Board to reconsider the case within 30 days upon receipt of the hearing outcome. The written request for reconsideration is to be sent to the Chair of the Hearing Board, who shall promptly convene the Hearing Board to review the new material and render a decision on a new hearing. (See GSRR 5.4.13.)

IX. FILE COPY:
The Chair of the Department shall file a copy of these procedures with the Office of the Ombudsperson and with the Dean of The Graduate School. (See GSRR 5.4.1.)
Approved by Faculty (Jan. 23, 2015)
Appendix 8

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 re-source. 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
354 Farm Lane, room 129
(517) 353-8830
ombud@msu.edu
https://www.msu.edu/unit/ombud/
J-SCHOOL STUDENT
CODE OF ETHICS
AND STANDARDS

Preamble
The faculty of the Michigan State University School of Journalism hold to the
highest professional standards of journalism—truth, fairness and accuracy.
For this reason and for the compelling needs of the profession, the School
expects its students to adhere to these same standards. Accordingly, the
faculty of the School developed this “Code of Ethics and Standards,” composed
of fundamental journalistic best practices as well as a description of potential
consequences for serious Code violations. This Code applies to students in
the School of Journalism while engaged in activities related to the mission,
values, processes and functions of the School, including participation in
journalism courses, J-School-sponsored organizations and external journalism
assignments.

As you progress through the J-School program, you will learn the complexities
of ethical behavior; for example, some conduct is legally permissible but
ethically wrong. We encourage you to ask us about any of the following
practices. By the time you graduate, it is the faculty’s expectation that you will
have developed a sound foundation to prepare you for the ethical, moral and
legal challenges of the profession. This Code is intended to serve as a guide
and a foundation for you as a working journalist.

This document will be available on the School of Journalism website. Undergraduate
students will be introduced to and will review this code in JRN 108: The World of Media
and JRN 200: Writing and Reporting News I. Journalism instructors will also refer to
this code in their syllabi and students agree they have read and understood this code
before taking an internship for credit. Graduate students will be given a copy of the
code upon acceptance to the master’s or Ph.D. programs.
BEST PRACTICES IN JOURNALISM

REPORTERS and PERSONAL CONDUCT

1. ADVOCACY AND OPINION Clearly distinguish advocacy from news reporting by labeling articles that include your point of view as analysis and/or commentary.

2. ATTRIBUTION Attribute all material obtained from sources in stories, columns, editorials, photos and illustrations.

3. AVOIDING BIAS Keep an open mind. Do not begin your reporting knowing what you want to come out of it.

4. COURSEWORK HONESTY The School strongly discourages submitting the same or similar work for credit in two or more courses. In a case where you are reporting on the same story for two different classes using two different media, you must seek prior approval from the instructor(s) involved.

5. FACT CHECKING Always double and triple check facts, spelling, addresses and titles for accuracy.

6. GRATUITIES Do not accept “freebies” — gifts or favors. Coffee at a press conference is not a freebie. A lunch at a speech is a freebie. If freebies are sent to you, donate them to a charity.

7. PERMISSION In public places or events such as a park, press conference, rally or protest, it is not necessary to obtain permission from a source to photograph, tape record or videotape. However, in private places, like residence hall rooms, homes, funerals and churches, you should obtain permission to do so. However, if either a tape recorder or a camera is clearly visible and operating, no notification is required. Also, do not use cell phones equipped with cameras to take “undercover” shots, but use them for breaking news photos of newsworthy events you witness.

REPORTERS and THEIR SOURCES

8. ACCURATE QUOTES When using indirect quotes or paraphrasing, strive to represent the source’s words and meaning accurately. Use a tape recorder or read the quotes back to the source to ensure accuracy. When using direct quotes, you must quote the source accurately.

9. APPROPRIATE SOURCES Avoid using classmates, friends, roommates, family members, etc., as sources for stories. If you are unable to avoid such an interview, you must obtain your instructor’s approval and, whenever possible, be clear when you have used a friend or family member as a source and identify them as such.

10. DIVERSITY Seek diverse sources. Diversity considerations include race, ethnicity, class, physical ability, geography, gender, religion, political orientation, sexual orientation, social status, age, educational background and economic standing.

11. IDENTIFICATION Identify yourself clearly to sources. You should identify yourself as a student reporting or completing an assignment for class, an MSU project, publication or outlet.

12. MULTIPLE SOURCES Do not use single source stories. Always use information from multiple sources from multiple sides of a story. Always make several attempts to contact all key sources, especially those who might come across in a bad light in the story, for the chance to offer their side.

Continued on the next page
13. NAMING SOURCES Using an unnamed source requires constant consultation with editors. Such sources should be included only when there is no other way to obtain the information and the information is vital to the story.

14. OFF THE RECORD Make every effort to find someone who will go “on the record” with the information. If you agree to go “off the record,” you must respect confidences. (Students should be familiar with the meaning of terms such as “off the record” and “background information,” as defined in these guidelines.)

15. RESPECT Be respectful when seeking and using interviews or photographs.

16. NEWS RELEASES Although it is a news release (printed, video, digital, etc.), students/reporters cannot cut and paste a news release into their stories—they must rewrite the material. Their work must be their own—otherwise, they are passing off someone else’s work as their work. Information, including that they are from a news release, must be clearly attributed. News releases should be submitted as a news source.

17. ETIQUETTE A word of advice . . . sources often ignore emails when the writer fails to adhere to basic email etiquette. When you contact a source, or your instructor, you must follow a protocol before pressing the SEND button:

- Provide an appropriate heading in the SUBJECT line of the email that can be keyworded easily later—e.g. “Jane Smith’s Grade” or “Coal Use Question”
- Begin with a courtesy greeting, called a SALUTATION. Use a title and last name. Unless your recipient has already given you permission to use their first name or signs off with a first name in their emails to you, your salutation should be formal with correct punctuation—e.g. “Dear Dr. Ogundimu,” or “Hello, Professor Ogundimu,” or “Professor Ogundimu,”
- Say why you are writing in the BODY of the email.
- End your message by signing off with a CLOSING and your name, on two separate lines: “Thank you, Jane Smith” or “I appreciate your time, Jane Smith”

18. IDENTIFYING JUVENILES AND VICTIMS Be cautious about identifying juvenile suspects or victims and about identifying victims of sexual assault of any age.

19. IDENTIFYING ALLEGED PERPETRATORS Do not use the name of an alleged perpetrator until the prosecutor issues an arrest warrant.

*The definitions below are from the University of Queensland’s School of Journalism’s Code of Ethics. “On the record” means the information may be broadcast or published with attribution.

“Off the record” means the information given by a source may not be used—either with or without attribution. Should another source offer the information on the record and independently of the first source, it would okay to use that information.

“Background information” means the information may be used but without attribution to the source.

Entering into an “off-the-record” relationship with a source should be treated with great caution because of the ethical problems involved. You should be very wary of stories that cannot be sourced. A source will sometimes attempt to apply an “off the record” disclaimer retrospectively. You are not obligated to accede to such an instruction/demand/request.

Be sure to clarify the status of the remarks when the source uses terms like “off the record.” Meanings vary, and it is possible a source may mean “background” or “not for attribution” when using the term “off the record.” Seek a clear understanding of the meaning intended.
## CODE VIOLATIONS

### SERIOUS CODE VIOLATIONS

1. **Do not plagiarize.** Plagiarism occurs when you fail to attribute information, passing it on as your own work.

2. **Do not fabricate information.**

3. **Do not practice “checkbook journalism.”** Do not pay for information other than fees required by local, state or federal authorities, such as materials obtained through the Freedom of Information Act.

4. **Do not go “undercover” or misrepresent who or what you are without your instructor’s and the Director of the School of Journalism’s prior approval.**

5. **Do not alter or distort the content** of news photos or video. Image enhancement for technical clarity, however, is permissible. Label photo illustrations, staged photos or re-enactments as such.

### PENALTIES FOR CODE VIOLATION(S)

Students who commit ethical offenses while enrolled in a journalism course may receive one of the following grade penalties, as determined by the instructor in consultation with the Director of the School of Journalism:

- A failing grade on the assignment
- A failing grade in the course.

In addition, the instructor, director or dean may call for an academic disciplinary hearing to impose a sanction in addition to a penalty grade, in accordance with Articles 2.4.6 and 4.3.1.1 of the Academic Freedom for Students at Michigan State University document. Sanctions include, but are not limited to:

- Denial of admission to the School of Journalism as a major. (Journalism preference students who violate the Code may be denied admission to the School as a junior.)
- Dismissal from the School of Journalism as a major.
- Suspension from Michigan State University.

In addition to the Code, students in the School of Journalism are expected to comply with other University policies regarding academic integrity, such as General Student Regulation 1.0, Protection of Scholarship and Grades, and the University policy on Integrity of Scholarship and Grade. (See Spartan Life: Student and Handbook and Resource Guide.)

### OTHER CODES OF ETHICS

The Independent Press Council compiled about 370 journalism codes of ethics adopted by news organizations and societies worldwide. While codes vary, most share these concepts: “truthfulness, accuracy, objectivity, impartiality, fairness and public accountability.” Students are encouraged to review professional codes of ethics authored by the following organizations:

- American Society of Newspaper Editors
- Journalism.org Professional Guidelines and Tools
- Poynter Institute
- Radio-Television News Directors Association and Foundation
- Society of Professional Journalists
10 TIPS TO GUIDE SOCIAL MEDIA USE

The faculty of Michigan State University’s School of Journalism extend the highest standards of professional journalism—truth, fairness and accuracy—to the use of Social Media (SM) in gathering, reporting and disseminating news created for J-School courses and J-School sponsored organizations. We recognize the powerful role SM has in mass communication. Thus, we encourage students to use these sites, but only after you have tried to interview multiple sources.

Realize that when you are using these sites for personal and professional reasons, you represent the School of Journalism. General guidelines to follow as you use SM: Think of SM sites as tip generators, not as the only source of information; “Do no harm” and “Avoid the appearance of bias.”

Aided by guidelines written by The Associated Press, NPR, Arizona State University’s Walter Cronkite School of Journalism and Mass Communication, students and faculty in MSU’s School of Journalism and others, we’ve provided 10 Best Practices to Guide Social Media Use as an addendum to the J-School Code of Ethics and Standards:

1. Never lift quotes, photos or video from social media sites and attribute them to the website address or owner of the site. Do some digging. Most SM sites provide contact information; use the information to email, call or set up a face-to-face interview with the site’s owner to explain your story and get new information.

2. When using photos, videos or other multimedia content from social networks in news stories, determine who controls the copyright to the material and get permission from that person or organization to use it. If appropriate, link the content to the original site.

3. Be transparent with your instructors, supervisors, editors and audience when using information drawn from an SM site or via an email from the site’s author. Let them know in the story how and in what context you contacted sources and gathered information and how you verified that information or sought to verify it.

4. Make corrections quickly and be transparent, admitting to and explaining the mistake, and why it needed to be corrected. “If you misunderstood something, acknowledge it.”

5. Remember that messages on the Internet are public, permanent and Re-Tweet-able. Don’t put anything on the Internet that you’d be embarrassed to see on the front page of The New York Times, i.e. inappropriate images or accusations without verified support. Also, assume that your post will be seen by the target of your criticism and know that like other media, Tweets can give rise to a defamation lawsuit.

6. Avoid the appearance of bias. Friend, liking and following sources are necessary to get information for your stories. If you think it might make you look like partisan, indicate that you are a (student) journalist on your page/bio.

7. Obtain consent from sources, disclosing who you are, what you are

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seeking and where your story will and/or could run. The informality of social networking sites makes it easier for potential sources to misunderstand your intentions and the impact of cooperating.**

8. Be cautious when dealing with minors and other vulnerable people who might not fully understand the consequences of cooperating with a journalist. If contacting a child through an SM site, make sure he or she connects you with a responsible adult.***

9. Report improper online behavior. It is important for you to engage with those who consume your content. However, if it becomes abusive, bigoted, obscene and/or racist, contact your instructor and campus police immediately. ****

10. Protect yourself. If you find it necessary, you may want to manage more than one SM account, one for professional and the other for personal use. Also, consider customizing your privacy settings on your accounts to determine what you share and with whom.*****

REFERENCES


6. “Social Media Guidelines for AP Employees.”

7. Thea Card, feedback from a student in JRN 400 Spartan Online Newsroom, spring 2012.


16. “Social Media Guidelines for AP Employees.”

17. “Social Media Guidelines for AP Employees.”

Appendix 13

College of Communication Arts and Sciences
Michigan State University

Policy Regarding Training in the Responsible and Ethical Conduct of Research¹

Background:

Michigan State University (MSU) College Communication Arts and Sciences (CAS) strives to foster a research environment of ethical and responsible research conduct. CAS discourages research misconduct, and responds promptly to allegations or evidence of possible research misconduct. This document outlines the CAS policy on training and regulation of integrity in research and publication.

The Federal and Michigan State University Offices of Research Integrity outline procedures to help ensure the quality and integrity in research. These bodies recommend a combination of self-regulation, adherence to individual and professional standards, and reference to research traditions and best practices that characterize academic research institutions.

Purpose:

This policy is to establish a plan for complying with Section 7009 of the America Creating Opportunities to Meaningfully Promote Excellence in Technology, Education, and Science (COMPETES) as implemented by the National Science Foundation (NSF) and the NIH Responsible Conduct of Research Notice (NOT-OD-10-019), to provide training and oversight in the responsible and ethical conduct of research to undergraduate, graduate, and postdoctoral researchers supported by NSF and NIH funding to conduct research and research-related activities. Adherence to this policy is also strongly recommended for individuals from CAS who engage in any type of research activity.

Responsible Conduct of Research is defined as conducting research in ways that fulfill the professional responsibilities of researchers, as those responsibilities are defined by their professional organizations, Michigan State University (MSU) and, when relevant, governmental and other entities that support and regulate research. Research integrity is defined as the quality of possessing and steadfastly adhering to high professional principles, standards, and obligations, as prescribed by professional organizations, MSU, and, when relevant, governmental and other entities that support and regulate research. Research Ethics is defined as the critical study of the moral problems associated with, or that arise in the course of, pursuing research.

Applicability:

This policy applies to the following individuals, henceforth referred to as “Researchers”:

- Undergraduates, graduate students, and postdoctoral researchers supported by NSF funding to conduct research and research-related activities².
- Scholars receiving NIH Institutional Research Training Grants, Individual Fellowship Awards, Career Development Awards (Institutional and Individual), Research Education Grants, Dissertation Research Grants, or other grant programs with a training component.
- Graduate and postdoctoral students working on research activities in CAS.³
Michigan State University Student Affairs and Services states, “Student health and well-being is central to academic success. Michigan State University provides information and services to help students develop and maintain good physical, psychological, and emotional health.” A variety of services are at your disposal in support of wellness. Resource: http://studentaffairs.msu.edu/health-wellness-safety/index.html

One important resource for special consideration is MSU’s Counseling and Psychiatric Services. Resource: https://caps.msu.edu/

This includes 24-hour access for all MSU students to a counselor for emotional or mental health services through a phone app to talk or instant message. The My SSP app, https://appadvice.com/app/my-ssp/1112006222, is available to all students (both undergraduate and graduate) and has proven highly beneficial, and now will complement existing on-campus mental health services. You are eligible for counseling on a walk-in bases at Counseling Services, which is housed on the 3rd floor of Olin Health Center (463 East Circle Drive). Resource: https://caps.msu.edu/services/index.html#IndCoup.

In September 2018, a second Counseling and Psychiatric Services, or CAPS, location will open on the third floor of the MSU Student Union. It will house 8-10 counselors, expanding capacity to reach more students each year. In total, 10 new positions have been added to our Counseling and Psychiatric Services.

Emergency mental health supports should be sought through more immediate resources. Resource: https://caps.msu.edu/emergency/index.html

If you have concerns regarding an individual other than yourself, you are encouraged to take action. Resource: https://caps.msu.edu/services/help-a-friend.htm