



DREXEL UNIVERSITY

College of

Arts and Sciences

Communication

GRADUATE PROGRAMS IN COMMUNICATION, CULTURE AND MEDIA

Student Handbook

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Program overview

Welcome from the Program Director

Dear CCM Students,

I am delighted to welcome you to the MS and PhD programs in Communication, Culture and Media at Drexel University. This promises to be an exciting year of educational opportunities and experiences designed to provide you with knowledge, skills, and tools to become an exemplary researcher.

You are here because each of you possess great promise to make extraordinary contributions to the social sciences. All the CCM administrators and faculty pledge to give you the best educational experience. We anticipate that you will see yourselves as partners with us on this journey.

Do not hesitate to reach out to your CCM faculty for any questions or concerns.

You have our best wishes for a productive and successful year.

Sincerely,

Ernest A. Hakanen, Ph.D.

Professor of Communication, Culture and Media

Director of CCM

Department of Communication

Drexel University

Editor and Chief, *Explorations in Media Ecology: The Journal of the Media Ecology Association*

About the CCM Program

The mission of Drexel's graduate program in Communication, Culture and Media is to create new areas of interdisciplinary inquiry and to educate emerging scholars in pursuing bold, original, and socially meaningful research.

The Master's and the Doctorate programs are highly interdisciplinary, drawing from the fields of communication, sociology, anthropology, and linguistics. Graduate students examine these disciplines through multiple critical and empirical lenses, including Marxism; poststructuralism; phenomenology; feminism and queer theory; critical theory; narrative and other discourse analysis; and media representation.

The work of communication, culture and media faculty and students covers a wide range of topics. Some work on consumer culture and commodification, while others study health communication and political topics involving conflict and collective morality. A number work on projects affiliated with Drexel's Center for Mobilities Research and Policy. New media studies is a common critical focus in research.

In terms of research approaches, our communication graduate programs strongly favor mixed methodologies. While some faculty conduct content, network, and other statistical analyses, others are more qualitatively oriented, engaged in discourse analysis, in-depth interviews, and ethnography. Many of the faculty cross these methodological divides, equally sympathetic to all.

The PhD program in Communication, Culture and Media develops innovative scholar-teachers who know how to impart theories and studies on the interaction of social forces and communication. Our graduates are trained as committed researchers in quantitative and qualitative approaches to communication study. The program also encourages interdisciplinary approaches to the study of communication and media through faculty strengths in anthropology, communication, linguistics, and sociology.

The Master's of Science Program (MS) in Communication, Culture and Media is a great choice for academically oriented students who wish to learn the basics of research and theory in communication and media studies, possibly to test the waters for further study, or to explore a personal fascination with mass media, mediated communication, cultural studies, social change and media. The program also encourages interdisciplinary approaches to the study of communication and media through faculty strengths in anthropology, communication, linguistics, and sociology.

Drexel University is a quarter hour institution with four academic quarters per year, each quarter ten weeks in length, excluding registration and examinations. Each course carries three quarter-hour credits unless otherwise specified.

Unanticipated problems or unique situations may occur, and are resolved through mutual consultation between the student, the appropriate faculty member or advisor, and the Department of Communication faculty who ultimately make decisions guided by their collective and best professional judgment.

Communication Department Contacts

The Department is located at 3201 Arch Street, Suite 100. The phone number is 215-895-2456. Once you become a graduate student, your student I.D. should gain you access to the building. Student IDs are available at the Dragon Card office in the Creese Student Center at 33rd and Chestnut Streets.

Communication, Culture and Media Program

Program Director	Dr. Ernest Hakanen	Room 149	215-895-5804	eah22@drexel.edu
Program Coordinator	Nicole Pearson	Room 151	215-895-2524	nmp39@drexel.edu

Department of Communication

Department Head	Dr. Hilde Van den Bulck	Room 152	215-895-0245	hdv26@drexel.edu
Department Administrator	Sharon Wallace	Room 150	215-895-2456	skw@drexel.edu

CCM Faculty

A listing of all CCM Faculty members, along with their contact information, can be found at the online [Directory](#).

University Resources

Administrative Offices

Bursar's/Cashier's Office	Main Building 1st floor	215-895-1600	Tuition payment, signing Stafford Loan checks, paychecks.
Financial Aid	Main Building Room 224	215-895-1081	Questions regarding Financial Aid
Drexel Central	Main Building Room 106 or online	215-895-1600	Information on registration, financial aid, billing, academics, transcripts, etc.
Human Resources	3201 Arch Street Suite 430	215-895-2850	Work Study students should complete and return forms for payment.
Payroll	3201 Arch Street 4th Floor	215-895-2885	Paychecks for Work Study students
Student Receivables	3201 Arch Street 4th Floor	215-895-1445	Billing problems; credit for financial aid; employer- assisted tuition deferred payment

Services

For information on:

- [Graduate College](#)
- [Student Services](#)
- [International Students and Scholars Services](#)
- [Counseling and Health Services](#)
- [Drexel Student Health Plan](#)
- [Information Technology](#)
- [Drexel Central](#)
- [Off-Campus Housing](#)
- [Graduate On-Campus Housing](#)
- [Transportation](#)
- [Drexel Libraries](#)*

*Graduate students at Drexel can also borrow books from other libraries, including [the libraries of the University of Pennsylvania](#). Ask for a Reciprocal Borrowing Form from the reference desk at Hagerty Library. Take that form to a library at Penn, and you can get a courtesy card. Be sure to take your Drexel ID when you go to Penn's libraries. The number for the Van Pelt Library, located at 34th and Walnut Streets, is 215-898-7555. Visit Drexel Libraries information on [borrowing from other libraries](#).

Academic Calendars and Campus Maps

- [Academic Calendars](#)
- [Events Calendar](#)
- [Campus Directions and Map](#)

Registration

Students register for classes online through the DrexelOne Portal. Students can look up courses each term in the [Term Master Schedule](#) by clicking the desired quarter, college, and department.

Log on to the [DrexelOne](#) with your e-mail ID and password. (Visit [Drexel IT](#) to find out how to activate your e-mail account.)

1. Click on the “Academics” tab
2. In the Registration Box, select “Register for Courses”
3. Select the term you are registering for
4. Enter the CRN* number(s) of the course(s) you are trying to register for

*A CRN is a course registration number. This number can be found in the Term Master Schedule by clicking “Review the Term Master Schedule” under the Academics tab in Drexel One.

On Drexel One, you can register for classes, check your grades, financial aid information, etc. Incoming graduate students can register for classes this way before they arrive at Drexel for their first term. Drexel Central will assign you a registration time ticket each term. Go to the [Registration page](#) for more information on registration time tickets or contact the department office.

Course Program of Study and Financial Aid

To meet financial aid requirements for loans and loan deferrals, students must be enrolled at least half-time. At the graduate level, that is at least 4.5 credits per term. Only courses which apply to a specific academic program are eligible for most financial aid. Drexel uses a technology referred to as [Course Program of Study](#) (CPoS) to track registration and make sure aid is only applied to qualified courses.

Realistically, since most graduate courses are three credits each, this means students using financial aid to pay for their education or who have loans in deferral while enrolled will need to register for two courses/six credits each term to qualify. In particular, because a Drexel master’s program requires 45 credits, this will leave MS students taking two courses per term with one final term when they only have three credits required to complete their degree. Adding an unnecessary course does not help because it will not apply to the degree and therefore is not eligible for aid. If you will be affected, please reach out to the program manager as soon as possible to potential mitigation strategies.

Questions about financial aid should be directed to [Drexel Central](#).

Applying for Graduation

Students must apply for graduation. The application deadline is the Monday of Week 5 of the term in which they will graduate. The Graduate College [Graduation Requirements](#) page has updated information on dates, deadlines and the application process. Drexel students need to be registered for at least one credit during the term in which they graduate.

Master's Program

The Master of Science in Communication, Culture and Media requires 45.0 credits of graduate-level coursework and a major research or critical paper that has come out of the student's work while in the program. Almost half of the credits in the program are electives, allowing students to tailor their program to best meet their career goals and interests. A listing and description of all courses in CCM are available in the [Graduate Course Catalog](#).

As per Drexel University Graduate Policy, all program requirements must be completed within five years of a student's initial date of matriculation, including any time spent on a leave of absence. Anyone who exceeds this time may be subject to academic dismissal and would need to apply for Readmission. Students needing more than the allotted time can apply to the Graduate College for a [Program Extension](#).

For students who need to take a break from their studies, Drexel allows a [Leave of Absence](#) of up to three quarters. Once a student is unregistered for four consecutive terms, they will need to apply for Readmission to the program to rejoin their studies.

Curriculum

Coursework

Core Requirements		6.0
COM 610	Theories of Communication and Persuasion	3.0
CCM 704	Research Methods in Communication, Culture and Media	3.0
Required Electives:	Students must choose three of the following options	9.0
CCM 710	Mass Communication and American Social Thought	3.0
CCM 715	Media, Advocacy and Public Spaces	3.0
CCM 725	Political Communication	3.0
CCM 740	Consumer Culture	3.0
CCM 750	Political Economy of Media	3.0
CCM 760	The Body Digital: Biopolitics and New Media	3.0
Additional CCM Electives:	Students choose three courses from the CCM rubric at 500-level or above. There are several possible electives in CCM, including special seminars at the 800-level.	9.0
Additional Free Electives:	Students choose seven additional courses for a total of 21.0 credits. Any appropriate graduate course offered at the University can serve as an elective if the student has sufficient background to take the course. Suggested courses for free electives might also include: CCM, COM, STS, PLCY, AADM, TVMN, and ENVP.	21.0

Academic Paper

The MS degree requires the review by two faculty members of a major research or critical paper that has come out of the student's work while in the program. MS students should select a paper written for a CCM course that best represents their interests. They present the paper for review to the professor who taught the course and another CCM faculty of the student's choosing. The faculty should inform the program coordinator of a pass/failure. This must be done by Week 8 of the student's final term.

Transfer Credit

Transfer of graduate courses from elsewhere must be approved by the program director. At least 30 credits towards the degree must be taken at Drexel. Students must receive pre-approval of transfer credit before taking a course at another institution.

Independent Study

For MS CCM students, there is a limit of 6 quarter hours of independent study credits acceptable for the degree requirements. All students in the MS CCM program can propose a topic for an independent study at any time. A proposal is required and should be submitted for approval by the Friday of Exam Week **before** the start of the term in which the independent study will be taken. You may obtain a proposal form from the program coordinator.

An independent study is an agreement between a student and full-time faculty member to pursue a course of study. They are restricted to students who:

1. want to study a topic beyond an offered course,
2. want to take a course not offered but does fall within the area of expertise of a faculty member, or
3. need a requirement that was not offered during the student's tenure.

Satisfactory Academic Progress

Students will be required to meet the minimum standards set forth for good [Academic Standing](#) by Drexel's Graduate College. A graduate student must maintain a minimum 3.00 term and cumulative GPA to progress toward graduation. Students not achieving minimum standards are subject to Academic Probation and may be subject to Academic Dismissal. Policies related to Academic Standing are upheld and overseen by the Graduate College under the [Office of the Provost](#).

Doctoral Program

Curriculum

The PhD requires either a minimum of 90.0 credits beyond a bachelor's degree or 45 credits beyond a master's degree, including coursework and research credit. Students *do not need* a master's degree to enter the program. The PhD coursework is structured around a set of required core courses, a set of required seminars with rotating topics, and electives in graduate communication lecture courses,

independent study work, and dissertation credit. A listing and description of all courses in CCM are available in the [Graduate Course Catalog](#).

All students in the program take five common core courses (CCM 701-705). They then take at least five courses from CCM 800-level seminar offerings. Students are encouraged to take additional seminars after meeting that requirement, since seminar courses enable collaborative relationships with professors and introduce students to the scholarly community. In addition to course work, students will be assigned required teaching and research duties in the fall, winter and spring terms.

In addition to completing the core requirements and seminar sequence, students take additional courses from existing graduate level lecture courses (depending on their interests and research needs). Students may take up to two graduate courses (six credits) outside the department. Additional credits to meet the 90.0 credit requirement will come from independent study and dissertation credits.

Program Requirements

Core Courses		15.0
CCM 701	Contemporary Social Theory	3.0
CCM 702	Communication Theory I: Persuasion and Media Effects	3.0
CCM 703	Communication Theory II: Discourse and Semiotics	3.0
CCM 704	Research Methods in Communication, Culture and Media	3.0
CCM 705	Data Analysis in Communication	3.0
Seminars:	Students select 15 credits from the five categories of seminars*	15.0
CCM 801	Seminar in Contemporary Theory	3.0
CCM 802	Seminar in Discourse and Semiotics	3.0
CCM 803	Seminar in Structural and Cultural Dynamics	3.0
CCM 804	Seminar in Research Methodology	3.0
CCM 805	Seminar in Communication Ethics	3.0
Communication, Culture & Media Electives:	Ten courses are required, for a total of 30.0 credit hours of electives. These may be chosen from CCM 500 to CCM 800 level courses, including 800 level seminars that are a different topic from earlier courses taken.	30.0
Dissertation Credits/Additional Electives **		30.0
CCM 998	PhD Dissertation Research in Communication, Culture & Media	1.0-12.0

For the dissertation, students work with a principal advisor, one of the Communication, Culture and Media Program grad faculty, and no less than two additional faculty from within the department.

Students must find one additional outside reader, and students may bring in up to two outside readers.

Total Credits

90.0+

*There are five categories of seminar: one in which students learn advanced work and influences on a specific theorist or theoretical school; one in which students learn about theories of language, discourse and the sign; one that teaches the paradigm of structural dynamics central to social sciences theory and research; one in which students study a research methods approach; and one that deals with approaches to research ethics. Students must take a seminar in each area ([CCM 801](#), [CCM 802](#), [CCM 803](#), [CCM 804](#), [CCM 805](#)). Seminars can be repeated, with a maximum of three courses taken in each area, as long as the subject covered is different each time.

**Students may take up to six credits of graduate-level courses outside of the Communication, Culture and Media program rubric. Classes outside the College of Arts and Sciences require approval from the program director.

Advising

New doctoral students should schedule a meeting with the program director and program coordinator during their first term. This serves as a “get to know you” opportunity, so that everyone has a sense of the student’s goals and interests. During this meeting, a tentative plan of study will be created. The plan of study serves to assist the student in making choices among courses and the attainment of professional objectives. It will address faculty the student might work with, courses to be taken, required examinations, and teaching assignments.

At this time, the student can begin to map out their program using the Graduate College’s [E-Forms: Road to PhD](#) system. Students complete the first two tabs, Supervising Professor (appointing for now the program director) and Plan of Study. Instructions in the form of a Getting Started video and E-Forms Guide can be found on the [Graduate College site](#) under Doctoral Forms. The student is expected to make satisfactory progress by keeping pace with the Plan of Study.

Annual Review and Satisfactory Academic Progress

Students will be required to meet the minimum standards set forth for good [Academic Standing](#) by Drexel’s Graduate College. Students in the doctoral program in Culture & Communication must maintain university wide standards, as well as the GPA standards of the doctoral program in Culture and Communication. Each year after doctoral candidacy is attained, a review of progress will be conducted and recorded via the E-Forms system.

Students must maintain a GPA of 3.5 or higher throughout their doctoral work to graduate. Failure to maintain the minimum 3.5 cumulative grade point average will result in placement on probation. Any student on probation must not only achieve a 3.5 cumulative average within two successive terms following the term in which the deficiency occurred, but also maintain at least a 3.5 term average in any term in which he or she is on probation. Failure to meet either of those requirements will result in dismissal from the CCM doctoral program.

Additionally, CCM guidelines require that students receive an “A” grade in four of the five required core courses. One course in the core may be repeated for a better grade. Students who fail to progress in

completion of coursework will be put on departmental probation and evaluated by the program director in the student's annual advising sessions.

Time to Completion

The CCM doctoral program is designed to be completed in five years, although students who enter with a master's degree may be able to complete all requirements in four years. These are general guidelines and there may be variability in individual students' timetables due to specific needs and interests. Nevertheless, the Graduate College [Time to Completion Policy](#) sets a seven-year limit on doctoral work (including any time spent on a [Leave of Absence](#)). It is very important that students remain mindful of these time limits as they plan their course of study, research proposal and dissertation research and write-up.

Students needing more than the allotted time can apply to the Graduate College for a [Program Extension](#) with the support of their Supervising Professor and the Program Director. A student who exceeds their time to completion is subject to academic dismissal from the program, in which case they would need to reapply for admission to the University.

Milestones

Plan of Study and Supervising Professor

During the first program year, doctoral students consider which faculty member would be a best advisor for their exams and dissertation. In fall of the second year, the student will meet with the program director to evaluate their plan of study progress and to discuss selection of an individual advisor. Once agreed upon between the student and faculty, the Supervising Professor is formalized by updating the E-Forms system.

Students should meet regularly with their advisor and/or the program director to discuss coursework, progress in the program, professional development, and any difficulties that may be encountered. Students will also be regularly advised of their standing in areas of progress toward the Ph.D. degree, coursework, research, teaching, and professional development via a yearly oral and written evaluation or student annual review. For questions regarding the program or curriculum, the student's advisor, the program director, and the program coordinator can be consulted.

Qualifying Examinations & Doctoral Candidacy

All students in the doctoral program are required to take a qualifying examination. Normally, students do so at the end of their sixth term, or the spring term of their second year. Students entering with a Master's in an appropriate field may opt to take their exams after the fall term of their second year, but are required by the University to take a minimum of 15 credit hours in the PhD program before being eligible to take qualifying exams.

The qualifying exam includes three parts: theory, methods, and a content area. Students will be given the grade of fail, pass, or high pass on the exam. A grade of pass in all three sections of the exam will be required to qualify for the PhD. Prior to the exams, the student completes the Candidacy Committee section of their E-Forms record. When a student passes all three sections of the exam, this is recorded

by the Committee with Graduate College via E-Forms and the student will be advanced to doctoral candidacy.

The Content Exam is developed over six months between the PhD student and the faculty advisor. The Theory and Methods Exams are completed in-person, in 3-hour time blocks, according to the exam schedule below. Please note: The Theory Exam question is developed between the PhD student and the faculty advisor. The Theory Exam question must be submitted to the Exam Committee for approval no later than two months before the exam date.

June exams for post-baccalaureate students:

- Theory Exam: In-person, Friday of Week 10 of the Spring term
- Content Exam: Due via email, Sunday of Week 10 of the Spring term
- Methods Exam: In-person, Monday of Finals Week of the Spring term

December exams for post-master students:

- Theory Exam: In-person, Friday of Week 11 of the Fall term
- Content Exam: Due via email, Sunday of Week 11 of the Fall term
- Methods Exam: In-person, Monday of Finals Week of the Fall term

Students who do not pass one out of three sections of the exam on the first attempt may retake the section that they failed one time to qualify for the PhD. If they do not pass the second time they take the failed section of the exam, the student will be dismissed from the program. Students who do not pass two sections will be dismissed from the program.

Dissertation Proposal

Within six months of successful completion of the qualifying exams, doctoral candidates should select their Dissertation Advisory Committee. The committee must consist of at least five members, at least three of whom must be currently tenured or tenure-track CCM faculty members. At least two of the committee members must be from outside of student's primary specialization area. At least one of the committee members must be from outside the University. Full-time, non-tenure track Research Faculties are also eligible to serve on the Dissertation Advisory Committee, including as Co-Supervising Professor. The Committee must then be filed with the Graduate College via the student's E-Forms record.

In their third or fourth year, the candidate should present their Doctoral Proposal. Students must be registered during the term they present their proposal; therefore, Summer terms should be avoided. The meeting should be scheduled beginning Week 1 and no later than Monday of Exam Week. Once a date and time are chosen, inform the program coordinator, who will reserve a room for the presentation.

The written draft must be given to the Dissertation Advisory Committee at least 10 business days before the scheduled meeting. The proposal presentation usually lasts 1 ½ hours and consists of the following parts (all times are approximated):

- Presentation of work by candidate (25 minutes)
- Questions from the Dissertation Advisory Committee and audience (30 minutes)
- Private discussion by the Dissertation Advisory Committee (15 minutes)
- Notification of results and future guidance given to the candidate (15 minutes)

Successful submission of the proposal is filed with Graduate College through E-Forms.

Dissertation Defense

For the dissertation, students work with their Supervising Professor and their Dissertation Advisory Committee. Students should defend the dissertation and graduate towards the end of their fourth or fifth year, depending on whether they entered the program with a master's or bachelor's degree.

The dissertation is scheduled via E-Forms at least four weeks in advance of the defense date. The defense will be publicized on the Graduate College website. Candidates should schedule their defense to allow enough time to make any revisions following the oral defense and to resubmit for approval prior to the posted [Graduate Program Completion Form deadlines](#). The meeting should be scheduled beginning Week 1 and no later than Monday of Exam Week. Anything outside this timeframe needs approval from the program director. Once a date and time are chosen, inform the program coordinator, who will reserve a meeting room.

The written dissertation must be given to the Dissertation Advisory Committee at least 10 business days before the defense. The dissertation defense usually lasts about two hours and consists of the following parts (times are approximated):

- Presentation of work by candidate (45 minutes)
- Questions from the Dissertation Advisory Committee and audience (30 minutes)
- Private discussion by the Dissertation Advisory Committee (30 minutes)
- Notification of results given to the candidate, with explanation of any edits and/or revisions required (15 minutes)

Within 48 hours, the Committee must record the outcome in E-Forms. The successful candidate makes the required revisions and re-submits a final version of the dissertation to the Supervising Professor. Once approved, the dissertation with all required forms is turned in to the Drexel Hagerty Library. A final E-Forms section must be completed to notify appropriate offices in order to ensure clearing for graduation.

Departmental Funding

Assistantships

All CCM doctoral students receive full-time tuition remission and a stipend for five years in the program. The tuition remission is for nine credits per term for three terms each year (Fall, Winter, Spring). The stipend is \$17,000 per year, paid monthly in increments of approximately \$1,888, beginning at the end of October through June.

In return, students are expected to work in teaching roles for those three quarters each academic year. Students will be asked to teach combinations of recitation section leadership, and/or standalone courses, dependent on experience and whether the student enters the program with a master's degree in a Communication-related or Social Sciences field. Ph.D. students are required to hold office hours while teaching. You will need to be living in or near Philadelphia on a full-time basis for the duration of any term in which you are funded with an assistantship, close enough that you can commute to campus for teaching responsibilities.

First-year students are paired with Drexel professors who mentor students as teachers in two courses each term. Most first-year students have no prior teaching experience, which may make the role of teaching assistant intimidating. Fortunately, the department and the university provide several resources to assist the graduate students through this process. The greatest resources for advice, information, and materials, of course, are the professors and the graduate students who were formerly TAs themselves for the same course. International students attend the [International Teaching Assistant Program](#) each summer for training specifically geared to their needs. Graduate College runs a required teaching preparation course for domestic students during the fall term.

Beginning in their second year, doctoral students lead five classes per year as primary instructor. Occasionally, teaching units can be replaced with a research assistantship if a faculty member has need for help with a project. This must be requested by the faculty person and approved by the program director.

While teaching, doctoral students will be closely monitored by the program director and receive course evaluations from their classes at the end of each term. These can be discussed with the program director towards learning successful strategies for pedagogy. All doctoral students are expected to adhere to the same ethical standards as Drexel University faculty and staff while teaching. Instructors should be clear, consistent, and objective in developing classroom policies and assigning grades to their students. Doctoral students must always also maintain strictly professional relationships with their students.

If a student takes longer than five years to complete their doctoral program, students will be financially responsible for all costs of remaining in the program.

The Department of Communication makes every effort to offer interested students the opportunity to teach one course each Summer Term. First preference is given to international students in F-1 status, as their visa status does not easily allow them to work off-campus. Students are paid for summer courses at the adjunct rate, currently \$1,000 per credit.

Drexel's Graduate College provides a [subsidy](#) that covers enrollment in the [Drexel Student Health Insurance](#) for full-time graduate students with qualifying assistantships, which covers CCM students with the program assistantship.

Travel Awards

The CCM doctoral program seeks to facilitate the professional development of its students. In accordance with this goal, students in the program participate in a number of professional organizations, seminars and colloquia, and research collaborations at local, regional, national, and international levels. Students should be consulting with their advisors and the program director regularly to generate such opportunities for participation.

Students who wish to present papers at conferences should contact the program director in the months prior to the meetings to request departmental funding for these endeavors. Pending availability of funds, the Communication Department will provide small grants for membership, registration, and/or travel costs.