

A low-angle, upward-looking photograph of a modern building with a white, grid-like facade. A large tree with green leaves is on the left, and another tree is on the right. The sky is visible through the branches.

USC Annenberg

Doctoral Student Handbook

2014-2015



USC University of
Southern California

2014-2015 DOCTORAL STUDENT HANDBOOK¹

The Annenberg School for Communication was created in 1971 by an endowment from Walter Annenberg, whose dedication plaque stands in the School's West Lobby. His words read:

Every human advancement or reversal can be understood through communication. The right to free communication carries with it responsibility to respect the dignity of others, and this must be recognized as irreversible. Educating students to communicate this message effectively and to be of service to all people is the enduring mission of this School.

~Walter H. Annenberg, March 4, 1971

The Annenberg School continues a long tradition of communication study at USC. In 1880, the year it was founded, the University offered a course in elocution, or public speaking. A College of Oratory was established in 1895, and became the School of Speech in 1921. Its first master's degree was awarded in 1924. The first doctoral degree in speech was conferred in 1935. The School, eventually placed within the USC College of Letters, Arts, and Sciences, became known as the Department of Communication Arts and Sciences.

The present configuration came together between 1994 and 1996 when the Annenberg School merged with the Department of Communication Arts and Sciences to become the new School of Communication. The School of Communication, together with the School of Journalism, constitutes the Annenberg School for Communication and Journalism. The doctoral program has evolved to combine and sustain USC's excellence in inquiry, research, teaching, and scholarship in the field of communication.

All students pursuing these research oriented degrees are required to take two theory courses that introduce them to inquiry in human communication, as well as two research methods courses that acquaint them with the critical and social scientific techniques available to conduct scholarly research. Students specialize in one of seven concentrations:

- *Global & Transnational Communication*
- *Groups, Organizations & Networks*
- *Health Communication & Social Dynamics*
- *Information, Political Economy & Entertainment*
- *Media, Culture & Community*
- *New Media & Technology*
- *Rhetoric, Politics & Publics*

In addition, students minor in a second concentration, and undertake work in a related, cognate field outside the Annenberg School for Communication and Journalism.

¹ This document supersedes previous Doctoral Student Handbooks. A student's curricular requirements are linked to the Handbook in use at time of acceptance into the program. Any student may elect to adopt program requirements detailed in later versions where indicated. The 2011-2012 entering class, for example, may follow the course totals here listed or those of the previous handbook in effect at the time of their acceptance into the program in 2011. Students may use the requirements from their entry year or from a later year, but they cannot combine the two.

CONTENTS

Part I of the handbook explains advising procedures; Part II covers degree requirements; Part III discusses appointments and financial support; Part IV illustrates citizenship duties; and Part V offers an overview of our administration. The information provided in this handbook is intended to supplement that provided in the *USC Catalogue*.²

| | | |
|-----------------|---------------------------------|-----------|
| PART I | ADVISEMENT AND GUIDANCE | 3 |
| PART II | DEGREE REQUIREMENTS | 6 |
| PART III | APPOINTMENTS AND SUPPORT | 17 |
| PART IV | CITIZENSHIP | 21 |
| PART V | ASCJ ADMINISTRATION | 23 |

APPENDICES

| | | |
|-----|--|----|
| I | <i>School Structure</i> | 25 |
| II | <i>PhD Office Facilities & Support</i> | 26 |
| III | <i>Qualifying Examination Procedures</i> | 28 |
| IV | <i>The Five Year Track</i> | 40 |
| V | <i>URLs</i> | 43 |
| VI | <i>Glossary</i> | 44 |
| VII | <i>2013-2014 ACGSA Officers</i> | 45 |

² <http://www.usc.edu/catalogue>

PART I ADVISEMENT AND GUIDANCE

Appropriate advisement and guidance by both faculty and peers is crucial for successful doctoral work. Students are encouraged to actively seek advice from their professors and fellow students in shaping a program of studies.

Mentors and Advisors

When new students enter the program they are assigned a *faculty mentor* as well as a *peer (student) mentor* assigned by the Annenberg Communication Graduate Student Association (ACGSA). Faculty and peers help the new student adjust to life in Los Angeles, the University, and the School. They may help supply answers to questions about moving, housing, areas of study, administrative processes, and research foci.

First Year Advising All first-year students are formally advised by the Director of the Annenberg Doctoral Program until their successful completion of the screening process. The screening process consists of a review conducted by faculty of the student's progress and takes place at the end of the first year of study. The Director's advice is both *substantive*, assisting students in defining and refining their course of study, and *technical*, ensuring that students are satisfying program requirements in a timely manner. The Director's approval is required for the student to transfer credits, obtain departmental approval ("D-Clearance") to register, and for assorted petitions.

The faculty mentors assigned to first-year students will acquaint and guide them through the initial year. Students are strongly encouraged to acquaint themselves with the faculty as a whole, with an eye toward choosing their faculty advisors and guidance committees by the start of their second year, if possible. Second year students are required to select an advisor and Annenberg Guidance Committee no later than the end of the fall semester of the second year.

Subsequent Advising Following successful screening at the end of the first year, the primary advising responsibility shifts to the student's advisor and guidance committee. Primary technical advising responsibility, however, remains with the Director. Students will need to obtain the approval of both their advisor and the Director (in that order) on relevant paperwork. Once the requisite signatures are obtained, Anne Marie Campian will process the paperwork.

Changing Advisors and/or Committee Members Over time, a student's interest and commitments may change, resulting in the need for an alternative advisor. To initiate changes in an advisor, contact the Director of the Annenberg Doctoral Program. Committee changes should be discussed with your advisor with appropriate requests to alternatives and notifications made in a timely fashion. To complete the process, update and submit the "*ASC Doctoral Guidance Committee*" form to Anne Marie Campian.

Screening & Annual Activity Report

Screening Student progress is carefully monitored by the School of Communication faculty. Students are screened at the end of their first year of graduate study, and are evaluated on first year academic achievement. At this time, they must have completed no fewer than 16 and no more than 24 units, including COMM 525, 526, 550, and 552. As a result of screening, students will be either permitted to continue or required to discontinue the program. Students may only pass screening and enter the second year of the program once they have completed all coursework in which they have enrolled.

Advisor Upon successful passage of the screening procedure, the student should select a faculty advisor and form a guidance committee. The Graduate School expects this process to be completed by the third week of fall classes. At minimum, the student must declare a preliminary three-person committee, consisting of a primary advisor and two additional members, by the end of their third semester (typically this deadline will be in December of the student's second year). Registration for classes for the spring semester will be withheld until this preliminary committee is formally established. Any late registration fees or other penalties resulting from this policy are the responsibility of the student.

Annual Activity Report and Annual Review of Progress By April 1st each year, all students will be asked to submit an activity report and updated vita.³ The vita should include accomplishments for the year, identification of advisor and committee members, Graduate Assistant activities, and specific plans for the upcoming year. The vita is to be submitted electronically along with the activity report. These materials will be evaluated by the Screening Committee and other appropriate faculty to monitor and identify possible problems with each student's progress toward degree completion. Letters indicating the results of the review process will be sent both to students and their advisors. Students are expected to discuss progress and plans with their advisors.

Guidance Committee

The student will then, in consultation with his or her advisor, form a guidance committee. Students work closely with the guidance committee, and particularly their faculty advisor, in selecting advanced course work and shaping research. In conjunction with the committee, the advisor supervises and approves the working paper and administers the qualifying examination. Ordinarily the guidance committee substantially overlaps with the student's dissertation committee. Should the student wish to replace one or more committee members at this point, he or she may do so by filing a "***Change of Committee***" form available from Anne Marie Campian.⁴

³ The activity report is to be accessed and submitted online at <http://phd.uscannenberg.org>

⁴ See also the USC Graduate School section of the USC *Catalogue* for Ph.D. Qualifying Exam and Dissertation Requirements.

Composition of the Guidance Committee A complete guidance committee is composed of a minimum of five **tenured or tenure track** USC faculty, at least three of whom must be from the School of Communication and at least one of whom must be tenured. An Outside Member from a different PhD granting department at USC, but outside of the Annenberg School, is also required. Should the student find expertise sufficient within the School, an appeal may be made to the Director of the Annenberg Doctoral Program and the Director of the School. In cases of particular academic merit, a non-tenure track faculty member may serve on a guidance committee with the approval of the Dean but may not serve as an Outside Member. In addition, it is acceptable to appoint co-chairs for your committee. The full committee must be formally established at least thirty (30) days prior to the beginning of the student's qualifying exam, by filing the "*Appointment of Committee*" form which may be obtained from Anne Marie Campian.

Dissertation Committee

The dissertation committee is formed after the student successfully completes the qualifying examination. The dissertation committee consists of at least three **tenured or tenure track** USC faculty. Two faculty members must be from the School of Communication and at least one of them must be tenured. An Outside Member from a different PhD granting department at USC, but outside of the Annenberg School, is strongly recommended by the School of Communication. In cases of particular academic merit, a non-tenure track faculty member may serve on a dissertation committee with the approval of the Dean. In addition, it is acceptable to appoint co-chairs for your committee. Typically, members of the dissertation committee have previously served on the student's guidance committee. The dissertation committee advises and approves the written dissertation and administers the oral defense. Non-tenure track faculty may serve on a committee as additional members only.

Graduate School Policies and Procedures

Information and forms related to the composition of committees are available from the Graduate School at:

http://www.usc.edu/schools/GraduateSchool/current_guidelines_forms_03.html

Request for Remote Participation at Qualifying Examination or Dissertation Defense

While personal participation is highly encouraged, if remote participation is necessary, permission to conduct a remote-participation Qualifying Examination or Dissertation Defense must be obtained by the Guidance or Dissertation Chair from the Vice Provost for Academic Affairs and Graduate Programs at least two weeks prior to the date of the exam or defense. Please contact Anne Marie Campian to initiate the process. For the Qualifying Examination, a maximum of two out of the five Guidance Committee members may participate remotely. For the Dissertation Defense, a maximum of one out of the three Dissertation Committee members may participate remotely. In either case, the committee Chair and the outside member may not participate remotely.

PART II DEGREE REQUIREMENTS

The School's degrees are awarded under the jurisdiction of the Graduate School. Refer to the *Requirements for Graduation* section and the *Graduate School* section of the *USC Catalogue* for requirements, guidelines, and policies.⁵

Master of Arts in Communication

Individuals seeking the Master of Arts in Communication are expected to acquire and demonstrate a general knowledge of human communication, including humanistic and social scientific approaches. Master's students will be assigned an advisor.

The program, arranged in consultation with an advisor and the Director of the Annenberg Doctoral Program, provides two options: a degree with a comprehensive examination requires a minimum of 32 units (normally eight courses), including core courses COMM 525, 526, 550, and 552, and four electives. A degree with thesis requires successful completion of the core courses, three electives, and four units of COMM 594ab Master's Thesis. Students planning to pursue the thesis option should meet with their advisor early in the first term to discuss registering for COMM 594A in their second semester (usually the spring term). Students wishing to subsequently apply for doctoral programs are strongly encouraged to take the thesis option.

No more than two approved 400-level courses may be applied to a student's program and a maximum of four semester units with grades of B or better may be accepted by transfer from another institution of higher learning. The minimum acceptable GPA for successful completion of this program is 3.0.

The majority of students choose the comprehensive examination option. The examination consists of six hours of writing, taken on two different days. Permission to take an M.A. degree with thesis can be obtained only by application to both the student's advisor and to the Director of the Doctoral Program.

⁵ <http://catalogue.usc.edu/>

Doctor of Philosophy in Communication

PhD General Requirements⁶

The student is required to complete a minimum of 72 graduate units (normally 18 courses) plus 4 units (794a and 794b at 2 units each) of required dissertation registrations, totaling 76 units. Six specific courses (four core courses: COMM 525, 526, 550, and 552; and two dissertation writing courses: COMM 794a and b) are required of all students. Additionally, students must present and defend a working paper, pass the qualifying examination, defend a prospectus, and write and defend a dissertation. One optional course (up to 4 units) will be available for an independent study to complete the working paper requirement.

The Core Curriculum

The core curriculum consists of four seminars, two in theories and two in methods:

- COMM 525 *Humanistic and Social Scientific Approaches to Human Communication I*
- COMM 526 *Humanistic and Social Scientific Approaches to Human Communication II*
- COMM 550 *Quantitative Research Methods in Communication*
- COMM 552 *Qualitative Research Methods in Communication*

These courses are required for first-year students. Students with equivalent prior graduate level training may waive a maximum of one core course by providing complete syllabi of prior coursework and obtaining approval from both the faculty instructor of the course the student is seeking to waive and the Director of the Annenberg Doctoral Program. In such cases, it is highly recommended that the student audit the course. A student who chooses not to audit is strongly encouraged to engage in a research project with a faculty member during that semester. Satisfactory completion of the core curriculum is necessary in order to be screened positively and permitted to continue in the program.

⁶ These degree requirements reflect a reorganized curriculum effective fall 2007. Students who entered the program prior to fall 2007 may choose either the old or current requirements.

Course Requirements

Students are to take courses from a primary area of concentration within the department (three courses, 12 units), a secondary, or minor area of concentration within the department (two courses, 8 units), and a cognate area of concentration outside the department (minimum 8 units).⁷

a. Area of Concentration Students specialize in one of seven concentrations by completing a minimum of three courses (12 units) in one of the following:

Global & Transnational Communication

Groups, Organizations & Networks

Health Communication & Social Dynamics

Information, Political Economy & Entertainment

Media, Culture & Community

New Media & Technology

Rhetoric, Politics & Publics

b. Minor Area In addition, students must minor in a second concentration by completing a minimum of two courses (8 units) therein.

c. Cognate Area Students also pursue an approved cognate elective program of study in which at least two courses (normally 8 units) are taken in a related field outside the Annenberg School for Communication and Journalism such as psychology, political science, cinema, etc.

Special Credit Concerns

Transfer Credit Students entering the School of Communication with a master's degree may, with permission, apply part of their previous graduate course work. Normally a maximum of twelve units may be applied. Students who enter the PhD program after earning a USC Master of Communication Management (CMGT) may exceed this limit, subject to the approval of their guidance committee. Before making a transfer credit request, the student should meet with his or her advisor and map out required areas, requests for substitution, and strategy of completing requirements. After planning is complete, the student should meet with the Director of the Doctoral Program.

Groups, Organizations & Networks Concentration Methods Requirement Students concentrating in Groups, Organizations & Networks are required to take at least two methods classes in addition to core courses 550 and 552. If taken in a department or unit other than the School of Communication, these courses **cannot** also be counted toward the student's cognate requirements (in other words, only content classes, not methods classes, may be counted toward the cognate requirement).

⁷ Courses CMGT/COMM 599 & COMM 620 may fulfill requirements, as determined by the Director of the Doctoral Program.

PhD Credit for Communication Management, Public Diplomacy and Journalism A student who wishes to apply Annenberg master's (CMGT, PUBD and JOUR) courses for PhD credit must negotiate a contract with the instructor in advance certifying that course materials are appropriate to the student's status. Ordinarily, the doctoral student will be required to complete additional work above and beyond that required of master's students such as an appropriate research paper. Students normally may count no more than two such courses toward their doctoral degree requirements, and no more than one in their concentration.

NOTE: A maximum of three COMM 620 classes may be applied to the PhD program, two of the three may be applied to a track, the third would be an elective. A maximum of 12 units of COMM 610, 12 units of COMM 590, 12 units of COMM 790 or 4 units of COMM 675 may be applied to the program.

Course Enrollment

The School of Communication defines full-time enrollment as two to three courses (8-12 units) per semester.

In order to make good progress toward degree completion within the available years of support, students normally are expected to take three courses (usually 12 units) in a semester. On occasion, students may have sound reasons to take a reduced load. Students, especially those without an MA degree, sometimes take a reduced load in their first semester when they are adjusting to life as a doctoral student at USC and in the United States. In addition, students often take a reduced load during the semester in which they are taking the qualifying exam.

Graduate assistants should take care not to drop below 6 units at any time, as doing so will terminate their full-time student status and disqualify them from receiving student aid (the exceptions include enrollment in 594 Thesis, 794 Dissertation, or GRSC 800 or 810).⁸

Incompletes An Incomplete is granted only when a documented illness or other emergency circumstance arises during the final three weeks of a semester. Students seeking an incomplete must submit, with their instructor's approval, an ***"Assignment of an Incomplete (IN) and Requirements for Completion"*** form.

Leave of Absence Requesting a Leave of Absence is initiated by obtaining a Leave of Absence petition from Anne Marie Campian. The maximum period of absence is four semesters, after which the student must withdraw from, and reapply to, the Graduate School. A Leave of Absence must be approved by both the Director of the Annenberg Doctoral Program as well as the Director of the School of Communication. The completed petition is then returned to Anne Marie Campian.

⁸ See the *Graduate Assistant Handbook* at http://www.usc.edu/schools/GraduateSchool/current_guidelines_forms.html

Pregnancy, Birth of a Child and Adoption Accommodation Program for PhD Students The Childbirth & Adoption Accommodation Program pertains to any eligible PhD student who becomes pregnant, becomes a parent, or who will be the primary caregiver of their newborn child, or an adopted child. Applications for the accommodation should be filed with the Graduate School at least three months prior to the anticipated start date. Requesting a Childbirth & Adoption Accommodation is initiated by obtaining a ***Childbirth & Adoption Accommodation Application*** from Anne Marie Campian. Note that a letter from a physician in the United States is required as part of the application materials.

PhD Qualifying Requirements & Dissertation

Research Tool Requirement Doctoral students are expected to demonstrate methodological competence in an area of specialization prior to taking the qualifying examination. Such competence usually is signaled through strong course work (the successful completion with a grade of B or better of selected course work approved by the PhD guidance committee and taken in the school and/or related departments), and by completion of the working paper. Under special circumstances, students with an exceptional prior background in research methods may demonstrate their competence by successfully passing a research tool examination designed and administered by the PhD guidance committee.

Working Paper The purpose of the working paper is to demonstrate students are capable of conducting original research on a communication problem. It is also intended to prepare students for the process of conducting dissertation research and may take shape as a prospectus. Several alternatives can fulfill this requirement. Students may submit: (a) a paper they have authored that has been accepted for publication in a scholarly journal or book or for presentation at an academic conference; (b) a revised seminar paper or master's thesis; (c) a research grant proposal written for submission to a major funding agency; or (d) any other alternative approved by their guidance committee, including a dissertation prospectus.

Students may enroll in COMM 694, Preliminary Research Paper, in the semester during which they plan to complete their working paper. The working paper must be approved by the student's advisor and at least two other members of the guidance committee before permission to take the qualifying examination will be granted.

Dissertation Prospectus Students are required to write and formally defend a dissertation prospectus. The dissertation prospectus is a document that articulates the dissertation project, methodology, justification, and outline of chapters. The prospectus should be completed in a process that runs parallel to, or in conjunction with, the qualifying examination. During the semester prior to taking a qualifying examination a student, in collaboration with an advisor, will choose one of three options:

- A. The prospectus would be distributed and discussed with the committee before the qualifying examination.
- B. The prospectus would be handed in during the qualifying examination and discussed as part of the orals.
- C. The prospectus would be distributed and examined no more than thirty (30) days after the defense.⁹

⁹ If the student completes the qualifying exam late in the spring semester such that the 30 day deadline falls during summer recess, the dissertation prospectus must be submitted within 30 days and defended no later than the end of the third week of the fall semester.

Qualifying Examination The qualifying exam is usually taken in the first semester of the fourth year of study, following completion of all required coursework and the working paper.¹⁰ The “*Appointment of Committee*” and “*Request to Take the PhD Qualifying Examination*” forms must be approved by the advisor and the Director of Doctoral Studies. These forms are obtained from, and submitted to, Anne Marie Campian at least thirty (30) days prior to the beginning of the exam period. All incomplete coursework must be completed, and the student’s working paper must be approved prior to filing this form.

The qualifying examination covers the student’s primary and secondary areas of concentration.¹¹ Each semester the Director of Doctoral Studies confers with all students intending to take their exams to explain the process and address any questions or concerns.

The exam is intended as a test of the student’s mastery of an intellectual field of inquiry, and is not simply a test of coursework. Consequently, students should expect to be tested on material beyond what was covered in their seminars, and should consult carefully with their committee members regarding the reading lists for which they will be held accountable. With the permission of their advisor and guidance committee, students may, in some cases, take their exams concurrently during the semester in which they are completing their coursework.¹²

Oral Defense of the Qualifying Exam Students are responsible for scheduling the oral defense of their written examination at a time that is convenient for all of the members of their guidance committee. Normally, the oral defense is conducted within two weeks of the completion of the written exam. In any case, the Graduate School requires that it be completed within sixty (60) days of the beginning of the written exam. The oral defense typically lasts two (2) hours. Committee members ask questions that focus on students’ written answers, but may cover any topic relevant to the field of communication. A successful defense requires agreement by a majority of the committee.

Unsuccessful Defense The re-examination must be completed no sooner than six (6) months and no later than twelve (12) months subsequent to the date on which the first doctoral qualifying examination was originally administered. If the student elects to take the qualifying examination for a second time, a new “*Request to Take the PhD Qualifying Examination*” form must be completed at least thirty (30) days prior to the re-examination **and** the student must be appropriately enrolled at USC during the semester in which the re-examination is to be taken. *A student may not take the qualifying examination more than twice.*

¹⁰ Exams should normally be taken after 6 semesters of courses (i.e. 3 4-unit courses [6 x 3 = 18]). Thus, exams usually take place near the beginning of the fourth year.

¹¹ See *PhD Course Requirements*, p8.

¹² See Appendix III for instructions on arranging for your exam. Students must confer with their advisor and guidance committee not later than the second week of the semester during which the examination is to be taken, regarding the distribution of written examination hours among subject matter areas.

The “**Report on PhD Qualifying Examination**” form must be submitted to Anne Marie Campian who will file the form with the Graduate School within forty-eight (48) hours of the completion of the oral defense, whatever the outcome. At the conclusion of a successful defense, the student may wish to form his or her dissertation committee by obtaining the proposed committee member’s signatures on the “**Appointment of Committee**” form. This form is available from, and should be filed with, Anne Marie Campian.¹³

Conferral of the Master’s Degree Students who successfully complete the qualifying examination may be awarded a master’s degree in communication. A “**Verification of Completion of the Requirements for the Master’s Degree**” form will be completed and processed by Anne Marie Campian.

Doctoral Dissertation The dissertation is an original research project contributing to knowledge about human communication and should demonstrate a high level of competence in methodologies of scholarly inquiry. The School of Communication requires the dissertation be written consistently throughout the manuscript in either American Psychological Association (APA) or Chicago style. If at all possible, students should devote their fifth year of support to its completion, before leaving the school for the workplace. After passing the qualifying exam, students must register for two units of COMM 794a, b, c, d, or z in each semester, excluding summers, until the dissertation has been approved. A minimum of four dissertation units of 794 is required. Four units is also the maximum number of units that may be applied to the 76-unit degree requirement.

Defense of Dissertation Dissertations are defended in a formal meeting with the student’s dissertation committee. Students are encouraged to provide a draft for their committee’s review, in anticipation of facilitating changes prior to production of the final manuscript. Dissertation defenses are open to the scholarly community, as stated in the USC catalogue: “[...] the oral examination is open to the general university community, [...]”. A successful defense requires a unanimous decision by the committee.

A copy of the final dissertation must be presented to the USC library. It is also customary to present a copy to the student’s advisor, if not to all the members of the student’s dissertation committee.¹⁴

Dissertation Submission Dissertations are submitted through Thesis Center, a paperless, online system. Guidelines for submitting the dissertation can be found at the following URL:

http://www.usc.edu/schools/GraduateSchool/current_thesis_dissert_02.html

Thesis Center eliminates the paper “Approval to Submit” form and allows faculty to ‘sign’ it electronically by checking a box on a secure website. Once students create a profile in Thesis Center, they can track the progress of the form.

¹³ Additional guidelines concerning the qualifying exam may be found at: <http://catalogue.usc.edu/files/2013/05/Graduate.pdf>

Conferral of the PhD¹⁵

Participation in USC commencement exercises is restricted to students who have successfully defended the dissertation in time to have their names placed in the USC commencement program. Participation in the Annenberg School's satellite commencement ceremony requires successful defense of the dissertation by April 15th.

¹⁴ University requirements for the format of dissertations can be found at http://www.usc.edu/schools/GraduateSchool/current_thesis_dissert.html

¹⁵ Instructions for graduation and awarding of the doctorate can be found on the following website:
http://www.usc.edu/schools/GraduateSchool/current_thesis_dissert.html and in the USC *Catalogue* at
<http://catalogue.usc.edu/files/2013/05/Graduate.pdf>

PART III APPOINTMENTS AND SUPPORT

The Annenberg School provides funding to all doctoral students for up to five years, contingent on satisfactory academic progress. Funding packages include up to 12 units of tuition per semester,¹⁶ payment of all required health care fees (access to University Health Services as well as medical and dental insurance premiums), a monthly stipend, support for research and conference travel, and, upon reaching candidacy, support for dissertation research. Although not included in the funding package, any student needing health care coverage for dependents must contact the USC Student Health Insurance Office directly to request an application and instructions.

Types of Appointments

All students are appointed as Graduate Assistants, Fellows, or some combination thereof. Students awarded Fellowships are not given work assignments but are expected to involve themselves in the work of the School both through formal and informal arrangements with faculty and other students.

Students who serve as Graduate Assistants (GAs) will work as Teaching or Research Assistants or, in a few instances, as Assistant Lecturers. In almost all cases, GAs are given what are called ‘50%’ assignments, meaning they are expected to work approximately twenty hours per week, or the rough equivalent of 50% of full-time, forty-hours-per-week employment. In many cases, students are given two 25% assignments for a semester.

Prior to taking a TA assignment, students must complete a training program offered by the University’s Center for Excellence in Teaching (CET). The sessions are offered prior to the start of each semester. Students should arrange their schedules to accommodate these mandatory sessions prior to the semester that they first take on teaching assistant duties. In order to assist in teaching, students who are not US citizens are required to pass a test of spoken English language proficiency. If not approved by USC, students will be asked to take supplementary courses on campus before teaching.

GA assignments are coordinated by the School of Communication Director’s Office, in conjunction with representatives of the Annenberg Communication Graduate Student Association (ACGSA). Preferences of assignments are solicited from both students and faculty for each semester’s assignments.

A student may apply for an Assistant Lectureship assignment and serve as the primary instructor for an undergraduate or masters-level course once the qualifying examination has been passed and the prospectus defended. Assignment as an Assistant Lecturer is subject to the approval of the student’s advisor, the Director of the School of Communication, and the Graduate School.

¹⁶ Students may sometimes wish to enroll in coursework at local universities such as UCLA and UC Irvine in fulfillment of their cognate requirements. Participation must be pre-approved by a student’s advisor as well as by the USC Graduate School. Contact the Graduate School for more detailed information about the program.

A strong record of achievement as a teaching assistant is an essential qualification for appointment as an Assistant Lecturer.

Students are encouraged to seek experience with both teaching and research to be competitive in the academic job market. The Annenberg School is committed to providing a wide range of experiences.

Reduced Work Load Exception Work responsibilities are reduced by half, to a '25%', or ten- hours-per-week assignment, for the term during which a student is preparing to take their qualifying exam. Students should take care to arrange this exemption carefully, as it may only be used once. Note that students who defer a semester of fellowship in the first year and take a 25% assistantship instead are not eligible for this load reduction while preparing for qualifying examinations. Many students choose to use the deferred semester of fellowship in the semester in which they are preparing for the exams.

Fellowship and Graduate Assistantship Stipends

Fellowship stipend checks are distributed on or about the 26th of each month beginning August through May. For questions regarding Fellowships, please contact Assistant Dean, Meredith Drake Reitan (mereditd@usc.edu) or Kate Tegmeyer (tegmeyer@usc.edu) at the Graduate School.

By April 10th of the first year, all students must fill out I-9 paperwork to be set up in payroll. This will enable a smooth transition into second year GA assignments and prevent any unforeseen problems that would delay stipend payments. Please contact Cindy Montes (cgmontes@usc.edu) to set up an appointment.

As with Fellowship stipend checks, GA stipend checks will be distributed on or about the 26th of each month beginning August through May.

Health

Insurance

When students register for classes in fall and spring, they will be automatically registered for health insurance and access to the student health center. Coverage for students registered for fall 2014 begins on August 18th. Spring health insurance continues over the summer, meaning that USC PhD students receive twelve (12) months of health insurance.

Technology Requirement and Fee

Annenberg has a Bring Your Own Device (BYOD) laptop requirement, so all USC Annenberg students are required to have a PC or Apple laptop. In addition, Annenberg students enrolled during the fall and spring semesters will be assessed a \$150.00 Annenberg Student Access Fee (Technology Fee) each semester. For Annenberg doctoral students, this fee will be paid by the Annenberg School. There will be no fee for those enrolled in summer courses.

Summer Funding, Study, and Research

The summer provides many opportunities for doctoral students to maintain progress towards their degree and other academic and professional objectives. In addition to seminars for academic degree credit, the School organizes a two-week program of short non-credit courses on research methods, the Annenberg Summer Institute for Methods and Statistics (ASIMS). Students are also expected to continue their own research efforts.

So that students have the financial means to continue making progress, the Annenberg School provides financial support during the summer months to as many doctoral students as possible. In most cases, doctoral students are guaranteed financial support for the summer months for up to four years contingent on the approval of a summer research proposal. For others, the School can assist in identifying research or teaching opportunities. Fall and spring semester graduate assistantships automatically include tuition for the following summer. Annenberg Graduate Fellows may receive summer tuition support through the Graduate School as part of their AGF support packages. At the beginning of the fall semester, students are required to submit a one page report detailing summer work and achievements.

Travel Support

USC Annenberg provides a limited amount of funding to assist doctoral students with the costs of scholarly conference travel. The actual level of support varies according to the number of students participating in conferences, but students are generally provided with \$1000 per fiscal year (July 1 - June 30). In order to be eligible for travel support, the student must be an active participant in a qualifying conference: delivering a competitively selected paper, participating on a competitively selected panel, or, in some circumstances, serving as a program discussant. Travel support is not guaranteed. Doctoral students should verify their travel support eligibility before traveling to a conference by submitting a ***Student Travel Funding Request***, which can be found on the PhD webpage using the Funding Request Forms link:

<http://annenberg.usc.edu/CurrentStudents/GStudentsvcs/PhD/FundingRequestForms.aspx>

All reimbursement materials (copy of pre-approval, expense reports, original receipts, boarding passes, etc.) must be submitted within ten business days of completing travel. Reimbursement will be made according to standard University accounting practices, which are detailed on the travel support application. Note that both proof of payment and proof of travel are always required.

The Graduate School makes grants available to Graduate School PhD Fellows for travel to conferences and to research sites. The base travel award is \$500. If the fellow's program matches this amount with \$500, the Graduate School will contribute another \$500. Since the Annenberg School provides \$1000 in travel support, these two sources combine for a total of \$2000.

The Graduate and Professional Student Senate (GPSS) also supports graduate student conference travel, provided the applicant has already exhausted the possibilities of departmental funding. GPSS travel support applications are available in the GPSS office.

Dissertation Research Support

All students who have passed their qualifying exams and have successfully defended a dissertation prospectus are eligible to receive up to \$3,000 in funding for approved dissertation- related research expenses. The “***Dissertation Research Funds Application***” can be found on the PhD webpage using the Funding Request Forms link:

<http://annenbergl.usc.edu/CurrentStudents/GStudentsvcs/PhD/FundingRequestForms.aspx>

Electronic Equipment Purchases

Any purchase of electronic or other equipment using Annenberg School of Communication funds must be approved in writing by the student’s advisor and the director of the Annenberg doctoral program. Typically, the request comes in the form of a research proposal for summer research funds, or a request attached to an approved dissertation prospectus. All equipment purchased using Annenberg funds is the property of The Annenberg School of Communication. All purchased equipment must be tagged as Annenberg property by ASCTECH. In the case of computers and other electronic equipment, the Annenberg Information Technology department must certify that the equipment conforms to all USC security and other safety requirements. Please contact Frank Miuccio (Frank Miuccio <miuccio@asc.usc.edu>) to fulfill this requirement. All equipment purchased with School of Communication funds must be returned to the school when students have completed the tasks for which the equipment was purchased. At the very latest, equipment must be returned by the time of the dissertation defense or when the student leaves the school for other reasons.

PART IV CITIZENSHIP

All students participate in the intellectual life of the School. Each year, activities take a unique shape and offer many opportunities for scholarly and professional development. Students are asked to attend public lectures and events, consistent with fulfilling academic and teaching assignments. Colloquia and research seminars are scheduled for many Mondays at noon. Job talks and other public events are held as well. As a rule of thumb students should plan to attend, consistent with other course and assignment obligations.

Meet the Faculty Each fall the School organizes a series of weekly sessions where students are introduced to Annenberg faculty who are actively engaged in research and doctoral student advisement. First year students are required to attend these sessions.

Professional Development Events that focus on professional development will be held throughout the year. Topics will be developed in consultation with ACGSA. Past topics included: Qualifying Examination Preparation, Job Interviewing, Prospectus Writing, Publishing, the Institutional Review Board and Human Subjects Research, Meetings of Professional Associations, and Grants. All students are expected to participate.

Academic Integrity The School of Communication is committed to upholding the University's Academic Integrity Code outlined in the *SCampus Student Guidebook*.¹⁷ It is the policy of the School of Communication to report all violations of the code. Any violation of the Academic Integrity Code will result in the student's expulsion from the program. Because of their special status as role models for undergraduate students and as future professors whose degrees and reputations will be based on their capacity to conduct their own scholarly research, doctoral students are held to the highest standards of academic integrity. It is particularly important that you are aware of and avoid plagiarism, cheating on exams, fabricating data for a project, submitting a paper to more than one professor, or submitting a paper authored by anyone but yourself. If you have doubts about any of these practices, confer with a faculty member or the Director of Annenberg Doctoral Program. More information can be found at the following links:

<http://www.usc.edu/student-affairs/SJACS/forms/AcademicIntegrityOverview.pdf>
<http://www.usc.edu/student-affairs/SJACS/forms/GradIntegrity.pdf>

¹⁷ <http://www.usc.edu/dept/publications/SCAMPUS/>

Student Organization ~ ACGSA

The Annenberg Communication Graduate Student Association (ACGSA) is the student organization for doctoral students in Communication. ACGSA is a registered USC student organization and has access to funds through the Graduate and Professional Student Senate (USC's graduate student assembly).

The general principle of the graduate student association is to promote collegiality and to support a feeling of community among fellow students and in the School generally. ACGSA officers are elected each spring for the following academic year, with the exception of the First Year Representative who is elected by the new cohort within a few weeks of beginning the fall semester. Officers meet regularly with the administration. The ACGSA 2014-2015 officers and their major duties are as listed in appendix VII.

PART V ADMINISTRATION

Director of the Annenberg Doctoral Program

The Director of the Annenberg Doctoral Program is a member of the faculty and is responsible for the overall operation of the program. The Director develops long term programs and policies, and presents them to the faculty for discussion and approval. The Director also administers the day to day functions of the program, including:

- advising all first year students until after they have been screened and formed their guidance committees;
- consulting with students about their programs;
- reviewing and approving Annenberg and Graduate School documents, such as requests for D-clearance (permission to register), transfer credits, requests to take the qualifying examination, and other general petitions;
- coordinating and overseeing the administration of the qualifying examination;
- chairing the Doctoral Admissions Committee, the Doctoral Screening and Review Committee, and the Doctoral Program Committee, and
- co-ordinating reports for the faculty.

The Director is also a member of the school's Scheduling Committee, which schedules each semester's course offerings and makes graduate student teaching and research assignments. The current Director of Doctoral Studies is:

Professor Peter Monge
 ASC 307D
 Phone: (213) 740-0921
 Email: monge@usc.edu
 Annenberg School for Communication and Journalism
 University of Southern California
 3502 Watt Way
 Los Angeles, CA 90089-0281

Graduate Advisor, PhD in Communication

The PhD Advisor provides support to faculty and assistance to graduate students and serves as liaison between students, administrative offices, and other University departments. The PhD Advisor also maintains and supervises administrative procedures, including:

- graduate student records;
- registration;
- general petitions and all program forms.

The PhD Advisor is:

Anne Marie Campian
 ASC 146 ~ Phone: (213) 740-0903 ~ Fax: (213) 740-8036
 Email: campian@usc.edu
 Annenberg School for Communication and Journalism
 University of Southern California
 3502 Watt Way, Suite 140
 Los Angeles, CA 90089-0281

Doctoral Screening & Review Committee

The Doctoral Screening & Review Committee, comprised of the instructors of the four core courses and the Director of the Doctoral Program, conducts the screening of the first year students at the end of their second semester. Review of the progress of all doctoral students is conducted at the same time.

Doctoral Admissions Committee

The principal function of the Doctoral Admissions Committee is to review applications for admission and make admission recommendations to the faculty. In addition, the committee advises the Director on policy issues.

Doctoral Program Committee

This committee considers the structure and content of the doctoral program, making recommendations to the faculty on courses and policy. The committee is comprised of graduate faculty and a graduate student representative.

Director's Office, School of Communication

| | |
|---|----------|
| Sarah Banet-Weiser, <i>Director</i> (sbanet@usc.edu) | 740-4088 |
| Imre Meszaros, <i>Associate Director</i> (meszaros@usc.edu) | 740-0934 |
| Dorine Lawrence-Hughes, <i>Associate Director</i> (dlawren@usc.edu) | 740-3970 |
| Anne Marie Campian, <i>PhD Advisor</i> (campian@usc.edu) | 740-0903 |
| Christine Lloreda, <i>Budget/Business Analyst</i> (lloreda@usc.edu) | 821-3037 |
| Kelly Kernaghan, <i>Administrative Assistant II</i> (kkernagh@usc.edu) | 740-2538 |
| Billie Shotlow, <i>Administrative Assistant II</i> (shotlow@usc.edu) | 821-2718 |
| Allyson Arguello, <i>Administrative Assistant I</i> (aarguell@usc.edu) | 821-0462 |

Appendices

APPENDIX I ~ School Structure

There are eight distinct student populations in the Annenberg School:

- ❖ Communication undergraduates working toward a bachelor's degree;
- ❖ Communication Management (CMGT) students working toward a professional master's degree;
- ❖ Global Communication (CMGL) M.A. students (in the second year of their joint program with the London School of Economics);
- ❖ Public Diplomacy (PUBD) students working toward a Master of Public Diplomacy degree (in a joint program with the School of International Relations);
- ❖ Communication master's and doctoral students working toward scholarly degrees;
- ❖ Journalism undergraduates, including public relations students, working toward B.A. degrees;
- ❖ Journalism master's students, including strategic public relations (SPR) students, working toward professional degrees; and
- ❖ Specialized Journalism students working toward a degree in a unique M.A. program designed for experienced professionals as well as aspiring reporters with proven skills.

The Annenberg School for Communication and Journalism is classified as a professional school by the University and also has a strong reputation for its scholarly production in the School of Communication's doctoral program.

ASCJ Administrative Structure

The three major administrative centers of the Annenberg School are the Dean's office, the School of Communication, and the School of Journalism.

The Dean's office is responsible for the overall functioning of the two schools within it, including building facilities and classrooms. The two Schools, with some exceptions, are each responsible for their own equipment and furnishings.

APPENDIX II ~ PhD Student Office Facilities & Support

Access to Facilities

All PhD students in the School of Communication should have keys to access the building and a USC identification card to access the PhD student offices.

Offices

Offices for doctoral students are in Garden Level West. These rooms are known colloquially as the “PhD offices,” or the “doctoral student offices.”

Security

Security is important at USC. Classrooms and offices must be locked when not in use. Undergraduates should not be left alone in the PhD offices if there are no doctoral students present. The PhD offices in particular require close attention so that the offices are not left unlocked.

Computers

Annenberg doctoral students have access to a number of laptop computers stored in a locked cabinet in the PhD student offices. Contact ASC Facilities and Technology to obtain a key.

Desk Assignments

PhD student desk space is allocated based on seniority and standing in the program. In general, every effort will be made to make desk space available for any doctoral student who is frequently on campus. Depending on the size of the doctoral student population at any given time, this may require that some people share a desk; first-year doctoral students should expect to share desks.

The ACGSA board makes desk assignments at the beginning of the academic year; students are encouraged to indicate their preferences. Continuing students will be presumed to remain at the same desk unless they express a new preference. New students will not have an initial opportunity to request a specific desk, but may change locations if they can negotiate an exchange with another student.

Office Appliances (Refrigerators, Microwave Oven, Coffeemakers, etc.)

All of the food-related appliances in Garden Level West belong to the PhD students. The school custodial staff **does not** clean or maintain them; they are maintained by the PhD students. People are expected to clean up after using the appliances.

General Maintenance

The custodial staff regularly vacuums the floors and empties the trash containers. Large items for disposal that do not fit in the containers should be clearly marked for disposal. The custodians **do not** clean desks or equipment of any kind. The PhD students are responsible for the general tidiness of the offices, of the appliances in them, and of their personal areas. The physical plant of the School (plumbing, electrical, telephone lines, computers, etc.) is overseen by Annenberg Facilities & Technology ('ASC Tech'). The furnishings in the PhD student offices (desks, bookcases, chairs, telephones, office supplies, etc.) are the purview of the School of Communication — see the Director's Office about these items. If you do not know the appropriate person to contact for a specific problem, ask an ACGSA officer.

Telephones

PhD students share telephones in their offices; instructions are posted near each phone. Doctoral students serving as teaching assistants with office hours are expected to answer their phones during office hours.

ACGSA Listserv

Student email accounts, with USC domains, are free for USC students, and all students are expected to obtain and use their accounts. All correspondence from both USC and the Annenberg School will be sent to the student's USC e-mail address.

ACGSA has its own listserv (electronic discussion list) that is limited to ACGSA members. No faculty, staff, or non-doctoral students are able to send to or receive email from it. Messages on this list should be considered to be confidential communication among the PhD students themselves and should not be forwarded or shown outside the community without approval of the sender. At the same time, everyone using the system must recognize that the computers are not themselves secure systems. Students are not required to subscribe to the list, but should note that ACGSA conducts a large part of its regular business in discussions via the listserv. Students who choose not to subscribe need to be aware that they are opting out of an important mode of participation in the scholarly community life.

APPENDIX III ~ Qualifying Examination Procedures

Setting Up the Qualifying Examination Usually, the student solicits questions from committee members. Anne Marie Campian assembles the examination, releases the examination to the student at the appropriate time, receives the student's answers when completed, and distributes these answers to members of the committee. Answers may be submitted electronically or in print. Regardless of the process followed, it is essential that a complete copy of the exam and answers be returned to the office of Anne Marie Campian for placement in the student's permanent file.

Written Examination Options

Open Book requires that a student select, in consultation with an advisor, four or five substantive areas over which the student wishes to be examined. Three or four questions cover areas deemed important to the student's major and minor concentrations. At least one question addresses a topic outside the areas of concentration, such as the cognate area or one of the concentrations in which the student did not specialize. Members of the guidance committee are responsible for approving reading lists in these areas and writing questions. Students may request to select from a pool of two or three questions per area. The examination typically takes from five to seven week days. Students may write at home or at another location of their choosing. Answers should be typed and conform to an appropriate professional style manual (APA, MLA, etc.).

Closed Book exams typically require students to write for a minimum of 12 hours, normally spread out over a seven to ten day period. At least eight hours are devoted to questions in the student's major and minor concentrations. At least four hours cover the student's cognate and outside areas. Members of the guidance committee are responsible for approving reading lists in these areas and writing questions. Students may request to select from a pool of two or three questions per area. Students writing in the same specialization, or in the same area for the same faculty member, should write on the same day(s) and time(s). Students are responsible for arranging, with ASC Tech, to reserve an appropriate location and computer access. Absolutely no notes or other materials are permitted during this exam. A blank USB drive will be provided, and should be returned to Anne Marie Campian at the conclusion of each writing period.

Hybrids In some circumstances, at the discretion of the guidance committee, the specializations exam may be a hybrid, consisting of both open and closed book questions. Students should consult carefully with their committee members so as to understand clearly the format of their examination. For purposes of calculating overall exam length, each open book question is considered to be the equivalent of two to three hours of closed book exams.

Examination Dates To facilitate the process of exam administration and ease the burden on staff, students are encouraged to write during roughly the same period. Students writing closed book exams in the same area or for the same professor must write at the same time (see above). Summer exams are not generally permitted except under extraordinary circumstances. The Graduate School requires that all portions of the examination (including the oral defense) be completed within sixty (60) days.

THE QUALIFYING EXAMINATION: A ROAD MAP

SIX MONTHS BEFORE QUALS

Meet with advisor to discuss choice of committee members and areas.

1. Begin to construct a reading list for each area, drawing materials from previous courses, research projects, and areas of interest. This is a time of discovery so make the lists broad and obtain the materials.
2. Take courses that will help you fill in the gaps (especially if you have recently changed academic interests) and answer questions.
3. Check with an “outside” person to determine willingness to serve on the committee and general availability.
4. Check with Anne Marie Campian to make sure you have met all requirements to take the examination.

THE SEMESTER PRIOR TO TAKING THE QUALIFYING EXAMINATION

1. Meet with Anne Marie Campian to obtain proper forms and discuss timing.
2. Prepare to obtain signatures in order to submit the following completed forms to Anne Marie Campian thirty (30) days prior to beginning the qualifying exam:
 - a. ***“Request to Take the Qualifying Examination”*** form
 - b. ***“Appointment of Committee”*** form (Guidance Committee)
 - c. Approved ***“Working Paper”*** form with a copy of the approved working paper or approved dissertation prospectus which may be used in lieu of the working paper

BEGINNING OF QUALIFYING EXAMINATION SEMESTER

1. Meet with your advisor as soon as possible to determine:
 - a. The members of the committee
 - b. The ‘areas’ to be covered in the examination (4 or 5)
 - c. The format of the examination (open-book or closed-book)
 - d. How you and your advisor will contact committee members
2. Obtain signatures for ***“Appointment of Committee”*** form (Guidance Committee)
3. Determine when you will take the qualifying exam and when you will defend the exam. Most students recommend scheduling the oral defense as soon as the dates of the qualifying exam are determined. It is easier to coordinate the schedules of five busy faculty members in the first few weeks of the semester, before their calendars fill up with other obligations. The Annenberg School acknowledges that it may be necessary for a committee member to participate from a remote location. Committee members may use Skype, conference calls or other forms of video communication to facilitate the qualifying exam. However, a backup plan should be established by the student and the Committee in the event of a failed connection.

4. Shape reading lists quickly, before discussing areas with committee.
 - a. Select what is crucial and what seems peripheral
 - b. Develop a justification for selecting these readings
 - c. Write a narrative for each area that ties the readings together
5. Meet with committee members in the first two to three weeks of the semester.
 - a. Refine agreement on the areas. Communicate whether the committee member will be a sole or collaborative writer of questions (work this out with your advisor in advance)
 - b. Discuss number of questions, and whether you will be asked to choose between questions
 - c. Discuss the relation of the exam to the dissertation project
 - d. For faculty outside the department, you may have to explain what the customs of preparation, writing and evaluation are at Annenberg
 - e. Write up and e-mail committee members the understandings reached in the meeting (with a modified reading list attached)
 - f. Request feedback to make sure you are on the same page
6. After meeting with your committee, meet with your advisor to confirm plans
 - a. Develop a concise description of the examination
 - b. Identify the when, where, and method of examination
 - c. Construct the final document with your advisor and determine which one of you will communicate this message to the committee

PREPARING FOR THE QUALIFYING EXAMINATION ITSELF

1. Plan a systematic, weekly approach to reading, note-taking, organization, and integration of materials. Ask questions if you hit snags or are uncertain. Develop a support team to talk through issues.
2. Outlines or notes should be comprehensive but brief, useful, and incisive. Consult with peers on reading and preparation strategies. Talk to those who have taken the same format (open- and closed-book strategies differ).
3. Two weeks before the examination, confirm arrangements, rechecking space availability with ASC Tech. Many students also recommend checking back in with your committee members a few days before they are schedule to begin writing. These meetings give you the opportunity to talk about your experience with the reading list (what you got out of it, what posed difficulties, what questions the readings generated for you, etc.). Discussing what you found to be the most interesting/pertinent ideas in each area serves as an excellent preparation for the actual examination, and may aid the faculty member in writing questions that are genuinely interesting and useful for you to write on.
4. A week before the examination, send a reminder notice to the committee. Make sure it indicates to whom the questions should be sent, when you will write the exam, when you will defend the exam, and where the defense will be held.

THE QUALIFYING EXAMINATION AT USC ANNENBERG

The Annenberg School for Communication and Journalism is comprised of an interdisciplinary group of scholars. The faculty members who serve as doctoral student advisors have overlapping yet distinctive ideas of the qualifying examination process. This document is designed to present a series of decisions that the student, advisor, and committee members face when preparing for and taking the qualifying examination.

The process of putting together a qualifying examination takes communication, strategic choices, and planning. **The process depends upon primary consultation with your advisor and systematic communication with the other four members of your committee.** The process also involves strategic choices among the options available to you. Remember that the qualifying examination is a test, which can be open to the public, and is a challenge to think about, reflect on, and critically integrate knowledge. Strategic choices are needed so that the books, articles, and other documents read produce a workable and productive experience for you and your committee. Finally, the qualifying examination involves planning. Planning ranges from taking care of details, such as getting a room within which to write, to developing an overall schedule that ends with a confirmed defense date.

Below we detail some of the routine decisions that students face during the qualifying exam process. It is important to remember that no two cases are identical. The following advice does not represent every custom, technical consideration, or choice to be made. Many students come to ASC with a plan to learn specific methods, study certain areas of knowledge, and pursue a particular dissertation topic. Other students find partially or wholly new paths to follow. Some students work collaboratively as part of research teams and this experience grounds their examinations, while others work individually or with informal groups. In either case, you need to act early and often, ask questions, be engaged in planning, work, and frequent communication with your advisor and committee members. Remember that experiences differ among students as do expectations of advisors and committees, so become engaged early and often.

THE INITIAL PHASE: 6 MONTHS BEFORE QUALS

Most students recommend starting the qualifying exam process six months before the anticipated exam date. Those taking quals in the spring should start at the beginning of the academic year; those taking quals in the fall should start at the beginning of the summer. This initial phase is meant to be a time of discovery and of organization.

Reading lists should be developed during this time. Generally, students develop one reading list per quals area. These lists contain books and articles, collections and original works, classics in the area that everyone should know, as well as specialized materials related to key debates in the field. Readings can be assembled from class syllabi and/or lists borrowed from fellow students, but they should always be developed in relation to what you have read and what you need to read. Talk to your advisor about different ways of generating reading lists, but do not limit yourself too much at this point. For the initial lists, you will want to generate a range of material that is of interest to both you and your committee members. Start early, because not everything you come up with can be read and mastered in your qualifying exam semester.

Dissertation project ideas should also be developed during this time. Faculty members encourage integrating the dissertation into the process of qualifying examination development, although the means of integration are left up to the advisor and committee members. A dissertation idea can be represented by a full-blown prospectus, or it can be sketched out in terms of methods, data, cases, and contributions. Many advisors accept a prospectus for the working paper requirement, but this is not a universal practice. You should discuss both the working paper requirement and the integration of the dissertation with the qualifying exam at the beginning of the process.

FIRST MEETINGS: SECOND AND THIRD WEEKS OF THE QUALS SEMESTER

If possible, schedule a meeting with your advisor for the second week of the semester, or as early as convenient. Here are some issues that need to be discussed:

COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP (Generally four from ASC and one outside member)

WHO WILL THE ASC MEMBERS BE?

These committee members are faculty members you have taken courses with, whose competencies you wish to be identified with, and who may become part of your dissertation committee. You should first determine whether a faculty member is able and willing to serve on your committee. Remember that faculty may or may not suspend duties while on leave or sabbatical. As a practical matter, letters for job applications are usually written by faculty who know you well, so this factor should enter into your decision.

WHO WILL THE OUTSIDE MEMBER(S) BE?

An outside member is someone who represents an area of expertise you wish to claim or a person who has knowledge relevant to your dissertation project. Outside members are frequently drawn from the list of associated faculty and are tenured or tenure track members of a PhD granting unit at USC. The chances of successful recruiting go up if you have taken a course or two with that faculty member or have overlapping research interests. You and your advisor need to agree on what the role of the outside member will be in the examination – so that, when asking the professor to sit on the committee, you can describe the duties and process crisply. Occasionally there are two outside members, but usually there is only one. If you would like to waive the outside member requirement, you must submit a petition signed by your advisor, the director of the PhD program, and the director of the School of Communication. The petition form may be obtained from Anne Marie Campian, and must be submitted at least thirty (30) days prior to your Qualifying Exam or Dissertation Defense.

WILL THE EXAM BE OPEN-BOOK OR CLOSED-BOOK?

It appears that USC faculty members differ on this score, with a slight preference for the open-book examination. Typically, qualifying exams are either open-book or closed-book, and not a hybrid of the two. Both types have advantages and disadvantages, which can be ascertained by discussing the formats with your advisor or other students. The chair of your committee generally determines the format of your exam, although on occasion, a committee member may wish to vary and a mixed format will result.

WHAT AREAS WILL THE EXAM COVER?

Students write in three to five “areas”. Most students write in four areas. Given that there are five members on a committee, this means that faculty members are going to have to “double up” in at least one area. Typically, each area has one faculty member writing questions, and in one area two faculty members provide questions. Remember that this is not always the case – an advisor/student can decide to mix and match faculty across areas. The question of what constitutes an “area” of study varies by advisor and committee. Here are some representative types of understandings:

- An area identifies a claim of your own expertise to be tested
- An area identifies a concept or concepts that are discussed and debated in the field of communication
- An area identifies a methodological competency to be demonstrated
- An area is a mixture of theory and practice with an opening for inquiry

READING LISTS

Reading lists should be shaped to fit the areas you have developed with your advisor. ASC students differ in regard to the length of such lists, appropriately so since the definition of an area varies so much. Generally, your list should include twenty to fifty sources (books and articles) per area. It is useful to arrange these in a way that makes sense to your project; for example, by expert source, issue in the field, or chronological order. The better prepared the list, the better the conversations you will have when you go to enlist faculty members to serve on your committee. Remember that the list should be flexible, as your committee members will undoubtedly offer input on prioritizing or adding sources.

MEET WITH COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Meeting with committee members is influenced by the context you have set for taking the examination. The context is a result of the kind of work and relationships you have evolved while taking courses. Some students participate on research teams. Team settings involve students in the day to day aspects of mentoring and being mentored so that you are engaged in the kinds of research, proposals, writing and thinking with professors out of which the qualifying examination is an extension. Other students may be pursuing a more “individualized” program by assembling a variety of interests and combination of methods. The degree of familiarity with committee members will vary. The less routinely you work with one or more members of your committee, the more extensive efforts at communication may need to be.

As soon as plans are set with your advisor, meetings with your committee members should be arranged. Explain the role they are being asked to play in the examination. This is especially important for your “outside” member, who may not be familiar with the Annenberg examination process. Show the faculty member your reading list and have it reviewed on the spot, or leave an opening for suggestions. After the meeting, summarize what was agreed upon and e-mail this information to the committee member, requesting modification if memory varies.

Before meeting with your committee members, you and your advisor should determine when you will take the qualifying exam and when you will defend the exam. Most students recommend scheduling the defense as soon as you know the dates of the qualifying exam. Your first round of meetings with committee members provides an excellent opportunity for ascertaining availability and scheduling a defense date.

Remember that it is easier to coordinate the schedules of five busy faculty members at the beginning of the semester, before calendars fill up with other events.

FINALIZE PLANS: TALK TO YOUR ADVISOR AGAIN

CREATE THE MEMO

After you have met with your committee members, you should construct a summary document that details the areas, committee members, who is writing which questions, and number of hours (closed-book) or days (open-book). In this memo, be sure to specify when and to whom the questions should be sent. Sometimes committee members send questions to Anne Marie Campian to distribute, sometimes to the chair, and sometimes to the student.

SEND THE MEMO

Some advisors will prefer to send this memo to the committee members themselves; some will let the student do this. In either case, once the final plan is put into place, notify everyone expeditiously. E-mailing the final plan (with reading lists attached) helps to ensure that everyone is on the same page.

VISIT THE OFFICE OF THE PHD ADVISOR

There is a list of forms included in this document. Please check with Anne Marie Campian to make sure the right forms are filled out in the appropriate sequence – or else a lot of work may go for naught. If you are uncertain about when to take the examination or how to get rooms for writing or for your defense, please inquire – early.

PREPARE FOR THE EXAMINATION

Preparation techniques for the qualifying examination vary. For closed-book examinations, students may concentrate notes to a page per source, develop memory devices, and formulate answers in their minds. For open-book examinations, students may select quotations, develop a bibliography, familiarize themselves with key research, and so on. In either case, preparation involves strategic thinking about what is important to know, which terms are important to define, which arguments can be made about a topic area, and how debates articulated in your classes, seminars, or meetings can be responded to. Many students find it useful to consult others who have taken examinations earlier or to form working groups with students who are taking examinations in the same semester. Whatever path pursued, preparation requires a systematic schedule that combines good time management with self-discipline.

THE ORAL DEFENSE

The scope of the defense is open in the sense that it can cover material from previous courses, although oral defenses usually probe the written answers. Experiences vary. Sometimes committee members ask for elaboration, pose a counter-position, or ask you to repair a weak answer. Frequently, the defense explores areas, synthesizes ideas, or covers information relevant to the working paper or dissertation. You should meet with your advisor before the defense to discuss what you need to prepare.

ASCJ ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES & MATERIALS FOR QUALIFYING EXAMINATION PREPARATIONS & DISSERTATION

Registration for GRSC 800 (36600D) Studies for Qualifying Examination in the semester of taking the exam. D-clearance obtained from the Graduate School by phone at 213-740-9033 or Web site. A maximum of three GRSC 800 registrations are allowed.

Anne Marie Campian will:

- Add Post 692 for the MA in Communication degree to student's record
- Apply 32 units of coursework for Post 692 M.A.
- Create STARS report for Post 692 M.A.

“Request to Take the PhD Qualifying Examination” form obtained from Anne Marie Campian. Completed form is returned to Ms. Campian a minimum of thirty (30) days PRIOR to Closed-Book or Open-Book written portion of the examination.

“Appointment of Committee” form for forming the Guidance Committee (minimum five members) form obtained from Anne Marie Campian.. Completed form is returned to Ms. Campian a minimum of thirty (30) days PRIOR to the written portion of the examination.

“Working Paper” form obtained from Anne Marie Campian. Completed form is returned to Ms. Campian a minimum of thirty (30) days **PRIOR** to the written portion of the examination.

A copy of the Working Paper (electronic or hard copy) should be submitted to Anne Marie Campian a minimum of thirty (30) days PRIOR to the written portion of the examination.

“Approval of Dissertation Prospectus” form obtained from Anne Marie Campian (a copy of the approved dissertation prospectus is submitted to Ms. Campian along with the completed form after the defense).

“Report on PhD Qualifying Examination” form and ***“Appointment of Committee”*** form for use in forming the Dissertation Committee (minimum three members) is obtained from Anne Marie Campian on the scheduled date of Oral portion of exam.

Register for COMM 794A in the semester immediately following successful completion of the qualifying examination. D-clearance is obtained from Anne Marie Campian.

Students submit the ***“Report on PhD Qualifying Examination”*** form, completed and signed by all members of the Dissertation Committee, to Anne Marie Campian within forty-eight (48) hours of completion of the exam. Date of Candidacy is entered on student's record by the Graduate School after receiving notification of successful completion of the exam.

M.A. Degree Conferred date on student's record by the Graduate School. Anne Marie Campian will:

- Apply 72 units of coursework taken for Post 693 PhD
- Create STARS report for Post 693 PhD
- Continue to apply 794 A and B registration for STARS report

Continuous registration required in 794 C, D, and Z's until all degree requirements are met.

Anne Marie Campian works with student to complete dissertation requirements. Deadline dates for Thesis Editor and final package of paperwork as downloaded from the Graduate School's web site.

ASC ADDENDUM ON THE OUTSIDE MEMBER OF THE QUALIFYING EXAM COMMITTEE

The purpose of the outside committee member is twofold:

- To provide guidance in an area of expertise the student wishes to claim and/or knowledge relevant to the student's dissertation project
- To provide an external perspective on the qualifying exam process

The outside committee member will have three major responsibilities:

- Assisting in the generation and approval of the reading lists (generally in area of expertise)
- Writing and/or contributing to the student's qualifying exam questions
- Reading and evaluating written answers in preparation for the student's oral defense (Outside members are not required to provide written evaluations or comments on the exam)

Note: If the student has elected to integrate the dissertation proposal with the qualifying exam, the outside committee member may also be asked to read the proposal prior to the oral defense.

Following is a brief narrative that might be provided to a potential outside member who may not be familiar with the ASC qualifying exam process.

The Annenberg Qualifying Examination

In the Annenberg School for Communication and Journalism, students generally select five faculty members for their qualifying exam committee, including one (or sometimes two) faculty members from outside of the department. The outside member provides an important external perspective on both the content areas and the process of the qualifying exam.

Annenberg students write in four or five "areas" developed in consultation with their advisor and the other members of their guidance committee. Most students write in four areas. Given that there are five members on a committee, this means that faculty members may double up or may be asked to contribute questions to multiple areas. What constitutes an "area" of study varies by advisor and committee. The student will have determined the scope of his or her areas before meeting with the outside member.

Generally, students develop one reading list per qual area. These reading lists contain books and articles, collections and original works, classics in the area that everyone should know, as well as specialized materials related to key debates in the field. Because the definition of an area can vary greatly, Annenberg students differ in regard to the length of the reading list. Generally, reading lists range from twenty to fifty sources (divided between books and articles) per area.

At Annenberg, the qualifying exam consists of two main stages – the written exam, which may be closed-book or open-book, and the oral defense. The number and type of questions each committee member will be asked to contribute vary by type of exam. These guidelines will be communicated to the outside member by the student's advisor. After the student completes the written portion of the qualifying exam, his or her answers will be sent to every member of the committee. Outside members are expected to have read and evaluated these answers prior to the oral defense, where the student will be asked to elaborate, clarify, or defend his or her answers.

GENERATING A MEMO FOR THE OUTSIDE COMMITTEE MEMBER

To make these general guidelines more helpful for the outside committee member, every Annenberg student should work with his or her advisor to generate a personalized memo that communicates key details of the qualifying exam procedure.

This memo should address the following questions and should be sent to the outside committee member shortly after he or she has agreed to serve on the qualifying exam committee.

- What are the “areas” covered by the qualifying exam? Who are the committee members?
- How long will each reading list be? How many books/articles are required for each list?
- Is the exam closed-book or open-book? What will this mean for the outside member?
- How many questions is the outside member responsible for generating? Which areas will the outside member be asked to write questions for?
- How much time will the student be given to answer questions? How many questions will the student be required to answer in a given area? Will there be options provided?
- Is the student expected to turn in a draft of his or her dissertation proposal prior to the written examination? Will this draft be discussed during the oral defense?
- When and how often will the student meet with the outside committee member?
- What is the proposed timeline for the qualifying exam?

[Consider when you plan to finalize your reading lists, when your advisor plans to request questions from the outside member, if/when you plan to submit your dissertation proposal, when you plan to write the exam, and when you plan to schedule the oral defense.]

APPENDIX IV ~ The Five Year Track

In order for the student to make efficient progress toward completing the PhD in five years, we have provided the following brief overview:

First Year

The first year involves completing core courses, screening, and beginning the move from a faculty mentor to a faculty advisor.

Each first-year student will be enrolled in two core courses, for 8 units, in each semester; they will typically also enroll in a third class during each semester. Each student should consult with the Director of Doctoral Program and/or a faculty mentor on course work during the first year and the beginning of the second year. During a student's stay at Annenberg, Anne Marie Campian and the Director of Doctoral Program will track course work electronically by means of the *STARS Report* and *Doctoral Student Status Report*.

A student must complete a “**Registration Authorization**” form each time he or she registers. Anne Marie Campian will provide departmental approval for the student's registration.

In a program of study, a student will enroll in at least three courses in one particular track, at least two courses from one additional track, and select a cognate area for study. (Students entering the program before 2003 can follow this guide or combine four courses in one area with one each in two other departmental areas).

Students should begin the process of transitioning from their mentor to an advisor, and screening takes place at the end of the first year.

Note: The ASC “**Petition for Transfer Credit ~ PhD Program**” may be used to request transfer credit for a class taken elsewhere to be applied to the USC program of study. Students should see Anne Marie Campian, the PhD Advisor, to obtain the following USC formal petitions:

- **Leave of Absence**
- **Extension of Time**
- **Exceed GRSC 800 Enrollment Limit**
- **Delay Retaking of the Qualifying Exam**
- **USC-UCLA Cross-Enrollment**
- **Retroactive Enrollment in 794, 594, GRSC 800, or GRSC 810**
- **PhD Student Pregnancy, Birth of a Child and Adoption Accommodation**
- **Graduate Assistant Appointment Less Than 25%**
- **Graduate Assistant Appointment Over 50%**
- **Graduate Assistant Appointment Under 3.0 GPA**
- **Waive 500+ Level Two-Thirds Rule**
- **Waiver and/or Substitution Over 50%**

A student may enroll in a CMGT, PUBD or JOUR course and apply that course to the PhD program of study. To do so, the student must complete the “**Contract to Take a Communication Management, Public Diplomacy or Journalism (CMGT/PUBD/JOUR) Course for PhD Credit**” form. The plan should have the written approval of the student's advisor and Director of Doctoral Studies.

Second Year

It is critically important in the second year that the student work with an advisor and a guidance committee on: (a) a program of study; (b) the selection of cognate courses; (c) the parameters for the working paper, i.e. topic, theories, methodology, length, etc.; and (d) the formation of a five member guidance committee. The working paper is discussed on page eleven of this handbook.

Advisor and Guidance Committee Selection In the fall semester, students should select an advisor who will also serve as the Chair for the guidance committee. The official guidance committee will consist of five members, four internal and one external to the School. The external member is a representative of the Graduate School, but should be a person who is an expert in the student's program of study. During years three and four, members of this guidance committee will provide questions for the qualifying examination, and participate in the qualifying examination defense. Some or all of the five members of this committee may serve on the dissertation committee.

Students typically register for three courses for the fall and three for the spring.

Interim Guidance Committee Since many students will not be able to select all five of the guidance committee members during year two, the student may select an interim guidance committee with one chair and two members of the faculty (see "*ASC Doctoral Guidance Committee*" form). This form is held internally at the Annenberg School, and is used to allow the student time to decide whom to include on the official guidance committee. This form should be completed within thirty days of screening, and no later than at the end of the semester in which the student has been screened.

Directed Research After completing a course in a particular area of interest, the student may wish to enroll in Directed Research in order to study some content of that area in greater depth. The student will need to have a faculty member agree to supervise this Directed Research, and will need to complete a "*COMM 790—Directed Research Contract*".

Third Year

The third year is the time for completing the working paper and finishing course work.

Ideally, the student will have completed the working paper by October 15th - November 1st of year three. The working paper will be distributed to at least three members of the guidance committee. Once the working paper is approved by three members of the faculty, the "*Working Paper*" form, along with a copy of the working paper, will be filed with Anne Marie Campian. During the semester in which a student completes the working paper, the student may wish to devote more time to working on the paper, rather than enrolling in two courses. To accomplish this, the student has two alternatives. The student may elect to enroll in one four-unit class and two units of COMM 694, thus enrolling in six units (a "full load"), or the student can enroll in one unit of GRSC 800. This one unit of GRSC 800 is considered by USC to be a "full load".

Fourth Year

Arranging for the Qualifying Examination (Quals) When three members of the faculty have signed the approval of the working paper on the *the “Working Paper”* form, the student is ready to take the qualifying examination at the beginning of year four (see appendix III regarding the qualifying examination). The student will obtain and file *the “Request to Take Qualifying Examination”* form with Anne Marie Campian. Once the student has passed quals, he or she should get the appropriate forms signed by faculty. Anne Marie Campian will submit the signed *“Verification of Completion of the Requirements for the Master’s Degree”* along with the signed and dated *“Report on Qualifying Examination”* form to the Graduate School, and the student will receive an M.A. degree.

Dissertation Prospectus The student will choose one of three options for completing the prospectus (see page 11). Upon completion of the prospectus the *“Approval of Dissertation Prospectus”* form will be signed and submitted (along with a copy of the prospectus) to Anne Marie Campian.

Fifth Year¹⁹

The qualifying examination process should be completed, a dissertation advisor selected, a committee formed, and the prospectus successfully defended by the end of fall semester of the fourth year of studies, or else a student will no longer be considered to be making satisfactory progress toward a degree. The remaining year and a half of support is spent in research, completing the dissertation, and preparing to enter the job market. Continuous enrollment in COMM 794 dissertation units is required each term, excluding summers, from the date of candidacy until the final typing card is signed.

¹⁹ PhD Thesis Submission packets are available from the Graduate School at http://www.usc.edu/schools/GraduateSchool/current_thesis_dissert_04.html

APPENDIX V ~ URLs

Academic Integrity

<http://www.usc.edu/student-affairs/SJACS/forms/AcademicIntegrityOverview.pdf>

<http://www.usc.edu/student-affairs/SJACS/forms/GradIntegrity.pdf>

Annenberg School for Communication and Journalism

<http://annenberg.usc.edu/>

Annenberg School of Communication Faculty

<http://annenberg.usc.edu/Faculty/Search%20by%20School/Communication.aspx>

Blackboard Help

<http://studentblackboardhelp.usc.edu/>

Counseling Services

<http://engemannshc.usc.edu/counseling/>

FERPA

<http://www.usc.edu/dept/ARR/ferpa/>

Graduate and Professional Student Senate (GPSS)

<http://www.gpssusc.com/>

The Graduate School

<http://www.usc.edu/schools/GraduateSchool/>

OASIS – Student resources such as permit to register, registered course list, grades etc.

<http://www.usc.edu/OASIS>

Office of International Services

<http://www.usc.edu/student-affairs/OIS/>

Online Registration

https://www.usc.edu/academics/classes/term_20133

SCampus

<http://www.usc.edu/dept/publications/SCAMPUS/>

Schedule of Classes

<http://www.usc.edu/soc>

USC Catalogue

<http://www.usc.edu/catalogue>

APPENDIX VI ~ Glossary

Schools and Departments at USC

- The School of Communication ~ COMM
- The School of Journalism ~ JOUR
- The English Department ~ ENGL

These and other acronyms can be found in the *USC Schedule of Classes*.

Buildings at USC

- The Annenberg School for Communication and Journalism ~ ASC
- Wallis Annenberg Hall ~ ANN
- Taper Hall of Humanities ~ THH
- Doheny Memorial Library ~ DML
- Leavey Library ~ LVL

Rooms are indicated in the *USC Schedule of Classes* and elsewhere by a combination of the three letter code for the building plus the room number: e.g., room 205 in the Annenberg building is *ASC 205*.

Calendars

- Semesters are indicated by the last two digits of the year plus the number of the term. For example, fall of 2014 is 20143, spring of 2015 is 20151, summer of 2014 is 20152, and fall of 2015 is 20153.

Phones

- Telephone extensions on campus are represented by the last five digits of the phone number. Most numbers use the prefix “740,” therefore most extensions begin with “0”, some have a prefix of “821” and those extensions begin with “1.”
- When calling off campus numbers from a campus phone, dial 9 to get an outside line.

Additional Campus Abbreviations and Acronyms

| | |
|--------------|---|
| ACGSA | Annenberg Communication Graduate Student Association ~ the student organization of the Communication doctoral students |
| GPSS | Graduate and Professional School Senate ~ the campus-wide student organization of which ACGSA is a member organization |
| CET | Center for Excellence in Teaching ~ a campus wide resource |
| CST | Center for Scholarly Technology ~ oversees computer software and training |
| ITS | Information Technology Services ~ encompasses online and library services, such as the USC library databases |

APPENDIX VII ~ 2014-2015 ACGSA Officers

PRESIDENT

Emma Frances Bloomfield (ebloomfi@usc.edu)

Organizes and directs meetings, proposes and administers the budget, organizes office and makes desk assignments, acts as intermediary to the faculty along with the Faculty Representative.

VICE-PRESIDENT & GSG REPRESENTATIVE

Melina Sherman (melinash@usc.edu)

Represents ACGSA to GPSS, records and reports minutes of meetings, assists the President.

TREASURER/FACULTY REPRESENTATIVE

Tisha Dejmanee (dejmanee@usc.edu)

Manages ACGSA checking account, coordinates GPSS funding, collects dues, handles disbursements. Attends faculty meetings and reports minutes to ACGSA, acts as intermediary to the faculty along with the President.

TECHNOLOGY REPRESENTATIVE

Joshua Clark (joshuaac@usc.edu)

Represents doctoral student interests to the ARC and acts as liaison to ASC's tech support staff.

TA/RA REPRESENTATIVE

Kari Storla (storla@usc.edu)

Coordinates requests for teaching and research assignments in the late fall and spring semesters.

POST-QUALS REPRESENTATIVE

Meryl Alper (malper@usc.edu)

Represents students who have passed qualifying exams/entered the dissertation stage.

FIRST-YEAR REPRESENTATIVE

TBD

Represents the first-year cohort.