

Department of Communication Studies Prospectus Guidelines

The faculty expect that all thesis projects, academic or creative, will engage a particular communication theory (or theories) in relation to a communication phenomenon. Your final project should be situated in the scholarly conversation surrounding your topic and fill a theoretical gap, extend a theoretical perspective, or demonstrate the application of theory in practice. Your work should also be data-driven, drawing on evidence derived from a suitable methodology or, in the case of a creative thesis, the appropriate application of theory.

A prospectus is a proposal for your desired thesis project that you write in consultation with your advisor and then turn over to your thesis committee for their review. The process culminates with an oral defense of your proposal with your entire thesis committee.

The following is meant to help you in the prospectus writing process. Please note that these are not hard and fast rules, but guidelines that the graduate faculty have put together to help you navigate this part of your Masters program. **As always, you should consult your thesis advisor for further details and guidance on exactly what your prospectus should contain.**

Basic guidelines – a prospectus should:

- Set up an academic thesis in 20-25 pages
- Set up a creative thesis in 10-15 pages
- Engage a particular theory or paradigm in communication studies
- Explain the communication phenomenon to be examined (academic)
- Explain the project to be completed (creative)
- Provide a rationale for the study's/project's completion
- Identify the potential value (scholarly or practical or both) of the study/project
- Provide the details of the proposed text, data collection or the applied project
- Include a timeline of the proposed project
- Be defended by mid-semester of your third semester (mid-October or mid-March, depending on when you started the program)