

MA in Global Communications

THESIS PROJECT REQUIREMENTS

1. BACKGROUND

Students pursuing the MA in Global Communications are required to write an original dissertation, worth 8 credits. The present document provides details of the content of the **thesis project** (CM 5095) and other relevant information.

Requirements: As part of their MA degree in Global Communications (MAGC) students must write an eight credit thesis of no fewer than 14,000 words and no more than 20,000 words.

This thesis, probably the first sustained piece of research that a student has undertaken, will demonstrate mastery of a specific subject area within the parameters of the degree. It will also demonstrate knowledge of the research currently being undertaken in the relevant field(s) and published in the English language. Important objectives of the MA thesis are the endowment of students with intellectual autonomy and the reinforcement of their research skills as they work through concepts and ideas to a new depth.

Prerequisites: Students registering a thesis must be in good academic standing (minimum G.P.A. of **3.0**), have completed at least two full semesters of the MAGC degree program, and not be subject to university disciplinary action.

2. BEFORE THE THESIS BEGINS

Choice of Topic and Thesis Advisor: Prior to choosing a topic, students are encouraged to discuss options informally with faculty and peer group. Students may choose their advisor and thesis topic. A list of faculty's areas of research interest is available on the departmental website. However, choice of topic is ultimately subject to approval by the MAGC Director. Any major change of topic must also be vetted and approved by both advisor and the Director. The deadline for declaring your intention in doing a thesis is March 15th for a Fall semester thesis registration, October 15th for a Spring semester registration, April 15th for a Summer semester registration.

Registration: The student must register the Thesis Project (CM 5095) during the preregistration period for the semester in which they plan to complete their thesis.

Thesis Project Proposal: Before the end of semester prior to the Thesis registration semester students must submit a completed "Thesis Project Application" form and Thesis Project Proposal to their project (thesis) advisor, academic advisor and the director of the graduate program concerned.

The Thesis Project Proposal must contain the following:

- Working Title
- Abstract (300 words)
- Central Questions
- Core Argument
- Research Methodology
- Structural Outline
- Working Bibliography
- Sources to follow up on
- Extensive Timeline

Admission to thesis

After the thesis proposal has been submitted, it will be reviewed by the director of the MA program and the student's project advisor. The latter will discuss the proposal with the student before submitting it for further review to a member of faculty with expertise in the theoretical and/or methodological concerns which the student proposes to adopt. Following this review, the student may be interviewed by the member of faculty to discuss the viability of the thesis project.

Upon approval by all concerned the completed "Thesis Project Application" form must be submitted to the Graduate Program Administrators for the Dean's final approval.

MA in Global Communications

3. PROGRESS: SUPERVISION, EXPECTATIONS AND MONITORING

It is essential that regular contact be maintained between student and advisor – and that evidence of regular meetings and consultations be kept by both parties in the form of electronic communication and / or signed notes.

In the final analysis, the impact of failing to complete a thesis is heavier for a student than for an advisor, so the student is expected to be proactive in their work.

As students advance in their research, thesis advisors will expect to see work that is more than merely rough drafts. They will expect students to attend regular meetings.

Students should expect their advisors to be available for regular meetings and to read work in a timely manner, providing relevant advice on substantive and theoretical aspects of the work.

As they work on their theses, it is important that students not under or overestimate the nature of the work to be undertaken and submitted. An MA thesis is a form of training in research, heightening students' awareness of the nature of academic research – and in some cases preparing them to move on to a PhD. Students will typically be expected to work with a high degree of autonomy, devoting a lot of time and effort to thinking through a series of concepts and debates related to a given area. It is possible that students will become frustrated with their topic. Nevertheless, every effort must be made to complete ON TIME and the advisor is responsible for providing timely and appropriate encouragement, support and practical advice.

Students must follow the [AUP Thesis Presentation Standards](#)

Recommended Timeline of due dates and Meetings

Weeks 1-5: weekly meetings, identify major theoretical concepts, work on weekly "mini literature reviews" for each major concept; will have draft of literature review by end of Week 5 or 6

Week 6-7: finalise exact primary material and finalise methodology; draft Methodology section of thesis

Weeks 8-10: work on analysis of primary material per methodology; weekly meetings with regular in-progress drafts of parts of Analysis/Results section of thesis

Weeks 11-12: write Discussion section of thesis

Weeks 13-14: work on complete draft, adding Conclusion

Week 15: final edit

4. DEADLINES AND EVALUATION

The thesis will be examined at the end of the semester during which it is submitted. Before presentation, the thesis must be approved by the thesis advisor, and only then can a thesis defense be scheduled. A second reader will be chosen with the approval of the Thesis Advisor and the final approval must be given by the MA Director. The thesis will then be evaluated by the thesis advisor and a reader. The thesis must be submitted in its final form, including all charts, graphics, captions, bibliography, references, etc., and at least two weeks before the date of the defense. The thesis defense date will be organised by the Graduate Program Administrators after coordination with the project advisor, reader, MA Director and the student. The thesis should be publicly defended and presented in person. Should circumstances warrant, the defense may be conducted through digital connection in real time, or, in extremely rare cases, other arrangements may be necessary. Upon completion of the defense, students will be awarded a grade which may be provisional and/or contingent on recommendation of revisions suggested by the examiners. Thus, four outcomes are possible:

- **Pass**, with the final grade being the average of those awarded by the examiners;
- **Pass subject to minor corrections.** In this case, the examination committee requests that minor corrections and alterations be made to the typescript. The grade will be awarded once these have been made to the advisor and degree chair's satisfaction;

MA in Global Communications

- **Pass with major corrections.** The examination committee requests major changes be made in terms of content. These changes are to be made on the basis of further work undertaken by the student with the advisor's advice and the thesis is to be resubmitted within one calendar month for the committee to re-evaluate;
- **Fail.** The student has clearly misunderstood the nature of the work required for an MA thesis and may not resubmit.

5. FORMATTING AND FINAL SUBMISSION

Students must consult the formatting guidelines and final submission procedure available from the AUP library in the document [AUP Thesis Presentation Standards](#). A final thesis grade for a student will only be available once the AUP Library has confirmed acceptance of a final Thesis project.

6. THESIS EXTENSION POLICY

Should a student require a thesis extension the [Thesis Extension Policy](#) can be reviewed.

7. COMPLAINTS AND REQUESTING REVIEW

Complaints regarding thesis examination – or indeed any other aspect of the thesis process - must be made in writing to the director of the degree program and the Office of Academic Affairs. In particular, complaints regarding assessment must be made in writing within three weeks of the official release of the thesis grade. Complaints will be communicated by the Office of Academic Affairs to all those concerned. Students will be informed in writing of decisions taken.

8. PLAGIARISM

Work submitted for the MA in Global Communications must be original. In the event of plagiarism in an MA thesis, the MA Examination Committee may request one or more members to look into the question. This sub-committee may request that the student establish their authorship of the thesis by submitting articles cited along with the notes, drafts and data on which the final document is based. They may also question the student orally on their work. This verification procedure is undertaken under the aegis of the AUP's Higher Degree Committee.