

New Mexico State University

**Department of
Communication Studies**

Graduate Student Handbook

September 2024

MA Communication Studies

The Master of Art in Communication Studies provides students with a social scientific approach to the study of human interaction, using both quantitative and qualitative research methods. Our curriculum is designed to explore how communication takes place interpersonally, within organizations and groups, within the media, and among cultures.

All graduate students take courses in communication theory and research methods as well as interpersonal, organizational, persuasion/social influence, and/or cultural communication. We also offer courses on topics such as communication technology, mass communication, family communication, health communication, leadership, nonverbal communication, sports communication, and strategic communication.

The program offers a wide variety of courses, allowing students in the program an opportunity to select topics pursuant to their particular interests. In addition to courses, students can obtain practical experience by participating in professional activities offered by the department, for example, graduate teaching assistantships, research, colloquia, and internships.

Degree Requirements

The department offers a thesis, non-thesis, and applied project options in its Master of Arts in Communication Studies. All options require of 36 credits, 30 credits of which must be in COMM, and 3 credits must be from an outside academic department. The thesis option requires at least 30 credits of coursework, six credits of thesis (COMM 5999), and an oral defense of the thesis. The non-thesis option requires 36 credits of coursework, six hours of written exams over the candidate's coursework, and an oral defense. The applied project option requires 30 hours of coursework, 6 credits of applied project (COMM 5996), and an oral defense of the project. All options require a minimum of 36 credit hours, 30 of which must be in Communication courses, and 3 credits from an outside department.

Graduate students are required to take COMM 5130: Quantitative Research Methods or COMM 5140: Qualitative Research Methods, and COMM 5110: Seminar in Theories of Communication in **their first year of enrollment**. These courses serve as a foundation for other coursework in Communication Studies. Students are also expected to take at least one other core content course each semester in their first year of enrollment (see below).

Graduate students can take undergraduate courses listed at the 4500 level or higher. Graduate students must take graduate-level versions (5000 vs. 4000 level) of any dual listed course when offered. However, the Graduate School only allows two courses (6 hours) at the undergraduate level (4500 to 4999) to count toward the M.A. degree in Communication Studies.

Master's Degree Program

Both of the following courses are required (6 hours):

- COMM 5130 Quantitative Research Methods **or**
COMM 5140 Qualitative Research Methods 3 hrs.
- COMM 5110 Seminar in Theories of Communication 3 hrs.

Three of the following four core content courses are required (9 hours):

- COMM 5210 Political Communication 3 hrs.
- COMM 5510 Organizational Communication 3 hrs.
- COMM 5710 Communication and Culture 3 hrs.
- COMM 5610 Interpersonal Communication 3 hrs.

Communication COMM Electives

- Electives in Other Departments (graduate levels; numbered 4500+) 3-6 hrs.
- Applied Project Option: COMM 5994 MA Project 6 hrs.
- Thesis Option: COMM 5999 Thesis 6 hrs.
- Non-Thesis Option: Additional Graduate COMM Electives 6 hrs.

Thirty-six credit hours are required for the degree, 30 of which must be in Communication.

Transfer of Credits

Students who have previously taken graduate-level courses (either at NMSU in another department or at another university) can transfer and apply up to 6 credit hours toward the Communication Studies M.A. degree. However, according to the NMSU graduate school, transfer credits cannot be more than seven years old from the time you begin your graduate coursework at NMSU. The Department Head must approve all transfer credits.

Transfer credits will NOT be approved for COMM 5130: Quantitative Research Methods, COMM 5140 Qualitative Research Methods, or COMM 5110: Seminar in Communication Theories. These courses must be taken at NMSU in the Department of Communication Studies.

Grades and Grading

Communication Studies graduate students are expected to apply themselves intensively to studying the material covered by the courses they are enrolled in. Accordingly, a high level of performance is required. A Communication Studies Graduate student must maintain an overall GPA of at least 3.0 in all graduate and undergraduate courses taken as a graduate student at NMSU. All graduate students must achieve a final grade of B or better in COMM 5110, COMM 5130, and COMM 5140. Further, all graduate students must achieve a final grade of B- or better in all of these other courses, COMM or otherwise, before they can proceed to comprehensive exams, thesis, project defenses and earning the degree. Courses transferred from other programs at NMSU will not be included in determining a cumulative GPA. Grades from other universities or colleges will not be used to calculate GPA.

Although C grades earned at New Mexico State University may be considered acceptable progress, these grades will not be counted toward the requirements for an advanced degree and is not considered acceptable graduate-level performance in the Department of Communication Studies. Courses in which students earn a C, D, or F are considered failing grades and will not

count toward a graduate degree. However, such grades are calculated in determining the student's GPA. Any course in which a student has not earned the minimum grade acceptable must be retaken for the courses to count toward the M.A. in Communication Studies degree.

Graduate Faculty

- Greg G. Armfield (Ph.D. 2004, University of Missouri-Columbia). Professor of Organizational Communication. Specific Interests: Organizational Culture, Leadership, Media, and Communication and Sports.
- Leah Dajches (Ph.D. 2022, University of Arizona). Assistant Professor of Communication in Social Influence and New Media Technologies. Specific interests: Persuasion/Social Influence, Media Theory/Effects, Adolescent/Youth Development, and Fandom and Marginalized Communities.
- Jeanne Flora (Ph.D. 1998, University of Kansas). Professor of Interpersonal and Family Communication. Specific Interests: Relationship Development and Maintenance.
- Anne Hubbell (Ph.D. 2000, Michigan State University). Professor of Organizational and Health Communication and Associate Dean of the Honors College. Specific Interests: Ethics and Equity in Organizations, Invisible Disabilities and Mental Health, and Health Disparities among Minorities.
- Gabriela I. Morales (Ph.D. 2017, University of New Mexico). Assistant Professor of Culture and Health Communication. Specific Interests: Health Disparities, Underrepresented Population Health Narratives, Health Literacy, DEI & Social Justice, and Feminist research.
- Duli Shi (Ph.D. 2022, University of Maryland). Assistant Professor of Strategic and Organizational Communication. Specific Interests: Corporate Social Responsibility, Corporate Social Advocacy, and Social Media.

Selecting an Advisor

Students are assigned a temporary faculty advisor, the Department Head or Graduate Student Advisor, as soon as they are admitted to the program. The role of this faculty advisor is to orient new students to the Communication Studies department, provide support and encouragement during the first semester of coursework, and guide students toward their academic goals.

During the student's second semester in the program, they will select a permanent advisor. Students should consult with the faculty member they would like as their new advisor to determine their availability and fit. The permanent advisor's role is to provide support and encouragement throughout the rest of the student's program and to chair the student's comprehensive oral exam OR thesis/applied project prospectus and defense meetings. Students are encouraged to select a permanent advisor with similar academic interests as they do before they begin their second academic year. Each student must follow their advisor's advice regarding graduate courses. Failing to follow their advisor's direction is a possible means for

dismissal from the program, forced advisor change and/or not graduating on an expected timeline.

It is NOT the responsibility of the advisor to track the thesis or non-thesis deadlines. Graduate School deadlines can be found on the [Graduate School Website](#).

Application for Degree

The student must file an "Application for Degree Form" via my.nmsu.edu and pay the graduation fee for the semester the student intends to graduate. The Graduate School publishes deadlines for graduation each semester.

Thesis Option

Some students in our department choose the thesis option, allowing them to pursue original research in their area of interest. Students selecting the thesis option will complete at least 36 credits, including at least 30 credit hours of courses in Communication, and 3 credits outside of the department, and 6 credits of MA Thesis work (COMM 5999). In most cases, if you fail to defend your thesis proposal before the end of your first semester, your advisor will switch you to a non-thesis comprehensive exam track.

Students must use the most recent edition of the Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association (APA) in preparing the thesis proposal and final thesis. It is the responsibility of the student to learn APA, not the advisor's responsibility to proofread and edit a student's manuscript. The completed thesis must also conform to guidelines established by the Graduate School's Guidelines for [Preparing a Thesis or Dissertation](#), published annually. Whenever human subjects are to be involved as research participants, the NMSU Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval is required. [CITI training](#) must be completed, and [IRB approval](#) (log-in with SSO) must be received before data collection.

Writing a thesis is a big undertaking and involves continuous engagement with your advisor. In most cases, if you fail to defend your proposal before the end of your first semester, your advisor will have you switch to a comprehensive exam track. Consult your APA 7th Edition manual for examples of guidelines and chapter breakdown or organization. You can also complete theses in our department on [ProQuest](#) through the NMSU library (If you are not on campus, you may need to sign in using the VPN). You can limit your search to the Department of Communication Studies. Additionally, an older bound thesis can be found in our Communication Sciences Building, Room 302. You may borrow these copies, but please return them.

Advisors and Graduate Committee

When a student has chosen a research area to pursue the thesis, the student should ask a graduate faculty member in the appropriate area of specialty to serve as the student's thesis advisor. This faculty member will serve as the student's course advisor as well. The thesis advisor and student work together on a timeline for completion of the thesis.

The student and advisor will select a graduate faculty committee comprised of one additional graduate faculty member from the Department of Communication Studies and one graduate

faculty member from outside the department to serve as the Dean's Representative. Additional internal and/or external faculty can serve as committee members with the student and advisor's agreement and approval. The student should talk in person or through Zoom with potential committee members to ascertain their willingness and availability to serve on the thesis committee. Thesis committee members will be present at the prospectus and oral defense meetings. We do not encourage more than four faculty members to attend these meetings.

Thesis Prospectus Meeting

This meeting will be held with the student's committee to approve the thesis prospectus. The thesis prospectus and the thesis prospectus meeting serve as preparation before the student starts to collect data for the thesis research. The prospectus usually includes the information that will serve as the basis for the first few chapters of the thesis. At a minimum, the proposal should address the first three chapters of a traditional five-chapter structure:

- Chapter 1 – Introduction: Introduction and rationale for the research
- Chapter 2 – Literature Review: A review of the relevant research literature and theory guiding the study; A statement of research questions and/or hypotheses and the rationale for the choices made.
- Chapter 3 – Methodology: A detailed description of the proposed research methods and proposed data analysis techniques.
- Chapter 4 – Results: A report of your findings.
- Chapter 5 – Discussion and evaluation in relation to the literature, limitations, and conclusion.

Although prospectuses vary in length, the average manuscript should be sufficiently detailed to demonstrate a grasp of the relevant research literature and demonstrates a thoughtful approach to the research method proposed for the student's study.

Please note: It is not appropriate to submit an IRB form before the prospectus meeting unless the student has approval from all committee members.

In consultation with the advisor and committee members, a two-hour prospectus meeting will be scheduled no later than finals week of the semester prior to graduation. The student should consult with their advisor on requirements for the prospectus. The student is responsible for scheduling the meeting at a time convenient for all committee members and reserving a room through the department administrative assistant. The student will deliver the prospectus to each committee member at least two weeks (10 working days) before the meeting.

There are three possible outcomes following the evaluation of the thesis prospectus by the faculty committee: approval, approval contingent upon recommended modifications, or rejection. It is common for a student to receive approval contingent upon changes recommended; it is uncommon for a student's thesis prospectus to be rejected.

Once your committee approves your thesis committee approves your thesis, you may continue your research, including the IRB proposal. An IRB proposal cannot be submitted until your committee has approved your thesis proposal. Students who fail to defend their thesis proposal

in the first semester may have to complete the program by taking comprehensive exams at their advisor's request.

Organization and Content of the Thesis

All theses must conform to guidelines established by the Graduate School as discussed in the [Preparing a Thesis or Dissertation](#) document reference earlier. Keeping this in mind, the typical thesis will have the following [sections](#):

- Title Page
- Acceptance/Approval page
- Acknowledgments (optional)
- Vita or Resume
- Abstract
- Table of Contents
- List of Tables with page references (required if present)
- List of Figures with page references (required if present)
- Chapter 1: Introduction and Rationale
- Chapter 2: Literature Review and Hypothesis(es) and/or Research Question(s)
- Chapter 3: Methodology
- Chapter 4: Results/Findings
- Chapter 5: Discussion and Evaluation in Relation to the Literature, Limitations, and Conclusion
- Appendix(ces)
- References

Oral Defense Meeting

Upon completion of the thesis and with the advisor's approval, students will send their thesis to the committee and schedule a two-hour oral defense meeting with the thesis committee. Students are responsible for contacting all committee members to determine the best time for the meeting and then schedule the thesis defense through the department administrative assistant. Students are expected to give the committee 10 to 14 days to read the thesis before holding the meeting. During this meeting, the student is questioned about the completed thesis. The thesis defense outcome can result in pass, fail, or adjournment. In the case of adjournment, the candidate will consult with their advisor on what needs to be corrected and when a second defense can be scheduled. In the case of failure, the candidate fails to graduate. The thesis defense will last no more than two hours.

Thesis deadlines are earlier in the semester than Project and Comprehensive Exam deadlines. Typically, a thesis deadline is in early November or April. Students are responsible for meeting all [Graduate School procedures and deadlines](#). Students should submit the [Master's Final Examination Form](#) with all necessary signatures to the Graduate School at least ten working days before their oral defense.

Non-Thesis: Applied Project Option

Some students in our department choose the applied project option, which allows them to pursue a specially designed project under the direction of a faculty member whose expertise and research interests are aligned. Students selecting the applied project option require 36 credits,

including at least 30 credit hours of courses in Communication, 3 credits outside of the department, and 6 credits of MA Project (COMM 5994). In most cases, if you fail to defend your project proposal before the end of your first semester, your advisor will switch you to a non-thesis comprehensive exam track.

Advisors and Graduate Committee

When a student has chosen an area of coursework to apply as a project, the student should ask a graduate faculty member in the appropriate area of specialty to serve as the student's project advisor. This faculty member will serve as the student's advisor and work with the student on a timeline for project completion. All full-time students are expected to complete their project proposal before the end of their first semester of project hours.

The student and advisor will select a graduate faculty committee comprised of one additional graduate faculty member from the Department of Communication Studies and one graduate faculty member from outside the department to serve as the Dean's Representative. Additional internal and/or external faculty can serve as committee members with the student advisor's agreement and/or approval. The student should talk in person or through Zoom with potential committee members to ascertain their willingness and availability to serve on the project committee. These committee members will be present at the proposal meeting and the oral defense meeting. We do not encourage more than four faculty members to attend these meetings.

Students must use the most recent edition of the Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association (APA) in preparing written aspects of the applied project proposal. The completed project must also conform to the Department of Communication Studies guidelines below.

Guidelines for Applied Project

1. The applied project consists of a plan and implementation of the plan designed to address a real-world problem or issue related to course material.
2. The candidate will clearly define the problem or issue they wish to address through the applied project.
3. Students will investigate and report past and current methods or practices used to solve the problem.
4. Because the Applied Project involves a systematic study and application, candidates must review scholarly literature related to their inquiry.
5. The plan of action will include the actual materials to be used in either concept or final form, a timeline and plan for their application, and a method for tracking the results of the application.
6. The project will close with a discussion and evaluation of the action plan, including reflections on theory/literature and practical implementation/feedback.

Choosing a Topic and Project Proposal-Meeting

It is recommended that a topic for the project be determined at the beginning of the student's last year in the M.A. program. In consultation with the advisor, the student should submit a proposal introducing the project, a brief literature review on the topic, an action plan describing the

project to be developed and applied, and the expected outcomes of the application (i.e., the potential for implementation). See sections one through six below.

Candidates may choose to create an Applied Project as part of their responsibilities in their current place of employment. In this case, some elements of the plan may be developed in collaboration with the candidate's coworkers. If this is the case, the candidate should identify which parts will be under their supervision and which elements they will be directly responsible for.

Organization and Content of the paper should be as follows:

- Title Page
- Acknowledgments (optional)
- Table of Contents
- Student Resume
- Body of Report: (Order may be changed by advisor and/or committee)
 - Section 1: Introduction (Why this matters)
 - Section 2: Review of Relevant Literature
 - Section 3: Situation Analysis and Target Audience Analysis
 - Section 4: Goals and Objectives (Rationale)
 - Section 5: Description of Deliverable to be Applied (including any sample material)
 - Section 6: Recommended timeline and plan for implementation
 - Section 7: Evaluation
 - Section 8: Discussion in Relation to Literature, Limitations, and Conclusion
- References
- Appendices

(Keep in mind, each advisor will ask for different order and optional content for individual projects. Projects can vary widely, and each project will require different content and organizational approaches)

In consultation with the advisor and committee members, a 90 -120 minute proposal meeting needs to be scheduled no later than finals week of the semester before the student's graduation. The student is responsible for scheduling the meeting at a time convenient for all committee members and reserving a room through the department administrative assistant. The student will deliver the prospectus to each committee member at least two weeks (10 working days) before the meeting.

Expectations for Writing and Planning

A candidate should expect multiple drafts or revisions of their work. The written project should conform to the most recent edition of the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association (APA)*. Careful time management should be exercised to prepare the revised drafts. Careful time management is also expected to appropriately apply the project according to a timeline that allows time to reflect and report on the application.

Project Presentation

Project sections 1 through 6 of the projects must be presented by the end of the first semester of student hours. This is similar to a thesis proposal. A typical project proposal should be more than 20 pages, double-spaced, not including references. Once the student's committee approves the project, the student can continue. Students who fail to defend their project in the first semester may have to complete the program by taking comprehensive exams at their advisor's request.

Project Defense

The final project shall consist of all the sections detailed above (Sections 1-8 and additional material as appendices). After the candidate has approval from their advisor, the student should consult their committee to schedule the project defense meeting. The final draft of the project and all deliverables should be provided to all committee members no later than two weeks before the defense date.

At the defense project defense, the candidate will present their work for 15-20 minutes. The committee's questions and discussion will follow this. When the questions and discussion have concluded, the committee will deliberate and provide feedback to the candidate regarding the project. At this time, the project may be approved, or the committee will request revisions, which could be minimal to extensive. In the situation of extensive revisions, the committee may request a student to schedule a second defense meeting after all revisions have been completed. The oral defense of a candidate's project can result in a pass, fail, or adjournment. In the case of adjournment, the candidate will consult with their advisor on what needs to be corrected and when a second defense can be scheduled. In the case of failure, the candidate fails to graduate. The project defense will last no more than two hours.

The final project must be defended by the graduate school's comprehensive exam oral defense deadline. All committee members should agree upon the defense date. Remember that faculty have many commitments toward the end of the semester. You are encouraged, with your advisor's consent, to plan your defense date early. Once you and your committee have agreed on a date, the candidate must complete the [Master's Final Exam form](#) and submit it to the graduate school. The deadline to submit this form is typically a month before the end of the semester and two weeks before the scheduled defense. Graduate students should be aware of the [graduate school deadlines](#). It is the student's responsibility to meet all dates established and published by the graduate school.

Students are responsible for meeting all Graduate School procedures and deadlines. Students should submit the [Master's Final Examination Form](#) with all necessary signatures to the Graduate School at least ten working days before their oral defense. Deadlines can be located on the Graduate School Website.

Non-Thesis: Comprehensive Exam Option

Students opting for the non-thesis comprehensive exam track must complete at least 36 credits of coursework, including at least 30 credit hours of courses in Communication, and 3 credits outside of the department.

The comprehensive examination allows the student to demonstrate an ability to integrate broad and specific knowledge of the discipline of Communication. Integration, roughly, involves reasoned synthesis, application, and communication from a social science perspective of knowledge gained from empirical research, theory, and even practical experience in the discipline of Communication Studies. The comprehensive exam is an outcome measure of the graduate program curriculum. We assess to what degree the student can demonstrate content knowledge in Communication Studies, thinking grounded in theory, and critical thinking about concepts and issues in Communication. Students will be able to demonstrate such abilities in their written and oral responses.

Advisors and Graduate Committee

Students will work with their advisor to choose a graduate faculty committee comprised of their advisor and, at least one additional faculty member from the Department of Communication Studies, and one outside graduate faculty member from a related area (usually a faculty member from whom the student has taken courses) to serve as the Deans Representative. All faculty members must have Graduate Faculty Status from the Graduate School. This committee will write exam questions and be present at a two-hour oral defense meeting of the exam answers and coursework. We do not encourage more than four faculty members to attend these meetings.

Written Examination and Oral Defense

During the students' last semester, they will undergo a comprehensive six-hour written examination over six course areas they have studied. Students must meet with their advisor to determine areas they will be examined (at least one hour in Communication Theory and one hour in Research Methods is required). It is common for students to receive rewrites on portions of their original answers. A student can only receive ONE rewrite per question. If a student fails the rewrite, the student fails the comprehensive exam and fails to graduate with an M.A. in Communication Studies that semester. To retest, the student must enroll in the following (i.e., fall or spring) semester and carry a minimum of 3 credit hours of Communication Studies courses to take their written examinations a second time and potentially proceed to an oral defense. If a student fails the written exams a second time, they must appeal to the Department Head to continue in the examination process. Otherwise, the student fails to graduate with an M.A. in Communication Studies. Students must complete the written portion of the exam by passing all written questions before scheduling the two-hour oral defense. During this two-hour oral defense meeting, students are questioned on their written exams and all coursework. Students must pass this oral defense as a requirement for graduation. If a student fails the oral examination, regardless of the outcome of the written exam, the student fails to graduate with an M.A. in Communication Studies.

Criteria for Evaluating Written and Oral Comprehensive Examination Answers

The results of the total comprehensive examination (both written and oral) will be evaluated by the student's committee.

- Answers should respond to the question. Regardless of the other criteria, answers should demonstrate a thorough understanding of the important issues presented in the question.
- Answers should present accurate knowledge of communication literature and theory. Answers should demonstrate that the student's knowledge base has both depth (i.e.,

employing of specific literature with appropriate citations) and breadth (i.e., articulating conceptual considerations).

- Answers should exhibit the integrative thinking indicative of a social scientist. The response should be thoughtful in that it integrates empirical thinking. Answers should demonstrate critical thinking rather than simple rote information.
- Answers should be organized, and ideas should be communicated clearly and coherently.

Steps in Completing Your Comprehensive Exams

1. The student meets with their advisor to discuss written/oral examination procedures. The student and advisor put together a committee of two or three Communication Studies graduate faculty members (this includes the student's advisor) and one graduate faculty member from a related discipline (usually, the student has taken coursework from this person). The student must ask the faculty members to write one or two exam questions and/or be on the committee. Not all question writers have to serve on the committee. ***Note: A grade of B or better is required in COMM 5110, 5130, and 5140. A grade of B- or better is required in ALL other COMM courses. In addition, you must have an overall GPA of 3.0 or better before exams are planned.***
2. The student and advisor will agree on a "grouping" of the student's work by content areas and/or faculty members. One hour must cover "Theories," while the second hour must cover "Methods." The student and their advisor will decide on the other four (one-hour questions). The length of the written exams shall be a maximum of six questions for six hours total. All questions have to be answered within a 10-business day timeframe.
3. The advisor will compile the breakdown of the committee members, subject areas, and writing times (length) into a memorandum, with a copy going to each faculty questioner and the department administrative assistant.
4. Students may confer with each faculty member for whom they are writing by the 2nd or 3rd week of the semester. The student and faculty member may discuss the subject areas for the questions, and the faculty member may suggest areas of concentration for the student. The faculty member should make sure the student understands if any materials (e.g., outlines, articles, etc.) other than the question are allowed during the exam and that approval of additional materials is needed by a specific deadline. Most faculty members do not allow supplemental materials. Be forewarned that if a faculty member allows supplemental materials, those must be approved in advance, or the department administrative assistant will not allow the material during the examination. Do not expect to get supplemental material approved by a faculty member less than 24 hours before your scheduled examination time.
5. Students typically schedule their written exams about the 8th week of their final semester and complete them within two weeks. Any rewrites should be completed as soon as possible after the initial ten working day (two weeks) testing period. Rewrites occur often, and the student must allow enough time for faculty members to grade

(typically a week) and students to rewrite their questions. The committee should also be given two weeks to prepare for the student's defense.

6. Students should determine the exam schedule with their advisor, not the administrative assistant. Students will answer the exam questions using a departmental laptop. After the student and advisor agree on an exam schedule, the student should schedule a room and computer with the department administrative assistant. If the administrative assistant determines the room or computer is unavailable, the student should consult with their advisor on a modified schedule.
7. The student must complete the [Master's Final Examination Form](#), found on the [Graduate School Website](#) under Current Students/Graduate Forms. Before completing the form, the students must confirm the oral defense's date, time, and location. This form must be submitted to the Graduate School no later than ten working days before the oral exam.
8. Faculty members will submit their questions for the written exam to the advisor at least three working days before the exam. The questions should be clearly marked as to the length of time the student has to answer and indicate what (if any) additional items the student can use during the exam.
9. The advisor will prepare each exam question and attach a cover sheet (i.e., indicating the name of the student, the name of the questioner, the length of time the student has to complete the question, and indicate any additional materials the student can use during the exam) to each question for the department administrative assistant to.
10. The department administrative assistant will distribute the questions according to the advisor's instructions. Students can keep a copy of their answers. The original copies of the questions and answers will be returned to the questionnaire for grading, and a copy of the original question and answer will be returned to the student's advisor.
11. The questioners will evaluate each question as "Pass," "Rewrite," or "Fail" and will mark that assessment on the cover sheet. Questioners will return the cover sheets to the advisor within one week after receiving the student's answer.
12. Before proceeding with the oral examination, students must receive a "pass" for all parts of the written exam. Any portion of the exam given a "rewrite" must be made up by rewriting that portion of the exam to achieve an evaluation of "pass" for that portion. Candidates are only allowed one rewrite per each original question. If a student fails a rewrite, then the student fails that question. If a student fails a question, they may appeal to the Department Head for a second rewrite. If a student fails a question, they will not be allowed to progress to the oral defense and will fail to graduate with an M.A. in Communication Studies that semester. The student must enroll in the following spring or fall semester and retake all 6 written exams while concurrently enrolled in coursework.

13. The oral examination will be held with all committee members present and will typically last 2 hours. The advisor will chair the oral examination. The Dean's Representative (the outside faculty member) will submit the ballots and the final report to the Graduate School, per graduate school policy. The oral exam outcome can result in pass, fail, or adjournment. In the case of adjournment, the candidate will consult with their advisor on what needs to be corrected and when a second oral defense can be rescheduled. In the case of failure, the candidate fails to graduate.
14. During the exam, student notes are restricted to their exam answers, blank paper, and only what was allowed during the exam (the questions, approved outlines, and/or articles). No other course notes, study notes, research articles, or papers are allowed.
15. Upon completion of the oral examination, one copy of the student's answers will be kept in the student's file in the department office.

Sample Program

Below is a sample program for all three (thesis, project, or non-thesis) options. The example is not an exact representation of a past student's program. This schedule is a composite model to illustrate the balance between required COMM courses and other courses that enhance a program of study. Most courses listed below are offered in the fall and/or spring semesters. Some students also attend summer school. Be advised that offerings in the summer are not very extensive. Note that both options include 33 credit hours of Communication courses and one out of department elective.

Two Year Course Schedule

First Fall Semester	COMM 5110 COMM 5210 or COMM 570 or COMM	Theories of Communication Political Communication Organizational Communication Communication Elective
First Spring Semester	COMM 5140 COMM 5710 or COMM 5610 or COMM	Quantitative Research Methods Communication and Culture Interpersonal Communication Communication Elective
Third Semester	COMM COMM 5994 or 5999	Outside Elective Communication Elective Master's Thesis, MA Project (3 credit hours) or Elective
Fourth Semester	COMM COMM 5994 or 5999	Communication Elective Communication or Outside Elective Master's Thesis, MA Project (3 credit hours) or Elective

While the required courses will be the same for all students, the student chooses elective courses within and outside the department with the approval of their advisor. Since each student's program is unique, these sample programs are not intended to be duplicated.

Outside Courses

Students majoring in Communication Studies may take up to six credits of courses outside of the department. This may or may not constitute an official minor. The Graduate School recognizes the completion of at least nine graduate level credits as a minor. If you wish to have these credits count as a minor, check the [Graduate School Catalog](#) and your visit with your advisor before enrolling in courses . It is crucial that you consult with your advisor and with the relevant department(s) before choosing an outside course. If you take more than six hours of classes outside the department, you still have to complete the required 30 credits of COMM courses for your degree.

Undergraduate Courses

Students can take up to six hours of undergraduate courses numbered 4500 - 4999 with approval from the student's advisor. Grades earned for undergraduate courses to be applied toward the student's graduate degree must be a B- or higher. Grades of C+ and below will not count toward the degree but will be calculated into the GPA.

Writing Style Guides

Graduate students are expected to engage in a considerable amount of writing before graduation. Consequently, adhering to a recognized style guide is required. For most writing purposes, the most recent version of the APA (American Psychological Association) style guide is suggested. First, this style is used predominately by journals in the disciplines and fields of the social sciences. Also, the graduate school recognizes the APA style guide as one which is allowed for thesis work. Students should purchase the APA style guide for future reference. The department expects all graduate students to understand APA guidelines and use them in all classes and writing.

Master's Accelerated Program

NMSU's Master's Accelerated Program (MAP) provides the opportunity for academically qualified undergraduate students to begin working on a master's degree during their junior and senior years while completing a bachelor's degree. Typically, a bachelor's degree requires four years to complete, and a master's degree requires an additional two years.

Students may take up to four of the following six courses:

Course to Enroll in	Course Topic	Counts for Undergraduate
COMM 5220	Communication Technology	COMM 4220
COMM 5230	Strategic Communication	COMM 4230
COMM 5310	Sports Communication	COMM 4310
COMM 5630	Family Communication	COMM 4630
COMM 5640	Nonverbal Communication	COMM 4640

COMM 5998	Internship	COMM 4998
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The Department of Communication Studies allows up to 12 credits of coursework of the above courses to count towards the completion of a master's program of study. Students must receive a B- or higher grade to receive graduate credit for up to 12 credit hours. MAP courses completed with a grade of C+ or lower are not eligible for graduate credit. Students must apply and complete a contract to be accepted into the MAP program, and during their last semester of studies in their undergraduate program, apply to the Graduate School. All MAP credits will then transfer to their Graduate credits upon the confirmation of their undergraduate degree. MAP students must maintain a minimum 3.25 GPA and earn a B- or better in all courses to receive MAP credit. For additional information about MAP and all the requirements to participate in MAP, please visit with the Department Head of Communication Studies. Enrollment in graduate courses requires the approval of the Department Head of Communication Studies.

Research Opportunities

Several courses may require research papers, but your research opportunities are not limited to coursework. Faculty members will frequently approach graduate students for assistance and collaboration on research projects. Furthermore, you should feel free to approach faculty members if you would like to participate in one of their research projects or would like assistance on one of your own. If your project is not required in a faculty member's class, faculty may request appropriate authorship on the research project. Such collaboration has produced, in the past, a large number of convention papers and published articles.

Policies:

If a research project involves collecting data in our introductory course, please adhere to the following guidelines:

1. Permission must be granted by the Basic Course Director before data collection can be approved and scheduled. Prepare a complete description of the data collection procedures, including the time required and copies of the research measures.
2. Data collection in lab sessions of the introductory course will not be permitted. Instead, students will be offered extra credit to participate in the study outside of class.
3. All Institutional Review Board requirements (training and applicable forms) for using human subjects must be completed before data can be collected. Copies of your training certificate and your IRB application/forms should be given to your advisor.
4. Extra Credit can only be offered in the introductory course by the Basic Course Director.

Departmental Policies

The department subscribes to all the policies of the Graduate School. Students are advised to familiarize themselves with university policies, graduation requirements, and deadlines. For Graduate Teaching Assistants, additional policies and procedures are located in the Graduate Teaching Assistantship Policy Manual. In addition to university guidelines, students majoring in Communication Studies will be expected to adhere to the following departmental guidelines:

1. No more than six credit hours in independent study courses (COMM 5997 or any other independent study numbers on campus) can be counted toward fulfilling the minimum hours needed for graduation.

2. To remain active majors, graduate students must enroll in at least one COMM course per semester.
3. Students should note that the Graduate School policy for completing the master's degree is five years (or six successive summers).
4. Students not maintaining a 3.0 in their COMM courses may be dropped from the program.
5. Students are expected to attend colloquia, symposia, and special seminars arranged by the department.

Academic and Nonacademic Misconduct

All Communication Studies graduate students are expected to hold themselves to the highest standards of academic integrity. This includes, but is not limited to:

- Being prepared and having read all class materials before class.
- Attend and participate in class discussions.
- Take exams honestly, relying on only your own knowledge.
- Giving proper attribution of sources without plagiarizing the work of others
- Avoiding self-plagiarism and usage of AI unless specifically allowed by the professor and stated in the class syllabus.
- Supporting and assisting your classmates appropriately, ethically, and legally.

This is not an exhaustive list and **unauthorized usage of AI in the classroom, or for any classroom assignments, especially those misrepresented as student work is considered Academic Misconduct** in the Department of Communication Studies. Allegations regarding academic misconduct of graduate students shall be brought immediately to the Academic Conduct Officer (ACO). All Graduate Students, by policy, will receive a Level 2 Sanction. Academic misconduct is discussed in APR [5.10](#) and [5.11](#). Academic and nonacademic misconduct is reviewed in the policy on [Student Conduct and Community Standards](#) and the [NMSU Student Handbook](#).

According to the NMSU Student Code of Conduct, any student found guilty of academic misconduct shall be subject to disciplinary action. Academic misconduct includes, but is not limited to, the following actions:

1. Cheating or knowingly assisting another student in committing an act of cheating or other forms of academic dishonesty.
2. Plagiarism is using another person's work without acknowledgment, making it appear to be one's own. Any ideas, words, pictures, or other sources must be acknowledged in a citation that gives credit to the source. This is true no matter where the material comes from, including the Internet, other students' work, unpublished materials, or oral sources. Intentional and unintentional instances of plagiarism, including self-plagiarism and submitting similar research papers in more than one course, are considered academic misconduct. Self-plagiarism or plagiarizing yourself is the use of content from another course assignment, whether current or past, for another course's requirement. Self-plagiarism and plagiarism violate the NMSU policy on Academic Integrity and will be reported as such. The student submitting the work in question is responsible for knowing, understanding, and complying with this policy. If no citation is given, then borrowing any of the following would be an example of plagiarism:

- An idea or opinion, even when put into one's own words (paraphrase)
 - A few well-said words, if these are a unique insight.
 - Many words, even if one changes most of them.
 - Materials assembled by others, for instance, quotes or a bibliography.
 - An argument
 - A pattern or idea
 - Graphs, pictures, or other illustrations
 - Facts
 - All or part of an existing paper or other resource
 - AI-assisted content
3. Self-plagiarism
 4. Unauthorized possession of examinations, reserve library materials, laboratory materials, or other course-related materials.
 5. Unauthorized changing of grades on an examination, in an instructor's grade book, or on a grade report; or unauthorized access to academic computer records.
 6. Nondisclosure or misrepresentation in filling out applications or other University records in, or for, academic departments or colleges.

This list is not meant to include all possible examples of plagiarism. Additional examples can be found in [ARP 5.10-A](#). This policy is taken from the NMSU student handbook. This is a university policy! For more information, including your rights, should you be accused of academic misconduct, see [ARP 5.10](#).

Students who engage in disruptive activities in an academic setting (e.g., classrooms, academic offices, or academic buildings) are subject to disciplinary action in accordance with Part III: Standards for Student Social Conduct. Such students are also subject to administrative actions in accordance with the [Undergraduate and Graduate School Catalog](#) as well as ARP [5.10](#) and [5.11](#).

Nonacademic Misconduct or violations of the [Student Conduct and Community Standards](#) can include the following, which is not an inclusive list, and will be subject to disciplinary action:

1. Actual or threatened physical injury to any person (including self) on university owned or controlled property or at a university-sponsored or supervised function, including conduct that endangers the health or safety of a person.
2. Engaging in individual or group conduct that is violent (including sexual misconduct, attempted suicide, or threats of either), abusive, indecent, unreasonably loud, or similar disorderly conduct that infringes upon the privacy, rights, or privileges of others or disturbs the peace or the orderly process of education on campus.
3. Unauthorized use, possession, or storage of any weapon or explosive (including fireworks) on university premises or at university sponsored activities.
4. Forgery, counterfeiting, alterations, or misuse of any university record, document, or identification card of a nonacademic nature (e.g., housing applications or parking permits).
5. Unauthorized entry into or alteration of any university computer records or violation of Computer Center policies.

6. Reporting the presence of a fire, bomb, explosive, or incendiary device on the university campus without good reason to believe the facts reported are accurate.
7. Unlawful possession, use, distribution, or sale of any narcotic or dangerous drug as defined by New Mexico State University Policy and the State of New Mexico statutes.
8. Theft of, or unwarranted damage to, university property or property of any University community member.
9. Failure to comply with Housing regulations.
10. Failure to comply with the lawful directives of university employees acting within the scope of their duties, including those directives issued by a university administrator to ensure the safety and well-being of students.
11. Entry into, or use of, any building, facility, room or other university property or grounds without authorized approval. This also includes the unauthorized possession or use of university keys, lock combinations, or other access codes.
12. Participation in illegal gambling activities on university-owned or -controlled property or at a function identified with the university.
13. Possession or consumption of alcoholic beverages in contradiction of state law and/or university policy.
14. Entering or attempting to enter any athletic contest, dance, social event, or other event without proper credentials for admission (e.g., ticket, identification card, or invitation).
15. Failure to make a satisfactory settlement for any debts to the university.
16. Failure to comply with university traffic rules and regulations.

This list is not designed to be an all-inclusive but offers examples of the types of prohibited conduct. More policy information on the [Student Social Code of Conduct](#) can be found in ARP [5.20](#) through [5.26](#).

Academic Probation and Suspension

The Department of Communication Studies reviews the academic records of all graduate students at the end of each semester when possible. A student whose cumulative GPA in Communication Studies courses at the end of any semester is less than 3.0 will be informed in writing and will automatically be placed on probation with the Department. If, during the next enrollment period, a student fails to earn a cumulative GPA of 3.0 or to show substantial improvement in the quality of work in Communication Studies (as determined by the department graduate faculty), the student will be suspended from the Department of Communication Studies. A GPA of less than 3.0 means any number numerically less than 3.0 with no rounding up. For example, a 2.99 GPA will not be rounded up to 3.0.

If a student wishes to appeal any probation or suspension, the student must formally write a letter to the Dean of the Graduate School and appeal to the The Department Head of Communication Studies to write a formal letter in support of the appeal to the Dean of the Graduate School. The Department Head is not obligated to write such a letter. This decision will be made at the discretion of the Department Head.

A student can be suspended from the Department but not the Graduate School. In these rare situations, students can continue to enroll in graduate courses in other departments. Students usually apply to a different program to complete their graduate education. Students on suspension from the Department who wish to continue their M.A. education in Communication Studies after suspension must re-apply to the Department. If a student wishes to appeal the suspension with the Department, this appeal should be directed to the Department Head in the form of an official letter.

A student can also be admitted to the Graduate school as a [Master's Provisional](#). Graduate Students who transfer or whose GPA in the last half of their undergraduate work is less than 3.0 but have a minimum GPA of 2.5 can be admitted provisionally. Provisional students do not qualify for a Graduate Assistantship and must complete their first three courses and 9 credits of graduate work with a minimum GPA of 3.0. Any provisional student who does not obtain a 3.0 GPA average after 9 credits of graduate coursework is subject to dismissal.

A graduate student who has not decided on a specific graduate degree program and has an undergraduate minimum GPA average of 2.5 may be considered for admission as a [Master's Undeclared](#) student. International students with an F-1 visa are not eligible for undeclared master's status. Master's undeclared students with a GPA below 3.0 do not qualify for a Graduate Assistantship.

Graduate Student Appeals

Any graduate student who believes they have been unjustly treated within the academic process may appeal following the educational grievance process for graduate students as outlined in ARP [5.14](#).

Change of Program

Any graduate student who wants to transfer into or out of the Department of Communication Studies must formally apply and be accepted by the new program. Students who want to transfer between the main campus and global may also need to make a new application to the program that they are applying to. The university rarely accepts the former "Department Program of Study Change." If a student applies to Global and wishes to be considered for the Main Campus program, they will have to make a new application to Main Campus. In the situation where a student wishes to transfer from Main Campus to the Global Campus, the graduate school may require a new application be processed for the Global Campus.

Leave of Absence

No leave of absence can be taken without the written approval of the student's faculty advisor and the Department Head. Students must submit a formal letter through the Department Head to the Dean of the Graduate School. The Graduate School will not accept an email. The request should include the beginning date and the anticipated ending date for the period of absence. A graduate student on leave of absence will be expected not to use university facilities and place no demands upon the university faculty and staff, and, therefore, will pay no fees. Time spent in the "leave-of-absence" status will not be counted toward the advanced degree time limits. A graduate student who fails to obtain a leave of absence from the Graduate School will be

considered withdrawn from the university by the Graduate School. The student must go through the formal readmission process to resume studies after such absences.

Students seeking a medical leave of absence and work with the Registrar's Office (575) 646-3411 or registrar@nmsu.edu. Students in the Military should work with the Office of Military and Veterans Programs (575) 646-4524 or mvp@nmsu.edu. All leave of Absence should be requested as soon as possible, depending on the circumstances. If the request is not fulfilled, students must re-apply to the University after one academic year.

Graduate Teaching Assistantships

The Communication Studies Department awards a limited number of Graduate Teaching Assistantships (GTAs) annually. The current [Collective Bargaining Agreement binds all GTAs](#). The Graduate Assistant Resource page provides additional information and resources for the GTA Union.

The department's process usually occurs each March and November and as needed thereafter. Graduate faculty and the Basic Course Director review all complete files and rate the candidates from the best to the least preferred. These are entirely independent ratings, and faculty do not discuss their ratings, nor do they elaborate on them on their review sheet. The Department Head or Graduate Advisor then generates a mean score from these ratings and awards assistantships based on those candidates that receive the highest scores. The Department Head does not select the Graduate Assistants. The Department Head calculates the scores and offers the assistantships. If a position opens unexpectedly, the Department Head returns to the original rankings if time permits and often will consult the the Graduate Advisor and Basic Course Director. The graduate faculty and Basic Course Director will often review new files to allow newly applied students to be considered for an assistantship if late or an unexpected opening occurs.

Full-time graduate assistants receive a stipend, out-of-state tuition waiver, small scholarship, access to technology for teaching courses, and office space for up to two years or four academic semesters, not including the summer semester while in the program. Graduate Assistants are required to provide 20 hours of service per week to the department, in most cases assisting in COMM 1115G (Introduction to Communication). Additionally, on rare occasions, Graduate Assistants may have summer work opportunities.

The graduate assistantship stipend is intended to help you complete your education. Thus, the renewal of your assistantship is dependent on two requirements:

1. Adequate progress toward completing the M.A. degree (Minimum cumulative GPA of 3.0, taking required courses, meeting enrollment expectations, etc.).
2. Satisfactory performance of your graduate assistant duties:
 - a. Effective teaching of the introductory course lab (6 classroom hours per week) and/or any special assigned duties by the Basic Course Director, Graduate Advisor, and/or Department Head.
 - b. Attending weekly lectures (1 hour per week plus all exam sessions if applicable).
 - c. Attending weekly staff meetings (1 hour per week) with additional meetings when necessary.

- d. Maintaining office hours (3 hours per week).
- e. Maintaining hours in the Center for Communication Development (2 hours per week).
- f. Teaching prep time (4 hours per week).
- g. Timely grading of assignments.
- h. Maintaining sufficient evaluations.
- i. Engaging in department service and outreach activities.
- j. Attendance and participation at department workshops, colloquia, symposia, and special seminars arranged by the department.

The Basic Course Director should be notified immediately and seek approval if a Graduate Assistant must miss a duty listed above. Graduate Assistants are not allowed to cancel COMM 1115G lab classes. In the case of absences, the Graduate Assistant must follow the substitution policy listed in the lab instructor and policy manual. The Basic Course Director will articulate the substitution policy. Documentation of a valid excuse (e.g., hospitalization, death in the family, conference travel) may be required by the Basic Course Director and/or the Department Head for missing lab sections, lecture, staff meetings, office hours, CCD hours, and/or special department obligations.

If a GTA fails to meet the performance criteria above or provide documentation for absences, the GTA may lose their assistantship. If a student loses their assistantship and wishes to appeal that loss, they can appeal to the Department Head.

GTA's are expected to adhere to the following departmental guidelines:

1. GTA's must enroll in at least 9 hours of graduate courses each semester, except their final semester.
2. GTA's are expected to enroll in at least six credit hours of Communication Studies courses each semester (exceptions to be approved by the advisor or Department Head).
3. GTA's must enroll in at least three credit hours of actual courses per semester-- exclusive of independent studies or thesis credits (exceptions to be approved by the advisor or department head).
4. Graduate Teaching Assistantships can be renewed for up to four semesters (excluding summers) for students fulfilling the above requirements. The department is not obligated to extend graduate assistantship stipends beyond four semesters despite the student's progress toward their degree. **Graduate Teaching Assistantships are not guaranteed.** All assistantships will be reviewed for renewal each semester. Decisions on renewal of each GTA are based on the performance discussed above and in their contract.

Additional Department Policies

If necessary, any additional policy statements will be distributed through the Department Head, Graduate Advisor, or Basic Course Director.

Financial Aid

The university administers an extensive program of loans and work-study employment for graduate students. The awarding of loans and work-study is based on need and will require the student to complete a Federal Application for Student Financial Aid (FASFA) form to determine possible awards. Students must apply annually for financial assistance and work with the office of financial aid early and check deadlines with the financial aid office. For information concerning available financial assistance, contact the [Financial Aid Office](#).

Student Employment

In addition to assistantships, fellowships, work-study, and other employment options may be available. Human Resource Services posts job listings for on-campus positions. Graduate students enrolled for a minimum of nine hours per semester may be served by Human Resources. Student spouses/partners who seek full or part-time work may also apply through the Office of Human Resource Services. See [Student Employment](#) options and other [career opportunities](#) at NMSU.

NMSU Policies

New Mexico State University (NMSU) does not discriminate on the basis of age, ancestry, color, disability, gender identity, genetic information, national origin, race, religion, retaliation, serious medical condition, sex (including pregnancy), sexual orientation, spousal affiliation or protected veteran status in its' programs and activities, including admissions, as required by state and federal law and University policy.

NMSU's Office of Institutional Equity is designated as the office that receives and processes internal complaints of unlawful discrimination, harassment, retaliation, and sexual misconduct on behalf of NMSU. The Office of Equity, Inclusion and Diversity is responsible for implementation of the University's Affirmative Action plan including equal opportunity practices, monitoring, and reporting. If you believe you have been treated in a manner inconsistent with equal opportunity, contact the Office of Institutional Equity.

NMSU has designated William Nutt as the Title IX Coordinator, responsible for ensuring compliance with Title IX and other state and federal laws addressing sexual and gender based harassment, including sexual assault, dating and domestic violence, stalking, and other forms of sexual misconduct based on sex, gender, sexual orientation, or gender identity.

NMSU recognizes that individuals with disabilities are entitled to access, support and, when appropriate, reasonable accommodation. William Nutt is also assigned to coordinate compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), Section 504, and other state and federal laws that prohibit discrimination on the basis of disability in admission, treatment, and/or access to its programs and activities.

Inquiries regarding equal opportunity, Title IX, ADA and/or Section 504 should be directed to:

Office of Institutional Equity

William D. Nutt

Executive Director, Title IX and ADA Coordinator

O'Loughlin House
Las Cruces, NM 88003
Office: (575) 646-3635
TTY: (575) 646-7802
Website: equity.nmsu.edu
Email: equity@nmsu.edu

Annamarie DeLovato is NMSU's Deputy Title IX and Deputy ADA Coordinator and can be contacted at the O'Loughlin House or by telephone at (575) 646-3635.

Complaints of unlawful discrimination, harassment, sexual misconduct, and retaliation may be directed to the Office of Institutional Equity by email at equity@nmsu.edu, directly through OIE's website located using our public [Report of Incident](#). Complaints may also be filed with the [US Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights](#) the [U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission](#), and/or [New Mexico Human Rights Bureau](#).

If a student has a condition which may affect their ability to exit safely from the premises in an emergency or which may cause an emergency during class, they are encouraged to discuss this in confidence with the instructor, the Basic Course Director (if they are a TA) and/or the Director of Student Accessibility Services.

Other NMSU Resources:

NMSU Main Campus emergency contact information

NMSU Police Department	575-646-3311	www.nmsupolice.com
Aggie Health & Wellness (Medical and Counseling Services)	575-646-1512	www.wellness.nmsu.edu
NMSU Dean of Students	575-646-1722	
For Emergencies	911	

Student Parking

All students who park on campus must register their vehicles annually with the [NMSU Parking Department](#) and obtain a parking permit on or before the date the vehicle is to be operated or parked on the campus. Registration of all motor vehicles, including motorcycles, motor scooters, and bicycles, owned or operated on the University campus by students is required. An annual registration charge will be assessed for each vehicle parking on campus. Parking lots are restricted. The parking permit indicates in which zone to park. (See Parking Zone Map available from the Parking Department).

Student Resources

Activity Center

The [NMSU Activity Center](#) is dedicated to helping members of the NMSU community reach their fitness goals and maintain a pure, balanced, and overall healthy lifestyle. The Activity Center offers modern, extensive exercise equipment, and a wide variety of classes, including aerobic, aquatic, intramural, open recreation, and outdoor adventure sports. The fitness/wellness services offered at the AC include such items as comprehensive fitness assessments, certified personal trainers, body composition testing, nutritional analysis, group fitness classes, and much more.

Aggie Health and Wellness Center

The [Aggie Health and Wellness Center](#) (AHWC) provides integrated comprehensive medical, psychological, and recreational activity services to NMSU students. It is a nationally accredited out-patient ambulatory facility offering services in: Employee Assistance Program (EAP), Health education, outreach and programming, Immunizations (travel and preventative), Medical clearance for NMSU research, education and employment purposes, medical illness and prevention, Mental health and counseling, Treatment and case management of workers compensation injuries, and Women's health. The AHWC is located on the northeast corner of the building, at the corner of McFie and Breland Drive, across the street from Zuhl Library (AHWC, 2017).

Information and Communication Technologies

Computer labs are open 24 hours a day, with a support staff available during most of these hours. All graduate students have access to the computer center and free software while concurrently enrolled at NMSU.

Libraries

New Mexico State University has a comprehensive library system and has two campus libraries, Zuhl and Branson. Both are located on the pedestrian walkway that runs through the middle of campus and are situated within easy walking distance of the Communication Science Building.

The NMSU [Library](#) offers a plethora of electronic resources ranging from biographies, citations, and style guides to dictionaries, encyclopedias, and maps. Formal instruction and tutorials on research, evaluating periodicals, and accessing and using electronic databases and journals may be arranged for classroom instruction. Most of the time, students can access all the sources needed for literature reviews and classroom presentations from departmental or home computers.