Overview

This guide explains the requirements for the Ph.D. in Communication and Rhetoric at Rensselaer. Additional Institute policies applicable to graduate students are explained on the Office of Graduate Education’s website http://gradoffice.rpi.edu. The Degree Progress Timetables at the end of this document will help you plan your progress through the Ph.D. program. They list the milestones by which your progress will be measured through an ideal full-time study period of eight to ten semesters.

Mission

The mission of the Ph.D. in Communication and Rhetoric at Rensselaer is to enable students to make a contribution with rigor, depth, and creativity on issues related to Communication in Technologically Mediated Contexts.

Program Requirements

While specific plans of study will vary to meet individual needs and interests, all students must meet the program requirements outlined in this section. Note that a course applied to fulfill one requirement cannot be used to satisfy a second requirement.

The Core

To provide a foundation for contributions on issues related to Communication in Technologically Mediated Contexts, students are required to take two core courses, each combining a horizontal disciplinary base in communication and rhetoric with depth on issues of communication in technological contexts:

- Communication Theory (currently Fall term annually)
- Rhetoric, Culture, and Technology (Spring term annually)
Directed Research

To enable students to prepare for the independent work of the dissertation, each student is required to take, under the direction of the dissertation advisor, at least three credits of directed research of the sort that might enable a student to satisfy the requirement for Public Presentation/Publication (see below). These credits may be taken as a three-credit block in a single semester or as one- to two-credit blocks over several semesters.

If a student completes project work under one advisor and subsequently changes advisors, the project work must be repeated under the new advisor.

Outside Courses

To support the breadth of perspectives required to study Communication in Technologically Mediated Contexts, students are required to take at least one course at Rensselaer outside of the Department of Communication and Media. Students may use this course to identify an outside member of their dissertation committee.

Students may elect to take courses outside the Department as well, but at least twenty-seven of the thirty-six credit hours of required course work beyond the master’s degree must be taken within the Department.

Application Courses

To enable the creative study, practice, and teaching of Communication in Technologically Mediated Contexts, students are encouraged to take up to three courses aimed at applying theory and research to design and practice in areas such as graphics, human-computer interaction, hypermedia, web design and development, or writing.

Totals:
MS/PhD track 90 credit hours
PhD 60 credit hours

Formal Presentation/Publication

Ph.D. students are required to produce three examples of submitted, peer-reviewed professional presentation and writing and to attend one grant-writing workshop prior to completion of the Ph.D. degree. These requirements may be satisfied with different options. In all cases, students must (A) attend a grant-writing workshop sponsored by the Department or School or as approved by the advisor, (B) present a paper at an approved conference and (C) publish an article (or submit one under conditions
below) in an approved publication. The one remaining presentation and writing requirement is up to the student and may be completed from categories (B), (C) or (D). Further specification of these options follows:

A. Students must attend one grant-writing workshop
B. One or two single-authored, conference presentations in venues outside of Rensselaer.
C. One or two published, in-press, or submitted scholarly articles or essays in an edited book (sole or co-authored) to a publication approved by the advisor. Students are encouraged to review articles with their advisors prior to submission. If the student does not have a published paper, the submitted paper must be one that the advisor has reviewed and approved prior to submission.
D. (Optional) One grant and/or fellowship proposal to sources outside of Rensselaer.

For example, a student could complete (A), one of (B), and two of (C). Or (A), one of (B), one of (C), and one of (D). Other combinations are possible. For more information, please consult (below): Formal Presentation/Publication Requirement: Guidelines

**Professional Development (20 hrs.)**

To support professional growth and development, students serve **twenty hours each term** as a curricular requirement in T.A., R.A., or other support roles. T.A. and R.A. support roles are governed by Institute policies and procedures. Other professional development activities are supervised by Department faculty and support a variety of research, teaching, and service activities, including the Center for Communication Practices and other administrative and service activities.

**Credit-Hour Requirements**

The Ph.D. degree requires satisfactory completion of **ninety credit hours beyond the bachelor’s degree**. Students who have completed (or are about to complete) an appropriate master's degree prior to entry into the Ph.D. program (for a Post-Master’s Doctorate) will ordinarily have completed thirty of the required ninety credit hours. Students who enter the Ph.D. program without an appropriate master’s degree (for a Post-Baccalaureate Doctorate) are required to fulfill the requirements for the master’s degree. Students with an appropriate master’s degree are required to complete an additional **thirty-six credit hours** of course work at Rensselaer following completion of the master’s degree. Students without an appropriate master’s degree are required to complete either the M.S. in Communication and Rhetoric or the M.S. in Technical Communication. They are also required to complete an additional thirty hours of
course work at Rensselaer following completion of the master’s degree. Students without an appropriate master’s degree are not permitted to fulfill the M.S. requirement by completing the M.S. in Human-Computer Interaction without prior approval of the Graduate Program Director. Some plans of study may require additional course work beyond this thirty-six credit-hour minimum, typically not to exceed forty-two credits.

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{Ph.D.: } & [30 \text{ MS}] + 36 + 24 = 90 \\
\text{M.S./ Ph.D.: } & 30 + 30 + 30 = 90
\end{align*}
\]

**Course levels:** at least two-thirds of the total credit hours, excluding thesis (dissertation credits), must be at the 6000 level, with no more than 21 credit hours of 4000 level courses for a 90-credit doctorate.

**Transfer Credit**

If you have taken additional graduate-level course work in an appropriate area prior to matriculating in the Ph.D. program, you may apply to the departmental Graduate Program Director for additional transfer credit, up to the maximum of forty-five of the required ninety credit hours. All transfer credits beyond the thirty credit hours automatically granted for an M.S. or M.A. will be counted as electives in place of dissertation credits unless approved by the Graduate Program Director as equivalent to one or more of the core courses or a specific elective course or courses as listed below. However, the transfer credits are counted, you are still required to take a minimum of thirty-six credit hours of course work at Rensselaer. Credits taken as audits will not count toward fulfillment of the course requirement.

**M.S./Ph.D.**

The Department admits qualified students with an appropriate bachelor’s degree to the M.S. /Ph.D. combination. In this case, ninety credits are required, with the first thirty credits counting as the M.S. degree.

To apply for the master’s degree, **during the semester in which you will complete your first 30 credits:**

1. Draft a separate M.S. Plan of Study in addition to a new Ph.D. Plan of Study and obtain the appropriate approvals (Advisor and GPD). You do not have to list your master’s credits by course on this new Ph.D. Plan – simply note “M.S. CMRT earned at Rensselaer” and place “30” in the credit column.
2. Complete a Change of Status form (http://www.rpi.edu/dept/grad/docs/change-status.pdf), indicating that you would like to “Add Additional Degree Program” and obtain the appropriate approvals (Dept. Head and Advisor)
3. Complete a Degree Application, indicating M.S. graduation at the end of that semester

For example, if you are finishing the remaining 3 credits of your initial 30 in the Spring semester of 2014, then you will have to file a degree application for May of 2014 (by the Degree Application deadline – usually early February) and submit items #1 and #2 to the Graduate Program Director (GPD) at the beginning of that semester.
The Advising Process

The Ph.D. advising process is intended to assist students in their preparations for the qualifying examination and dissertation, both to ease them through the process and to ensure that they are well prepared.

1. Each Ph.D. student is assigned an initial advisor upon admission into the Ph.D. program, usually the Graduate Program Director. The student is encouraged to identify an appropriate advisor and is permitted a change of advisor upon request by the student and consent of the new advisor. Each student is required to complete a Nomination of Advisor form in the first year of Ph.D. study or by the end of the Third Semester at the latest (see form below). A student may nominate an advisor of his or her choice, including either the initial advisor or a new advisor.

2. Each student is required to develop a Graduate Plan of Study (POS) in consultation with his or her advisor, prior to the end of their second semester of coursework (see below).

3. Each student is required to obtain approval of the proposed plan of courses from the entire dissertation committee before registering for the final six credit hours of courses*. The committee may stipulate additional courses, readings, or activities necessary to prepare the student to undertake original scholarship, research, and/or creative work for the Ph.D. Each student is encouraged to obtain committee approval of the proposed plan of courses as early as possible during his or her coursework but no later than the time of registration for the final six credit hours of courses.

Graduate Plan of Study

Prior to the end of your second semester of full-time Ph.D. study, you must meet with your advisor to complete the Office of Graduate Education’s Plan of Study (POS). The purpose of this Graduate Plan of Study is to help you to design a series of courses that will prepare you to complete a dissertation in your chosen area of study. Graduate students who completed the master’s degree at another institution should list the degree and institution for a total of thirty credit hours (and no more than thirty credit hours) plus all of the courses competed at Rensselaer, not to exceed the total of ninety credit hours required for the degree. Additional dissertation credits beyond the ninety hours should not be shown on the Plan of Study. Graduate students who completed the master’s degree at Rensselaer should list all of the courses that

* typically during the third semester of full-time study
count toward the master’s and the Ph.D., plus any additional certificates, not to exceed the total of ninety credit hours required for the degree. The Plan of Study should also indicate any approved transfer credit.

The Graduate Plan of Study may be modified if your scholarly interests change. But these modifications may require that you take additional courses to ensure that you have completed the kinds of course work that are important for a dissertation in a given area. The Plan of Study must be signed by you, your advisor, and the departmental Graduate Program Director. Any modifications are subject to the full approval process. The final Graduate Plan of Study must include your M.S./M.A. credits and must list all course titles and numbers, including dissertation credits and semester completed. The course titles and numbers must match your transcript precisely.

**Research with Human Subjects/Institute Review Board**

All research involving human subjects must be reviewed and approved by Rensselaer's Institutional Review Board. Both faculty advisors and graduate student are obligated to review IRB policies and procedures and monitor research judiciously to ensure that these policies and procedures are followed in all instances and, specifically, in doctoral dissertations and other published work. Failure to obtain IRB approval for the use of human subjects can result in administrative penalties, including formal reprimand, loss of funding for research, and/or rejection of theses and dissertations for student work. For a detailed explanation of IRB proposal and renewal procedures, proposal guidelines, templates, and timelines, please refer to [http://www.rpi.edu/research/office/irb/index.html](http://www.rpi.edu/research/office/irb/index.html).

**The Dissertation Process**

Each candidate for the doctorate pursues, under faculty direction, an original investigation of a problem or problems in a field of concentration and presents the results of the investigation in a dissertation. The doctoral dissertation, including the qualifying examination and the dissertation prospectus, must be the work of each individual student and must meet the highest standards of academic integrity. Direct contributions by others, either in person or through electronic media, must be approved by the Doctoral Program Director prior to their use or implementation.

**The Dissertation Committee**

Sometime toward the end of your second semester of study or early in your second year, you should enter into an agreement with the faculty member who will most likely chair your dissertation committee. The basis of the agreement will be mutual intellectual interests and the faculty member's willingness to guide you through your planned dissertation research. You should establish this informal relationship early because your dissertation advisor will need to review and possibly modify your Plan of Study.

You and your prospective dissertation committee chair will select the other members of your committee. You must then propose your committee to the Department Head for approval and formal appointment by the Head and the Dean of the Office of Graduate Education. The dissertation committee must consist of at
least four tenured or tenure-track Rensselaer faculty members, one of whom must be an “outside” member who is appointed by the Graduate Program Director in consultation with the student’s dissertation advisor. Whenever possible, “outside” shall be “outside the university,” but in all cases this person must come from outside the Department. At least three of the Committee members must be members of the Department, including the committee chair. The outside member is expected to be a recognized authority on the subject of the dissertation. For appointments of committee members who are not members of the faculty, the Graduate Program Director will forward to the Office of Graduate Education a letter appointing the individual to the Committee. This letter should explain the basis for the appointment and must include the address of the appointee.

For committees having more than four members, only one non-approval is permitted. Substitutions in committee membership, once it has been determined, must be approved by the Graduate Program Director in consultation with the student and the dissertation committee chair. Replacements will occur only if a member is unable to serve or if a student’s dissertation topic changes, requiring a new dissertation chair and/or modification in the committee. In cases other than these, approval for changes in committee membership rests with the Dean of the Office of Graduate Education.

The dissertation committee will review your proposed plans of study, conduct your qualifying examination, and later review and approve your dissertation prospectus and the completed dissertation.

The Qualifying Examination

This should be taken toward the end of, or shortly after, the completion of all course requirements.

In consultation with your dissertation committee chair and the other members of your committee, you will declare a major area and two minor areas in which you will be examined. Your qualifying examination will consist of written and oral portions. Although only three of your committee members will pose questions for the written portion, all of your committee members read your written examination and participate in the subsequent oral part of the examination. You should keep your entire committee informed throughout your preparation for the examination. The purpose of the qualifying examination is not to test your memory of specific, isolated facts but to permit you to demonstrate that you can develop and defend an informed position on topics or questions that are important in your major and minor areas of study.

Written Portion

The written portion of your examination consists of a major area and two minor area essays. The exam will assess your ability to review, synthesize, and take ownership of three substantial bodies of literature related to your dissertation work. In addition to consulting with your advisor, you will meet with your
other committee members to determine your exam areas and prepare reading lists. Graduate students typically undertake independent reading courses with each examining committee member during the semester prior to the exam. The exam will include a written and an oral portion, as specified below.

- The written portion of your examination includes a major area exam and two minor area exams.
- The major exam is to be written at home and returned to the committee within 48 hours.
- The minor exam areas are to be written at school, on a department computer, without books or notes (though you may, with your committee's knowledge and consent, use an unmarked copy of your reading lists). Each minor exam is to be completed in 4 hours and is monitored by the Department's staff.
- All three exams, if you and your advisor agree, may be preceded by work on practice questions that differ significantly from the questions that actually appear on the exam. If you work on practice questions, you must indicate on your examination that you have done so and specify the practice questions.

Any exceptions to these options must be approved by the Doctoral Program Director.

**Oral Portion**

The oral portion of the exam lasts for about two hours and is conducted approximately one to two weeks after you have completed the written portion. For the oral exam, you may be asked to clarify, defend, or elaborate upon your responses in the written examination, including the options of the extended essay or the published or accepted manuscript, to discuss other topics in the examination areas, and/or to discuss your plans for dissertation research.

**Candidacy**

Candidacy must be attained **within two years after passing the qualifying exam.** In the Department of Communication and Media a student is recommended for candidacy when he or she has **successfully passed the prospectus defense.** This recommendation comes from his or her doctoral committee and the student is admitted to candidacy upon approval by the Office of Graduate Education. All further degree requirements, including the dissertation, must be completed **within three years of attaining candidacy.**

To begin this process, the student will file a prospectus approval form (below), circulate a final prospectus to his or her committee members and subsequently convene for a prospectus defense.

Institute rules on candidacy:
A student may apply for the candidacy examination, given by his or her doctoral committee, when:
- His or her course work nears completion.
- The student has an approved doctoral examining committee.
- He or she has the approval of his or her doctoral committee to take the candidacy exam.
The Dissertation Prospectus

Before you begin work on your dissertation, your committee must formally approve your dissertation prospectus. The length and format of the prospectus may vary considerably in individual cases and should be determined in consultation with your committee. In this prospectus, you should answer the following questions:

- What thesis, hypothesis, or research question do you intend to explore in your research?
- What is currently known about this thesis, hypothesis, or research question?
- How do you plan to develop your thesis, test your hypothesis, or answer your research question?
- Of what consequence is your proposed research?

As part of the answer to the second question (What is currently known...?), your prospectus should include a literature review or a working bibliography that the committee considers sufficiently comprehensive. The full dissertation committee must meet with you to assess the prospectus and indicate any changes that are necessary. Whenever possible, the outside members of the Committee will attend (in person or via communication technology such as conference phone or Skype) this initial meeting. In the process of developing the prospectus, you are encouraged to discuss your ideas with your committee members, either individually or collectively. After they meet with you and after you have made any necessary changes to the prospectus, your dissertation committee must formally approve the prospectus. The committee must also approve any subsequent changes that committee members judge to be significant. The prospectus, accompanied by an approval sheet signed by all committee members, will be kept on file with the Graduate Program Assistant.

Subsequently, the Committee must be kept informed of the student’s progress and must agree to follow the candidate’s work and assist in its development. The committee shall also agree to give ample and early warning of any reservations concerning the student’s progress and must specify in writing the changes required for dissertation acceptance.

The Dissertation

The dissertation is a demonstration of your scholarly and research competence and thus must meet high standards of intellectual accomplishment and integrity. The dissertation committee chair has the primary responsibility for guiding you through the research and writing of the dissertation, but you should consult regularly with all of the members of your committee throughout the research and writing process. Ordinarily you should expect to submit individual chapters of the dissertation to all members of your committee for their review and approval before you submit the completed dissertation. If and when your
committee considers your dissertation to be defensible, you must defend the dissertation publicly. At that time, your committee may ask for additional revisions of the dissertation. Every member of your committee must approve and sign your dissertation before you may submit it to the Office of Graduate Education for their approval.

Financial Aid

Each year the Department is able to make a small number of awards for financial aid in the form of teaching or research assistantships. The awards are made on the basis of scholarly achievement and promise. The Department generally receives numerous applications for resources that are quite limited. Thus, a financial-aid award represents a considerable investment in the career of a student. We expect in return that students who receive awards will pursue their studies with vigor and commitment. Students who are awarded assistantships generally receive a stipend of $18,500 per academic year and a full tuition scholarship for two years. A financial aid award in the form of an assistantship generally requires that the student provide teaching or research assistance equivalent to twenty hours per week.

It is our goal to financially support all Ph.D. students throughout their graduate work with fellowships or research assistantships. After two years, you will be eligible for further funding if you remain in good academic standing according to the rules established by the Department in this guide:

- Satisfactory performance in completion of duties associated with the assistantship,
- Satisfactory academic performance in the program of study, and
- Satisfactory progress toward the completion of the degree. In general, funded doctoral students are expected to take six to eight courses (eighteen to twenty-four credit hours) per academic year toward the completion of their doctoral coursework. Further, funded doctoral students are generally expected to pass their qualifying examinations within the semester following the completion of doctoral coursework. Rensselaer Graduate Fellowship students are expected to complete eight to ten courses (twenty-four to thirty credit hours) during each year of the Fellowship.

A range of funding options for advanced students is available. Students can be supported as research assistants to faculty who have external grants or by fellowships from external sources such as the U.S. National Science Foundation. Advanced students can also be supported by fellowship programs at Rensselaer including the prestigious Humanities, Arts, Architecture, and Social Sciences (HAASS) Fellowship Program.

Financial aid renewals and new decisions are made annually. Generally, all funded graduate students will be asked annually if they wish to apply for or renew their financial aid. Decisions are ordinarily announced on or before April 1 for incoming students and prior to the start of the Fall semester for continuing students. Current students who are not presently receiving but wish to apply for financial aid should consider submitting updated materials in support of their request. These materials might consist of a revised and updated goals statement and/or new letters of recommendation.
Students who are currently receiving financial aid may be granted a deferral for one or two years provided that they request the deferral in a timely manner (that is, far enough in advance to allow the Department to make an alternative award). Students who wish to defer their financial aid should fulfill all other conditions for taking an approved leave of absence and should check with both the Office of Graduate Education and the Department to ensure that they have met these conditions.

Looking Ahead

As you read this guide for the first time, you are just beginning the process it describes. Your goal in this process is to make a significant and original contribution to knowledge in communication and rhetoric, thereby achieving full collegial membership in an international community of scholars. This goal, which is itself only a beginning, may seem far off. The process of achieving it will be difficult and at times frustrating. But your work as a doctoral student should also prove satisfying in a way that makes it worth doing in itself, apart from the value of the outcome. We wish you the joy of graduate education within the Rensselaer community and beyond.
Students with Master’s degrees. 60-Credit Hour Degree Progress Timetable.

This Timetable lists the milestones by which your progress will be measured through an ideal full-time study of eight semesters. Making good progress is a requirement for continuing good standing in our program.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>First Semester</th>
<th>Second Semester</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Graduate School Plan of Study</strong></td>
<td><strong>Degree Progress</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work with your assigned academic advisor to begin a preliminary Plan of Study</td>
<td>Complete the Office of Graduate Education’s annual review forms prior to financial aid decisions for the following year, at approximately the end of the Spring semester. See the section on Financial Aid for more details.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(POS) (available at gradoffice.rpi.edu/) that will allow you to complete your degree requirements in a timely fashion.</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Formal Presentation/Publication</strong></td>
<td><strong>Dissertation Committee Chair</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Make plans for a public presentation or publication of your work by the end of your first academic year. See the section on Formal Presentation/Publication.</td>
<td>By the beginning of the third semester you should finalize your choice of dissertation committee chair, the faculty member who has agreed to supervise your progress for the remainder of your program including your dissertation. You should begin having discussions with potential advisors early in this semester in order to have an agreement in place on time. Complete a Nomination of Advisor no later than the end of the third semester. See the section on The Dissertation Committee for more details.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Graduate Plan of Study</strong></td>
<td><strong>Graduate Plan of Study</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Complete the Plan of Study as specified in the section on Graduate Plan of Study. This form should be approved by the dissertation committee prior to registration for the final semester of coursework.</td>
<td>Complete the Plan of Study as specified in the section on Graduate Plan of Study. This form should be approved by the dissertation committee prior to registration for the final semester of coursework.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Third Semester</td>
<td>Fourth Semester</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Doctoral Committee Nomination</strong></td>
<td><strong>Degree Progress</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>By the beginning of your third semester</strong>, complete the Doctoral Committee Nomination Form (available at <a href="http://gradoffice.rpi.edu">gradoffice.rpi.edu</a>) to nominate the Doctoral Committee that will supervise your qualifying exams and subsequent dissertation work. See the section on The Dissertation Committee for more details.</td>
<td>Update the Office of Graduate Education’s annual review forms in time for financial aid decisions for the following year, at approximately the end of the Spring semester. See the section on Financial Aid for more details.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Directed Research</strong></td>
<td><strong>Graduate Plan of Study</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Make plans to complete directed research under the direction of your dissertation chair during your second year. See the section on Directed Research for more details.</td>
<td>Revise your Plan of Study if necessary.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Formal Presentation/Publication</strong></td>
<td><strong>Qualifying Exam</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Make plans for a public presentation or publication of your work by the end of your second academic year. See the section on Formal Presentation/Publication.</td>
<td>Prepare to take and pass your qualifying exam before the beginning of your fifth semester. After this you have a maximum of two years to pass your prospectus and attain candidacy status.</td>
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<tr>
<th>Fifth Semester</th>
<th>Sixth Semester</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Formal Presentation/Publication</strong></td>
<td><strong>Doctoral Prospectus and Candidacy</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Make plans for a public presentation or publication of your work by the end of your third academic year. See the section on Formal Presentation/Publication.</td>
<td>Working with your committee, draft the prospectus for your planned dissertation work by the beginning of your sixth semester. The prospectus along with an approval sheet signed by all committee members must be filed with the GPA (Jenn Mumby).</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Doctoral Prospectus and Candidacy</strong></td>
<td><strong>Degree Progress</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Within a maximum of two years after your qualifying exams, pass your Candidacy Exams (Prospectus defense) and complete the Record of Candidacy Examination form (available at <a href="http://gradoffice.rpi.edu">gradoffice.rpi.edu</a>). It is <strong>recommended that you achieve candidacy within one or two semesters after the qualifying exam.</strong></td>
<td>Update the Office of Graduate Education’s annual review forms in time for the annual review of doctoral students prior to financial aid decisions for the following year, at approximately the end of the Spring semester. See the section on Financial Aid for more details.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Working with your committee, draft the <strong>prospectus</strong> for your planned dissertation work <strong>by the beginning of your sixth semester</strong>. The prospectus along with an approval sheet signed by all committee members must be filed with the GPA.</td>
<td><strong>Dissertation Research</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Carry out diss. research.</td>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Seventh Semester</th>
<th>Eighth Semester</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Dissertation Research</strong></td>
<td><strong>Dissertation Defense</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Complete your diss. research.</td>
<td>Draft and defend your dissertation and complete</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Formal Presentation/Publication</strong></td>
<td>the <em>Record of Dissertation Exam</em> form* (available</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Make plans for a public presentation or publication</td>
<td>at gradoffice.rpi.edu) as a record of your</td>
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<td>of your work by the end of your fourth academic</td>
<td>accomplishment.</td>
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<td>year. See the section on Formal Presentation/</td>
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<td>Publication.</td>
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A Thesis checklist is available from the Office of Graduate Education at gradoffice.rpi.edu.
MS/PhD students. 90-Credit Hour Degree Progress Timetable.

This Timetable lists the milestones by which your progress will be measured through an ideal full-time study of ten semesters. Making good progress is a requirement for continuing good standing in our program.

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<thead>
<tr>
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<th>Second Semester</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Graduate Plan of Study</strong></td>
<td><strong>Degree Progress</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work with your assigned academic advisor to complete a preliminary Graduate Plan of Study (POS) (available at gradoffice.rpi.edu) that will allow you to complete your M.S. degree requirements within your first three semesters of graduate study and your M.S. and Ph.D. requirements within your total five-year time limit for the M.S. and Ph.D. degrees. Include a plan for completion of the M.S. in Communication and Rhetoric or Technical Communication, including the Graphics and/or HCI certificates.</td>
<td>Complete the Office of Graduate Education’s annual review forms in time for the annual review of doctoral students prior to financial-aid decisions for the following year, at approximately the middle of the Spring semester. See the section on Financial Aid for more details.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Formal Presentation/Publication</strong></td>
<td><strong>Nomination of Advisor (Committee Chair)</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Make plans for a public presentation or publication of your work by the end of your first academic year. See the section on Formal Presentation/Publication.</td>
<td>Complete and file the Nomination of Advisor Form by the end of the Third Semester at the latest. See the section on The Dissertation Committee for more details.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Summer Work</strong></td>
<td><strong>Summer Work</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consider completing Directed Research or Independent Study credits, if necessary, to permit completion of the M.S. degree by the end of the third semester. Work on manuscript submissions for publication.</td>
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<thead>
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<th>Third Semester</th>
<th>Fourth Semester</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Graduate Plan of Study</strong></td>
<td><strong>Degree Progress</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work with your academic advisor or committee chair to review and revise your preliminary Plan of Study, if necessary, to ensure that you will complete your Ph.D. degree requirements within your total five-year time limit for the 90-Credit-Hour Ph.D. degree.</td>
<td>Complete the Office of Graduate Education’s annual review forms in time for the annual review of doctoral students prior to financial-aid decisions for the following year, at approximately the middle of the Spring semester. See the section on Financial Aid for more details.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plan to complete the M.S. degree, including any</td>
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</table>
certificates, for a December degree award. File paperwork with the Office of Graduate Education in time for December deadline. In addition, develop a plan for your dissertation committee chair and membership so that your entire committee will be prepared to sign off on your Graduate Plan of Study prior to registration for your final semester of courses.

**Formal Presentation/Publication**
Make plans for a public presentation or publication of your work by the end of your second academic year. See the section on Formal Presentation/Publication. Complete the formal presentation form.

**Nomination of Advisor (Committee Chair)**
If not yet completed, complete and file the Nomination of Advisor Form by the end of the Third Semester.

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**Fifth Semester**

**Doctoral Committee Nomination**
By the beginning of your fifth semester, complete the Doctoral Committee Nomination Form (available at gradoffice.rpi.edu/) to nominate the Doctoral/Dissertation Committee that will supervise your exams and subsequent dissertation work. Finalize your Graduate Plan of Study for your dissertation committee chair and membership and secure sign off from your entire committee prior to registration for your final semester of courses. See the section on The Dissertation Committee for more details.

**Directed Research**
Complete the Directed Research requirement under the direction of your dissertation chair during your third year. See the section on Directed Research for more details.

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**Sixth Semester**

**Degree Progress**
Complete the Office of Graduate Education’s annual review forms in time for the annual review of doctoral students prior to financial-aid decisions for the following year, at approximately the middle of the Spring semester. See the section on Financial Aid for more details.

**Qualifying Exam**
Formulate and revise your reading lists with your committee members and complete your readings, under dissertation and/or independent-study credits. Take and pass your qualifying exam by the end of the sixth semester or the beginning of your seventh semester at the latest.

**Doctoral Prospectus and Candidacy**
Once you have completed your Qualifying Exam,
**Formal Presentation/Publication**  
Make plans for a public presentation or publication of your work by the end of your third academic year. See the section on Formal Presentation/Publication. Complete the formal presentation form.

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**Grant Proposals**  
Write grant proposals for research and writing phases of the dissertation.

**Dissertation Research**  
Begin your diss. research.

**Summer Work**  
Continue proposal writing and diss. research. Continue to work on manuscript submissions for publication.

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<tr>
<th>Seventh Semester</th>
<th>Eighth Semester</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Grant Proposals</strong></td>
<td><strong>Degree Progress</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Write grant proposals for research and writing phases of the dissertation.</td>
<td>Complete the Office of Graduate Education’s annual review forms in time for the annual review of doctoral students prior to financial-aid decisions for the following year, at approximately the middle of the Spring semester. See the section on Financial Aid for more details.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Doctoral Prospectus and Candidacy**  
Working with your committee, complete and defend your prospectus within two years of your qualifying exam (it is recommended that you achieve candidacy within one or two semesters after the qualifying exam). The prospectus along with an approval sheet signed by all committee members must be filed with the GPA (Jenn Mumby). See the section on The Dissertation Prospectus for more details.

**Dissertation Research**  
Carry out diss. research.

**Formal Presentation/Publication**  
Make plans for a public presentation or publication of your work by the end of your fourth academic year. See the section on Formal Presentation/Publication. Complete the formal presentation form.

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ninth Semester</th>
<th>Tenth Semester</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Degree Progress</strong></td>
<td><strong>Dissertation Research</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Summer Work**  
Continue writing with the expectation of completing at least two chapters of the dissertation by the beginning of the ninth semester in preparation for the job search. Continue to work on manuscript submissions for publication.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Dissertation Research</strong></th>
<th><strong>Dissertation Defense</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Complete at least two chapters of the dissertation by the beginning of the ninth semester as preparation for the job search. Complete at least two more chapters by the end of the ninth semester.</td>
<td>Draft and defend your dissertation thesis as early as possible but <strong>no later than the end of the tenth semester</strong>. See the section on The Dissertation for more details. Consult the <em>Thesis/Dissertation Manual</em> available from the Office of Graduate Education at gradoffice.rpi.edu/.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Formal Presentation/Publication</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>By this time, you should have completed the public presentation requirement. Continue to work on manuscript submissions for publication.</td>
<td><strong>Summer Work</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Continue to work on manuscript submissions for publication.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Forms

Several forms are available at the Office of Graduate Education website. These forms include:

- Graduate Plan of Study http://www.rpi.edu/dept/grad/docs/pos02.PDF
- Nomination of Doctoral Committee http://www.rpi.edu/dept/grad/docs/Nomination_Form.PDF
- Record of Candidacy Exam http://www.rpi.edu/dept/grad/docs/Candidacy_Exam_Form.PDF

Department of Communication & Media Forms

Presentations and Publications Guidelines
Effective December 2013

PhD students should consult with their advisor about where to submit their work or paper proposals, either during an annual review or at other times. They should follow standard academic protocols, with emphasis upon substantive rather than formal characteristics, including public performance and peer review, and with the presumption that acceptable public presentations will also be appropriate vita entries. Examples include:

Presentation at conferences or meetings of academic or professional organizations (e.g., Association of Teachers of Technical Writing, International Communication Association, International Society for the History of Rhetoric, National Communication Association, National Council of Teachers of English, Penn State Conference on Rhetoric and Composition, Rhetoric Society of America, Society for Technical Communication, etc.)

Manuscript accepted for publication in a refereed book chapter or academic or professional journal (e.g., College Composition and Communication, College English, Communication Theory, Human Communication Research, Human-Computer Interaction, Journal of Communication, Quarterly Journal of Speech, Rhetoric Review, Rhetoric Society Quarterly, Rhetorica, Technical Communication, Technical Communication Quarterly, etc.)

Proposal submitted for an internal or external grant or fellowship for pre-dissertation, dissertation, or post-doctoral work (e.g., Humanities, Arts, Architecture Fellowships, American Association of University Women Fellowships, Social Science Research Council Fellowships, etc.)
Other public performances, such as participation in institutes or symposia sponsored by academic or professional organizations, may also qualify as public presentations for the purpose of this requirement. PhD students should consult with their advisors. Note, however, that internal performances such as in-class presentations, poster sessions, and Institute, School, or Department publicity presentations may not be used to satisfy the presentation requirement.

PhD in Communication and Rhetoric
Department of Communication and Media

Nomination of Advisor Form

Student Name: _______________________________________________________

Current Advisor: _____________________________________________________

Proposed Advisor: ___________________________________________________

Signature of Proposed Advisor: ________________________________

Signature of Graduate Program Coordinator: ____________________________

Signature of Department Chair: ________________________________

Date: _________________________________________________________

File with the HASS Graduate Program Assistant (Jenn Mumby).
Dissertation Prospectus Approval

Student:

Title of Proposed Study:

Date of Approval:

Signatures of Committee Members:

_____________________________

_____________________________

_____________________________

_____________________________

File with the HASS Graduate Program Assistant (Jenn Mumby).