

# M.A. in Communication

## Admission Requirements

To be admitted to classified status, students must apply to and meet all criteria for admission to the Graduate School. The priority deadline for applying for admission in the fall semester is April 1. In addition, students need to meet the following criteria:

- Application for Admission to the Graduate School at Idaho State University
- Application fee
- A letter of application/interest and professional goals
- Official transcript(s), both undergraduate and graduate
- Minimum grade point average of 3.0 (conditional admission with 2.5-2.9 GPA)
- International students must submit official English TOEFL scores: 80 or above with a score of 20 on each section (graduate assistants who teach courses must score 23 or above on the speaking section) on the iBT
- International students may also submit the IELTS with a performance score of 6.5 or better

## Program Overview

The Master of Arts in Communication program is a highly flexible 30-credit graduate degree. Students typically take graduate courses in other departments to supplement work in Communication, Media, and Persuasion to build their own cohesive program of study. All students need to work with an advisor to design and approve a program of study and should contact one of the graduate faculty before registering for the first semester. Though it is possible to work at an accelerated pace, the Master of Arts in Communication is designed as a two-year program.

All programs of study will be expected to reflect the following departmental standards:

- A minimum of 30 MA program credits
- At least 15 credits must be from 6600-level coursework
- At least 18 credits must be from course work in Communication, Media, and Persuasion

## Required Coursework:

Code	Title	Credits
CMP 6601	Communication and Media Studies	3
CMP 5509 or CMP 5588	Communication Inquiry Rhetorical Criticism	3
CMP 6630	Seminar in Communication (See Categories Below Table for Options)	3
CMP 6650	Thesis	6
Electives		15
Graduate Teaching Assistants must take CMP 5587		
<b>Total Credits</b>		<b>30</b>

## CMP 6630 Seminar Areas:

- Media
  - Media & Culture
  - Social Movements
  - Communication Revolution
- Criticism & Theory

- Visual Culture Methods
- Human Symbol Usage
- Metaphor & Thought
- Strategic Communication
  - Crisis Communication
- Creative Team Leadership
- Metaphor & Thought

## Thesis

- Students must take a minimum of 24 course credits plus a minimum of 6 Thesis (CMP 6650) credits. In the thesis option, students can either a) write an in-depth independent research paper, or b) complete a professional and/or artistic project.

## Elements of a Thesis

The thesis is an in-depth independent research or creative project that examines a topic of interest to the graduate student.

You should begin thinking about your thesis topic early on in your graduate studies. Ideally, this should happen by the end of your first year of study. It will be your responsibility to find a graduate faculty member with command of the subject area and who is willing to serve as your thesis advisor. Additionally, you will need to form your thesis committee, which will include your thesis advisor, an additional departmental graduate faculty member, and an "outside" member known as a Graduate Faculty Representative (GFR) from an academic department other than CMP.

A research thesis can take different approaches, such as qualitative, quantitative, or rhetorical criticism. A traditional thesis will typically consist of an introduction section with a problem statement, research question(s) or hypothesis; a literature review; a theory section; methods section; analysis and discussion sections; followed by a conclusion.

A creative thesis combines a creative product plus a paper. The creative product may include professional, artistic, or campaign-oriented work that reflects the student's learning, knowledge, and skill in the areas of design, advertising, public relations, or social media. The additional paper argues about the unique contribution of the work and the theoretical and practical perspectives reflected in the creative work.

Any research or creative thesis involving human subjects will need to comply with Human Subjects in Research protocols. All graduate student investigators will need to complete online CAYUSE-IRB training prior to beginning the project. Training is available through the office of Research Outreach & Compliance website: <https://www.isu.edu/research/research-support/research-outreach-and-compliance/human-subjects/> (<https://www.isu.edu/research/research-outreach-and-compliance/human-subjects/>).

All theses should be written in accordance with the APA (American Psychological Association) publication manual (current edition), as designated by the Graduate School.

Regardless of the type of thesis, all CMP 6650 work is expected to include the following elements:

- Data/artifact/creative work as a source for analysis/exploration/application.
- Clear justification (theoretical and/or practical) for the analysis/exploration/application.
- Review of relevant literature demonstrating broad and substantive theoretical and/or historical and/or practical knowledge related to the subject.
- Clear explanation of and justification for a framework to guide the analysis/exploration/application.
- Original results that contribute in some way, not simply a summary or report of results from others.

**Thesis Defense:**

There will be an oral defense of your thesis, which will be scheduled within the department. Work closely with your thesis advisor on this important aspect of your program. Ensure your final Program of Study is completed, signed, and submitted to the Graduate School in the semester prior to the semester you plan to defend and graduate. **Your oral defense must take place at least three (3) weeks prior to the end of the semester you plan to graduate.** This is your responsibility, so stay on top of your deadlines!

The oral defense and presentation are open to the public and graduate faculty. Only graduate faculty may attend the examination portion of your defense. Final copies of your thesis/degree paper should be submitted to your committee, including your GFR, **at least two (2) weeks prior to your defense date.** Only upon passing your oral exam and after final approval and acceptance by your thesis committee (including edits and rewrites) may you submit your finalized thesis. To ensure proper thesis clearance with the Graduate School, follow all guidelines provided at: <https://www.isu.edu/graduate/current-students/graduation-information/>