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Please see [www.usfsp.edu/journalism/calendar](http://www.usfsp.edu/journalism/calendar) for important dates related to the program. More general dates related to the university can be found on the university academic calendar: [http://www.usfsp.edu/academic-calendar/](http://www.usfsp.edu/academic-calendar/)
Contacts and web resources

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The Department of Journalism and Digital Communication
http://usfsp.edu/journalism/

USFSP Graduate Studies
http://usfsp.edu/spgrad/

USF Graduate School
http://www.grad.usf.edu/

The Department on Facebook
http://www.facebook.com/JMS.USFSP

The Department on Twitter
http://twitter.com/myjms/
Welcome

Dear Graduate Student,

The 2017-2018 academic year will see major changes in our graduate program. Traditionally, our Master of Arts in Journalism and Media Studies and Master of Arts in Digital Journalism and Design set our students on different tracks. But in the fall of 2018, these two programs will be combined into a single curriculum that can be completed online or in a hybrid format. This program doesn’t go live until the fall semester of 2018. Until that time, the current two-program curriculum will remain in place.

Once operational, the combined program will be flexible enough to meet our students’ diverse goals and professional and academic aspirations. Students will be able to choose between a more applied or analytical approach to the study of media. All will get a heavy dose of the digital technology that has redefined the field while learning critical thinking skills and the traditional journalistic values of accuracy, fairness, and balance. Our programs must change so that our overarching goal need not: to produce journalists well equipped with both the technical and intellectual skills to excel in the world of journalism and digital communication at large.

Our students come from a wide range of professional and cultural backgrounds. Some students enter the program with extensive professional experience; We challenge them to look at issues from different perspectives they may have missed in their professional work. Other students have no journalistic background. They must complete coursework in reporting and editing in order to participate fully in our professionally oriented seminars. Our student diversity complements the varied professional and educational backgrounds of faculty. The mix makes for lively, provocative encounters for all of us.

Our coursework demonstrates the responsibility of media professionals to be sensitive to factors and practices that have traditionally excluded those who have suffered discrimination based on gender, race, ethnicity, disability, sexual orientation, or religious affiliation.

Our Neighborhood News Bureau opened an off-campus office in September 2006 in Midtown, St. Petersburg. A working newsroom, it provides journalistic outlets for our faculty and students while producing stories, features, and announcements that focus on a historically underserved portion of our community.

Our graduate students are challenged and changed by the interactive, individually focused programs they pursue. Let us know how we can add to your adventure.

Regards,

Mark J. Walters, Director of Graduate Programs
Department of Journalism and Media Studies
Faculty

Like our students, our faculty also come from a wide range of professional and academic backgrounds. The careers of some have emphasized academic studies, while others have focused on the practice of journalism. All are committed to bridging the two by offering would-be journalists a rigorous theoretical foundation while ensuring those whole wish to follow a more academic track in their careers are steeped in the skills of the craft. You will find faculty profiles at http://www.usfsp.edu/journalism/about/faculty-staff/

Faculty advisers and advisees

Every graduate student is assigned to a full time graduate faculty member for advising purposes. Advisers/advisees assignments are published periodically via email and a current list of advisors and their advisees is posted on the department’s website. Be sure to ask if you don’t know who your adviser is.

Succeeding in JMS program

Graduate school will differ from your undergraduate experience. This section offers some pointers on how to succeed in the master’s degree program and offers some advice from past students.

Go to class! At the graduate level, even one unexcused absence is noticed. Since many classes meet only once a week, missing even a single session is significant. Also, to remain in the program and be eligible for graduation, you must maintain a 3.0 grade-point average, which can be difficult if you miss class.

Go to class well-prepared. Reading assignments, especially in the core courses, might take several hours each week to complete. Don’t leave assignments until the last minute.

You will be expected to produce research papers in your three core courses—Media Theory/Research Methods, Media Ethics, and Media Law. Other classes might require academic papers as well. A graduate-level research paper resembles a published academic journal article rather than the term papers most undergraduates write. Familiarize yourself with the typical format of academic papers. Understand the difference between quantitative and qualitative research; be familiar with different types of research, including methods of content analysis; and be able to recognize and write each of the sections of an academic paper, such as an abstract, problem statement, literature review, etc. You will also need to learn
the proper format for citing the works you reference. Our department uses the American Psychological Association (APA) format, since many academic journals in mass communications use this format. You can find it online at many sites, but it is definitely worth investing in a copy of the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association*. This guide covers citation format and also explains what each section of an academic paper must include, offers examples, and includes a grammar guide.

Anyone planning to write an academic thesis is required to take the online Research Methods course. Several students who have taken this class recommend that all master’s students take it—as soon as possible! The course presents an overview of different types of research, teaches you how to write research objectives and hypotheses, and explains what the Institutional Review Board (IRB) is and when you might need IRB approval for your research. If taking the class is not feasible, you can familiarize yourself with academic research by reading several examples of articles that are similar to articles you might research and write, and by studying the examples in the APA Publication Manual.

Also, you’ll need to learn how to conduct academic research. Your academic papers will cite other academic articles in addition to books and articles from the mainstream media. The Nelson Poynter Memorial Library, located on the USFSP campus, offers a large selection of online journals and databases. Reference librarians there can guide you through your first searches to find the most relevant articles. Journalism and Media Studies graduate students are also permitted to use the Poynter Institute’s Eugene Patterson Library for research. The Patterson Library contains an outstanding collection of media and journalism resources.

Succeeding in graduate study requires more than just going to class and getting good grades. Check into other opportunities like Independent Study, Directed Research or the Practicum. Students have prepared themselves for careers in broadcast, print and new media through their practicum experience. Graduate students are sometimes permitted to take seminars at the Poynter Institute for credit—these are a great way to meet and network with outstanding instructors and professionals. Talk to your adviser about these and other opportunities available to graduate students.

### Completing your degree

Whether you have just completed undergraduate work or have been out in the workforce for many years, graduate work will be new and different. You will be expected to produce professional quality work on deadline. Most classes are taught in a seminar style with the assumption that you have completed all reading,
homework, or other prep work; and that you come to class ready to engage in a lively and thoughtful discussion about the concept at hand. Relatively few assignments (sometimes only one paper and one exam) will be evaluated in determining your course grades. Graduate students must maintain an overall average of 3.0 (B) and a 3.0 (B) or better in core courses. Course grades of C- or below will not be accepted toward a graduate degree.

Credits Required to Graduate

Students seeking the Journalism & Media Studies M.A. need 36 credits to graduate. At least 20 of those credits must be taken in formal, regularly scheduled classes. While most of those credits come from courses that you take within the department, you may also receive credits from:

- Transfer credits from approved graduate courses at other institutions or non-degree coursework: up to nine credits
- Courses taken outside of the department: up to 12 credits
- 4000-level undergraduate courses (Note that financial aid won’t pay for undergrad courses): up to six credits
- Seminars offered by The Poynter Institute: up to three credits
- Practicum: up to six credits
- Directed reading or Independent study: up to three credits
- Applied research project: three credits or Thesis: six credits

Each of these is described in this handbook; all are subject to departmental approval and other limitations. You should register for classes as soon as registration opens because classes fill up, even those that are limited to our graduate student majors. Class size is kept small to allow for a high degree of interactivity among students and with the instructor.

Core Curriculum (nine credits required)

Regardless of how our M.A. recipients use their degrees, they leave the program with an in-depth knowledge of media ethics, media theory, and media law. These areas serve as the foundation for an understanding of journalistic practice. Each of these courses (MMC 6206 Media Ethics, MMC 6400 Media Theory, and MMC 6612 Media Law) requires students to demonstrate knowledge of the area and competency in writing in academic style. Media theory and media ethics are both
offered in the fall semester; media law is offered in the spring semester only. Students must achieve a B or better in all three core courses. We recommend that you take only one core course at a time, and that you take them in consecutive semesters, as that is the best preparation for comprehensive exams. If you cannot achieve a B in a core class, you probably do not have sufficient understanding of the material to pass comprehensive exams.

**Preparatory Courses** (up to six credits)

Students who lack substantial previous journalistic experience should enroll in JOU 6114 Multimedia Reporting in their first semester of study. Along with providing an introduction to the basics of gathering, writing, and editing the news, this course ensures that graduate students have the necessary journalistic vocabulary to participate in professionally oriented seminars.

Students who are not familiar with reading academic journal articles or writing in the academic style should enroll in MMC 6421 Research Methods in Mass Communications early in their graduate studies. This course is required for students who pursue the thesis option.

**Other Departmental Course Offerings**

Each semester’s course offerings are chosen from a list that can be found online. Meet with your adviser every semester to review progress toward your degree and to plan future semesters to best meet your needs and ambitions.

**Courses External to the Department** (up to 12 credits)

Up to 12 credits from classes in other departments at USFSP or on other USF campuses may be counted toward your degree if those courses relate to the study objectives for the degree. Your adviser and the Graduate Director are the final decision-makers as to the appropriateness of courses outside of the department.

**4000-Level Undergraduate Courses** (up to six credits)

Occasionally, graduate students will find upper-level undergraduate courses that complement their area of study. While graduate students are discouraged from taking undergraduate-level courses, with permission, students may register for up to six credits of undergraduate level study, within the department or in other departments at USF, if those courses relate to the study objectives for this degree, and if an equivalent graduate-level course is not offered. Your adviser and the Graduate Director decide the appropriateness of undergraduate courses prior to registration. The course instructor is expected to provide graduate-level goals, activities, and assessment and will, therefore, need to provide special permission as
well. In addition, be advised that financial aid may not cover the costs of an undergraduate course.

Digital Journalism and Design Courses

In general, students enrolled in the face-to-face JMS program should only elect courses offered within the JMS curriculum and related to the study objectives for the JMS degree. Should JMS students wish to take DJD courses, permits must be granted by students’ adviser and the Graduate Director based on the appropriateness and availability of the DJD courses. Students will not be permitted to take more than one DJD course per semester.

Seminars Offered by The Poynter Institute (up to three credits)

A unique aspect of graduate study in the Department of Journalism and Media Studies at USFSP is our geographical and professional connection with The Poynter Institute for Media Studies. The Poynter Institute offers a range of professional seminars for journalism professionals and professors. Interested graduate students may be accepted as participants in these seminars. Students must have the recommendation of their adviser to apply. Poynter faculty review students’ applications based on availability and competitive factors. Students may receive up to three credits for participating in a Poynter seminar and preparing and presenting a report based on the experience. Students should begin seeking approval as early as possible, but no later than one semester prior to the seminar that they wish to take. Upon receiving approval, register for MMC 6936 Professional Colloquium.

Practicum (up to six credits)

Internships are called “practicums” at the graduate level. Students must first complete 12 credits toward their degree. Eligibility will be determined by the student’s adviser and practicum supervisor based on:

- A full description of the duties and the skills that the student expects to either learn or improve as a result of the practicum;
- Full contact information, including name, title, phone number and e-mail address of the student’s on-site supervisor;
- Verification that the number of required hours for the practicum (120 hours) will be met and a tentative schedule of days and hours.
- Students’ job sites are not appropriate practicum settings. Further details can be found on the journalism department website. Graduate students should register for MMC 6945 Professional Practicum.
Two-year program

While graduate students may take up to five years to complete the JMS degree, the program in Journalism and Media Studies is designed so that students can complete all requirements within two years and still manage to have a life. This is easiest if you begin in Fall or Summer term. (Keep in mind that the final semester in which students can enter the JMS degree will be spring of 2018. Thereafter, all graduate students will enter the new graduate program in digital journalism and design.)

Year One

Before beginning classes, meet with your adviser to review your plan for your first year. If you have previous academic work, taken AFTER completing your bachelor’s degree, you may bring in up to nine hours of transfer credit if they relate to your program of study (departmental approval required) and are taken at the graduate level of study completed with a grade of B or better.

The following is a hypothetical schedule. Course offerings may vary from semester to semester. Completion of “core” classes—ethics, law and theory—is essential and it is recommended that you take those courses when they are offered and complete them in any order in your first three semesters to be prepared to take comprehensive exams in your fourth semester.

Semester 1:
- MMC 6206 Media Ethics or MMC 6400 Media Theory or MMC 6612 Media Law: three credits.
- JOU 6114 Multimedia Reporting (Required for anyone who lacks substantial journalism experience.): three credits.
- Or, in addition to Media Ethics, Media Theory, or Media Law, take other classes (with adviser approval) for a total of nine credits for the semester: three credits.

Semester 2:
- MMC 6206 Media Ethics or MMC 6400 Media Theory or MMC 6612 Media Law (Do not take more than one in the same semester.): three credits.
- MMC 6421 Research Methods (Required if you plan to write a thesis. Recommended if reading/writing scholarly literature is new to you.): three credits.
- Take one or two more courses: three-six credits.

Summer:

Take one or two courses or do one course and a practicum: three–six credits.
Year Two

Semester 1:

- MMC 6206 Media Ethics or MMC 6400 Media Theory or MMC 6612 Media Law (Do not take more than one in the same semester.): three credits.
- Take two more courses: six credits.
- Invite a faculty member in the department to serve as the committee chair for your thesis or applied research project. With that person’s advice, add committee members as appropriate. Complete thesis or applied research proposal forms. Get prospectus or proposal approved no later than the start of registration for the next term.

Semester 2:

- Take comprehensive exams.
- MMC 6971 Thesis: six credits or MMC 6950 Applied Research Project: three credits. (You may register for additional ARP credits, but only three credits count toward the required 36 hours.
- Take additional courses if needed to complete the 36-hour requirement and graduate.

If you don’t finish in two years...

Remember that you must enroll for 2 credits the semester that you graduate and must be enrolled for 6 credits over three consecutive semesters to meet the “continuous enrollment” requirement. Continuous enrollment is defined as completing, with grades assigned, a minimum of six hours of graduate credit every three continuous semesters. Summer counts as a consecutive semester.

You may find the following two year course offering plan and advising record helpful in designing your schedule.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Semester</th>
<th>Course</th>
<th>Credits</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Summer A</td>
<td>MMC 6936: Special Topics Seminar</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summer B</td>
<td>MMC 6936: Special Topics Seminar</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summer C</td>
<td>MMC 6936: Special Topics Seminar</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fall I</td>
<td>MMC 6936: Special Topics Seminar</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fall II</td>
<td>MMC 6936: Special Topics Seminar</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Updated 11/20/2014 - To be implemented Fall 2015 - Updated online offerings in Italics.
### JMS Master's Degree Advising Record

**Department of Journalism and Media Studies**

**Student Name**

**USF ID**

**Street Address**

**Primary Phone**

**City, State, Zip**

**Secondary Phone**

**USF Email**

**Semester Admitted**

**Faculty Curriculum Adviser**

(Updated 9/2014)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>COURSE</th>
<th>TITLE</th>
<th>CREDITS</th>
<th>TERM(S) COMPLETED</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>MMC 6400</td>
<td>Mass Communications Theory</td>
<td>(3 cr)</td>
<td>___ Spring ___ Summer ___ Fall / ___ Year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MMC 6612</td>
<td>Law &amp; Mass Media</td>
<td>(3 cr)</td>
<td>___ Spring ___ Summer ___ Fall / ___ Year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MMC 6206</td>
<td>Mass Communications Ethics</td>
<td>(3 cr)</td>
<td>___ Spring ___ Summer ___ Fall / ___ Year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MMC 6950</td>
<td>Applied Research Project</td>
<td>(3 cr)</td>
<td>___ Spring ___ Summer ___ Fall / ___ Year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MMC 6421</td>
<td>Research Methods</td>
<td>(3 cr)</td>
<td>___ Spring ___ Summer ___ Fall / ___ Year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MMC 6971</td>
<td>Thesis</td>
<td>(6 cr)</td>
<td>___ Spring ___ Summer ___ Fall / ___ Year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MMC 6975</td>
<td>Applied Research Project</td>
<td>(3 cr)</td>
<td>___ Spring ___ Summer ___ Fall / ___ Year</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Students pursuing an Applied Research Project must take 24 elective credits.

**Electives**

(18-24 cr)

**Thesis Option**

Proposal accepted (date):
Application for graduation (date):
Thesis defense (date):

**Committee chair:**
**Committee member:**
**Committee member:**
Committee appointment form filed with grad school:

**Examining Professor:**
**Date:**
**Result:**

**Research Methods**

Proposal accepted (date):
Application for graduation (date):
Thesis defense (date):

**Committee chair:**
**Committee member:**
**Committee member:**
Committee appointment form filed with grad school:

**Examining Professor:**
**Date:**
**Result:**

**Comps**

**Theory**

**Examining Professor:**
**Date:**
**Result:**

**Law**

**Examining Professor:**
**Date:**
**Result:**

**Ethics**

**Examining Professor:**
**Date:**
**Result:**
Comprehensive exams

All graduate students enrolled in the master’s degree program in Journalism and Media Studies at the University of South Florida St. Petersburg take comprehensive exams to demonstrate that they have achieved competency in their field of study. (This requirement will change for students entering in spring of 2018; they will not be required to take comprehensives.) Successful completion of comps indicates that you have an in-depth understanding of media theory, law and ethics. These three serve as the foundation for journalistic practice.

You are eligible to take comps after you have completed 21 semester credits and have been successful in the three core courses. Students sit for comprehensive exams for four hours. Students may not begin serious committee-supported work on culminating projects without first passing all three comprehensive exams.

You must inform the graduate director of your intention to take comps the semester prior to the exam. On the day of the exam, you will be given one question from each of the core areas to answer. The question may include an example that will require you to apply core content knowledge.

Books and notes are allowed when you take your comps, but they must be done individually.

Each question is graded “pass,” “defend” or “no pass.” Pass means that you have demonstrated adequate knowledge for the question; defend means that you have not demonstrated adequate knowledge and will be given a list of further questions to explore and respond to either orally or in writing, at the relevant subject instructor’s discretion; no pass means that you may not retake the exam until the following semester. Comprehensive exams may be attempted no more than three times.

Comprehensive exams are intended to meet the following core competencies:

- LAW: Understand and apply the principles and laws of freedom of speech and press, including the right to dissent, to monitor and criticize power, and to assemble and petition for redress of grievances;

- HISTORY: Demonstrate an understanding of the history and role of professionals and institutions in shaping communications;
• DIVERSITY: Demonstrate an understanding of the diversity of groups in a global society in relationship to communications;

• THEORY: Understand concepts and apply theories in the use and presentation of images and information;

• ETHICS: Demonstrate an understanding of professional ethical principles and work ethically in pursuit of truth, accuracy, fairness and diversity;

• CRITICAL THINKING: Think critically, creatively and independently;

• PROFESSIONAL WRITING: Write correctly and clearly in forms and styles appropriate for the communications professions, audiences and purposes they serve. The measure of these competencies within the comps study and writing process are as follows:

  • LAW: Students will prepare using the concept and reading list and write an essay of 1,000–2,000 words in response to a provided question in which they apply their learning related to principles and laws of freedom of speech and press;

  • HISTORY: Students will prepare using the concept and reading lists to confirm their understanding of the role and history of professionals and institutions in shaping communications. One or more of the comps questions will require students to demonstrate that understanding;

  • DIVERSITY: Students will prepare using the concept and reading lists to confirm their understanding of the diversity of groups in a global society in relationship to communications. One or more of the comps questions will require students to demonstrate that understanding;

  • THEORY: Students will prepare using the concept and reading list and write an essay of 1,000–2,000 words in response to a provided question in which they demonstrate their learning of theories in the use and presentation of images and information;

  • ETHICS: Students will prepare using the concept and reading list and write an essay of 1,000–2,000 words in response to a provided question in which they demonstrate an understanding of professional ethical principles and work ethically in pursuit of truth, accuracy, fairness, and diversity;
• CRITICAL THINKING: The comps writing process, which requires students to respond extemporaneously to questions that demonstrate the competencies listed above, requires students to think critically, creatively and independently;

• PROFESSIONAL WRITING: The comps writing process, which requires students to respond extemporaneously to questions that demonstrate the competencies listed above, requires students to write correctly and clearly in forms and styles appropriate for the communications professions, audiences and purposes they serve. Comps that are not coherently written and well organized will not receive a passing grade.

Ethics Concept and Reading List

While your question will not cover all of these concepts, you should have a thorough understanding of the following prior to taking the ethics exam:

• ASNE Code of Ethics
• Cheating
• Confidentiality
• Conflict of Interest/Conflict of Commitment
• Deception
• Deontology
• Digital communication controversies
• Distinction between ethical and other types (legal, economic, prudential, religious) of decisions
• Global communication and cultural conventions
• Harm principle
• Mixed Formalism
• Moral Development
• Privacy
• Promise-Breaking
• Relativism vs. Pluralism
• Role-Related Responsibilities for Citizens
• Role-Related Responsibilities for Journalists
• RTNDA Code of Ethics
• Secrecy
• SPJ Code of Ethics
• Stereotyping and other issues relating to diversity in research and presentation
• Systematic Moral Analysis
• Utilitarianism
• Virtue Theory

Readings and Other Sources for Review:

ASNE Website


Online News Association website


RTNDA Website

SPJ Website

**Law Concept and Reading List**

While your question will not cover all of these concepts, you should have a thorough understanding of the following prior to taking the law exam:

- Historical and contemporary meanings of the First Amendment’s free press and free speech clauses
- Landmark Supreme Court cases, most notably
  - *New York Times v. Sullivan*
  - *Near v. Minnesota*
  - *Branzburg v. Hayes*
- Legal defenses in libel law
- Legal defenses in invasion of privacy
- Actual malice rule
- Copyright, fair use, and the news
- Access to judicial proceedings
- Federal FOIA
- Press access rights to people, places
- Journalist’s privilege/Shield laws
• Sunshine (freedom of information) laws
• Prior restraint
• Gag (restrictive) orders
• Privacy Protection Act of 1980
• Harm/injury caused by media: physical, economic and emotional

Readings:


Theory Concept and Reading List

While your question will not cover all of these concepts, you should have a thorough understanding of the following prior to taking the theory exam:

- Development/functioning of the press in various overall social theories (structural functionalism, structuralism, pluralism, Marxism, political economy, positivism or correspondence theory, symbolic interactionism, postmodernism, technological determinism, etc.)

- Development of media and media theory (including philosophical, sociological, psychological, and historical foundations); relevance of theory.

- Press functioning and media effects, including behaviors and coverage, and potential media effects on society (include but don’t limit to cultural and critical theory, social construction of reality, feminist and queer theory, multiculturalism, cultivation theory, public opinion theories such as the spiral of silence, framing and agenda-setting).

- Personal, convention and routine, organization, extra-media, government, and cultural effects on media content.

- Relative significance of (and difference between) content and technological effects and influences in society.

- Theoretical explanations of differences in and functioning of print, broadcast, and digital media, including news possibilities of each and their effects on democracy; media structures, globalization, convergence (trans-national media companies, international distribution of content).
• Relationship between media and the public (uses and gratifications, perceptions of media, user-generated content and citizen journalism, etc.).
• Roles of objectivity and truth in journalism and difficulties posed for journalism by truth in general, including those from post-modern perspectives.

• Required Readings:


• Suggested Readings:


**Culminating projects**

Graduate students may elect to write a thesis or complete an applied research project (ARP) for the culminating work in the Department of Journalism and Media Studies. Concentrated work to complete the thesis or ARP may not begin until the student has successfully passed all three comprehensive exams.

For the ARP, students will receive 3 credits toward the degree. For the thesis, students will receive 6 credits toward the degree. Students who are writing theses may take more than 6 hours of thesis credit, but only 6 count toward the 36 hours required for the degree; students who are doing ARPs may take up to 6 hours for continuing registration purposes, but only 3 count toward the degree.
Culminating projects often take students longer to complete than they initially plan. As students are required to have continuing registration and must be enrolled for at least two credit hours the semester of graduation, it is not unusual to take additional credits to see the project to completion. It is best if students have a semester to put into the culminating project in which students are finished with coursework or have no more than one class to complete. The two-year plan includes three semesters of nine credits each plus two classes in the summer, leaving the final semester for ARP or thesis.

**ARP**

An ARP is a significant piece of work intended for publication for a lay, trade, or scholarly audience.

Topic: The subject may be a topic within the fields of journalism or media studies or may be a journalistic exploration of the student’s topic of choice.

Methodology: The project may be presented through still photography, video, audio, design, or may be solely text.

Length: If solely text, the project should be between 2500–5000 words. Projects presented in other media must be the equivalent, as determined by the Committee Chair. An ARP that is visual or web-based must consult with the library to choose the best format for archive. Along with the visual or web-based project, a seven-page or longer text document must be presented to provide the project’s executive summary, background, approaches, reflections and contributions. References, presented in APA style, are separate from the word limit.

Committee: Two members, chaired by a full time faculty member in the department. An additional member from the department (regular or adjunct) should serve as the second member. Committee members may ask the student to provide the name and contact information for an expert in the subject area who can attest to the quality of a completed project.

Examples of ARP: blog, website, or other interactive presentation; audio or video documentary; in-depth photo essay, case presentation with analysis of ethical or legal cases; feature or in-depth writing; comprehensive review of literature on a particular topic; explorations of mass communication theories. You may log on to the campus Digital Archive (http://dspace.nelson.usf.edu) to sample some ARPs from the past.

**Process to Complete ARP**

Students planning to do an ARP are responsible for following these steps:
Step 1. Select a full-time, graduate faculty member in the department to be your ARP adviser. The choice of adviser is usually based on your research interest and the faculty’s expertise. A mutual agreement between students and advisers on the topic, approach, format, and work style will ensure the quality and success of your work.

Step 2. Develop an ARP topic/idea, based on which student and adviser decide on the ARP committee chair (who may or may not be the student’s faculty adviser). The additional member, chosen by the chair in consultation with the student and adviser, may be an adjunct or courtesy appointment.

Step 3. Prepare an ARP proposal to submit to the committee for approval and schedule a committee meeting for discussion and approval of the proposal.

Step 4. Complete the “Applied Research Project Form” and have committee members sign approval at the proposal meeting.

Step 5. Register for ARP hours.

Step 6. Consult with committee chair on deadlines and plans to complete the ARP.

Step 7. Work with the committee, mainly the chair, to complete the ARP draft and submit it to the committee for review.

Step 8. Arrange a committee meeting to approve the ARP.

Step 9. Revise and finalize the ARP. Submit one copy of the final ARP to the USFSP library’s Digital Archive.

Step 10. Present the approved APR at a public presentation usually held at the end of the semester.

**ARP Proposal Requirements**

The ARP requires a proposal, usually no more than 3 or 4 pages, that includes a description of the project, a justification for the project, summary or outline of the literature review, and methodology and justification brief.

- Project Description: A concise summary on what the proposed project hopes to accomplish.

- Project justification: What is the significance of the project in advancing knowledge or performance in journalism or mass communications studies?
• Literature review: Provide context for the work and help justify the project.

• Method and justification: What approaches will be used to accomplish project objectives? How will the information be collected and how will it be analyzed or interpreted? (Every project must be accompanied by an statement explanation of its purpose and significance, why you chose the topic, and why you collected and dealt with data in the way you did.)

• Outline and Summary: Provide an outline of the project, summarizing its contents.

• Sources: Cite sources, including interviewees, if any.

Thesis

A thesis is an original piece of academic research of sufficient heft and quality for possible publication in a scholarly venue.

Topic: Journalism or Media Studies.

Methodology: Historical, philosophical, ethnographic, qualitative, or quantitative. (An Institutional Review Board (IRB) application is required for almost every study involving human participants. Students who plan to interview, survey, or observe humans as part of their research, should see graduate program coordinator while writing the proposal to determine if IRB review will be required).

Length: 30-50 pages with the following sections: Abstract, Introduction, Problem Statement, Research Objective/Questions and/or Hypotheses, Literature Review, Methodology and Justification for Methodology, Findings or Case Presentation, Discussion or Analysis, and Conclusion. References, in APA style, are separate from the 30-50-page limit.

A final copy of the thesis, with title page with chair and committee signatures, must be submitted to the department in a white binder with the student’s name and thesis title on the binder.

Committee: Three members, chaired by a regular faculty member in the department. Students may choose a member from outside of the department based on particular expertise.

Process to Complete Thesis

Students doing a thesis are required to take MMC 6421, Research Methods in Mass
Communication. Students should consult their adviser and follow these steps:

Step 1. Go to the USFSP Graduate Studies website and view USFSP’s thesis and dissertation guidelines. The student is responsible for knowing and following all USFSP procedures and deadlines regarding the thesis.

Step 2. Select a full-time, graduate faculty member in the department to be your thesis adviser. The choice of adviser is usually based on your research interest and the faculty’s expertise. A mutual agreement between students and advisers on the research topic, methodology, and work style will ensure the quality and success of your work.

Step 3. Develop a research topic, based on which student and adviser decide on the thesis committee. The committee comprises the chair and at least two additional faculty members. The adviser serves as the chair of the committee, and one of two additional members may be from another department at USF. Poynter Institute faculty may serve on a thesis committee that has three USF faculty members. Adjunct faculty members in the Department of Journalism and Media Studies may not serve on a student’s thesis committee.

Step 4. Prepare a thesis prospectus to submit to the chair and committee members. Schedule a prospectus meeting for approval of the prospectus.

Step 5. Complete the “Graduate Student Supervisory Committee Form” and have committee members sign approval at the prospectus meeting.

Step 6. Register for thesis hours.

Step 7. Consult with committee chair plans to complete the thesis following the schedule set by the USFSP Graduate Studies. Complete and submit a Thesis Student Information Request Form to the USFSP Graduate Studies.

Step 8. Work with the committee, mainly the chair, to complete the thesis draft and submit it to the committee for review.

Step 9. Arrange a public thesis defense and orally defend the completed thesis. A public announcement must be posted two weeks prior to the thesis defense.

Step 10. Revise and finalize the thesis and submit it to the USFSP Graduate Studies. In addition, submit one copy to the USFSP library’s Digital Archive.

**Thesis Proposal Requirements**

A thesis requires a 4- or 5-page proposal, including research objectives, problem
statement, literature review, research questions or hypotheses, and research method, depending on your research approach. These are often the first three chapters of the thesis.

Research objectives: A concise explanation of what the proposed research aims to accomplish.

Problem statement: Define and justify the research problem. What is the significance of the thesis in advancing knowledge in journalism or mass communications studies? How is it theoretically relevant?

Review of literature: Put your proposed study into a theoretical framework by giving a survey the relevant research, both published and unpublished.

Research questions or hypotheses: Under the theoretical framework built in literature review, specify hypotheses or/and a set of research questions to be explored and answered. A hypothesis is a clear statement of conjecture about a problem, expressing a relationship between variables. The problem may also be stated as a series of connected research questions that explore the full range of the issue or topic.

Research method: Specify what will be done to solve or explore the thesis problem. Explain how information or data will be collected (observation, questionnaire, survey, content analysis, etc.) and then, how the data will be analyzed and interpreted.

Definition of Terms: Define words or terms that have a meaning special to the thesis.

Outline and chapter summary: Propose chapter names (or topics) and sub-heads (if used), and a summary of what each chapter hopes accomplish. This may change in your actual thesis. Be as comprehensive as you can in your proposal.

Bibliography. Provide a preliminary list of sources.

The chart on the following page compares the Thesis and ARP processes.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>ARP</th>
<th>Thesis</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Final submission</strong></td>
<td><strong>TBA</strong></td>
<td><strong>TBA</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Committee</strong></td>
<td>2 members, both from</td>
<td>3 members, which may include one member outside of</td>
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<td>department but within USF system (or with grad school</td>
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<td>6 of MMC 6971 (and MMC 6421)</td>
</tr>
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<td>Academic, includes scholarly research; may require IRB</td>
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<td>audience, journalistic</td>
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<td>Proposal approved by</td>
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<td>committee, manuscript approved by committee,</td>
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<td>public defense</td>
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<td><strong>Final product</strong></td>
<td>2500-5000 words (or</td>
<td>30-50 page academic paper suitable for publication in</td>
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<td>equivalent) suitable for</td>
<td>a scholarly journal</td>
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<td>May benefit a future</td>
<td>May benefit a future</td>
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<td></td>
<td>professional career</td>
<td>academic career</td>
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</table>
Succeeding in the DJD program

An online graduate-school experience differs from a face-to-face one. Each format has advantages and limitations.

Because of the asynchronous nature of DJD courses, you have to manage your time well. DJD courses may vary in the ways they are taught, but almost all of them rely on modules that must be completed by certain dates and times. Although your professors will be in contact, you should log in to each course daily so you can be prepared for any changes in coursework or due-dates.

In addition to completing multimedia reporting projects and other deliverables, you might be required to write academic papers in some courses. A graduate-level research paper resembles a published academic journal article rather than the term papers most undergraduates write.

You will need to understand the difference between quantitative and qualitative research; be familiar with different types of qualitative research, including methods of content analysis; and be able to recognize and write each of the sections of an academic paper, such as an abstract, problem statement, literature review, etc. You will also need to learn the proper format for citing references. Our department uses the American Psychological Association (APA) format. You can find it online, but it is worth investing in a copy of the Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association. This guide covers citation format and also explains what each section of an academic paper must include, offers examples, and includes a grammar guide.

Completing your DJD degree

Whether you have just completed undergraduate work or have been out in the workforce for many years, graduate work will be new and different. You will be expected to produce professional quality work on deadline. Graduate students must maintain an overall average of 3.0 (B). Course grades of C- or below will not be accepted toward a graduate degree.

Credits Required to Graduate

You need 30 credits (ten 3-credit courses) to graduate. Of these 30 credits, there are no opportunities for students to take electives. However, if a student wishes to take additional electives offered by the Department of Journalism and Media Studies—online or on campus—they can do so on top of the required credits. Students often
pursue this option during the summer semester if they are required to take a minimum number of credits for financial aid purposes.

**Required Curriculum**

MMC 6114: Multimedia Reporting (3 credits)

This course teaches writing and multimedia skills specific to the practice of journalism across all media platforms: print, broadcast, and the web. Students conceptualize and write news articles and feature stories for print and online style, with consideration given to storytelling techniques for emerging digital media platforms such as blogs, Twitter and other forms of social media. Special emphasis is given to modifying text-based articles and stories for multimedia presentation.

MMC 6360: Digital Media Technology (3 credits)

This course provides an in-depth analysis of the tools and technologies used to deliver news and information online. Eight distinct delivery platforms are reviewed. Along the way, underpinning technologies are introduced, and their roles in how we create, disseminate and share news are explained. Emerging trends, ethical challenges and business models are considered, and the ramifications for news producers and consumers are uncovered. Throughout the semester, students will encounter frameworks to evaluate and design digital media. Essential vocabulary and tools are presented alongside opportunities to create and assess digital content.

Along with [Multimedia Reporting](multimedia-reporting), Digital Media Technology provides students with a foundation in the tools and techniques used to publish compelling digital content. This course puts special emphasis on how compelling content can be published and connected to audiences. Together, these courses should form a bedrock for students’ [final projects](final-project), which should take the form of original multimedia reporting, an original news or information website, a news app or a tool, service or platform that enhances the delivery of news or information.

JOU 6708: Digital Ethics and Law (3 credits)

This course will help students “think digitally” about communications law in a constantly changing online environment. It will help them to create new knowledge in the field. The course also leads students through a systematic ethical exploration of major issues in online mass communication in the following areas: investigation, including privacy; data collection, including copyright; presentation, including identity, accuracy, and sponsorship. Philosophical topics covered include application of ethical theory, systematic moral analysis, blameworthy and praiseworthy, deception, and role-related responsibilities. Students will also articulate standards
and conventions to use in the development of Codes of Ethics.

MMC 5146: Web Publishing (3 credits)

This course is a hands-on introduction to the most popular technologies, tools and processes for publishing content to the Web. It’s also an overview of the most important design and development trends, especially for news and information websites. No prior experience creating Web content is needed, but the class is fast-paced and rigorous. Throughout the semester, you’ll encounter a range of technical concepts and techniques. By the end of the course, you’ll create your own site and know how to use foundational technologies to establish an effective Web presence.

MMC 6936: Social Media (3 credits)

Social media literacy is critical in today’s society to both professional communicators and consumers of communication. This class covers what social media are, who uses them, who gains from them, and how they are transforming our personal, social, cultural, political, economic worlds as well as our media. You will become familiar with a range of social media tools, analyze and discuss their uses and implications, and use them in a professional manner.

VIC 6007: Visual Communications Design & Theory (3 credits)

This course teaches practical applications of information designs in an exclusively digital media environment. Students learn to create information images in all their forms, from the static to motion graphics, but all for online presentation. The course also looks into visual uses and applications of visuals in contemporary media, with focus on online. The course covers photography with focus on photojournalism, visual presentation of data (infographics), principles of design, best practices of web design, color, typography and other topics relevant to visuals in the media.

MMC 6936: Multimedia Production (3 credits)

This course will allow students to hone critical thinking skills while becoming familiar with what comprises publishable audio, video and photographs. Students will blend different types of media to produce polished digital content.

JOU 6006: Digital Media & Democracy (3 credits)

This course will provide perspectives on and historical development of the practice of journalism in the digital era. Students will also make determinations about the efficacy of digital journalism in building or diminishing democracy.

GEB 6118: Business Enterprise [Entrepreneurial Journalism] (3 credits)
Business Enterprise (Entrepreneurial Journalism) leads creative minds through a multimedia focus to compete in the marketplace as freelancers and business leaders. Real-world media partnerships and competitive start-ups will be developed on the strength of audience demand for competitive delivery of the news. Lectures by nationally known experts in journalism will allow students to interact online through webinars designed to successfully teach hands-on trends for building and managing a media business. GEB 6118 is offered in partnership with USF St. Petersburg’s award-winning entrepreneurship program.

MMC 6950: Final Project (3 credits)

This course will provide opportunities for intensive project work, with detailed feedback from the course instructor. Students will develop the ideas conceived in the first semester of the program and see them to fruition. Students can choose between two project types: reporting-based projects and development-based projects.

Final Project

Throughout your time in the program, you'll be working in select classes to develop your final project. In MMC 6950: Final Project, which MUST be taken in the final semester of the program for 3 credits, you will actually produce your finished project and have it vetted by DJD faculty. By default, Final Project evaluator committees are comprised of two DJD faculty – but students can request other faculty members from within the department or from another department at USFSP as long as the chair of the committee is DJD faculty member.
There are two types of Final Projects:

**Reporting-based Projects** - Most student projects will involve reporting and producing an original piece of multimedia journalism. Depending on the student’s goals, these projects might emphasize one platform or seek to blend many delivery formats. In general, three reporting-based projects can be pursued:

- A long-form video project (30+ minutes total, but could involve multi-part installments);
- A long-form audio project (60+ minutes total, but could involve multi-part installments);
- A full multimedia package (combining three or more media, e.g., text, photos and audio)

**Development-based Projects** — Students with experience (or a strong interest) in the more technical or entrepreneurial aspects of digital journalism, may pursue one of three development-based projects:

- An original news or information website;
- A news app for the desktop and/or a mobile device;
- A tool, service or platform that enhances the delivery of news or information.

For development-based projects, a prototype may be sufficient, depending on the scope of the proposed idea.

Like all other DJD courses, a permit is required for students to register for Final Project credit hours. Only after the department’s Academic Program Specialist has final project paperwork in hand, signed by the overseeing faculty member, will this permit be issued.

**Registering for Classes**

With the assistance of the department’s Academic Program Specialist, DJD students are granted permits for each course they wish to take every semester. This is done to ensure that only DJD students have the first opportunity to claim seats in these attendance-limited courses. After consulting the offerings each semester, students should contact the APS and inform with regard to which courses they wish to take. After permits are granted, students self-enroll via OASIS, accessible via my.usf.edu. Each course has a unique course reference number (CRN) that will be provided by the APS when notified of permits being granted.

The DJD Course Plan and DJD Advising Record on the following pages may be useful in structuring your studies. Copies of these forms are available in the JMS Faculty Office, second floor, Peter Rudy Wallace Florida Center for Teachers.
While USF St. Petersburg’s Digital Journalism and Design master’s degree program was designed to be completed over three semesters (in one year), we also recognize that many people prefer to complete the program on a part time basis over six semesters (in two years).

We’ve designed four “tracks” for completing the program: full time beginning in the fall, part time beginning in the fall, full time beginning in the spring, and part time beginning in the spring. Use the chart to the right to determine which track is best for you.

Not all DJD courses run in fall and spring semesters. Below, find out what your options are and plan your path of study.

**FULL TIME - PART TIME**

Full Time (Starting in Fall)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FALL</th>
<th>SPRING</th>
<th>SUMMER</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jou 6114</td>
<td>Jou 6006</td>
<td>GEB 6118</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jou 6708</td>
<td>Jou 6360</td>
<td>MMC 6936²</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MMC 5146</td>
<td>MMC 6936²</td>
<td>MMC 6950</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MMC 6936¹</td>
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Part Time (Starting in Fall)

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<tr>
<th>FALL 1</th>
<th>SPRING 1</th>
<th>SUMMER 1</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jou 6114</td>
<td>Jou 6360</td>
<td>GEB 6118</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jou 6708</td>
<td>MMC 6936²</td>
<td>JMS Elective*</td>
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<tr>
<td>MMC 5146</td>
<td>MMC 6936²</td>
<td>MMC 6900*</td>
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<tr>
<td>MMC 6936¹</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Not all DJD courses run in fall and spring semesters. Below, find out what your options are and plan your path of study.

FALL

- MMC 5146: Web Publishing (3 cr)
- MMC 6936¹: Social Media (3 cr)
- JOU 6708: Digital Ethics & Law (3 cr)
- JOU 6114: Multimedia Reporting (3 cr)
- MMC 6950: Final Project (3 cr)

SPRING

- Jou 6006: Digital Media & Democracy (3 cr)
- Jou 6360: Digital Media Technology (3 cr)
- MMC 6936²: Multimedia Production (3 cr)
- VIC 6007: Viscomm Design & Theory (3 cr)
- JOU 6114: Multimedia Reporting (3 cr)
- MMC 6900: Directed Reading* (2-3 cr)
- MMC 6950: Final Project (3 cr)

SUMMER

- GEB 6118: Entrepreneurial Journalism (3 cr)
- MMC 6900: Elective/Directed Reading* (2-3 cr)
- MMC 6950: Final Project (3 cr)

†Note: Because of the semesters in which courses are offered, students pursuing a part-time schedule beginning in the spring semester will need to either take nine credit hours in a spring semester or enroll in one extra semester of classes to keep their schedule under six credits every semester.
As your student completes the required courses for the DJD master’s degree, please keep this record of the courses taken updated. JMS faculty should advise students before they register for classes each semester.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>COURSE</th>
<th>TITLE</th>
<th>CREDITS</th>
<th>TERM(S) COMPLETED</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>JOU 6114</td>
<td>Multimedia Reporting</td>
<td>(3 cr)</td>
<td>__ Spring __ Summer __ Fall / ___ Year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JOU 6360</td>
<td>Digital Media Technology</td>
<td>(3 cr)</td>
<td>__ Spring __ Summer __ Fall / ___ Year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JOU 6006</td>
<td>Digital Media &amp; Democracy</td>
<td>(3 cr)</td>
<td>__ Spring __ Summer __ Fall / ___ Year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GEB 6118</td>
<td>Business Enterprise (DJD)</td>
<td>(3 cr)</td>
<td>__ Spring __ Summer __ Fall / ___ Year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Multimedia Production</td>
<td>(3 cr)</td>
<td>__ Spring __ Summer __ Fall / ___ Year</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Digital Law &amp; Ethics</td>
<td>(3 cr)</td>
<td>__ Spring __ Summer __ Fall / ___ Year</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Viscomm Theory &amp; Design</td>
<td>(3 cr)</td>
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<td>DJD Web Publishing</td>
<td>(3 cr)</td>
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<td>DJD Social Media</td>
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<td><strong>REQUIRED</strong> (27 cr)</td>
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**ELECTIVES**

(4-6 cr)

*Students may take a JMS course during the summer if they rely on financial aid and need at least 5 credits during each semester. They may also take MMC6900: Directed Reading for 2-3 credits in the spring or summer.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>COURSE</th>
<th>TITLE</th>
<th>CREDITS</th>
<th>TERM(S) COMPLETED</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>MMC 6950</td>
<td>Final Project</td>
<td>(3 cr)</td>
<td>__ Spring __ Summer __ Fall / ___ Year</td>
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**FINAL PROJECT**

(3 cr)

**The Final Project course is the last course of the degree. Most students will take it in the summer.**
Succeeding in the FWP program

Food Writing and Photography Graduate Certificate Program

Students enrolled in the Food Writing and Photography graduate certificate program will take three – possibly four – DJD courses: JOU 6114: Multimedia Reporting, MMC 6936: Digital Media Ethics and Law, an elective, and MMC 6950: Final Project. Most cross-listed DJD/FWP students will count one of their other DJD courses as the FWP elective. They can, however, take other elective offerings from the department on top of their required 30 credits.

Students in the Food Writing and Photography certificate program should inform their course instructors each semester of their enrollment in that program. In addition to these courses, the 15-credit program requires students to take MMC 6936: Special Topics in Food Writing, which is online and offered during the fall semester (this name will be variable every year).

Food Writing and Photography Final Project

In MMC 6950: Final Project, which MUST be taken in the final semester of the program for 3 credits, you will actually produce your finished piece and have it vetted by DJD/FWP faculty. By default, Final Project evaluator committees are comprised of two DJD/FWP faculty – but students can request other faculty members from within the department or from another department at USFSP as long as the chair of the committee is a DJD/FWP faculty member.

There are two types of Final Projects:

Reporting-based Projects - Most student projects will involve reporting and producing an original piece of multimedia journalism. Depending on the student’s goals, these projects might emphasize one platform or seek to blend many delivery formats. In general, three reporting-based projects can be pursued:

- A long-form video project (30+ minutes total, but could involve multi-part installments)
- A long-form audio project (60+ minutes total, but could involve multi-part installments)
- A full multimedia package (combining three or more media, e.g., text, photos and audio)
Development-based Projects - For students with experience (or a strong interest) in the more technical or entrepreneurial aspects of digital journalism, three development-based projects can be pursued:

- An original news or information website
- A news app for the desktop and/or a mobile device
- A tool, service or platform that enhances the delivery of news or information. For development-based projects, a prototype may be sufficient, depending on the scope of the proposed idea.

A permit is required for FWP students to register for Final Project credit hours. Only after the department’s Academic Program Specialist has final project paperwork in hand, signed by the overseeing faculty member, will this permit be issued.

**Academic integrity and disruption of academic process**

Academic Integrity assumes that students complete and present work that represents their own efforts and that they represent the efforts of others accurately and fairly. Cheating, plagiarism, fabrication, forgery, obstruction, multiple submissions, complicity, and other misconduct in research and creative endeavors including computer misuse and misuse of intellectual property will not be tolerated.

These expectations are fundamental to the credibility of working journalists and are explicit and firm requirements for all work produced by our graduate and undergraduate majors. Definitions of these acts can be found under USF Regulation Number USF3.027.

Depending upon the seriousness of infraction and level of intent, graduate students who violate academic integrity requirements can expect the following: an “F” or “Zero” grade on the subject paper or assignment; an “F” in the relevant course; an “FF” in the course, which leads to expulsion from the University; academic dismissal from the program; revocation of the degree if academic dishonesty is discovered after the degree is conferred. Students are required to know what counts as a violation of academic integrity. Ignorance is not an acceptable excuse.

Disruption of the academic process occurs when student language or conduct “directs attention away from the academic matters at hand,” or “presents a danger
to the health, safety, or well-being of self or other persons,” in the view of the instructor. Disruption may result in exclusion, dismissal, or academic sanction. Full information can be found under USF Regulation Number USF3.025.

General information

Accessing Classes

The University of South Florida uses the Canvas learning management system for all distance learning. Students should log in on the first day of classes each semester to be counted as “present.” Your instructor may have additional tasks for you to complete to be counted “present.”

Applying To Graduate

In a student’s final semester in the graduate program, it is the student’s responsibility to apply for graduation. This can be done online via OASIS. Applying to graduate is required and is NOT the same as registering for commencement. Students can register for commencement at http://www.usfsp.edu/commencement/. Students graduating in the fall or spring semesters have the optional opportunity to walk in USF St. Petersburg’s commencement ceremony.

Students graduating in the summer semester may walk at USFSP’s fall commencement, but their names will not appear in the program. Or, they can walk at the USF System summer commencement at the Sun Dome in Tampa, FL. One upside to this, aside from appearing in the program, is that there will be no limit to the number of guests who can attend (USFSP commencement, on the other hand, occurs in the Mahaffey Theater and there are strict ticket limits per graduate).

Assistantship

The Department of Journalism and Media Studies distributes limited funds to outstanding graduate students through tuition waivers or/and stipends based on the student’s potential or demonstration of talent and commitment. All students are expected to work for the department in exchange for the departmental support, regardless of the source of funding. While students are each assigned to a faculty supervisor, students may be called on to assist in activities throughout the department. All supported students will be referred to as graduate assistants and will work, at least, 10 hours per week in support of the department throughout each semester.

Online graduate students may be eligible for assistantships. If a DJD student is local he or she may maintain a physical presence in the department of journalism
and media studies. Outstanding distance learning candidates may be considered based on proven ability to communicate digitally and the existence of research tasks that can be completed asynchronously and online.

Eligibility for Support

Minimally, applicants to the department must have an undergraduate GPA of 3.0 or above, a score on an admissions test that places them in the 75th percentile or above, and demonstration of accomplishment in previous work or academic environments. Current students must have a current GPA of 3.0 or above and have demonstrated their commitment to the department or the field. All support is awarded on a competitive basis. There are always more qualified candidates than supported positions.

Type of Support

Tuition Waiver: The Department provides support at the level of one semester’s in-state tuition. This is deposited directly into the student’s university account.

Stipend: The Department provides support at a set amount paid out over a semester that is generally equivalent to a semester’s tuition waiver.

Hourly pay: depending on the source of funding, the Department may pay a student a set hourly rate that is determined in consultation with Human Resources.

Sources of Funding

College of Arts & Sciences Graduate Assistant Funding: the amount that the Department receives each semester in this funding line varies and may be directed support, in that it limits student services to a particular function, such as online course support.

Poynter-Jamison Foundation Scholar: the Poynter Jamison Chair in Media Ethics and Press Policy may select a student with an outstanding academic background who has also demonstrated an interest in ethics or responsible media practices. This scholar will provide teaching and/or research assistance to the Poynter Jamison Chair.

Tampa Bay Times Fellow: the Tampa Bay Times may be used to support eligible students who bring strong interest or professional experience in media presentations of those who have traditionally been underserved by traditional media. The Tampa Bay Times Fellows often work as teaching or editorial assistants for the departmentally supported Neighborhood News Bureau.
Directed Reading/Independent Study (Up To Three Credits)

Students may pursue semester-long individual research related to their study objectives for their degree and get up to three credits. Students invite an appropriate instructor to supervise the study and write a “study contract” that includes a one-page description of the planned study including learning goals, activities planned to achieve those goals, and a process by which the student will demonstrate that the learning goals were achieved. Students should request the appropriate form from the department’s Academic Program Specialist. After the contract is completed by student and instructors, a permit can be granted. Students then may register for MMC 6900 Directed Readings in Mass Communications or MMC 6910 Individual Research in Mass Communications. Note that MMC 6900 and MMC 6910 are graded as S/U and do not contribute to a student’s overall GPA.

Incompletes

The grade of “Incomplete” is not given for the convenience of the student, but rather signifies that the student has 1) completed a majority of the semester’s work, and 2) the student is unable to complete course requirements due to illness or other circumstances beyond his or her control. Instructor and student agree to a written contract that stipulates when and how the course will be completed and both sign the required form. All missing work must be completed within one semester. If the student fails to meet contracted terms, the course grade reverts to the grade that the student would have received in the class if s/he had received a zero on the missing assignment(s). A copy of the contract is kept in the student file and in the graduate student office.

Institutional Review Board

The Institutional Review Board (IRB) is a Federally-mandated, University-wide committee that examines academic research proposals that involve “human subjects.” The purpose of IRB review is to make sure that people who are being used in the conduct of research are not being subjected to harm and that they have an opportunity to understand the purpose of the research and to voluntarily give their consent to participate.

IRB approval is not required for journalistic research, but it is required for academic research that evaluates human participation as subjects of journalistic research or as intended to contribute to generalized knowledge. Academic research is intended for publication in academic journals or for presentation at an academic conference. For example, a news story or magazine story about women at USFSP who have been victims of domestic violence that is based on interviews with the women is journalistic research; however, interviews with victims of domestic
violence to see how they feel about being named in newspaper articles, conducted with the intent of publishing an article in Journalism Quarterly, is academic research.

This distinction is important because academic research that includes interviews or surveys or other interaction with people must be reviewed by the IRB before research is begun. In most cases of academic research about media, the chairperson of the IRB will determine that there is no risk or minimal risk to people who agree to participate in your research, but the IRB must make that determination.

There are exceptions. One exception to the need for IRB review is research that includes interviews to produce a specific case study where no generalizations will be drawn from the gathered material. Another exception is conducting interviews with public officials regarding their professional duties. Projects produced as a classroom exercise with no wider audience than classmates and instructor are also excluded from review. However, if a student decides, after conducting interviews or surveys for a classroom exercise, that s/he would like to use the data for a project with a wider audience, it is likely that IRB will not allow the use of that data. This policy is consistent with the Federal Office of Research Integrity requirements and the University of South Florida requirements for human subject’s protection. Any questions should be directed to the department’s Graduate Program Director.

**Non-Degree-Seeking Students**

Non-degree-seeking students who are enrolled in graduate-level courses in our department fit one of three descriptions. First, professionals or members of the community who have undergraduate degrees may wish to take courses with no plans to seek a graduate degree. Next, students from other institutions may wish to enroll in our courses and transfer those credits to their home institutions. Or, the department may allow a student who has an application for enrollment in the graduate program pending or partially completed to enroll in courses. Enrollment in this latter case will be allowed based on the following criteria: progress that the student is making on his or her application and a grade of B or better in all previous classes taken as a non-degree seeking student. Up to nine credits may be transferred into the JMS program from courses taken non-degree, but students who successfully complete nine credits with non-degree-seeking status will not necessarily be admitted to the graduate program.

In all cases, non-degree-seeking students will be allowed to register with permission of the course instructor, based on availability and the instructor’s judgment of the suitability of the class for the student.
Robert W. Dardenne Chapter of Kappa Tau Alpha

Kappa Tau Alpha is a college honor society that recognizes academic excellence and promotes scholarship in journalism and mass communication. Membership must be earned by excellence in academic work at one of the colleges and universities that have chapters. Selection for membership is a mark of highest distinction and honor. The University of South Florida St. Petersburg Chapter of Kappa Tau Alpha was established in 2012. The top 10 percent of the class are inducted into Kappa Tau Alpha each year.

The seventh oldest national honor society, Kappa Tau Alpha was founded at the University of Missouri in 1910 at the world's first school of journalism. The Society has 95 chapters and has inducted nearly 60,000 outstanding students since its founding in 1910. It is one of 67 members of the Association of College Honor Societies.

The emblem of Kappa Tau Alpha is the key, the oldest symbol of knowledge and communication. The Greek letters mean "The Truth Will Prevail." The letters also suggest three English words: knowledge, truth and accuracy. The Society's colors are light blue, significant of truth, and gold, emblematic of worth and high standards.

Submitting Projects to Digital Archive

The campus Digital Archive (http://dspace.nelson.usf.edu) is a database for scholarly output, supporting materials, and official archives created by members of the USFSP community. The Department of Journalism and Media Studies became a contributor to the archive in 2011. Our graduate students are required to submit their ARPs, theses and final projects to the Digital Archive’s “Journalism and Media Studies Graduate Student Culminating Work Collection.” The library can assist our students with loading files into the collection. If you need help, please contact the library at digcol@nelson.usf.edu

Acceptable File Types: For text, machine-readable PDF files are preferred. The library recommends that MS Word or other document files be converted to PDF for preservation purposes. Any other file type such as JPG, PPT, PPTX, XLS, GIF, etc. are acceptable, too.

File Names: Naming your file(s) appropriately will help ensure better access to your work. Use short descriptive names and connect elements with an underscore. Use the appropriate file extension (.pdf, xls, ppt, etc.). For example: Smith_John_biology.pdf, conf_presentation.ppt, and precipitation_data.xls.
Time Limitations

Though most JMS and DJD students aim to finish in two years or fewer, all requirements for the M.A. degree must be completed within five calendar years from the student’s date of admission. Students may request an extension using the Time Limit Extension Request Form or may submit a Leave of Absence Request.

Transfer Credits (Up To Nine Credits)

You may count up to nine credits from graduate-level work at other institutions toward your degree if those courses relate to your study objectives for the degree. You must have completed any course considered for transfer with the grade of B or better. You may need to provide a syllabus or other evidence to demonstrate the relevance of the course to your study. Courses that have been used to complete another degree are not eligible for transfer. Your adviser and the Graduate Director are the final decision-makers as to the appropriateness of transfer of credits.