



**Mississippi
College**
A CHRISTIAN UNIVERSITY

Graduate Handbook

Department of Communication

*Mississippi College
P.O. Box 4019
Clinton, MS 39058-4019*

E-mail:

Cliff Fortenberry, PhD.

Department Chair - fortenbe@mc.edu

Merle Wm. Ziegler, PhD.

Director of Grad Studies - mziegler@mc.edu

Telephone 601.925.3229

<http://www.mccomdepartment.com/graduate.htm>

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Mississippi College

Department of Communication – Graduate Handbook

Degrees and Options

The Department of Communication offers the **Master of Science in Communication (MSC)** degree. Through elective class choices, students may tailor their degree toward mass media,, interpersonal/public, journalism, health services administration, or communication in sports. . This choice must be made in consultation with their graduate advisor while planning the proposed course of study.

Thesis Track (31 hours)

- Twelve graduate hours of required course work in Communication
- Twelve graduate hours of elective course work in Communication (3 hours may be an out-of-departmental elective)
- Six hours of thesis with oral defense
- COM 6599 (Convocation – Thesis presentation)

Applied Communication Generalist – Non-Thesis Track (31 hours)

- Twelve graduate hours of required course work in Communication.
- Eighteen graduate hours of elective course work in Communication (3 hours may be an out-of-departmental elective).
- COM 6599 (Convocation)

Public Relations and Corporate Communication – Non-Thesis Track (31 hours)

- Fifteen graduate hours of required courses in Communication
- Three graduate hours of elective courses in Communication
- Six graduate hours of required courses in The School of Business
- Six graduate hours of electives in Marketing
- COM 6599 (Convocation)

Professional Communication in Sports

- Fifteen graduate hours of required course work in Communication
- Nine graduate hours of required course work in Kinesiology
- Three graduate hours of required course work in Journalism
- Three graduate hours of required course work in Education
- Three graduate hours of communication electives
- COM 6599 (Convocation)

Professional Communication in Health Services Administration

- Fifteen graduate hours of required course work in Communication
- Twelve graduate hours of required course work in Health Services Administration
- Three graduate hours of required course work in Journalism
- Three graduate hours of electives

Academic Standards Required of Students in the MSC Degree Program

The Department of Communication at Mississippi College expects graduate students to conduct themselves in a respectful manner, exhibiting high professional and ethical standards. Pursuing a master's degree requires a high degree of dedication to the academic demands of graduate school. Students who fail to maintain a cumulative graduate GPA of at least 3.00 must petition the Graduate School in order to remain in the program. The Communication Department reserves the right to dismiss from the program any graduate student caught in the act of plagiarizing.

Degree Plan

Once admitted to graduate study in the Department of Communication and prior to taking any graduate course, a prospective graduate student must seek advice from the Departmental Director of Graduate Studies. The Director of Graduate Studies will serve as graduate advisor until the Communication Department Chairperson assigns a Graduate Advisor or the student selects one.

Graduate Advisor

The student will select or be assigned a graduate advisor from the graduate faculty in the Department of Communication before completing nine hours of study. The graduate advisor is responsible for supervising the completion of the student's degree plan, overseeing the convocation paper preparation and presentation and/or acceptance and completion of their thesis. The student must secure approval of the desired graduate advisor to serve in that capacity before making such designation on the degree plan (Appendix II). The graduate advisor must be a member of the graduate faculty. If a student wishes to change his/her graduate advisor, he/she must consult with the Director of Graduate Studies in the department.

Requirements for the Degree Plan

The Graduate Student is responsible for seeing that the "degree plan form" is filed in their permanent file with the Communication office before completing nine hours of graduate study (Appendix VII).

The student's graduate advisor and then the Communication Graduate Faculty must approve changes in the degree plan. To amend a degree plan, the graduate advisor must send a copy of the revised plan to the graduate faculty indicating the changes to be made. A copy is then placed in the student's permanent file in the Communication Office.

The degree plan must indicate the student's area of concentration.

After selecting the graduate advisor, the graduate student obtains a blank degree plan form, meets with their graduate advisor, and completes the form (Appendix VII). The graduate student keeps a copy, the graduate advisor retains a copy, and a third copy is placed in the student's permanent file.

Once the degree plan has been completed the graduate student recognizes that any changes to the degree plan may adversely affect their date of graduation.

Advisory Committee

For students on the thesis track, the graduate advisory committee is responsible for advising the student regarding which courses to take, conducting the prospectus defense, making recommendations regarding direction of the thesis and overseeing the oral defense of the thesis as well as managing the comprehensive examinations.

For students on the non-thesis track, the graduate advisory committee is responsible for advising the student regarding which courses to take, directing the convocation paper writing and presentation and executing the comprehensive examination process.

The graduate advisory committee consists of three members: the graduate advisor and two other “graduate faculty” from the communication department. Each member should have either had the student in class or will have him/her in a graduate class. The student must secure the consent of each committee member to serve (Appendix III).

Thesis Track

The Graduate School has established procedures for the submission of a thesis. In order to better understand the process, each thesis track graduate student is expected to obtain this manual directly from the graduate school. Hard copies are available in the Graduate Office or an online copy is available at <http://www.mc.edu/academics/graduate/forms/>

The decision regarding whether a student is permitted to write a thesis rests with the student’s graduate advisor. The student’s desire to write a thesis, his/her scholarly writing skills, and methodological competence are the major components influencing the decision.

Selecting a graduate advisor to direct the thesis project is an important decision for the student and the department. Both the student and the department want to select a graduate advisor with whom the student can work effectively and efficiently, and that professor’s direction could contribute significantly to the quality of the study. At the same time, the department has a significant interest in distributing the workload associated with directing a thesis across all members of the graduate faculty in the department. Therefore, a student should consult with the Director of Graduate Studies or their graduate advisor for advice regarding which professors, in the student’s area of emphasis, to consult regarding the thesis.

Non-Thesis Track – Applied & Public Relations/Corporate Communication

In the non-thesis track, the graduate advisory committee will help the student plan a program of courses and a **spring convocation paper and presentation** (See Appendix XI). Although primarily the responsibility of the graduate advisor, the graduate advisory committee will work closely to oversee the topic selection, research, writing and evolution of the convocation paper. **If a non-thesis track student does not complete the convocation paper requirement, he/she will not graduate. Convocations are scheduled only during the spring semester on the 2nd Monday night in April.** August and December graduates must meet this requirement the previous April. All graduate students are required to attend the Convocation program during their tenure as a graduate student.

Required Meetings

Spring & Fall Convocation/Orientation

During the period in which he/she is enrolled, each graduate student must attend the spring and fall **Convocation/Orientation (COM 6599)**. At this meeting calendar events and changes in the program will be discussed and new faculty and students will be introduced. It is the responsibility of each student to register for COM 6599 in the semester in which they intend to present the convocation paper. It is assumed the student will have begun the process the semester prior. For the graduate student to be allowed to register for COM 6599 they must have completed and have filed, in the Communication Office, the "Convocation Presentation Form" as well as a thorough research proposal or first draft of the convocation paper by **October 30th** (for presenting in the spring) or **March 30th** (for presenting in the fall).

If not presenting, the graduate student must arrange their schedule and be in attendance for every spring and fall semester they are in the program. **Failure to attend will hinder progress toward the graduate degree.**

The Convocation/orientation will be held on the **second Monday in October** in fall semesters and the **second Monday of April** in spring semesters.

Qualifying Examinations

During the semester in which graduate students complete 12 graduate hours, they will be required to take qualifiers. However, **students with only "A" or "B" grades are exempt**. Qualifying examinations will be completed by the 10th or 11th week of the semester. Students must consult their graduate advisors concerning their status and register by midterm. Forms are available in the Communication Office (Appendix X).

Comprehensive Examinations

The graduate advisory committee will help schedule and proctor the written and oral comprehensive examinations. If necessary, they will also assist with qualification examinations.

During the semester in which the graduate student completes ALL course requirements, he/she will be required to take both written and oral comprehensive examinations. The Director of Graduate Studies will announce a date for the examinations each semester. In order to take comprehensive examinations the graduate student must have met all other graduate requirements and have completed or be completing the thirty-one graduate hour minimum.

Definition: The comprehensive examination is a test of the student's understanding of ideas that are central to the field of communication. The comprehensive examination is designed to determine the extent to which the student has mastered the theories and skills necessary for the degree and is a test of the student's ability to describe, analyze and evaluate concepts in communication. The exam includes both a written and an oral portion.

Information to be covered: In the comprehensive examination, students will be expected to demonstrate familiarity with and understanding of the ideas in their readings, research, as well as information covered in courses. In addition, the students will be expected to be competent in analyzing

relationships between ideas covered in their discussions with graduate faculty as well as concepts addressed during graduate studies.

Procedures:

In the semester in which the student intends to completion or will be in the process of completing all thirty-one necessary hours they should register form COM 6099 – Graduate Comprehensive Exam. It is advisable that you clear this with your graduate advisor and confirm it with the Graduate School

Schedule with the Communication secretary two writing sessions and an oral examination period.

- In the fall semester, the week for written comprehensive examinations will be the first full week of November. Oral comprehensive examinations will begin on the last Monday in November and will last through Wednesday of that week if needed.
- In the spring semester, the week for written comprehensive examinations will be the last full week of March. Oral comprehensive examinations will begin the third Monday in April and will last through Wednesday of that week if needed.
- In the summer semester, the week for written comprehensive examinations will be the second week of July. Oral comprehensive examinations will begin the last Monday in July and will last through Wednesday of that week if needed.

The graduate student will bring sufficient materials to the written comprehensive sessions or a laptop computer with “Respondus Lockdown Browser” software installed. This includes, but is not limited to: clean lined paper, loose leaf or “blue book,” no spiral pads (answers will be written on only one side of the paper), writing instruments, either pens or pencils and all needed fillers and/or sharpeners. If it is determined that the graduate student has brought paper with prewritten answers, uses cheat notes or is dishonest in any other similar manner, then that student will be immediately disqualified and dismissed from the program. It is a good idea to bring along writing materials even if the student plans to utilize the computer to compose his/her written responses.

The written portion of the examination will last for eight hours. The student will write for four hours in each session on consecutive days. The questions will be divided and inserted into two separate packets and the student will receive one packet per session. Answers should be divided and attached to each question. After writing, the questions with the attached answers should be returned to the Communication secretary. If the computer is used then the responses are saved to the university server when the student logs out. The student only needs to return the questions. The graduate director will separate and distribute the answers to the graduate faculty for evaluation. The grade (Pass or No-Pass) on the written portion will be based on the student’s ability to analyze concepts and the student’s written communication skills.

If a student were to be deficient in the part(s) of the written portion of the examination, he/she will have up to two opportunities to re-write the deficient part(s). If re-writing is necessary, the student’s graduate advisor and committee will decide when the student will rewrite. Should the student fail to successfully complete the written portion after two rewrites, the student will not be permitted additional rewrites until additional course work (to be determined by the graduate advisor and committee) is taken. If, after taking additional course work and retaking the deficient part(s) of the

written examination, the student's written answers are still deficient, no subsequent rewrites will be permitted.

No student will be permitted to participate in the oral portion of the examination until all parts of the written examination have been successfully completed.

The oral portion will be evaluated on the basis of the student's analytical and oral communication skills. Should the student fail to successfully complete the oral portion, one oral re-examination will be permitted.

At the conclusion of the oral portion of the comprehensive examination, the candidate will be excused from the room and the student's committee will decide whether the student's performance is satisfactory, taking into consideration the written and oral portions of the comprehensive examination. After discussion among themselves, the committee will inform the student of the committee's decision.

After successfully completing the oral portion of the comprehensive examination, the Graduate Director will be responsible for securing all necessary signatures and then transmitting the results to the Graduate School.

APPENDIX I

Checklist For Graduate Students

This is a checklist of procedures that must be followed by graduate students. You should retain this checklist throughout your graduate studies. ***Each student is responsible for seeing that appropriate deadlines are observed.***

I. ADMISSION PROCEDURES

No later than the semester before you start graduate studies (Appendix IV):

_____ Apply for admission to Mississippi College.

_____ Have transcript evaluated by Department Chair of Communication for necessary undergraduate prerequisites.

_____ Apply for admission to Graduate School at Mississippi College.

_____ Take the GRE; A verbal score beginning in the range of 146-150 (equivalent to 400-450) and a quantitative score beginning in the range of 140-141 (equivalent to 400-450), or a score within these ranges on either section and a score of 2.5 on the writing assessment of the GRE General Examination, is required. The verbal and quantitative scores will not be combined.

II. DEGREE PLAN PROCEDURES

_____ Schedule advising session with Graduate Director or Department Chair.

During first 9 hours of study:

_____ Select graduate advisor. Secure his/her consent.

_____ Attend Fall/Spring graduate orientation/convocation

_____ Obtain Department Chair's approval for graduate advisor; file form (Appendix II).

_____ In consultation with graduate advisor, and with the signature of Department Chair, create a graduate degree plan; file original copy, give 1 copy to graduate advisor and keep 1 copy (Appendix V and VII).

_____ In consultation with graduate advisor, select two graduate faculty members for advisory committee. Secure consent from each professor; file form (Appendix III).

_____ If thesis track, secure permission from graduate advisor to write thesis.

During the semester in which 12 hours are completed:

_____ Review grades with graduate advisor to determine if qualifiers are needed.

_____ If all grades are "A" or "B" no qualifying examination is required.

_____ If one or more grades are "C" or a midterm grade is projected to be less than either "A" or "B," schedule qualifying examinations; pickup qualifying examination form (Appendix X) and follow its directions.

III. THESIS TRACK STUDENTS

_____ Obtain current APA style manual.

_____ Obtain Graduate Thesis Manual (either hard copy or online).

_____ Register for COM 6563 and COM 6564 consecutively.

_____ Write prospectus.

_____ After securing permission from graduate advisor, schedule a prospectus meeting.

_____ Participate in prospectus meeting.

_____ Write thesis.

_____ With graduate advisor, prepare copies of thesis for graduate advisory committee.

_____ Prepare copies of the signature pages.

_____ Schedule final thesis defense.

_____ File for graduation.

_____ Distribute reading copies of the thesis, abstract and final thesis defense.

_____ Participate in Final Thesis Defense.

_____ Make corrections in final copy required by reader and submit to Graduate School for binding.

IV. NON-THESIS TRACK STUDENTS

During the semester prior to your convocation (COM 6559) presentation:

- _____ Fourth week of the semester: consult graduate advisor about topic and research possibilities, begin reference search.
- _____ Eighth week of semester: meet with graduate advisor to examine finished reference list.
- _____ Twelfth week of semester: meet with graduate advisor to examine outline.

During the semester of your convocation presentation:

- _____ Register for COM 6599 Convocation.
- _____ Second week of semester: meet with graduate advisor to examine your first draft.
- _____ Sixth week of semester: meet with graduate advisor and advisory committee to examine your second draft.
- _____ Eleventh week of semester: meet with graduate advisor and advisory committee to examine final draft.
- _____ After final draft approval secure committee signatures on convocation presentation form, file form (Appendix VII).
- _____ Send an electronic copy of your paper to the Director of Graduate Studies in the Communication Department one week prior to the scheduled convocation.
- _____ Prepare convocation presentation (10 minutes maximum). Send PowerPoint to Director of Graduate Studies if you plan on using it in your presentation.

V. ALL STUDENTS

During the semester in which you complete course work:

- _____ Submit all degree application material before the first day of the semester in which you plan to graduate. (Always check with the MC Registrar's office for specific dates!)
- _____ Consult director of graduate studies for the date of comprehensive examinations (see page 6 and Appendix VIII of this publication).
- _____ Consult with advisor as well as other faculty to discuss the types of questions to be asked.
- _____ Eighth week of semester: schedule written and oral testing periods with the Communication secretary.

_____ See that all incomplete grades are removed.

On the days of the written comprehensive examination:

_____ Bring all necessary material for writing (paper, pens, pencils and/or laptop computer)

_____ In order to reduce anxiety, arrive on time and be prepared.

_____ Write clearly, expansively, and in depth. Cite authors, use knowledge and information gathered in all your graduate work and look past the obvious and simple. Establish yourself as the scholar you claim to be.

After completing the written portion of the comprehensive examination:

_____ If there was material on the written examination that you were not sure of, familiarize yourself with it. Study that information, know it if asked to rewrite. If not asked to rewrite, it will be asked in the oral portion. Do not miss the same information twice.

_____ Recheck appointment time for oral examination.

_____ Arrive early for oral examination, dress appropriately, relax and do your best.

APPENDIX II

Request For Graduate Advisor In Communication (Msc)

DATE: _____

STUDENT'S NAME: _____

STUDENT NUMBER: _____

I request _____ as my graduate advisor, I have consulted with him/her and he/she has agreed.

Signature of Requested Graduate Advisor

Signature of Department Chair

APPENDIX III

Request For Graduate Advisory Committee Members In Communication (Msc)

DATE: _____

STUDENT'S NAME: _____

Student ID#: _____

I request _____ as a graduate advisory committee member. I have consulted with him/her and he/she has agreed.

I request _____ as a graduate advisory committee member. I have consulted with him/her and he/she has agreed.

Signature of Requested Advisory Committee Member

Signature of Requested Advisory Committee Member

Signature of Department Chair

APPENDIX IV

Master Of Science In Communication

Name: _____ Student ID#: _____

Admission

1. All general requirements for admission to the graduate school at Mississippi College.
2. The prospective candidate must hold a bachelor's degree from an accredited school an appropriate field of study.

Degree Granting Institution _____

Degree _____

3. Prerequisite courses may be required: up to twelve (12) undergraduate hours as determined by the faculty of the Department of Communication:

Dept./number _____ Date/semester _____ Grade _____ Hours _____

Dept./number _____ Date/semester _____ Grade _____ Hours _____

Dept./number _____ Date/semester _____ Grade _____ Hours _____

Dept./number _____ Date/semester _____ Grade _____ Hours _____

4. Upon the completion of twelve (12) hours of graduate work, a prospective candidate who scores a C or lower will be expected to pass a qualifying examination.

Date: _____ Pass _____ Fail _____

5. After successfully completing the course work requirements, the prospective candidate will take both written and oral comprehensive examinations.

Written: Date: _____ Pass _____ Fail _____ Score: _____

Oral: Date: _____ Pass _____ Fail _____ Score: _____

Requirements:

1. A minimum of thirty semester hours of graduate work must be completed at 3.0 GPA or better.
2. Fifteen (15) hours or more of the course work must be 6000 level or above.
3. The prospective candidate must meet all Graduate Division residence requirements.
4. Six (6) graduate hours may be transferred from another accredited institution.
5. The prospective candidate must complete all requirements within six (6) years.
6. A thesis may be substituted for six (6) hours of course work.

APPENDIX V

Course Choice Checklist Communication (MSC: Applied Communication)

- Applied Communication Generalist (On-Campus) - <http://www.mcomdepartment.com/status-sheets/ms-generalist-campus.pdf>
- Applied Communication Generalist (Online) - <http://www.mcomdepartment.com/status-sheets/ms-generalist-online.pdf>
- Applied Communication Journalism - <http://www.mcomdepartment.com/status-sheets/ms-journalism.pdf>
- Professional Communication in Health Services Administration - <http://www.mcomdepartment.com/status-sheets/ms-health.pdf>
- Professional Communication in Sports - <http://www.mcomdepartment.com/status-sheets/ms-sports.pdf>
- Public Relations & Corporate Communication - <http://www.mcomdepartment.com/status-sheets/ms-publicrelations.pdf>

Appendix VII

Degree Plan

MISSISSIPPI COLLEGE GRADUATE SCHOOL (MSC)

The original must be filed in the permanent file; one remains with the student and one with the graduate advisor.

NAME: _____ Student ID #: _____
HOME ADDRESS: _____
CONCENTRATION _____ GRADUATE ADVISOR: _____

(Responsibility for reading catalog requirements and for knowing when MSC program has been completed rests entirely upon the student!)

UNDERGRADUATE PREREQUISITIES

Department	Numbe	Description	Date to be taken	Date taken	Grade	Hours

Total Hours _____

REQUIRED COURSES

Department	Number	Description	Date to be taken	Date taken	Grade	Hours

Total Hours _____

ELECTIVE COURSES

Department	Number	Description	Date to be taken	Date taken	Grade	Hours

Total Hours _____

GRAND TOTAL _____

I, _____ recognize that any changes made in my degree plan may deleteriously affect my graduation date.

APPENDIX VIII

Instructions For Completing Comprehensive Exam Application

The Graduate Application for Degree is required to be filed at the beginning of your last semester. The Graduate School in consultation with the Registrar's Office processes the form. The Graduate School and Department Chairs reserve the right to select the comprehensive examination committee for each student's examination. The criteria for selecting the committee are governed mainly by the availability of the faculty members and courses the students have had. See the *Graduate Bulletin* for further information about the comprehensive examination. (Below is the web address for the form.)

<http://www.mc.edu/commencement/prior-to-commencement/degree-application>

You may wish to select your committee members, but please understand that scheduling will be based upon availability. Remember, you, the student, are ultimately responsible for knowing whether you have completed degree requirements.

*We suggest that you review all of your course materials **very carefully** in preparing for your examination. In addition, you may wish to confer with your advisor for other examination suggestions.*

Directions

- **Complete "Graduate Application for Degree" at the onset of the semester of final attendance.**
- Review all courses you have completed and all courses in which you are currently enrolled, or in which you plan to enroll and transfer work you intend to use on your graduate degree.
- Schedule comprehensive exam dates and times with Communication Department secretary.
- Schedule oral exam date and time with Communication Department secretary.
- Graduate Honors -- The Graduate Council adopted the following graduate honors scale effective December 1998: Highest Honors, *Summa Cum Laude-4.0*; With High Honors, *Magna Cum Laude-3.95-3.99*; and With Honors, *Cum Laude-3.90-3.94*.

Application for Degree deadlines:

(ALWAYS CHECK THE MC WEB PAGE OR
CALL THE REGISTRAR'S OFFICE TO CONFIRM DATES!)

APPENDIX IX

Convocation Presentation Form (Com 6599)

DATE: _____

STUDENT'S NAME: _____ Student ID #: _____

I request the opportunity to present my convocation paper. I have consulted with my graduate advisor and advisory committee and they have approved the title for the paper as given below.

Title of Paper: _____

We the under-signed agree the above named student has completed the written part of the convocation requirements and should be allowed to present their research during the spring/fall (circle one)

_____ Graduate Convocation.

(Year)

Signature of Graduate Advisor

Signature of Requested Advisory Committee Member

Signature of Requested Advisory Committee Member

Signature of Department Chair

APPENDIX X

Graduate Qualifying Examination In Communication

The Mississippi College Graduate Bulletin states, "A prospective candidate for the Masters of Science Degree in Communication will be expected to pass a qualifying examination after the completion of twelve hours of graduate study."

In order to meet this requirement, the student must check with his/her graduate advisor during the semester in which they complete twelve graduate hours. If they have any grade lower than "A" or "B," then they must successfully complete qualifying examinations.

It is the responsibility of the student to complete and return this form to his/her graduate advisor. If not returned before midterm, the student will not be allowed to complete the qualifying examination process and may not register for any further graduate classes. **Schedule an examination appointment with the Departmental Graduate director.**

DATE: _____ NAME: _____ Student ID #: _____

Course Title	Number	Instructor	Date	Grade

The classes listed above, the instructors, the semester attempted, and the final grades for each are accurate and reflect the information held in my permanent record at Mississippi College. I have consulted with my graduate advisor and advisory committee and they have agreed.

Signature of Student

Signature of Advisory Committee Member

Signature of Graduate Advisor

Signature of Advisory Committee Member

Qualifying Examination page 2

Recommendations: After completing the qualifying examination process, the committee

Recommends that _____ be given:
(Name of Student)

Full Candidacy _____ **Provisional Candidacy** _____ **No Candidacy** _____

If **provisional status**, it is mandatory that the candidate complete the following requirements:

Student Signature

Date _____

Graduate Advisor Signature

Committee Member Signature

Committee Member Signature

Committee Member Signature

Department Chair Signature

If a “no candidacy” recommendation has been made, it is suggested that the student may reapply the qualifying examination at a future date to be agreed upon by both the members of the committee and the student. The retesting must occur during the same semester as the original examination. The questions used for the original examination and the oral presentation by the student may not be used again. The qualifying examination process may be attempted only 2 (two) times. If after the second attempt is made, a “no candidacy” recommendation is again made, the student will be asked to resign from the program.

APPENDIX XI

Convocation Paper Requirements

A completed “Convocation Presentation Form” must be on file in the Department office the first of November the Fall Semester before the convocation paper is to be presented. Without this in your file you will not be allowed to register for COM 6599 – Convocation in the spring.

The following are intended as guidelines for **acceptable types of research** for the “Convocation Paper.”

I. Historical-Critical Research

- A. This is not an academic area of study but a way of thinking. Historical-critical research consists of a synthesis of the knowledge of the past so as to provide insights for making decisions about current problems. It can tell us what has been tried before and what has been successful (or unsuccessful) and thereby give criteria to better appraise alternative courses of action.
- B. Types:
 - 1. Biographical studies
 - 2. Movement or idea studies
 - 3. Rhetorical criticism

II. Descriptive Research

- A. Descriptive research seeks to describe – events, beliefs, attitudes, values, behaviors, etc. The researcher collects through various specific techniques information about present conditions about the selected topic (i.e., events, beliefs, attitudes , etc.)
- B. Types:
 - 1. Surveys
 - 2. Interviews
 - 3. Observations

III. Experimental Research

- A. An experiment is designed and executed to provide answers to research questions. It should be characterized by precision and control, and use the scientific method.
- B. Types:
 - 1. Non-laboratory
 - 2. Laboratory

Special note: Research requiring the use of test subjects and/or involving individuals from outside of Mississippi College requires prior approval from the “University Research Committee.”

The following are intended as **guidelines for construction** of the “Convocation Paper.”

- I. **Length** – Approximately 20-25 pages
- II. **Format** -- American Psychological Association Style Manual (Current Edition)
 - A. **Title Page**
 1. Running head – an abbreviated title that runs at the top of the pages of the article. Maximum of 50 characters.
 2. Title – summarize the main idea of the paper with a concise statement that identifies the main theoretical issues or variables under investigation.
 3. Author’s name and institutional affiliation
 4. Author note.
 - a. Departmental affiliation of the author of the article.
 - b. Sources of financial support.
 - c. Acknowledgement of colleagues and their professional contribution and personal assistance.
 - d. How the interested reader may get further information about the article.
 - B. **Abstract** – A brief comprehensive summary of the contents of the paper. It should not exceed 120 words.
 - C. **Introduction** – Presents the specific issue under investigation and describes the research. It is not to be labeled. A good introduction answers the below listed questions in a paragraph or two:
 1. Why is the problem important?
 2. How does the hypothesis and design relate to the problem?
 3. What are the implications of the study?
 4. How does the study relate to previous research?
 5. What theoretical propositions are tested?
 - D. **Method** – is composed of a detailed description of how the study was conducted.
 - E. **Results** – summarizes the data collected and the treatment used. Does not discuss the implications of the results.
 - F. **Discussion** – is the evaluation and interpretation of the results. This is where you discuss the implications of the results as they relate to your original hypothesis or research question.
- III. **References** – all citations made in the text of the paper must appear in the reference list and all references must be cited in the text.
- IV. **Appendix** – helpful if a detailed description of certain material would be distracting if included within the text of the article.
- V. **Author Note** – this is the place to comment on any of the following:

The following is intended as guidelines for the **oral presentation** of the “Convocation Paper.”

- I. The presentation should be in the style of a well-constructed public speech rather than a reading of sections of the paper.
- II. Presentational aids should be utilized in the presentation (i.e., PowerPoint, audio-visual aids, etc.)

III. The length of the presentation should be limited to 15 minutes.

IV. The presenter is expected to remain for a question/answer period immediately following the presentation.

The final electronic draft must be submitted to the Director of Graduate Studies for the Communication Department at least one week prior to the date of presentation.