M.A./PH.D. PLAN OF STUDY
Department of Communication Studies
University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

Name _______________________________________________________________
Date of Entry into the Graduate Program ___________________________________
Adviser ______________________________________________________________

Summary
The plan of study
The M.A./Ph.D. Plan of Study refers to the course of a student’s overall graduate career.
This document addresses the student’s career in two, related parts: Research and Teaching. The
first part is intended to help students define primary research interests, identify appropriate
coursework, and anticipate completion of qualifying exams and a dissertation. The second part is
intended to help students correlate research with teaching interests with the aim of securing
postdoctoral fellowships and/or university teaching positions.

Treat this as a working document. While it serves as a record of accomplishments, this document
should be part of ongoing consultation with the student’s interim/doctoral adviser. It should
revised and resubmitted annually (as part of the annual review process) to reflect students’
developing research interests and course of study. Students are encouraged simultaneously to
maintain curriculum vitae and teaching portfolios.

The doctoral program in the Department of Communication Studies at UNC Chapel
Hill is a question-driven program. It requires students to pursue excellence in core study and to
build on core courses with integrative coursework based on an evolving primary research
question that will ultimately define the dissertation. While working with this document, consider
how each part relates to all others. Ideally, the primary research question—which should change
and become more refined over time—will be reflected in every aspect.

Basic requirements
Number of courses
Doctoral students entering the program without having completed an M.A. must complete a
minimum of 61 hours of coursework:
4 core courses
  700: Introduction to Research and Theory in Communication Studies
  703a: Communication and the Social
  703b: Communication and Discourse
  703c: Communication and the Political
1 M.A. exam preparation course:
  992: Non-thesis Option
2 professional development courses:
  702: Teaching in Communication Studies (1 credit)
  907: Research Practicum in Communication Studies
14 research courses
Faculty
At least two research courses must be taught by faculty who are not home-based in the Department (although they may have adjunct appointments). In order to be exposed to a range of intellectual traditions, students must take courses (not including 700, 702 or 703) from at least 4 faculty in the Department whose teaching and research reflect different aspects of the discipline.

Additional course stipulations
Students should identify at least one course, to be listed among his/her research courses, in which he/she will develop appropriate methodological (archival, theoretical, interpretive, statistical, etc.) competence to pursue designated research question(s).

No more than 9 hours of independent study may count towards completion of required coursework.

600-level courses are considered bridge courses; they are open to graduate and undergraduate students. With the approval of their committees, doctoral students may take up to 9 hours of credit at the 600-level.

How to use this document
First: Identify a working research question. What do you want to know or find out?

Second: Break this question down into two primary lines of inquiry. What are two questions you need to pursue in order to answer the guiding research question? Each line of inquiry should reflect a central problematic or set of issues that a student must pursue in order to address the research question(s).

Third: Begin to identify courses that will help you to pursue those lines of inquiry. All courses should reflect a broad but integrative approach to each line of inquiry.

Fourth: Adjust your plan and anticipated schedule to include:
Completion of core courses
Completion of 3rd-semester M.A. exam (see the Ph.D. Handbook)
Achievement of methodological competence
Achievement of language proficiency (per consultation with adviser)
Optional minor/certifications
Optional additional courses
Completion a doctoral dissertation, including qualifying exams, dissertation proposal, and dissertation research hours
Additional opportunities for professional development

A note on reading lists and qualifying exams
Two of the three reading lists for doctoral qualifying exams (to be developed by student in collaboration with his/her adviser and members of his/her doctoral committee) will be based on
the designated lines of inquiry; the third (also to be developed in collaboration with the adviser and members of the doctoral committee) will ask the student in some way to locate his or her work in relation to the field of Communication Studies. See the Ph.D. Handbook for elaboration of the exam process.

**YOUR PLAN**

**PART ONE: COURSEWORK AND DOCTORAL STUDY**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>I. Core Courses</th>
<th>Semester Taken</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Comm 700</td>
<td>_______________</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Comm 703a</td>
<td>_______________</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Comm 703b</td>
<td>_______________</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Comm 703c</td>
<td>_______________</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**II. M.A. exam preparation**

1. Comm 992: Non-thesis Option _______________
This course provides students with three credit hours for preparation and completion of the M.A. exam. Students should register for 992 in their third semester with a faculty member who has agreed to supervise development of part two of the three-part exam, “preliminary research proposal.”

**III. Research Courses**

**A. Research Question(s) (what specifically do you want to know, learn, discover?):**

________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

**B. Lines of Inquiry**

1. **First Line of Inquiry** (state as a question that directly reflects the primary research question):

________________________________________________________________________

Describe. What are the primary issues or sub-questions that define this line of research?
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

**Courses**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course title</th>
<th>Instructor/Dept</th>
<th>Semester taken</th>
<th>Relation to line of inquiry</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
2. Second Line of Inquiry *(state as a question that directly reflects the primary research question)*: __________________________________________

Describe. What are the primary issues or sub-questions that define this line of research?

________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

Courses

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course title</th>
<th>Instructor/Dept.</th>
<th>Semester Taken</th>
<th>Relation to Line of Inquiry</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.___________</td>
<td>__________________</td>
<td>______________</td>
<td>___________________________</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.___________</td>
<td>__________________</td>
<td>______________</td>
<td>___________________________</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.___________</td>
<td>__________________</td>
<td>______________</td>
<td>___________________________</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.___________</td>
<td>__________________</td>
<td>______________</td>
<td>___________________________</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.___________</td>
<td>__________________</td>
<td>______________</td>
<td>___________________________</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.___________</td>
<td>__________________</td>
<td>______________</td>
<td>___________________________</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

C. Methodological Competence *(1 course required, cross-listed with research courses)*

Which of the courses listed above will help you achieve the methodological competence necessary to pursue your dissertation research?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course title</th>
<th>Instructor/Dept.</th>
<th>Semester Taken</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.___________</td>
<td>__________________</td>
<td>______________</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
IV. Minor or Certifications

Unless otherwise stipulated by the program overseeing the minor or certification, courses may be cross-listed with the student’s required research courses.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title of Minor or Certification Program</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Program adviser (as applicable)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Courses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title of Minor or Certification Program</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Program adviser (as applicable)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Courses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

V. Language Proficiency

Language
Date exam passed

VI. Professional Development Activities (including for-credit courses and e.g. presentations in department and university colloquia; participation in research groups and professional development workshops or seminars; independent performance and media production; regional, national, international conference presentations)

1. _702____________________________________________________
2. _907__________________________________________________________
3. __________________________________________________________________
4. __________________________________________________________________
5. __________________________________________________________________
6. __________________________________________________________________
7. __________________________________________________________________
8. __________________________________________________________________
9. __________________________________________________________________
10. __________________________________________________________________
11. __________________________________________________________________
12. __________________________________________________________________
13. __________________________________________________________________
14. __________________________________________________________________
VI. Dissertation
Dissertation topic______________________________________________

Working title___________________________________________________

Doctoral adviser______________________________________________
Dissertation Committee (min. 5 members, including a majority from within the graduate faculty in the Department and 1 from outside the discipline)
1.__________________________________________________________
2.__________________________________________________________
3.__________________________________________________________
4.__________________________________________________________
5.__________________________________________________________
6.__________________________________________________________
7.__________________________________________________________

Anticipated date for written qualifying exams________________________
Anticipated date for submission of dissertation proposal________________
Anticipated date for oral defense of exams (within 6 weeks of exams) __________
Anticipated date for oral defense of dissertation proposal (may be the same as for the exams*) __________
Anticipated date for oral defense of dissertation__________________________

*Note: Students wishing to defend their exams and proposal at the same meeting must distribute the final proposal to all 5 (min.) doctoral committee members no less than 10 days prior to the scheduled defense. All students should schedule a defense meeting prior to taking the exams.
PART TWO: CAREER GOALS AND YOUR TEACHING FOCUS

Students completing the PhD in Communication Studies at UNC typically pursue research and/or teaching/research positions. While the PhD program in Comm. at UNC emphasizes interdisciplinary, integrative research, we encourage students to reckon with a highly variable job market, one that includes positions that are sub- and supra-disciplinary and that emphasize teaching to greater and lesser degrees. Students should continually reflect on how coursework and research correlate to career goals and visions. This portion of the Plan of Study is intended to support ongoing reflection and revision.

1. Identify your preferred areas of teaching emphasis:

________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

2. Explain how courses you have taken and taught reflect and support your teaching focus.

________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

3. Identify particular courses you would like to teach upon completion of the PhD.

________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

4. What additional courses are you prepared to teach?

________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
PLAN OF STUDY REVIEW AND APPROVAL

1. *Preliminary submission* date __________ initial/date ________ ________ ________
   student  adviser  DGS
   Total course hours at time of submission: _____________

2. *Revised submission* date __________ initial/date ________ ________ ________
   student  adviser  DGS
   Total course hours at time of submission: _____________

3. *Revised submission* date __________ initial/date ________ ________ ________
   student  adviser  DGS
   Total course hours at time of submission: _____________

4. *Revised submission* date________ initial/date ________ ________ ________
   student  adviser  DGS
   Total course hours at time of submission: _____________