



SCHOOL OF
**COMMUNICATION
JOURNALISM
& MEDIA**

CENTRAL MICHIGAN
UNIVERSITY

Graduate Student Handbook

Fall 2026

Table of Contents

Introduction	3
Other Key SCJM Faculty.....	3
Program Overview	4
COM Degree Requirements.....	4
MCA Degree Requirements	4
Registering for Classes	5
Suggested Course Sequence for a Fall 2026 Start Date.....	5
Communications	5
Media Arts	5
Thesis and Plan B information	6
Thesis.....	6
Overview	6
Your Thesis Advisor and Committee	6
Thesis Committee requirements.....	7
Thesis Prospectus Meeting	7
IRB Approval	7
Thesis Defense.....	8
Thesis Credits.....	8
Thesis Grants	9
Plan B.....	9
Overview	9
Your Plan B Advisor and Committee	9
Plan B Prospectus Meeting.....	10
IRB Approval	10
Plan B Defense.....	10
Plan B Credits.....	11
FAQ on Academic Procedures and Policies.....	12
University Resources	15
Professional Associations and Conferences	19
Appendix - Thesis and Plan B Proposal Guidelines	20
Guidelines for Proposing a Traditional Research Paper.....	20
Guidelines for Proposing a Plan B Screenplay.....	21
Guidelines for Proposing a Plan B Business Plan.....	22

Introduction

Welcome to the School of Communication, Journalism, and Media (SCJM) graduate program. The aim of this handbook is to guide you smoothly through your career as a graduate student.

Within the handbook you will find information about course scheduling, Thesis and Plan B information, SCJM, Office of Graduate Studies, and CMU academic policies and procedures, as well as university resources you may find useful. The information provided in the following pages is intended to help you become more knowledgeable, prepared, informed, and confident in your role as a graduate student. Questions are always welcome.

Note: This guide is a supplement to, not a substitute for, the University Graduate Bulletin. Policies of the university are current as of the date of this publication but are subject to change.

Dr. Amy Sindik, SCJM Graduate Coordinator & Professor

 sindi1a@cmich.edu  989-774-2819

 310 Moore Hall  Office Hours: Tuesdays & Thursday, 12:30-2:00 pm

Other Key SCJM Faculty

Dr. Heather Polinsky, SCJM Director & Professor

 polin1he@cmich.edu  989-774-2031

 333 Moore Hall  Office Hours: TBD

Dr. Kirsten Weber, COM Area Coordinator & Professor

 weber2km@cmich.edu  989-774-7890

 364 Moore Hall  Office Hours: TBD

Dr. Trey Stohman, MCA Area Coordinator & Professor

 stohl1ta@cmich.edu  989-774-1687

 318 Moore Hall  Office Hours: TBD

Program Overview

SCJM offers master's degrees in Communication (COM) and Media Arts (MCA). While the programs have separate bulletins, some of the classes offered for the program are taken together. Both Communications and Media Arts offer traditional, 30-credit master's programs, as well as accelerated master's programs.

SCJM School Director: Dr. Heather Polinsky (polin1he@cmich.edu)

Communication Area Coordinator: Dr. Joesph Packer (packe1j@cmich.edu)

Media Arts Area Coordinator: Dr. Trey Stohlman (stohl1ta@cmich.edu)

COM Degree Requirements

To graduate with an M.A. degree in Communication, students must have:

- ✓ Completed at least 30 credit hours of coursework commensurate with the requirements of the program.
- ✓ Achieved a cumulative GPA above 3.0.
- ✓ Earned a "C" or better in all courses listed on the Authorization of Degree Program form,
- ✓ Completed a thesis or Plan B research paper that is approved by the thesis committee; and
- ✓ Submitted all required paperwork and documentation.

NOTE: Teaching assistants must complete COM 795 during their first fall semester as a condition of their employment.

MCA Degree Requirements

To graduate with an M.A. degree in Media Arts, students must have:

- ✓ Completed at least 30 credit hours of coursework commensurate with the requirements of the Program.
- ✓ Achieved a cumulative GPA above 3.0.
- ✓ Earned a "C" or better in all courses listed on the Authorization of Degree Program form.
- ✓ Completed a thesis or Plan B research paper that is approved by the thesis committee; and
- ✓ Submitted all required paperwork and documentation.

Registering for Classes

Graduate students are advised to meet with the Graduate Coordinator prior to registering for classes. Registration for each academic year opens in mid-February. Media Arts students must let the Graduate Coordinator know their Track during registration advising. Students can register for the entire academic year (Fall and Spring semesters) at one time. Certain courses (e.g., Plan B, Thesis and Independent Study credits) require approval from the Graduate Coordinator before registration can be completed.

Transfer credits: A maximum of 15 semester hours of approved course credit “appropriate to a student's degree program” from an accredited college or university may be transferred. Students must apply to the Office of Graduate Studies to transfer credit by submitting a completed Transfer Credit Request form.

Suggested Course Sequence for a Fall 2026 Start Date

Communications: 30 credits needed to graduate

1st semester: COM 600: Introduction to Research and Graduate Study in Communication COM 601: Research Design in Communication COM elective course OR COM 795 (for Graduate Assistants)	2nd semester: COM 602: Qualitative Research Methods COM 661: Contemporary Communication Theory COM elective course
3rd semester: COM elective course COM 730 or 798: Plan B or Thesis credits	4th semester: COM elective course COM 730 or 798: Plan B or Thesis credits

** Students may only take 3 credits of COM 764 (Internship) or COM 790 (Advanced Independent Study).*

Media Arts: 30 credits needed to graduate

1st semester: MCA 600: Intro to Research and Graduate Study in Media MCA 604: Quantitative Mass Comm Research Methods One course from your Media Arts track	2nd semester: MCA 601: Theories of Mass Communication MCA 603: Qualitative Mass Communication Research Methods One course from your Media Arts track
3rd semester: 2 courses from your Media Arts track OR 1 course from your Media Arts track and MCA 798: Thesis	4th semester: 1 course from your Media Arts track MCA 730: Plan B OR MCA 798: Thesis

Thesis and Plan B information

The culmination of your graduate work is your Thesis or Plan B research. Both options require an original research project or creative work to be conducted under the advisement of a committee.

The primary differences between the Thesis and Plan B options are that the Thesis must be traditional academic research, is overseen by the Graduate School (you must follow their deadlines and procedures) and requires you to have three committee members. The Plan B project can either be academic research or a creative work and is overseen by SCJM. Plan B projects require two committee members.

Thesis

Overview

A master's thesis is a piece of original research that is conducted and written under the direction of a faculty advisor. A thesis project should contribute to your discipline's theoretical or conceptual knowledge and/or address a significant communication or media issue. Students who chose to write a master's thesis often do so because they are interested in pursuing a doctoral degree.

The final thesis manuscript should be roughly 35-50 pages including cover page, abstract, and references. Generally speaking, it takes a student two semesters to complete a thesis project. One semester is spent working on the prospectus and the other is spent conducting the research, writing the conclusion and discussion sections, completing the defense and making final edits to the thesis.

[Link to CMU Graduate Studies Thesis Information](#)

Your Thesis Advisor and Committee

To write your thesis you must find a faculty member who is willing to be your thesis advisor. Your advisor will be your chief contact while you are writing the master's thesis. When asking a faculty member to serve on your committee, it is recommended that you send them a brief overview of your research topic, intended theory, and intended method. This will allow the faculty member to determine if they are a good fit for your committee.

A committee consists of 3 faculty members. Once a thesis advisor has agreed to serve, students should consult with them about the selection of two additional faculty members to serve on the thesis committee. These committee members function as thesis consultants and participate in approving the thesis prospectus and the thesis defense. All members of the committee must have graduate faculty status as defined by the Academic Senate's Graduate Education Policy.

Once the thesis advisor and committee members have been selected, the student should email the Graduate Director with a list of their committee members.

Thesis Committee requirements

The committee chair must be an assistant, associate, or full CMU professor on regular, medical, or research faculty appointment with full graduate faculty status.

At least one other member of the committee must be either a CMU tenured-tenure-track faculty member or a CMU fixed-term faculty member. This committee member may or may not be in the student's program or department, and they must hold either full or associate graduate faculty status.

The third committee member may also be from CMU as described above, or they may be from outside of CMU with associate graduate faculty status. The third member may be a post-doctoral scholar with associate graduate faculty status, provided their post-doctoral advisor is not also a member of the committee.

Thesis Prospectus Meeting

The first step in the thesis process is to write a thesis prospectus. A prospectus usually consists of the first two sections of the thesis. Section 1 is usually a review of relevant literature relating to the research topic and section 2 is usually a discussion of the research methodology to be used in collecting data.

Students should expect to write multiple drafts of their prospectus before the committee is ready to approve it. For each draft of the prospectus submitted to your chair (or full committee), expect that it will take 2 weeks for you to receive feedback and edits. Once a prospectus has been completed to the satisfaction of the thesis advisor, a prospectus meeting is held with the thesis committee. Thesis committee members should receive the completed thesis prospectus at least two weeks in advance of the scheduled prospectus meeting date.

The prospectus meeting involves a brief presentation of the thesis project followed by a question-and-answer session, after which the committee decides whether the student can proceed with the thesis project. A prospectus meeting to approve the thesis project must occur before IRB approval, data collection, and data analysis.

After the prospectus has been approved, the student must fill out the [Prospectus Form](#). The Prospectus form must be approved before any research collection can begin. Projects undertaken prior to final approval may be denied, the project deemed invalid, and the student will have to begin the process again.

[Link to More Graduate Office prospectus guidelines](#)

IRB Approval

If the thesis project involves conducting research on human subjects, the student must receive Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval after the thesis prospectus can be approved and before the collection of thesis data can begin.

Thesis Defense

When the thesis has been completed to the satisfaction of the thesis advisor, the thesis committee will conduct a thesis defense.

Thesis committee members should receive the completed thesis at least two weeks in advance of the scheduled thesis defense date. After agreeing on a date and time with all thesis committee members, the student should work with the main office to reserve a room for the defense. This process must be completed at least one week before the desired defense date. The student may invite other faculty, graduate students, or family and friends to the defense.

After the time, date, and location of the defense have been determined, email this information to the Graduate Coordinator.

The thesis defense should be scheduled sufficiently in advance of the graduation deadline to permit completion of all degree requirements in accordance with the University's deadlines for graduation.

The first portion of the thesis defense includes a 10-15 minute presentation of the project. Other faculty, friends, and family members are invited to this part of the defense. After this portion, family and friends are excused and the committee engages in a question-and-answer session with the student, after which the committee decides whether the thesis project is approved or not.

At the defense, it is typical for a thesis committee to request changes—of varying degrees—to a thesis. The thesis committee is responsible for approving necessary changes in the thesis, approving its completion in its final typed form, and verifying that the student has met all requirements for graduation. The committee as a whole will judge the quality of the work and determine whether the completed thesis is acceptable.

After the committee has approved the final draft, the committee chair must submit the thesis to the Graduate Office, through the iThenticate program.

[Link to More Graduate Office information on Thesis proposals](#)

Thesis Credits

- ✓ Students must take a total of 6 thesis credits (COM 798 or MCA 798).
- ✓ Students can take the first 3 thesis credits before their prospectus is approved.
- ✓ The prospectus must be approved before the student is eligible to enroll in the last 3 hours of thesis credit.
- ✓ The student must initiate prospectus and defense paperwork through DocuSign via the Graduate Office.

Thesis Grants

The Office of Graduate Studies offers Graduate Student Research Grants and Graduate Student Publication and Presentation Grants. The Graduate Student Research Grant provides funds to offset the costs of research for theses, such as mileage to conduct personal interviews or fees for using proprietary survey measures. In addition, the grant provides support for student travel to present research at international and national conferences.

[Link to more grant information](#)

Please note: The student's advisor must support the request for one of the above grants. Also, graduate students who wish to use a CMU affiliation for submitting papers, panels, or posters for presentation at local, regional, national, or international conference may do so only under the supervision of a faculty member.

Plan B

Overview

A Plan B project is a piece of original research that is conducted and presented under the direction of a SCJM faculty advisor. The Plan B can be a traditional research paper, creative work, screenplay, business plan or professional presentation of original research. Generally speaking, it takes a student two semesters to complete their Plan B. One semester is spent working on the prospectus and the other is spent conducting the researching and writing the Plan B paper or presentation, or creating the Plan B project.

Your Plan B Advisor and Committee

To complete a Plan B project you must find a faculty member who is willing to be your Plan B advisor. Your advisor will be your chief contact while you are completing the Plan B project. A Plan B committee consists of 2 faculty members. Once a Plan B advisor has agreed to serve, students should consult with them about the selection of one additional faculty member to serve on the committee. This committee member functions as a consultant and will participate in approving the Plan B prospectus and the Plan B defense.

When asking a faculty member to serve on your committee, it is recommended that you sent them a brief overview of your research topic, intended theory, and intended method. This will allow the faculty member to determine if they are a good fit for your committee.

The committee chair must be an assistant, associate, or full CMU professor on regular, medical, or research faculty appointment with full graduate faculty status.

The other member of the committee must be either a CMU tenured-tenure-track faculty member or a CMU fixed-term faculty member. This committee member may or may not be in the student's program or department, and they must hold either full or associate graduate faculty status.

Plan B Prospectus Meeting

The first step in the Plan B process is to complete a Plan B proposal. The requirements for the Plan B proposal will depend on the type of Plan B you are doing. Ask your committee members what is required for an approved proposal, so there are no surprises.

Guidelines for Plan B proposals are included in the handbook appendix.

After the proposal has been approved by your committee members, complete the [Proposal Completion form](#) and submit it to the Graduate Coordinator.

IRB Approval

If the Plan B project involves conducting human subjects research, the student must receive Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval after the prospectus has been approved and before the collection of Plan B data can begin.

Plan B Defense

When the Plan B project has been completed to the satisfaction of the Plan B advisor, the Plan B committee shall conduct a Plan B defense.

The Plan B committee members should receive the completed Plan B at least two weeks in advance of the scheduled Plan B defense date. After agreeing on a date and time with all committee members, the student should work with the SCJM office to schedule a room for the defense. This process must be completed at least one week before the desired defense date. The student may invite other faculty, graduate students, or family and friends to the defense.

Once the time, date and location have been determined email this information to the Graduate Coordinator.

The first portion of the Plan B defense includes a presentation of the project. Other faculty, friends, and family members are invited to this part of the defense. After this portion, family and friends are excused and the committee engages in a question-and-answer session with the student, after which the committee decides whether the Plan B project is approved or not.

The Plan B defense should be scheduled sufficiently in advance of the graduation deadline to permit completion of all degree requirements in accordance with the University's deadlines for graduation. It is typical for a Plan B committee to request changes—of varying degrees—in a Plan B. The Plan B committee is responsible for approving necessary changes in the Plan B, approving its completion in its final typed form, and verifying that the student has met all requirements for graduation. The committee as a whole will judge the quality of the work and determine whether the completed Plan B is acceptable.

After the Plan B has been successfully defended, send a Plan B completion form to the Graduate Coordinator.

Plan B Credits

- ✓ Media Arts students must take 3 Plan B credits (MCA 730).
- ✓ COM students must take a total of 6 Plan B credits (COM 730).
- ✓ COM students can take the first 3 Plan B credits before their prospectus. Their prospectus must be approved before the student is eligible to enroll in the last 3 hours of thesis credit.

FAQ on Academic Procedures and Policies

How long do I have to complete my degree?

You have seven years to complete your degree. While both the COM and Media Arts degrees are designed for full-time students to complete in two years, not every student will finish in this time. After seven years, all the courses you have taken will expire and not count towards graduation. At that time, you will need to either retake the courses or apply for an [Extension of Time request](#). [Link for more information](#) about time for completion.

What happens if I don't finish classwork or my Plan B or Thesis before the end of a semester?

You will receive either an I (Incomplete) grade for a class or Z (Deferred) grade for your 730 or 798 credits.

An incomplete (I) is a temporary grade used by the instructor in cases when a student is unable to complete course requirements because of illness or other justifiable circumstances. It is assigned only in cases in which the student has completed satisfactorily the major portion of the course requirements and has convinced the instructor of his or her ability to complete the remaining work without re-registering for the course. It is not to be given to a student who is already doing failing work.

It is the student's responsibility to contact the instructor to complete the remaining work. The required work should be completed, and a grade reported by the end of the student's next semester in residence, but in no case later than one calendar year following the receipt of the Incomplete grade.

A Z grade is given when a student is not able to finish and/or successfully defend their Thesis or Plan B by the end of the semester. After a successful defense, the grade will be changed.

[Link to the full CMU policy on Incomplete and Deferred grades.](#)

What is the minimum GPA I need to maintain?

Graduate students need to have a minimum 3.0 GPA. Additionally, students must earn at least a "C" in every course.

What happens if my GPA falls below a 3.0?

You will be placed on Academic Probation and required to retake any classes that you earned less than a B- in. When placed on Academic Probation, you must meet with the Graduate Coordinator before being able to register for classes. Once placed on Academic Probation, students are given two semesters of enrollment to raise their cumulative GPA to the required level.

If a student does not raise their cumulative graduate GPA to the required 3.0 after the two semesters of enrollment, the Office of Graduate Studies will contact the department to decide whether you will continue in your graduate program.

Being on academic probation will affect your Federal Financial Aid eligibility. Two consecutive semesters on academic probation will result in the suspension of your Federal Financial Aid.

If you have a GA position, being on Academic Probation can result in the termination of your assistantship.

[Link to the Graduate Academic and Retention Standards.](#)

How many times can I retake a course?

You can repeat a course two times, and the grade from the final attempt is used for your GPA.

What happens if I decide to take some time off during the program?

Students are not required to be continuously enrolled in the program, however you will lose access to your CMU email, library privileges and other university benefits when not enrolled. If you plan on skipping one semester, registering for the following semester may prevent losing access to these functions. If during your time away from CMU you want to access your email or use library resources, you will need to submit an [Extended Access Request](#).

How (and when) do I apply for Graduation?

In the semester before you intend to graduate, you must submit a completed Graduate Application form, along with the appropriate fee through CentralLink.

[Link to more information about graduation.](#)

After a student submits the form, the Office of Graduate Studies audits the student's academic record to verify completion of program requirements.

If the student fails to meet the necessary requirements for graduation by the deadline, the Office of Graduate Studies will send the student a Failure to Complete Requirements for Graduation form. It will then be necessary to reapply to graduate in a subsequent semester. To help students monitor their own progress towards graduation, the Office of Graduate Studies has developed a Self-Audit form. Students are encouraged to obtain a copy of this form.

What is the difference between my Academic Advisor and Thesis/Plan B advisor?

Your academic advisor can help students plan their program of graduate study, choose classes, and troubleshoot graduate school related issues. The Graduate Coordinator serves as the academic advisor for all of the graduate students.

A thesis or Plan B advisor (also called your committee chair) oversees the writing and defense of a graduate student's thesis. Typically, this person is selected toward the end of the first year or at the beginning of the second year.

I have a Graduate Assistantship. How do I submit my Tuition Waiver?

If you are a graduate assistant registered for classes that should be paid for by an assistantship, you will need to electronically submit a Graduate Assistant Tuition Waiver. You may access the waiver system through CentralLink by visiting My Account, then Benefits, then Graduate Assistant Tuition Waiver Request.

If you experience problems with the tuition waiver system, contact Faculty Personnel Services immediately at (989) 774-3368.

Where do I find all of the Graduate Office forms?

All Graduate Office forms can be found [through this link](#).

University Resources

Campus ID Card

Students must obtain an ID card from the Campus ID office on the first floor of the Bovee University Center. The Campus ID is used to gain access to the Student Activity Center (SAC), check out books from the library, and gain free access to CMU sporting events. Obtaining a Campus ID should be a new student's top priority.

CentralLink

Students can access their email via CentralLink at centrallink.cmich.edu. In addition to checking email, CentralLink is used to register for courses and access student account information.

Parking

Permits to park in the lot adjacent to Moore Hall (Lot 33) can be purchased at CMU's Department of Public Safety (DPS). A parking permit for students currently costs \$175.00 per academic year. To buy a parking permit, visit the [Parking Services webpage](#). Parking is free on campus after 4:00 pm daily in most lots. Ticketing begins before the semester begins, and CMU Police will ticket anyone who is illegally parked or does not have a permit displayed.

Financial Aid

Financial aid is available for graduate students. Students may contact the Office of Scholarships and Financial Aid through their [website](#).

For financial aid purposes, graduate students must carry at least 5 credit hours per semester to be considered a half-time student and 9 credit hours per semester to be considered a full-time student.

Graduate Assistants with a full assistantship must carry at least 6 credit hours per semester to maintain their assistantships.

Library Resources

Park Library is located between Moore Hall and the Bovee University Center. Library hours vary throughout the week, weekends, and on holidays. The Park Library phone number is 989-774-3500 and library resources can also be [accessed online](#).

The library has assigned Katie Edmiston, as the SCJM reference librarian. Katie can assist students with learning how to use the library and its resources. Katie can be reached at 989-774-3835 or via email at edmis2k@cmich.edu.

Academic Assistance Program

The Academic Assistance Program offers programs to help students with academic workload issues and concerns. The office is located in the Bovee University Center, Room 215 (phone: 989-774-3465).

The Writing Center

The Writing Center is a free resource providing assistance with any writing, at any level, from any discipline. The Writing Center is open to all current students, faculty, and staff. Walk-in service is provided, but appointments are encouraged. The Writing Center has locations in Park Library Room 400 (989-774-2986), Anspach Hall Room 003 (989-774-1228), and The Towers (Wheeler Hall next to the computer lab; 989-774-1002). [Link for more information about the Writing Center](#)

Student Disability Services

Student Disabilities Services is located in Park Library 120 (phone: 989-774-3018). Students with disabilities are asked to register with Student Disability Services. However, students are not required to notify the university of their disability. Confidentiality of all disability information is assured. [Link to Student Disability Services](#)

All CMU course syllabi include the university's disability statement: CMU provides students with disabilities reasonable accommodation to participate in educational programs, activities, or services. Students with disabilities requiring accommodation to participate in class activities or meet course requirements should contact their instructor as early as possible.

Career Development Center

The Career Development Center guides students through the process of choosing a career and connects students and alumni with employers from across the country. The Career Development Center is located in Ronan Hall, Room 240 (Phone: 989-774-3068). [Link for more information about the Career Development Center](#)

University Engagement and Student Affairs (UESA)

University Engagement and Student Affairs (UESA) is the driving force behind CMU's commitment to creating a culture of care and concern across campus. The work of our division emerges in the expansion of institutional policy, procedure, practice, and community outreach. UESA serves as an advocate for students and their concerns while simultaneously coordinating student services. UESA promotes a learning environment that fosters intellectual curiosity, professional development, holistic engagement, and community building among students, faculty, and staff.

UESA encourages students to communicate their needs and interests to enhance the quality of programs, services, and student life. Students are therefore encouraged to contact the Student Affairs subdivision for assistance with courtesy notifications to instructors regarding extended absences from campus due to illness or other personal reasons. In total, the Division of University Engagement and Student Affairs aims to advance Central Michigan University as a pluralistic educational community that fosters growth and transformation in action and thought. [Find out about UESA resources](#)

CMU Health: Student Health Services

CMU Health's Student Health Services is located in Foust Hall, Room 220 (phone: 989-774-6599). The clinic is a primary health care facility, with the same sort of services as a family

doctor. Students can receive allergy injections, pharmacy prescriptions, medical testing, and lab work at the clinic.

Walk-in appointments are available, but appointments are encouraged. Students will be billed for their appointments through their monthly university accounts. Health insurance is accepted, and a special student health insurance package is available. Students will need to take their Campus ID. [Link to CMU Health: Student Health Services](#)

Counseling Center (Free Services)

The Counseling Center is located in Foust Hall in Room 102 (phone: 989-774-3381). The center provides free, confidential assistance. The Counseling Center's hours are Monday through Friday from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.; counselors are on-call at other hours. Appointments can be made in advance and emergency (walk-in) counseling appointments are available. [Link for more Counseling Center information.](#)

The Counseling Center is available to students, faculty, and staff, and there is no charge for these services. Other services at the Counseling Center include growth groups and workshops, in-service training and consultation services, outreach programs, referral to appropriate agencies (such as McLaren Central Michigan hospital), and testing. In case of an emergency, call the CMU Police at 989-774-3081.

Student Food Pantry and Food Insecurity Resources

Hunger and food insecurity affect thousands of individuals and families around the country every day. At CMU, as many as one in every three students may be experiencing hunger. The Student Food Pantry is here to support students who need a little extra help, so they can focus on their academic success.

The Student Food Pantry is located at 1200 S Washington St (Robinson Hall), Mt. Pleasant, MI 48858 (phone 989-774-7685). The location is accessible via mobile device maps and includes on campus walking directions. [Link to more Student Food Pantry information](#)

If you are experiencing food insecurity, please create a profile on [PantrySoft](#) and fill out the [Registration Form questions](#). The Student Food Pantry also offers care products (hygiene, cleaning, some kitchen, and school supplies).

Student Activity Center

The Student Activity Center/Rose Center complex (known as the SAC) is operated by Campus Recreational Services. The facility includes racquetball courts, a weight fitness center, basketball courts, volleyball courts, tennis courts, a 3-lane 1/9-mile track, a lounging area, meeting rooms, study area, aquatic center, multi-activity center, fitness assessment center, and a power lifting center. The SAC also offers various programs such as fitness walking and aerobics.

Membership in the SAC is included in student tuition fees if you are enrolled in and have paid for at least one credit hour in a semester. [Link for information about the SAC](#) or call 989-774-3686.

University Events

All speakers' series and artist course events are available to students and community members. Information and tickets for upcoming events can be obtained from the Central Box Office located in the Events Center. The Central Box Office can be contacted at 774-3045 or [through this link](#).

The Bovee University Center (UC)

The Bovee University Center (UC) is home to a variety of student services and resources. In addition to the services previously listed in this handbook, the UC also houses Central Eats (located on the lower level). There, students can purchase a snack or a meal, or simply sit at one of the many tables to study or socialize. The UC Bookstore is also located on the main level, where students can buy textbooks, gifts, CMU apparel, and many other materials needed for classes.

Professional Associations and Conferences

Below is a listing of some of the professional SCJM associations with web links. As a reminder, the Office of Research and Sponsored Programs does offer funding opportunities for graduate students presenting at conferences.

[National Communication Association](#) (NCA),

[Central States Communication Association](#) (CSCA),

[International Communication Association](#) (ICA),

[Broadcast Education Association](#) (BEA) Conference

[Association for Journalism and Mass Communication](#) (AEJMC)

Appendix - Thesis and Plan B Proposal Guidelines

Guidelines for Proposing a Traditional Research Paper

- ✓ COM students doing a Plan B will submit a PowerPoint presentation to their committee prior to the proposal defense.
- ✓ Media Arts students doing a Plan B will submit a paper to their committee prior to the proposal defense.
- ✓ Thesis students must also submit a Thesis Prospectus form (consisting of a Technical Summary and Layperson Summary) to the Graduate Office following their committee proposal defense.

Introduction

Introduce the topic, theoretical basis for the research, and methodology
Justification of research; answer the “so what?” question

Literature Review

Comprehensive review of prior research/publications on the topic
The lit review should be thorough, but focused. It should also be well organized.
Include relevant, related journal articles, books, articles from other periodicals, etc.

Theory

Introduction of your theoretical foundation
Explanation of why this theory is appropriate for the research

Research Questions/Hypotheses/Thesis Statement

Method

Introduction to the chosen method
Explanation of why it is appropriate for the research
Specific information that should include (when appropriate)
Sample type, size and justification for sample
Data collection method; data analysis discussion
If human subjects are involved, discuss privacy concerns and how the project will adhere to IRB ethical standards

Timeline

Projected dates for all key steps to be completed
Include at least 2 weeks between drafts for committee review.

Bibliography

Must use standard citation style: APA, MLA, etc.
Consult your committee chair for appropriate style

***Be aware that your committee may require additional materials when appropriate.
Work closely with your committee chair to ensure that you understand the expectations
for your proposal, its format, and its content.***

Guidelines for Proposing a Plan B Screenplay

This option is only available to students on the Media Arts: Film Theory & Criticism track

Introduction

- Introduce the narrative, the research foundations of the project
- Include the logline for the script.
- Justification of why a screenplay
- Why not another kind of project?

Literature Review

- Comprehensive review of prior films relative to your story elements
- Comparison between your story and approximately 6 others.
- Those in the same genre, with similar characters, etc.
- Discuss how your story differs from those that came before it.

Screenplay Components

- Character sketches
- Plot point outline

Timeline

- Projected dates for all key steps to be completed.
- Include at least 2 weeks between drafts for committee review.

Bibliography

- Must use standard citation style: APA, MLA, etc.
- Consult your committee chair for appropriate style.

Be aware that your committee may require additional materials when appropriate. Work closely with your committee chair to ensure that you understand the expectations for your proposal, its format, and its content.

Students who wish to write a screenplay based on current or historical events should be prepared to submit a thorough, research-grounded overview of those events.

Students who wish to write a screenplay based on material that they do not own should be prepared to submit contracts/agreements as evidence of their right to make the adaptation.

Guidelines for Proposing a Plan B Business Plan

This option is only available to students on the Media Arts: Media Management track

I. Executive Summary

- a. What's the product and why is there a need for it in the market?
- b. Mission Statement

II. Business and Management overview

- a. What's your business model?
- b. Organizational structure
- c. What is the background of you and your staff?

III. Products or Services

- a. What are the current products or services being offered?

IV. Market and Competitors

- a. Is the market you're entering growing, flat or declining?
- b. Market details (barrier to entry, economies of scope and scale in the industry)
- c. What is your primary target market?
- d. How much market share can you gain?
- e. Who are your major competitors?
- f. What's the regulatory environment?

V. Marketing and Promotion

- a. How will you sell your product?

VI. Bibliography

- a. Must use standard citation style: APA, MLA, etc.
- b. Consult your committee chair for appropriate style.

Be aware that your committee may require additional materials when appropriate. Work closely with your committee chair to ensure that you understand the expectations for your proposal, its format, and its content.