

COMM 5093: Professional Exit Project

Instructor of Record: Graduate Coordinator

Project Supervisor: Graduate Student's Major Advisor and Advisory Committee Members

Text Requirements:

Reading list will be created by each student based on their individual project, with approval of committee.

Catalogue Description: Professional Exit Project (3 credits)—permission of advisor and committee. A major creative, research, and/or service-based piece of work. Flexible format that can combine written work with performance and audio/videotape development and/or documentation.

Course Objectives: The Professional Exit Project is required of students who do not choose to write a thesis in our program. Students are expected to develop a major piece of creative, research, or service-based work, in order to synthesize their experiences and represent their goals in the field. The distinction from the M.A. thesis will be in the flexibility of its format. Examples of possible products include news packages, an event, a defined piece of service to a cause or organization, a documentary, an analysis of some sample of communication phenomena, a PR program plan, design or redesign of print collateral, a handbook or booklet, and so forth.

Course Topics:

To be determined by student in coordination with major advisor and advisory committee.

Learning Outcomes:

At the end of this course, the student is expected to:

- Distill and demonstrate key elements of their goals and experiences in the field of communication by designing and carrying out a significant creative, research, or service project.
- Show proficiency in critiquing their process and product.
- Suggest directions for future developmental work in the area of the project.

Major Assignments:

1. Proposal: Before being permitted to register for the course, students must submit a project proposal for approval by his/her advisor and committee. This proposal will consist of three parts:
 - a. Purpose: Identify the subject, significance, methodology, and likely audience or beneficiaries of the project.
 - b. Literature or related work in the subject area to be reviewed for the paper portion of the project.

- c. Operational plan: Similar to methodology chapter of a research paper, this should address the media to be used, the venues in which the project will be conducted, and the scope and limitations of the project.
2. Mid-Project Evaluation: At the outset of the operational phase, the student will meet with the committee for a mid-project evaluation, to confirm that the work is on track. If the committee approves, the student may proceed to the final phase of the project.
3. Carry out the project according to the proposal.
4. Written research report: Complete an analysis of the project, to include an account of the process and the significant learning involved, proposed future plans and recommendations for further work in this area of study. Although there is no required length or limit, exit projects resulting in an analysis of some sample of communication phenomena are expected to be 30-50 pages in length. Papers accompanying communication products that are significant pieces of work in themselves—such as a documentary, a PR plan, an event planned and conducted—are expected to be 15-30 pages in length.
5. Material from the proposal can be revised and integrated into the paper, which must include a discussion of the theory guiding the project, research done for the project, a literature review, and a reflection/critique of the process and outcome. All appropriate documentation in the form of scripts, video, audio, or other media products must be submitted with the paper.
6. Presentation to committee: Student and advisor will schedule an oral presentation of and defense of the project, to be conducted in a public forum.
7. Revisions: Student must make corrections, revisions, or additions to the project and paper as advised by the committee.
8. Final submission: Student will submit 2 copies of all materials relevant to the project, one to the Graduate Coordinator to make available to other graduate students, and one to the student's major advisor.

Grade Assignment:

The major professor is expected to consult the advisory committee about the grade to be awarded, and to submit the final grade to the graduate coordinator as instructor of record for the course by the deadline she/he provides each semester.

Required Texts:

A readings and resource list will be created by each student in consultation with the advisory committee.