

**Department of Media, Culture and Communication  
Master's Culminating Exam Information**

**Why:** The MA Exam is one of two options that will fulfill the culminating experience requirement. It offers the student an opportunity to synthesize their coursework and write about their understanding of significant scholarship in communication, media studies, and related fields acquired during their MA career.

**Who:** Master's students who have earned 28 points or more are eligible to take the MA Exam. Typically the MA Exam is taken in the last semester of study. In the Fall semester the exam will be offered before the Thanksgiving break, and in the Spring it will be offered just prior to spring break.

**What:** The MA Exam is a take-home essay exam containing two sections. Students will have a choice of one question from among several for each section.

The first section will be based on common readings covered in E58.2001 Media, Culture, and Communication Core Seminar as well as supplemental lists generated by the faculty at large. The second section will be based on a faculty-generated common bibliography connected to the Area of Study the student elects: Persuasion and Politics; Interaction and Social Processes; Cultural and Visual Studies; Technology and Society; or Global and Transcultural Communication.

Students will be responsible for the bibliographies that are published and dated no later than the end of their first semester of study.

The MA Exam is a written essay exam; no multi-media work will be considered.

**Where:** Students will pick up the MA Exam from MA Advising and initial a MA Exam check out log on the first day of the exam.

**When:** The MA exam takes place over 72 hours, prior to Thanksgiving break in the fall semester, and prior to spring break in the spring semester. Students will receive the exams on Friday and will submit their exams on the following Monday at 12 noon. It will be mandatory that students provide a hard copy of their answers to the department. (We will accept an electronic version to ensure that deadlines are met but will not print out and grade the electronically-submitted version).

**How:**

1. Students tell the graduate advisor that they plan to take the Master's Exam by the last day of the semester prior to the semester in which they plan to take the exam. Students taking the Master's Exam will be contacted via their NYU email reminding them about the exam pick up/drop off dates and procedures.
2. A typed hard copy of the students' exam is due to MA Advising by 12 noon 72 hours after pick up. Hard copies are required. Electronic copies may be submitted as a backup to hard copies.
3. There is a page limit: a maximum of ten pages for each question.
4. Format required: double-spaced Times New Roman 12 point font with one-inch margins with the name at the top of each page.
5. MA Exams will be graded by the entire faculty (with at least two faculty grading each student's exam, and with additional faculty grading to resolve any disputes over the results).

*Note: In exceptional circumstances, the protocols related to the administration of the MA Exam may be altered on the recommendation of the MA Committee.*

# NYUSteinhardt

## Department of Media, Culture and Communication Master's Culminating Exam FAQ

### **How do I complete the MA Exam requirement?**

1. Sign up for the exam. The deadline is the last day of the semester prior to the semester in which you plan to take the exam.
2. Tell the graduate advisor when you plan to take the exam after earning 28 or more points.
3. Pick up exam on the assigned date.
4. Complete exam in 72 hours. Responses to each essay question must be no more than 10 pages long. The format required is double-spaced Times New Roman 12 point font with one-inch margins and a name at top of each page.
5. Drop off hard copy responses to exam questions by 12 noon the following Monday. Electronic copies may be submitted as a backup to hard copies.
6. Wait for notification via NYU email of "pass" or "no pass" result. This will usually take 6 – 8 weeks.

### **Can I retake the MA Exam?**

Yes. A student may take the MA Exam twice.

### **What type of exam is the MA Exam?**

The MA Exam is a take-home essay exam containing two sections. Students will have a choice of one question from among several for each section. The first section will be based on common readings covered in E58.2001 Media, Culture and Communication Core Seminar. The second section will be based on a faculty-generated common readings bibliography connected to the Area of Study the student elects: Persuasion and Politics; Interaction and Social Processes; Cultural and Visual Studies; Technology and Society; or Global and Transcultural Communication. The MA Exam is a written essay exam; no multi-media work will be considered.

### **How do I effectively prepare for the MA Exam?**

By successfully completing the required core seminar as well as independent study of the common readings not covered in a particular core seminar, students will acquire the theoretical and specialized knowledge that is needed to create cogent essays and earn a "pass" on the MA Exam.

Similarly, to prepare for the area-of-study section, the student will read the common bibliography compiled by the faculty in each area of study, and will be able to use the themes, theories, and frameworks presented in a student's area-of-study coursework to write an effective essay and earn a "pass" on the MA Exam.

### **How is the MA Exam graded?**

Each student's exam will be read by at least two different faculty. A result of "pass" or "no pass" will be sent via NYU email, and posted to the student's transcript. The faculty will not write on the exams nor return them.

### **Can I appeal an MA Exam result of "no pass"?**

Yes. To appeal an MA Exam result of "no pass" a student must submit a letter of appeal to the Director of Graduate Studies and follow up with an in-person meeting with the Director to discuss the "no pass" result and next steps.