PROFESSIONAL RESEARCH AND WRITING

Term: Fall only
Credits: 1-4
Enrollment: Permission only. Applications are submitted in May and reviewed by MA Committee and course instructor.
FTE Eligibility: Fall only

Description: The expectation for the Professional Writing class is that you arrive in the class with a project already under way. Ideally, you have a research paper or some other artifact that you have produced for another class, which includes faculty feedback and ideas about how you can develop the project further. The idea of the course is to begin with a paper or project for which you have already laid a foundation with research, bibliographic exploration, working through ideas, close examination of your artifacts or sources, theoretical framing, and so on. With a foundation already in place, you can expand, develop, and polish your extant paper into something that is a sophisticated and well-formed piece of writing. The course is not designed for you to begin a project from scratch. You should, in short, come into the class with a commitment to developing a work that is already in progress. Course instructors will want to read your paper before the class meets for the first time in the fall.

This class will operate like a writer’s workshop. Students will be seriously engaged in reading and responding to each other’s work. This course is meant to integrate skills and knowledge acquired during the master’s program to achieve a level of competency in several areas: writing for professional journals or websites; developing survey or other instruments for data production; surveying the scholarly literature; writing scholarly abstracts; understanding the processes of self-editing and peer reviewing; and giving polished oral presentations of final writing and/or web-based projects.

THESIS (Independent)

Term: Any term
Credits: 0-4
Enrollment: Permission only. Sponsoring faculty approval + 3.75 minimum GPA required.
FTE Eligibility: Fall and Spring

Description: The Thesis constitutes an analysis of a specific topic that engages with the existing literature and which makes an argument supported by evidence and using the methodologies of the discipline. You will work one faculty member as a thesis advisor who will read and approve the final version of your thesis.

Suggestions for selecting a Thesis Advisor:

- Identify your research interests and a potential thesis topic as soon as possible. Know that this will likely evolve over time.
- Remember that your thesis advisor must be a full-time faculty member from MCC. Visiting professors and adjuncts cannot serve as Thesis advisors.
- Start creating a list of potential advisors now. Have back ups in mind!
- Reach out to faculty and schedule meetings and/or go to office hours.
  - Ask your potential advisor what they would like you to come to the meeting prepared with.
  - Share your research interests and get feedback.
- If a faculty member will be on sabbatical next year he/she may not be able or willing to serve as a thesis advisor.
- Once someone has agreed to be your thesis advisor, make sure to have them sign your Thesis Approval Form.
- If a faculty member says no to serving as your advisor, don’t panic! This may just mean that they might not be able to provide the expertise you need on the topic of your choice. If this happens to you, don’t be afraid to ask if they have any suggestions about other faculty members that might be a good fit for you given your research interests.
- Plan ahead and be in touch with your primary advisor if you need help.
**THESIS (Seminar)**

**Term:** Fall only  
**Credits:** 0-4  
**Enrollment:** Permission only. Sponsoring faculty approval + 3.75 minimum GPA required.  
**FTE Eligibility:** Fall and Spring

**Description:** This course is designed to support your progress in writing the thesis. Students will be introduced to various aspects of the writing process and participate in peer-reviewing and critique. Students will discuss and gain an understanding of how academic discourse is generated within scholarly communities and how scholars position their writing within spheres of intellectual debate. The course will offer opportunities to workshop drafts, engage with feedback and incorporate critique. The course will provide you the tools and the learning environment to make significant progress towards the writing of your thesis.

**MA CULMINATING EXAM (Independent)**

**Term:** Fall & Spring Only  
**Credits:** 0  
**Enrollment:** Send an email to mcc.graduate@nyu.edu with the following:  
   1. Subject Line: MA Comp Exam Registration  
   2. In the body of your email include the following  
      1. your full name  
      2. your NYU NetID email address  
      3. your N#  
      4. your area of study  
      5. Requested term for the exam  

**FTE Eligibility:** None

**Description:** The exam offers students 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.

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 the Media, Culture, and Communication Core Seminar as well as supplemental lists generated by the faculty at large. The second section will be based on the area of study of the student’s choosing.

**Theoretical Synthesis for Research, Writing, and Teaching (Exam SEMINAR)**

**Term:** Fall only  
**Credits:** 0-2  
**Enrollment:** Permission only.  
**FTE Eligibility:** Fall only

**Description:** This course is a 0-2 credit seminar. It is optional, but encouraged, for students taking the exam. The course focuses on a series of intensive exercises designed to develop students’ ability to synthesize key theories and concepts in the study of media, culture, and communication. The class focuses on synthesis as an essential skill for research, writing and teaching. Students will be re-reading texts they have read before rather than encountering new texts, in the process consolidating their understanding. Students will practice extracting key arguments from texts and putting these arguments together by constructing topical groupings, syllabi, and charts/maps of conceptual fields. Each exercise will push students to locate or construct connections and contrasts, drawing out relationships—logical, epistemological, historical, and methodological—between various concepts, theories, schools of thought, and disciplines.