



**College of  
Communication  
and Information**

# Handbook for the Doctoral Program

2019-2020



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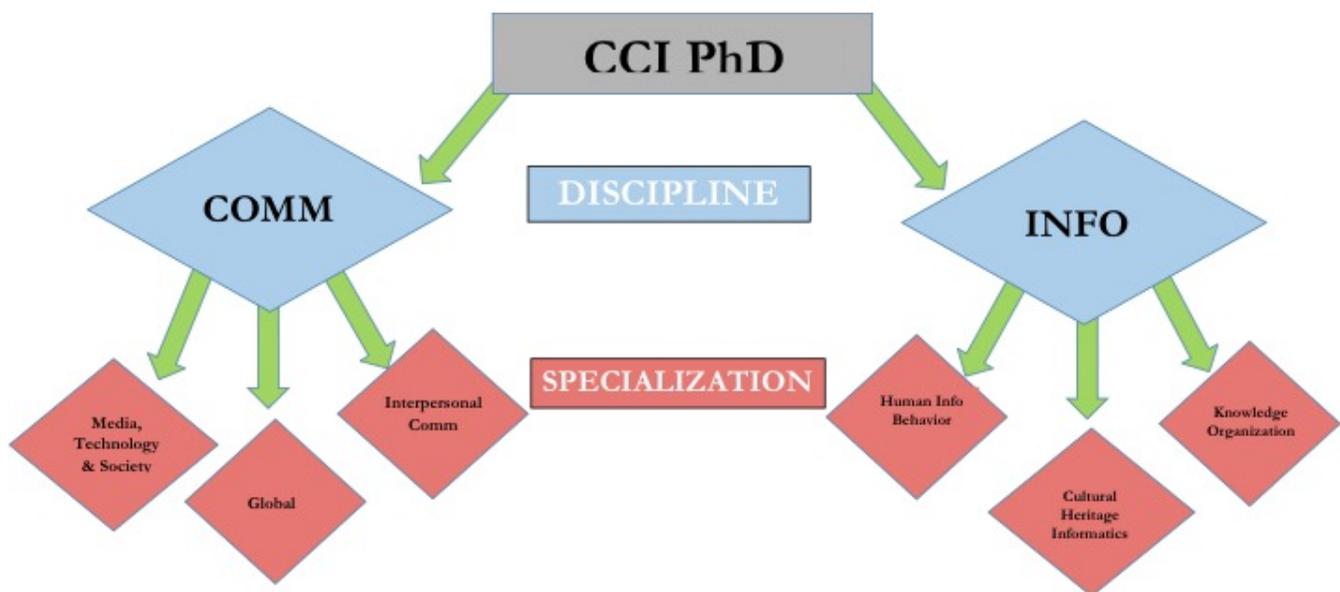
## Overview of the Ph.D. Program in Communication and Information

The College of Communication and Information (CCI) was founded in 2002 as the result of a grassroots effort by the faculty in its four original constituent schools: Communication Studies, Information, Journalism and Mass Communication, and Visual Communication Design. In 2017, the Digital Sciences program joined the College. The College is built on the premises that information and messages in all forms and media must be designed for optimal use by human beings and that the interface between information technology and contemporary human experience is a key locus of investigation, reflection, critique, and intervention for the common good. The objectives of the doctoral program are to help students further develop their knowledge and skills in cutting-edge areas of research, prepare for the pedagogical dimension of most academic appointments, and acquire habits of service to relevant professions and the wider community. The Ph.D. program in CCI aims to place graduates in tenure-track positions at R1 universities, where outstanding research and teaching skills are expected.

The Ph.D. Program in Communication and Information integrates the perspectives of both disciplines in its curricular core. Students finish the core courses with a broad understanding of the intersections between various aspects of communication theory, information theory, and related areas, and helps students contextualize their research and teaching. Within the context of this integrative framework, scholarship in areas of specialty follows, whereby the student pursues a line of research that is both recognized within the field and that features innovative thinking and application.

Students align with one of six specializations:

- **Communication:** Media, Technology, and Society; Interpersonal Communication; Global Communication
- **Information:** Cultural Heritage Informatics; Human Information Behavior; Knowledge Organization



Each of these specializations is supported by faculty members across the five schools in the college.

## **Philosophy and Goals of the Ph.D. Program**

### ***Philosophy of the Curriculum***

The College of Communication and Information doctoral curriculum provides exposure to theoretical fundamentals in both communication (broadly defined to include mass communication and journalism as well as other communication specialties) and information. The program is receptive to intellectually innovative students who plan to create new and different research paths within our specializations.

### ***Doctoral Program Mission, Goals and Objective***

#### Mission of the Ph.D. Program

The goals of the Doctor of Philosophy degree program in the College of Communication and Information (CCI) are:

- To explore the convergence of theoretical and research models from the college's component schools,
- To promote the development of new or hybrid models appropriate to information and communication practices in a digital environment, and
- To realize the advantages of interdisciplinary collaboration within the College of Communication and Information.

This program is designed to prepare individuals for careers in research, teaching, and administration in the rapidly converging fields of communication and information through a prescribed core of interdisciplinary courses and approved selection of additional coursework within and across disciplines.

#### Goal and Objectives of the Ph.D. Program

The goal of the Ph.D. program is to develop each scholar's ability to generate knowledge by conducting, analyzing and presenting research in one or a combination of the CCI disciplines. Each scholar will demonstrate achievement of this goal through the following objectives:

- Creating a critical analysis and synthesis of existing research,
- Mastering techniques for data collection and analysis,
- Identifying research questions that need to be answered,
- Designing, implementing and reporting independent research, and
- Constructing a personal research agenda.

Date of last program review: 2017

Date these program goals and objectives were revised: June 2014.

## **Admission Standards**

The Ph.D. in Communication and Information at Kent State University is primarily a research degree designed to prepare students for tenure-track positions at R1 universities. Successful candidates for admission will have strong foundations in and some experience with investigations in one or more areas of emphasis represented by the Ph.D. program of the College. Typically, successful candidates will have completed a master's thesis and participated in individual and/or collaborative research efforts. All students are expected to enroll full-time and complete their programs within four years.

Successful candidates will typically have a strong background in at least one of the major areas of specialization in our program: media technology and society; interpersonal communication; global communication; knowledge organization; human information behavior; or cultural heritage informatics.

Prospective students lacking adequate preparation in research and theory will be encouraged to register for appropriate coursework at the master's level. They will be encouraged to reapply for admission to doctoral study when they can demonstrate the appropriate level of expertise by successfully completing the recommended courses.

## **Admission**

### *Admission Requirements*

The doctoral program in Communication and Information is oriented towards research and theory. Applicants are normally expected to have completed a thesis in their master's program. Admission is restricted to the most promising applicants. Applications are viewed holistically to evaluate the student's potential for success in the CCI Ph.D. program. Students are admitted for the fall semester, and the preferred deadline for all application materials is January 2<sup>nd</sup>.

In addition to regular application requirements of the university, admission to the CCI Doctor of Philosophy program normally requires the following:

- Completion of the academic requirements of a master's degree in one of the disciplines represented in the College of Communication and Information or in a discipline related to the applicant's proposed course of study. Applicants with academic preparation in other fields may be required to enroll in preparatory course work at the master's level that will not count toward the Ph.D. degree.
- A minimum 3.3 (where A=4.0) graduate GPA (GPA above 3.5 strongly recommended).
- For international applicants, a minimum score of 587 on the TOEFL examination or the equivalent in another testing format. The TOEFL requirement may be waived if an applicant provides official transcripts indicated that he or she has attended 2 years at an American university or 3 years at an American high school.
- At least three superior letters of recommendation from those in a position to evaluate graduate academic performance and potential. Letters that speak to job performance or character alone are not sufficient.
- A goal statement describing the applicant's academic goals and intended topics of study that are compatible with the focus of this doctoral program. This statement should clearly identify the applicant's intended specialization, why the applicant wishes to pursue doctoral education, and how our program will help them meet their goals. An indication of the theoretical area or areas the applicant wishes to study and the line of research the applicant wishes to pursue should also be included. Statements that make reference only to the applicant's teaching or administrative goals are not viewed favorably. If an applicant's goal statement is not sufficiently clear and informative, they may be asked to submit a new statement before the application is considered.
- A sample of superior scholarly writing (published paper, major term paper, thesis chapter, etc.)
- An updated copy of the applicant's CV.

### ***Application Review Policy***

Applicants to the doctoral program normally are expected to have completed a master's degree, with either a thesis or competitive research paper (typically presented at a conference or accepted for publication in a scholarly, peer-reviewed journal) completed before entering the doctoral program. Those students who have not written a thesis should provide evidence of other strong scholarly accomplishments and writing in their application files.

Applicants who, in the judgment of the Doctoral Studies Committee (DSC), are admissible to the program but require strengthening of academic preparation in the areas they propose to study at the doctoral level may be required to enroll in preparatory coursework at the master's level that will not count toward the total coursework requirement of the Ph.D. degree.

In rare circumstances, applicants who have earned a graduate GPA below 3.300 may be admitted conditionally, providing that their application files provide strong evidence of a high probability of success in the Ph.D. program. The academic records of conditional-admission students are reviewed every semester for evidence that the conditions are being met.

### ***Procedures for Application Review***

Applicants to the Ph.D. program apply online to either the Division of Graduate Studies (domestic applicants) or the Office of International Affairs (international applicants). Complete applications come to the College and are then considered in three phases: An initial review is conducted by the Associate Dean and the Doctoral Studies Committee. Positively reviewed applicants are then reviewed by core faculty in the proposed area of specialization to ensure the applicant's research interests can be supported by the College. Applicants who receive a positive recommendation from the core faculty will have a final review by the Doctoral Studies Committee. At that point, determinations will be made about graduate assistantship offers.

The DSC will recommend one of the following final actions for each applicant: (1) admit, (2) admit conditionally, or (3) deny admission. Conditional admissions are generally discouraged.

If the applicant is admitted conditionally, the DSC will specify the conditions of admission. Normally, the conditions include up to nine hours of specified coursework that must be completed within a specified amount of time with grades of B (3.000) or better in each course. If the conditions are not met, the student will be reviewed for dismissal. Other conditions may also be applied. A statement of the conditions of admission will be included with the letter of admission.

The preferred deadline for applications is January 2nd for the following fall semester. Applications will be considered for admission action at each regular meeting of the DSC through March. Late applications may be considered in April and May. No applications received after May 1 will be considered for admission for the fall semester of the same calendar year.

All applicants will be admitted to begin coursework in fall semester. All students are expected to enroll full-time throughout their program.

The DSC will recommend a faculty member as the transitional advisor for each admitted student, based on the alignment of the faculty member's area of expertise and the student's research interests as described in the Statement of Purpose.

The Associate Dean will notify the applicant of the admission decision according to university procedures.

## Curriculum

### *Curricular Requirements*

The doctoral program has a flexible structure. It is designed to provide both a broad interdisciplinary core of knowledge about communication and information theory and research, and focused individualized programs of study developed by students in consultation with their advisors and committees.

For students enrolled in catalogs before Fall 2018, the Ph.D. program in Communication and Information requires a minimum of 45 semester hours of graduate credit beyond the master's degree and 30 semester hours of dissertation work for a total of 75 semester hours. (Please consult the appropriate Handbook for curriculum details.)

Students admitted for Fall 2018 are required to complete a minimum of 40 credit hours of graduate credit beyond the master's degree and 30 hours of dissertation work for a total of 70 semester hours.

In addition to the required number of credit hours, students are expected to be engaged in a variety of research projects before they begin dissertation work. Such projects may originate from class work, from partnerships with faculty, or from students' own areas of interest.

### *Elements of the Program*

The 40 required hours of coursework are divided into 4 areas: Core (10 hours), Theory (6 hours), Methods (12 hours), and Electives (12 hours). The remaining 30 credit hours are earned through dissertation credit.

#### Core (10 hours):

- CCI 80000 Foundations of Communication and Information Inquiry (3)
- CCI 80001 Introduction to Research in Communication and Information (3)
- Colloquium (4)
- *Additional theory courses may be substituted for the CCI 80000 and 80001*

#### Theory (6 hours):

- Advisor Approved Theory Courses from the College of Communication and Information

#### Methods (12 hours):

Methods courses may be selected from the courses in CCI or, with approval of the student's academic advisor, may be chosen from any appropriate Kent State University graduate offerings:

- One quantitative research methods course (3)
- One qualitative research methods course (3)
- Two other methods courses

#### Electives (12 hours):

Electives are selected with the approval of the student's Academic Advisor to support the student's research interests. Students who do not have previous teaching experience should include CCI 80094 College Teaching in Communication and Information (3) in their electives. In special cases, and with the approval of the DSC, up to 12 credit hours of coursework taken at the 50000 or 60000 level (excluding workshops) may be counted toward completion of the Ph.D. degree. If a course you wish to take is offered only at the Master's level, contact the school offering the course to find out if a doctoral section can be scheduled. All coursework applied to Ph.D. degree requirements must be taken within the university's time limits for the completion of a degree.

#### Dissertation (30 hours):

- CCI 80199 Dissertation I (30)

### *Orientation for New Ph.D. Students*

The first Colloquium class of Fall will be dedicated to an orientation session for the incoming new Ph.D. students in the College of Communication and Information. All Ph.D. students will be invited. Orientation to the doctoral program in CCI should include an introduction to the origins and philosophy of the interdisciplinary Ph.D. program in CCI by the Dean and/or Associate Dean and descriptions of innovative research taking place in each of the CCI schools and across the schools, provided by the graduate coordinator and other faculty from each school. New students should be given the opportunity to ask questions and to get acquainted with the faculty members and administrators present as well as with each other.

### ***Doctoral Program Plan***

Students will prepare a Doctoral Program Plan, in consultation with their Academic Advisor, during their first year of study. The Program Plan should contain the following information: (a) the names and signatures of the student and the Academic Advisor; (b) an academic and professional identity statement, including a description of the areas in which the student currently holds or wishes to develop expertise and a statement of the student's proposed major research area or potential dissertation topic; (c) a summary of course work organized around areas of expertise including methodology, with relevant completed master's courses with term taken and grade received, completed doctoral course work with term taken and grade received, planned course work with planned semester of enrollment, and dissertation credits; (d) a schedule of planned course work organized chronologically by semester, including projected dates for the comprehensive exam, dissertation prospectus approval and dissertation defense; and (e) a curriculum vitae.

Upon approval of the Academic Advisor, the Program Plan is forwarded to the Associate Dean by April of the first year. The Associate Dean and the DSC review the plans. If revisions to the Program Plan are requested, the document will be returned with comments to the student and the Academic Advisor. Revisions should be submitted to the Associate Dean in a timely fashion so that a final, signed document can be filed by the beginning of the summer term at the conclusion of the student's first year in the program. (See Appendices A and B for examples.)

Full-time enrollment requires a minimum of eight hours of coursework each semester (typically, three courses). Part-time students are advised to take two courses per semester whenever possible in order to make steady progress toward the degree.

It is recommended that, to the extent reasonable, students fulfill their programs of coursework within CCI. However, there may be instances where some theory or methods courses are needed for specialization or as a complement to courses in CCI. Examples could be advanced statistics courses (e.g., in psychology or education) or a course in an allied discipline (e.g., sociology or public health) that helps to round out studies in health communication and health informatics.

## Advisors and Committees

### *Types of Advisors/Committees and Stages of the Program*

**Transitional Advisor** — When an applicant is accepted for admission to the program, the Doctoral Studies Committee (DSC) will assign a Transitional Advisor chosen by matching the academic interests of the student and the advisor. The student is expected to contact the Transitional Advisor before the start of the academic year to discuss first semester courses. During the first semester, the Initial Advisor will advise the student on course registration for the second semester of attendance and will help the student choose a permanent Academic Advisor.

**Academic Advisor** — During the first semester of attendance, the student and Transitional Advisor should evaluate the student's developing coursework and research interests to see if the Transitional Advisor is the appropriate person to serve as the student's permanent Academic Advisor who will advise the student through the remainder of the program. The Transitional Advisor may continue to advise the student or the student may select a different faculty member as his/her Academic Advisor, with approval of the DSC. Students should choose their Academic Advisors by December of their first year. The Academic Advisor normally will supervise development of the Doctoral Program Plan, oversee adherence to the Program Plan (including recommended changes or course substitutions), coordinate the preparation of comprehensive exams, and direct the student's dissertation. The Academic Advisor may change between different stages of the program, although it is often helpful to maintain continuity when possible. Co-advisors are permissible at any point in the program, if this best serves the student's academic needs.

**Comprehensive Examination Committee** — A student who meets the requirements to enter the candidacy stage of the program should meet with his/her Academic Advisor to select a Comprehensive Examination Committee consisting of the Academic Advisor and two or three additional faculty members who have participated in the student's program. The membership of the Comprehensive Examination Committee must be approved by the DSC. All committee members must be active in the professoriate. Any emeriti faculty must be approved with special permission from the DSC.

**Dissertation Director and Dissertation Committee** — Following successful completion of the comprehensive examination, the student should submit to the DSC a written request for approval of the dissertation topic, the advisor and the committee members. The Dissertation Committee will be composed of the student's Academic Advisor, or, if appropriate, another faculty member, who serves as director of the dissertation, at least two additional members from the CCI faculty and a faculty member from an outside discipline. It is expected that all faculty representing CCI must be current faculty at Kent State University. In order to represent a particular area of expertise (for example, a theoretical position or a research method), a member of the committee may be from another institution or emeritus faculty. This member may not be the Advisor. All members of the committee must have permission to serve on dissertation committees. Faculty from other universities may participate on dissertation committees if qualified; they will be treated as "temporary" members of the graduate faculty.

### *How to Choose or Change Advisors/Committee Members*

The Transitional Advisor is assigned to the student by the DSC upon admission to the program. This appointment is intended to be temporary for the purpose of seeing that the student is matriculated appropriately in the first term of attendance. After their first semester, students may request that their Transitional Advisor continue on as their Academic Advisor, or they may request another faculty to serve in that role. If a student wishes to switch advisors, they should do so in consultation with the Transitional Advisor. Academic advisors and committee members should be chosen for their connection to the student's area of interest, familiarity with students' academic coursework, and for the additional expertise they can bring to the development and review of student work demonstrated in the comprehensive examination and dissertation.

After a prospectus is approved, the Dissertation Director or Dissertation Committee members should not be changed unless the faculty member leaves the university, chooses not to participate on the committee or, owing to extraordinary circumstances, cannot participate. Requests for changes in Dissertation Committee members must be submitted to the DSC for approval. If the DSC deems a student is not making sufficient progress toward graduation, they can require a change in Dissertation Director and/or committee members in order for the student to remain in the program.

### ***Responsibilities of the Student and the Advisor/Committee Members***

Students should prepare for meetings with their advisors and committee members by developing questions they wish to have answered and goals they wish to accomplish at the meeting. Students should supply any written material to be discussed well in advance of the meeting so that their advisors have time to review it. While faculty office hours are appropriate times to drop in with minor questions, students who have issues that need longer discussion should schedule appointments for that purpose.

Above all, faculty advisors help graduate students explore and articulate their academic goals. Advisors are familiar with school, college, and university policies and procedures in order to interpret them for the student or to refer the student to the appropriate office for information. Also, advisors are familiar with university support services available to graduate students. A faculty advisor is the first point of contact for a doctoral student and is the primary academic and professional mentor.

## Academic Progress

Doctoral students in the College of Communication and Information are expected to make satisfactory progress toward the completion of their degrees by consistently producing academic work of good quality and quantity throughout their period of enrollment. According to University Policy, students who fail to maintain these standards are subject to dismissal from the university by their dean. See the current catalog for more details of university dismissal policy:

<http://catalog.kent.edu/academic-policies/dismissal-appeal-reinstatement/>

At the end of each fall and spring semester, after grades have been posted, the Dean's Office will review the records of all Ph.D. students for evidence of the following:

- Cumulative GPA less than 3.0 of 4.0 or a B average.
- Grades lower than B.
- Conditions of conditional admission met or unmet.
- Number of incomplete and in-progress grades received along with the number of course withdrawals.
- Time limits approached or exceeded for completion of coursework, defense of comprehensive exams, defense of prospectus and defense of dissertation.
- An approved Program Plan by the time the student has completed 15 hours in the doctoral program.

Any student who receives any grade lower than B will receive a warning letter from the Dean's Office.

Any student whose cumulative GPA has fallen below 3.000 or who has received more than eight credit hours of B- or lower grades, or who has received more than four credit hours of C or lower grades, will be reviewed by the Doctoral Studies Committee, which may recommend dismissal to the dean.

Students who have successfully completed conditions of admission or who are still in the process of completing their conditions will be notified of their status by the Dean's Office. Students who have failed to complete the conditions of admission will be reviewed by the DSC, which may recommend dismissal to the dean.

Students who have received a large number of IN and/or IP grades and/or course withdrawals will be reviewed by the DSC, which may recommend dismissal to the dean.

Students who are approaching the time limits for the completion of any phase of their program will receive a notification of upcoming deadlines from the Dean's Office. Students who have exceeded the time limits for any phase of their program will be reviewed by the DSC, which may either recommend dismissal to the dean or instruct the student to apply for an extension of the time limits.

Students who have failed to file an approved Program Plan by the completion of 15 hours in the doctoral program will receive a warning that they must do so by the end of the next fall or spring term or their records will be reviewed by the DSC, which may recommend dismissal to the dean.

Students are expected to successfully complete their comprehensive exams no later than one year (three terms, including summer) after completing coursework. If a student takes longer than one year, the DSC will review the circumstances of their case to determine whether or not appropriate progress is being made and the student may be dismissed from the program.

Once students have passed their comprehensive exams, they have one year (three terms, including summer) to successfully defend their dissertation prospectus. If this deadline is not met, the DSC will review the circumstances of their case to determine whether or not appropriate progress is being made and the student may be dismissed from the program.

A student who has passed their dissertation prospectus defense has two years (six terms, including summers) to successfully defend their dissertation. If a dissertation is not defended in that period, the student must update and re-defend their prospectus or face dismissal from the program after review by the DSC.

## Graduate Assistantships

### *Overview*

Graduate Assistantships are based on a 9-month contract and typically entail a stipend, reimbursement of tuition and fees, and assistance with health insurance, if the student chooses to elect the health care provider partnering with Kent State University. According to the KSU policy register (6 -09.1 E(2)), tuition benefits cannot be used for enrollment in non-credit courses or credit courses which are audited, which should be considered when developing a Program Plan.

The sequencing of types of assistantships for individual students will take into account availability of funded opportunities, students' interests, areas of emphasis as indicated in approved Program Plans, the duration of projects, and projected employment.

DSC members consult with colleagues in their respective schools about potential doctoral Graduate Assistant assignments. Faculty members who are assigned doctoral student graduate assistants are encouraged to mentor students, helping them develop research skills and produce scholarship.

### *Graduate Assistantship Appointments*

The primary function of a doctoral graduate assistant appointment in CCI is to provide students with a structured opportunity to acquire expertise in their areas of study and to learn how to conduct research. A secondary function of such an appointment is to provide doctoral students with supervised teaching experience if they have not had this experience at the master's level. Doctoral appointees in CCI typically start out as research assistants with teaching duties added as appropriate. The transition from research to teaching duties for any doctoral GA should be flexible, given individual student experience, interest, career goals and level of involvement with ongoing research projects. Administrative assistantships should be granted only in rare cases and only with the approval of the Dean.

Graduate assistant appointments are made based on the opportunity for doctoral students to contribute to the college and to learn from their assistantship experiences. Graduate assistants are assigned to supervising faculty members based on their mutually compatible interests, the requirements of grant funding, and/or the needs of the CCI schools. Graduate assistant appointments are considered privileges for both faculty and students involved. With all such positions, contracts should be created and agreed upon by the student and the supervising faculty member.

### *Types and Length of Appointments*

The College's goal is to devote at least 50 percent of the Ph.D. graduate assistant appointment to research activities. Another goal of the CCI Ph.D. program is to have between one-third and one-half of its doctoral graduate appointments funded by grants.

The College of Communication and Information complies with the April 2013 Graduate Studies policy statement on the Roles and Responsibilities of graduate assistants:

- Research Assistantship (RA): A student receiving a Research Assistantship is expected to assist a faculty member in his or her research or other scholarly activities. No teaching or service responsibilities are assigned to full time Research Assistants.
- Teaching Assistantship (TA): A student receiving a Teaching Assistantship is expected to assist a faculty instructor of record (e.g., recitations, laboratories, grading) or be the instructor of record in their own course.
- Administrative Assistantship (AA): A student receiving an Administrative Assistantship is expected to work in service that promotes the mission(s) of the unit or university. These assistantships exclude responsibilities that would typically be assigned to current office staff, personal errands for faculty/staff etc.

A doctoral student in the Ph.D. program who receives an assistantship in the first year of attendance in the doctoral program may anticipate support for a total of four academic years, subject to availability of funding, appropriate academic progress, successful completion of assigned duties, demonstrated work ethic and collegial attitude. Appointments are subject to rigorous review and are not renewed automatically.

Note: CCI will not make a funding commitment beyond four years of study. For example, a student who receives a graduate assistantship for the first year can expect three more years of support for a total of four. If a student already enrolled in the program receives support commencing in their second year, they should expect a total of three years of support. If a student

receives funding in their first year from another unit on campus or from an external grant, they should expect no more than three years of support from CCI.

### ***Application***

The Application for Graduate Assistantship is available from Graduate Studies in the forms library: <http://www.kent.edu/graduatestudies/forms-library>.

This application should be submitted with the online application for admission or directly to the Associate Dean for Graduate Studies.

### ***Selection Criteria***

For initial appointees, grade point average, TOEFL scores (where appropriate), letters of recommendation, and the applicant's statement of purpose will be considered by the Doctoral Studies Committee in evaluating applicants.

Most doctoral GA appointments will take place at the time of initial admission to the program. Doctoral students already enrolled (and who did not receive an assistantship appointment at the time of admission) may apply for a Graduate Assistantship by completing the Application for Graduate Appointment form from the Forms Library on the Graduate Studies web site. This applicant will be considered in the same pool as new, incoming applicants for admission and appointment. However, most new GA appointments in any given year will go to new, incoming students.

### ***Assignment of Graduate Assistants***

Doctoral graduate assistantships in the College of Communication and Information are intended to help prepare students for work in academia as well as support faculty and school needs. Full-time appointments may be split, with each half of the appointment being supervised by a different faculty member. In no case should assistantship supervision be split into more than two assignments. The DSC will review applicants beginning as soon as possible after February 1 for the following fall semester and will at the same time communicate with relevant faculty and administrators about possible graduate assistantships for the following academic year. After the DSC has a sense of students available for the following year's assistantships, the Associate Dean will contact relevant CCI faculty members and administrators wishing to have doctoral graduate assistants for requests. A memo submitted by faculty members to request student assistance should include:

- type of appointment (RA or TA),
- supervising faculty member or administrator,
- whether the appointment is full-time (20 hours/week) or half-time (10 hours/week),
- whether the appointment is for one semester (fall or spring) or the entire academic year,
- a description of the expected duties, and
- a description of the funding source: grant, start-up funds, school budget, college budget or other. If the source of funds is the school budget, include the director's signature.

The Doctoral Studies Committee will prioritize the requests and will propose assistantship awards and the assignment of graduate assistants to faculty as part of the admission process. Proposed appointments and assignments will be submitted to the dean for review and approval.

### ***Conditions of Appointment and Reappointment***

A number of factors contribute to the decision whether or not to reappoint GAs, including progress toward the degree, grade point average, and evaluation of performance in the student's assignment. Two-way reviews of assistantships are due with the Coordinator and the DSC in early December of each year. (In cases where the structure of a student's appointment changes in the spring, for example, when they are working with another faculty supervisor, there will be an additional report by early March.) The assistantship supervisors will provide students with feedback concerning their first semester performance so that any issues may be addressed before the reappointment notification date of approximately April 15.

All details of appointment and employment of Graduate Research Assistants, Graduate Teaching Assistants and University Fellows will be handled in a uniform manner through Graduate Studies and the College of Communication and Information. University policies and forms pertaining to graduate student appointees are available at: <http://www.kent.edu/graduatestudies>.

For specific information about graduate appointee involvement in governance, categories of appointments, graduate appointment service commitment and other terms of the appointment, see the Kent State University Policy on Role and Status of Graduate Student Appointees at: <https://www.kent.edu/sites/default/files/file/Role%20and%20Status%20of%20GS%20Appt.%208.3.15.pdf>

1. All graduate appointees must be in good academic standing. To be in good standing at Kent State University, graduate appointees must maintain a 3.000 GPA. Failure to meet this requirement for two consecutive semesters will result in the appointment being withdrawn. Appointments or reappointments, including tuition scholarships, are not automatic, but are contingent upon satisfactory progress towards the degree and performance of duties.
2. All new graduate assistants are expected to complete the orientation program provided by Graduate Studies. New graduate assistants can obtain more information about and register for Graduate Student Orientation (GSO) at: <https://www.kent.edu/graduatestudies/gso>
3. A graduate research assistant will carry out research as designated in the contract under which he or she is employed. The nature of this research must be clearly related to the student's special research area within his or her major field or in direct participation with a faculty member's research. This research service must be under the direct supervision of a member of the graduate faculty, although others may be involved in the supervision.
4. A graduate teaching assistant normally performs instruction or instructional duties beneficial to the appointee's professional development. Teaching assistants in the doctoral program may be assigned to teach courses in their specific area of expertise. This teaching service will be conducted under the direct supervision of the appropriate coordinator (Graduate Coordinator, Undergraduate Coordinator, Course Coordinator, etc.) from the academic unit offering the course.
5. The graduate appointments are intended to provide the support required to enable a student to spend the maximum amount of time in pursuit of his or her graduate studies with the objective of completing the degree in the shortest amount of time. To this end, it is not appropriate for a full-time graduate appointee to be engaged in additional outside employment. Except in unusual circumstances, a graduate appointee may not hold an additional formal appointment such that the total commitment of service at Kent State University exceeds 20 hours per week. Exceptions require the approval of the Academic Advisor, the Coordinator, and the Dean.
6. Assuming satisfactory progress towards the degree, availability of funding and successful completion of assigned duties, doctoral students can expect support for four years from the College of Communication and Information. Notification of non-reappointment and reappointment for the next academic year will be given to students by April 15.
7. All international students holding graduate teaching appointments must take and pass the university English Language Examination. There are two segments in the ELE: a written examination and an individual oral examination. Students who do not pass both segments of this exam may not teach.

***Performance Expectations: Research Assistants***

The goal of the CCI Ph.D. program is to develop in each CCI doctoral scholar the ability to generate knowledge by conducting, analyzing, and presenting research in one or a combination of the CCI disciplines. This goal may be achieved through pursuit of collaborative research with a full-time faculty mentor and may be demonstrated by completion of research projects to submit for publication in regional, national and international publications.

Research assistantships could comprise half or more of a doctoral student's assistantship. Research assistantships are generally awarded as academic year assignments, renewable upon mutual agreement between faculty member and student and approval by the DSC. Research assistants:

- 1) may be assigned only to full-time faculty,
- 2) are selected after relevant solicitations and consultations within the schools, and
- 3) must receive a satisfactory written evaluation from the faculty mentor to be re-assigned as a research assistant in a future semester.

***Performance Expectations: Teaching Assistants***

Graduate assistants assigned to teaching duties are required to take CCI 80094 College Teaching in Communication and Information for three semester hours during the year preceding or during their first semester of teaching duties. This class provides instruction in basic pedagogical principles and experience in observing experienced teachers.

Graduate teaching assistants may also elect to intern in an upper-division undergraduate class with a seasoned faculty member and develop syllabi and lesson plans for courses in the student's chosen area of expertise.

### ***Evaluation of Graduate Assistants***

Graduate Assistants participate in an evaluation process each year to help assess and document the need for developmental support to satisfactorily perform their tasks. Evaluations also provide a mechanism for regular feedback and review between the graduate assistant and their supervisor, to clarify goals and expectations, and document acceptable and unacceptable performance.

Faculty members and administrators who supervise graduate assistants should conduct an informal review with the student by December 1<sup>st</sup> to ensure that the goals of both parties are being met so far as is practical. Any resulting issues should be discussed with the Associate Dean and the DSC. By the beginning of spring semester, those faculty members and administrators who supervise graduate assistants will complete an evaluation and submit it to the Associate Dean (see Appendix C). The DSC will review the evaluations at their January meeting assessing the students' academic progress in conjunction with their work quality and professional and ethical performance. When appropriate, student evaluations of instruction for teaching assistants should be considered. The spring review will inform the decision to renew GA reappointment for the following academic year. Any proposals to revoke an assistantship mid-year or to deny a reappointment to a continuing student will be reviewed by the Dean and Associate Dean.

All graduate assistants will be asked to evaluate the supervision of the faculty members to whom they have been assigned in a confidential memo to the Associate Dean by December 1st. The graduate assistants will be asked to comment on the value of their assigned tasks to their professional needs and goals, the value of their assigned tasks to the goals of the university, the extent to which the assignments from their supervisor(s) were clear and reasonable, and the extent to which they received the information and instruction necessary to complete their tasks. The Associate Dean will review these memos with the Dean. These two-way evaluations will be kept in a confidential file in the Associate Dean's office.

### **Opportunities for Additional Income**

Graduate assistantships in CCI typically do not include funding for summer terms. However, doctoral students may be able to receive funding through some of the following options. These options may not be appropriate for all students. For example, international students with certain types of visas may not be eligible to pursue some of these options. Students should check the terms of their other financial aid, visas, etc. before pursuing any of these opportunities. Summer income opportunities should be arranged early in the previous spring semester.

1. Some research grants include funding for research assistants during summer terms. These grants typically provide income and may provide tuition reimbursement. Interested students should consult with the faculty member who is the Principal Investigator of the grant.
2. Occasionally the Dean's Office or individual CCI school offices may have one-time funds to support research or administrative work in the summer. These positions typically pay the current hourly student employment wage and do not include tuition reimbursement. Interested students should inquire at the college and school offices.
3. Doctoral students may be qualified to teach summer courses for one of the CCI schools or one of Kent State's regional campuses as an adjunct faculty member. The School of Information provides the opportunity to teach short workshops or special courses online throughout the year. These part-time, temporary teaching positions provide income plus limited tuition benefits. Interested students should speak to the relevant school's undergraduate coordinator, the regional campus dean, or the Director of the iSchool.
4. Kent State University employs some students for a variety of jobs in the summer. Interested students should apply through Handshake on the website of the Career Exploration and Development: <https://kent.joinhandshake.com/login>. Student employment usually pays the current hourly wage for student workers, although summer graduate appointments may occasionally be available due to an office's emergent needs.

### ***Other Financial Aid***

Other kinds of financial assistance may be available for doctoral students. For instance, financial aid is available to students who are enrolled in four or more credit hours during the summer term and may also qualify for subsidized loans. For more information, contact the Financial Aid Office: <https://www.kent.edu/financialaid>

## Comprehensive Examination

### Overview

Doctoral comprehensive exams have two primary objectives: first, they are intended for students to demonstrate mastery of material in major areas of theory and research relevant to the student's specific field of study; and second, they allow for the synthesis of a substantial number and range of ideas while offering for a platform for the advancement of the student's work, particularly as the student moves into the dissertation stage.

### Overall Structure

The Comprehensive Exam includes preliminary research, the exam, and the oral defense of the exam.

**Preliminary research:** Before students can take the comprehensive exam, they first must pass a preliminary research requirement. Through this preliminary research requirement, students demonstrate their preparation to take their comprehensive exams and move onto the dissertation. In consultation with their committee members, students will choose one of the following options:

- **Published manuscript in an appropriate journal:** The expectation is that students will have primary or first authorship on a paper published in a journal deemed appropriate by the committee. This can be completed at any time during the student's doctoral coursework, allowing the student to move directly to the comprehensive exam upon approval from the student's committee and the Doctoral Studies Committee.
- **Publishable manuscript:** Students prepare a completed manuscript in their area of expertise. Unlike the option above, this manuscript does not need to be published in an appropriate venue. In this case, the committee must review the manuscript as if they are reviewing a journal article and provide feedback to the student. The student then revises the paper and resubmits it to their committee members. If it is deemed acceptable, the student can move forward. Students and committees should expect this review process to take a minimum of four weeks, although it likely will take longer.
- **Dissertation chapters:** In this option, students write the introduction, literature review, and proposed study design for their dissertations. This will then be reviewed by the comprehensive exam committee for evidence the student is prepared to enter the dissertation phase. Please note that this does not mean the dissertation prospectus has been defended; that process is a separate one detailed later in this handbook.

**Comprehensive examination:** In order to demonstrate mastery of relevant material, students are expected to complete nine hours of a traditional comprehensive examination. These should be allocated with three hours each to theory, methods, and area of specialization. Students will work with their committee members to determine the specific parameters of the comprehensive examination, including whether to include any take-home elements and if in-person sessions are open- or closed-book (including notes and other materials) or some variation thereof. The entirety of the comprehensive examination should take place over no more than two weeks.

- **Preparation:** In advance of the examination, the student and members of the committee will discuss the structure and parameters of the comprehensive exam, including those related to the scope and pertinent bodies of literature. The committee members may choose to offer reading lists, but this is not required.
  - Once the structure of the examination is determined, the plan must be presented to the Doctoral Studies Committee for review and approval. This should happen as early as possible, but it must be presented by one month before the comprehensive exams are scheduled to begin.
- **Structure of the exam:** The nine hours of comprehensive exams can be a combination of take-home and in-house questions. At least six hours must be in-house. These hours should be divided evenly into three components: theory, methods, and area of specialization.
  - **In-house questions:** In-house questions can be either open-book/open-note or closed entirely. This should be determined in advance by the committee. Students are expected to include the question being addressed in their responses. All questions are confidential and should not be shared with other students.
  - **Take-home elements:** Take-home elements should be designed to give the student ample opportunity to thoughtfully and deeply engage with material in order to demonstrate mastery and their ability to synthesize materials. The take-home components of the exam will consist of a set of complex, multi-part questions that require identification, interpretation, and synthesis of the literature.
- **Conducting the exam:** The in-house components of the examinations should be held in a location of the committee chair's choosing. Computers and appropriate software will be provided by the School or College. All technological requirements must be agreed to in advance.

- While students will not have access to the specific questions in advance, they should retain paper copies of both the questions and their responses once the day's work is completed. These materials will be used to prepare the student for the oral defense.
- All questions should be treated as confidential and not shared outside of the committee and DSC. Sharing questions marked Confidential or answers to those questions with others will be considered cheating and will result in dismissal from the program.

**Oral defense:** The oral defense must be held no later than two weeks following the conclusion of the comprehensive examination. Since the preliminary research stage must be completed before moving on to the comprehensive exam, the defense will primarily focus on the responses given in either take-home or in-house components. Questions will focus on the written responses but can be expanded to include other aspects of the student's program that have not been covered in the written examination.

- Length: The oral defense is expected to last approximately two hours.
- Student preparation: Between the completion of the comprehensive exam and that of the oral exam, students should carefully review their written materials and make notes on what might require additional explanation or elaboration.
  - The student cannot question his or her committee about content before the oral exam, but may ask the Academic Advisor questions about procedures.
- Faculty preparation: Before the oral defense is conducted, the committee must meet to determine that the comprehensive exam responses are defensible.
  - If the committee determines the exam responses are not defensible in their entirety, the student must retake the examination. The exams must be successfully completed and defended by the end of the next academic term (Fall or Spring).
  - If the written responses are considered defensible, the committee will move forward to the oral defense with the student.
- Should the student's responses be found inadequate or insufficient during the oral defense, the committee will decide on an appropriate remedial activity, which might include additional written and/or oral examinations.
  - This remedial activity must be passed in order for the student to remain in the program, be admitted to candidacy, and move to the dissertation stage.
  - Remediation can focus on one or more areas.
  - All remedial work must be completed within one semester of the original defense date.
  - In cases where the committee does not believe the comprehensive examination and oral responses are sufficient to pass with remediation, students will be asked to retake their examinations. At least one semester must pass before the student's second attempt. The preliminary research requirement does not need to be reviewed.

### ***Timing***

While the preliminary research stage can be completed at any time, the in-house exam is normally taken during the semester following the conclusion of coursework. Under special circumstances, students can complete coursework in the same semester in which they take their examinations. Students must pass their comprehensive examinations within one year after completing their coursework or they will be subject to dismissal. As a reminder, the Doctoral Studies Committee must review and approve all comprehensive examination proposals at least one month before the exam can begin. The template for these proposals can be found in Appendix D of this handbook.

### ***Completion***

Upon successfully completing the comprehensive exam, the student completes the Report of Candidacy Examination form, available from the forms library at the Graduate Studies website (<https://www.kent.edu/graduatestudies/forms-library>). That form is submitted to the College office.

## Dissertation

### *General Requirements*

Completion of a dissertation is required for the Ph.D. in Communication and Information. Upon admission to candidacy (defined as the student passing comprehensive exams), each doctoral candidate must register for CCI 80199, Dissertation I, for 15 hours in each of the two subsequent terms (including summer). If the dissertation is not completed during that time, students must register for CCI 80299, Dissertation II, during all subsequent terms, including summers, until they graduate.

The Dissertation Committee shall be established in consultation with the Dissertation Director. A student must submit a request for approval of the Dissertation Committee to the Doctoral Studies Committee following the successful completion of the comprehensive examination (see Appendix E). The approved request must then be filed with Graduate Studies. For more information about the composition of the Dissertation Committee, see the Advisors and Committees section of this handbook.

If, in the opinion of the Dissertation Director, in consultation with the Dissertation Committee, the student is found not to be making insufficient progress toward completion of the dissertation over a period of one calendar year, the student may be subject to dismissal from the program.

Students are expected to successfully defend their dissertation prospectus within one year of their comprehensive examinations. Students who do not meet this requirement are subject to dismissal.

Students should successfully defend their dissertation within one year of their prospectus defense. If a student does not successfully defend their dissertation within two years of their prospectus defense, they will need to update the prospectus and redefend it with their committee.

Due to fluctuations in faculty workloads and availability, any student who takes more than three years to complete their dissertations from the time of their comprehensive exams should expect significant turnover in their advisors and/or committee members.

### *Dissertation Prospectus Approval*

1. The student, in consultation with their Dissertation Director, will prepare a fully detailed prospectus based on the approved statement of a proposed research problem. The prospectus typically will include the following content/sections: problem statement, rationale of study, literature review, research questions and/or hypotheses, and complete methodologies.
2. The student will deliver digital and, upon committee request, paper copies of the prospectus to members of the Dissertation Committee at least two weeks before the prospectus meeting. A copy of the prospectus will also be made available in the College Office at the same time.
3. The Dissertation Director will convene the committee and moderate the prospectus meeting, at which time the student will be questioned on the clarity, scope, and methodology of the proposed study. Typically the student will give a presentation of the prospectus. Committee members may ask questions to ascertain the student's theoretical, methodological and/or statistical expertise as pertains to their ability to carry out the proposed study, as well as providing suggestions for improving the study.
4. At the conclusion of the questioning, the student will be excused and, by majority vote of the committee, the prospectus will be approved, conditionally accepted (with specific changes to be made subject to the approval of the Dissertation Director), returned for revision and resubmission to the entire committee, or disapproved.
  - If returned for revision or disapproved, a resubmission date must be established at the prospectus meeting.
  - After approval is obtained, the Approval of Dissertation Topic form [https://www.kent.edu/sites/default/files/file/Approval%20of%20Dissertation%20Topic\\_0.pdf](https://www.kent.edu/sites/default/files/file/Approval%20of%20Dissertation%20Topic_0.pdf) will be forwarded to the College by the student's Dissertation Director.
  - If the proposed dissertation uses human subjects, it is the obligation of the student to secure clearance through the University's Institutional Review Board (and any other relevant institutional IRBs) before data collection but after the defense of the prospectus. Note that the prospectus approval will not be officially submitted to the university until after the IRB has approved this project. The Dissertation Director should hold on to the signed form until that approval comes through, then add the number to the approval form and submit it to the Dean's office.
  - The student should prepare the dissertation so that it conforms to the CCI Style Guide and Instructions for Preparing Theses and Dissertations: [https://www.kent.edu/sites/default/files/file/CCI%20Style%20Guide%20AY%202016-2017\\_0.pdf](https://www.kent.edu/sites/default/files/file/CCI%20Style%20Guide%20AY%202016-2017_0.pdf)

### ***Dissertation Oral Defense***

1. Ordinarily, the oral defense of the prospectus and the oral defense of the dissertation should not occur in the same semester.
2. The College Office is to be notified of an impending dissertation defense by the Academic Advisor no less than one month in advance so that it can appoint a Graduate Faculty Representative to serve on the Dissertation Committee. Usually, the Graduate Faculty Representative also will serve as the moderator responsible for conducting the deliberations at the oral defense.
3. If the Graduate Faculty Representative will not be serving as the defense moderator, then the Dissertation Director must secure a moderator.
4. All members of the Dissertation Committee (including the moderator) must receive digital copies (and, upon request, paper copies) of the dissertation at least two weeks before the dissertation pre-oral defense meeting.
5. A dissertation pre-oral defense meeting will be conducted to determine whether the dissertation is defensible or not defensible. The student does not attend the pre-oral defense meeting. Members of the committee will indicate what modifications, if any, should be made in the dissertation so that it is suitable for oral defense. If the dissertation is determined not to be defensible, the committee will inform the Dissertation Director about deficiencies that must be addressed prior to defense. The Dissertation Director will then communicate those recommendations to the student.
6. A dissertation pre-oral defense meeting and the oral defense of that dissertation should not be held on the same day.
7. An oral defense, open to the public, for the purpose of accepting or rejecting the completed dissertation, will be held at a time mutually agreeable to the Dissertation Committee and the candidate. University rules for conducting the oral defense are found on the Graduate Studies web site: <https://www.kent.edu/graduatestudies/guide-to-graduate-education/section-7>
8. At the conclusion of the oral defense, the Dissertation Committee will vote to determine the success or failure of the candidate. A candidate passes the final oral defense if there is no more than one dissenting vote. If the candidate fails, the Dissertation Committee will propose to the Dean either: (1) revision and resubmission of the dissertation for a new defense by a specified date or (2) dismissal from the university. Further action is then the responsibility of the Dean.
9. After completion of the oral defense, the form Report of Dissertation Final Examination [https://www.kent.edu/sites/default/files/file/Report%20of%20Dissertation%20Final%20Examination\\_0.pdf](https://www.kent.edu/sites/default/files/file/Report%20of%20Dissertation%20Final%20Examination_0.pdf) should be signed by the committee and forwarded to the College Office by the student's Dissertation Director.
10. A student's final approved dissertation must be submitted electronically To OhioLINK Electronic Theses and Dissertations (ETD) here: <https://etd.ohiolink.edu/>. Guidelines for uploading the dissertation to OhioLINK can be found here: <https://www.library.kent.edu/about/departments/copyright-services/electronic-theses-dissertations>. Please refer to the instructions for proper preparation and uploading at: [https://www.kent.edu/sites/default/files/file/CCI%20Style%20Guide%20AY%202016-2017\\_0.pdf](https://www.kent.edu/sites/default/files/file/CCI%20Style%20Guide%20AY%202016-2017_0.pdf). Students also are encouraged to deposit one bound copy of the dissertation with the Dissertation Director, if the director desires one.

### ***Deadlines***

In order to graduate in the student's desired term, the student must meet University deadlines for defending the dissertation and for filing the dissertation in the College office. For a calendar of those deadlines, see the Academic Calendar in the current Catalog: <http://www.kent.edu/catalog>

When an extension of any time limits associated with completion of the dissertation seems to be necessary and proper, the student and Dissertation Director will petition the Dean for an extension. This extension may be denied, in which case the student will be subject to dismissal, or it may be granted with qualification. The student and the Dissertation Director will be informed of the decision in writing by the Associate Dean for Graduate Studies.

Requests for time extensions exceeding one year must be submitted to the Dean with evidence that the degree candidate is current in their field of study.

## **Graduation**

### ***Application***

Students who are on track to graduate must complete a graduate application at the beginning of the semester in which they plan to graduate. The deadline for submitting the graduation application is typically the end of the first week of classes of the graduation semester. Check here for official deadlines: <https://www.kent.edu/registrar/application-graduation-deadlines>. The application can be accessed in Flashline under the Student, then Resources.

### ***Commencement***

Commencement ceremonies are held three times a year at Kent State University: May, August, and December. Doctoral students are hooded by their faculty advisors during the ceremony. Details about commencement can be found here: <https://www.kent.edu/commencement/students>

## **Administration of the Ph.D. Program**

### ***Doctoral Studies Committee (DSC)***

The Doctoral Studies Committee (DSC) administers the doctoral program in the College of Communication and Information. Its duties include: reviewing and approving admission applications and dismissal decisions, graduate assistantship appointments and program plans; and proposing curriculum, policy and procedures for the CCI doctoral program.

The voting members of this committee are designees from three of the five CCI schools. At present, COMM, JMC, and Information each has one representative. Members of the DSC are appointed or elected by their schools for two-year terms; however, continuity of membership has been very important for the college-wide program; thus, some members have served for multiple years. Members of this committee, when possible, should hold the Ph.D. degree or other terminal degree.

The DSC is chaired by the Associate Dean. The chair shall be an ex officio nonvoting member of the DSC but may vote when necessary to break a tie. In accordance with the Kent State Policy on Role and Status of Graduate Student Appointees, a CCI doctoral graduate assistant shall be appointed by the Associate Dean for Graduate Studies to serve as a nonvoting member of the DSC. The student representative is excused for discussions of confidential student or personnel matters.

Meetings normally are held at least bi-weekly during the fall and spring semesters and as needed during the summer. An agenda is prepared and provided to the membership in advance. Minutes of the meetings are maintained and submitted for approval to the DSC. Approved minutes are circulated to members of the DSC for dissemination as deemed appropriate. Key information and decisions should be shared by DSC members with the other graduate faculty in their respective schools.

### ***Policy on Appealing Actions of the DSC***

Graduate students may appeal policies or actions of the Doctoral Studies Committee. Appeals should be in writing and addressed to the Associate Dean for Research and Graduate Studies in the College of Communication and Information, who will then call a meeting of the DSC for the purpose of discussing the appeal. The DSC will make a recommendation for action to the Associate Dean. Then the Associate Dean will make a recommendation for action to the Dean and also notify the student. A student wishing to appeal the Associate Dean's recommendation should submit an appeal in writing to the Dean of the College of Communication and Information.

### ***Course Scheduling***

Doctoral courses offered by the College of Communication and Information and its constituent schools shall be scheduled with such frequency and lack of time conflicts that doctoral students are able to complete their programs in a timely manner.

Per the demands of course scheduling, the DSC will review doctoral students' program plans to determine which courses will be needed in the forthcoming terms, and the Coordinator will communicate this information to the appropriate schools. The DSC will review CCI school course schedules and identify for resolution potential schedule conflicts that might prevent doctoral students from completing their programs of study in a timely manner. The DSC will propose faculty to teach courses with CCI course prefixes. These faculty assignments must be approved by the appropriate school directors. Course schedulers in each CCI school will schedule the doctoral courses with their respective school's course prefixes.

### ***Curriculum Revision***

Revisions to the doctoral program curriculum shall be initiated by the Doctoral Studies Committee, based upon suggestions from DSC members or other doctoral faculty members in the College of Communication and Information. Members of the DSC shall take any curriculum proposal to the CCI Doctoral Faculty for review. CCI Doctoral Faculty are faculty members from the five schools in CCI who wish to participate in the Doctoral Studies program. When the CCI Doctoral Faculty have approved the proposal, the DSC will forward it to the CCI Graduate Coordinators Council for action and to the CCI College Curriculum Committee as an information item.

## Financial Policies

### ***Graduate Assistantships***

The Associate Dean will meet with the Dean and the Director, RCM and Budget Operations each year to determine the number of doctoral-level GA positions available for the following academic year and the amount of the stipend to be awarded.

Doctoral students who receive a graduate assistantship for their first year of attendance in the CCI Ph.D. program can expect to receive a total of four years of GA appointments. Students who receive a graduate assistantship later in their period of attendance will have the number of years on appointment prorated accordingly. (Thus, a student who receives an appointment beginning in his second year of attendance in the program can expect to receive a total of three years of appointments.) See the Graduate Assistantship section of this Handbook for the criteria to receive reappointment and for additional details about the administration of doctoral assistantships in CCI.

### ***Payment of Student Recreation and Wellness Center (SRWC) Fees for Dissertation II Students***

Because the maintenance of doctoral students' physical and mental health is essential to the completion of their programs of study, the College of Communication and Information will reimburse the SRWC fees for any CCI student registered for Dissertation II.

To receive reimbursement, the student must request it from the Director, RCM and Budget Operations in the Dean's Office. The student must pay the SRWC fee by the semester rather than on a monthly or per visit basis. The student must submit to the Director, RCM and Budget Operations a receipt for payment of the fee and proof of registration for Dissertation II hours for the same semester.

The College will provide reimbursement of this fee to a student for no more than four terms, including summer terms.

### ***Support for Doctoral Students' Conference Travel***

CCI doctoral students who need financial support to travel to academic conferences should apply to the KSU Graduate Student Senate <https://www.kent.edu/graduatestudies/gss-awards>. The student also should apply for student travel support from the association hosting the conference.

### ***CCI Doctoral Student Global Travel Fund***

In order to support doctoral student research, CCI has established a global travel fund. These funds are intended to help CCI's doctoral students travel for purposes related to their academic success and career advancement, including engaging in global fieldwork, formal study abroad programs, and travel to nationally and internationally prominent conferences. Funds (currently, up to \$2000 per student) are available during two periods: Years 1 & 2 and Years 3 & 4. Money cannot be carried over from the first period to the second. Note that funding is not guaranteed and not all applications will be funded. The Doctoral Studies Committee and CCI reserves the right to fund only a portion of the requested totals.

## University Policies Affecting Graduate Students

For Kent State University policies related to graduate studies and students see:

- University Policy Register - <https://www.kent.edu/policyreg>
- University Catalog - <http://catalog.kent.edu/>
- Policy on Role and Status of Graduate Student Appointees - <https://www.kent.edu/sites/default/files/file/Role%20and%20Status%20of%20GS%20Appt.%208.3.15.pdf>

Guide to Graduate Studies

<https://www.kent.edu/graduatestudies/guide-to-graduate-education>

Leave of Absence Policy

<https://www.kent.edu/policyreg/administrative-policy-regarding-leaves-absence-graduate-students>

Statement on Students with Disabilities

<https://www.kent.edu/policyreg/administrative-policy-regarding-nondiscrimination-and-access-university-programs-qualified>

Student Academic Complaint Policy

<https://www.kent.edu/policyreg/administrative-policy-and-procedure-student-academic-complaints>

Student Cheating and Plagiarism

<https://www.kent.edu/policyreg/administrative-policy-regarding-student-cheating-and-plagiarism>

University Discrimination and Harassment Policy

<https://www.kent.edu/policyreg/university-policy-regarding-unlawful-discrimination-and-harassment>

Withdrawal from Courses

<https://www.kent.edu/policyreg/operational-policy-and-procedure-regarding-withdrawal-courses>

Withdrawal from the University

<https://www.kent.edu/policyreg/operational-procedures-and-regulations-regarding-withdrawal-university>

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## Appendix A: Sample Program of Study

Area of Specialization: Human Information Behavior

Core Courses (10 hours)

CCI 80000	Foundations of Communication and Information Inquiry (3)
CCI 80001	Introduction to Research in Communication and Information (3)
CCI	Colloquium (4)

Theory courses (6 hours)

COMM 75652	Theories of Communication (3)
LIS 80613	Information Needs, Seeking and Use (3)

\*Methods courses (12 hours)

COMM 75020	Quantitative Research Methods in Communication (3)
JMC 80010	Qualitative Research in Mass Communication: Data Collection (3)
PSYCH 71651	Quantitative Statistical Analysis I (3)
EVAL 65515	Quantitative Research Design and Analysis (3)

\*Electives (12 hours)

	<i>(select from)</i>
UXD 80103	Researching the User Experience (3)
UXD 80106	Usability I (3)
LIS 80636	Knowledge Organization Structures, Systems and Services (3)
PSYCH 70453	Introduction to Cognitive Psychology (3)
COMM 75665	Personal and Mediated Communication (3)
LIS 80644	Information Science (3)
UXD 80113	Researching the User Experience II (3)
LIS 80666	Ethical Concerns of Library and Information Professionals (3)

Dissertation (30 hours)

CCI 80199	Dissertation (30)
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\*Methods and elective courses may be taken outside of CCI

## Appendix B: Doctoral Program Plan

The Doctoral Program Plan should contain the following information:

- a) the names and signatures of the student, the Academic Advisor, and the Associate Dean
- b) a statement of purpose, including a description of the areas in which the student currently holds or wishes to develop expertise and a statement of the student's proposed major research area or potential dissertation topic;
- c) a summary of course work organized around areas of expertise and methodology, including relevant completed master's courses with term taken and grade received, completed doctoral course work with term taken and grade received, planned course work with planned semester of enrollment (from item d), and dissertation credits;
- d) a schedule of planned course work organized chronologically by semester, including projected dates for the comprehensive exam, dissertation prospectus approval and dissertation defense; and
- e) a curriculum vitae.

For items a, c and d, use the templates in this section. You may revise the templates as necessary to fit your program.

Item b should be presented in an essay format. You may revise the statement of purpose you submitted with your admission application, or you may submit an entirely new document.

If you have questions about how to prepare an academic curriculum vitae, see your Academic Advisor. For more information, see the Advisors and Committees section of this handbook.



## Doctoral Program Plan Signatures

\_\_\_\_\_  
Student Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Advisor

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

**This plan has been approved by the Doctoral Studies Committee.**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Associate Dean

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

Summary of Course Work

Core and Theory Courses

Course Name	Master s or Doctoral level (M/D)	Term taken or planned (term/year)	Grade

Methods Courses

Course Name	Master s or Doctoral level (M/D)	Term taken or planned (term/year)	Grade

Electives Courses

Primary Area:

Course Name	Master s or Doctoral level (M/D)	Term taken or planned (term/year)	Grade

Secondary Area (optional):

Course Name	Master s or Doctoral level (M/D)	Term taken or planned (term/year)	Grade

Dissertation

Dissertation I or II	Number of credits	Term taken or planned (term/year)

Schedule of Planned Course Work

Term 1:

Course	Hours	Grade

Term 2:

Course	Hours	Grade

Term 3:

Course	Hours	Grade

Term 4:

Course	Hours	Grade

Term 5:

Course	Hours	Grade

Term 6:

Course	Hours	Grade

Term 7:

Course	Hours	Grade

Term 8:

Course	Hours	Grade

Term 9:

Course	Hours	Grade

### Appendix C: Graduate Assistant Evaluation

Date \_\_\_\_\_  
 Assistant's Name \_\_\_\_\_  
 Faculty Supervisor \_\_\_\_\_  
 Semester/Year \_\_\_\_\_ Assignment(s): \_\_\_\_\_

*Faculty Supervisor Assessment*

Responsibilities/Performance Factors	Low	Acceptable	High
Accomplishes assigned tasks			
Ability to work independently to accomplish assigned tasks			
Demonstrates commitment to assignments			
Cooperates with co-workers on project assignments and in use of facilities			
Seeks actively to improve skills and knowledge and to incorporate them into work			
Reliability in accomplishing assigned tasks			
Produces adequate quantity of work within the time allotted to assistantship assignments			
Demonstrates ethically responsible actions within research activities			
Demonstrates ability to produce and report quality research and evaluation activities			
Accepts suggestions and constructive criticism			
Demonstrates ingenuity, initiative, and originality in work and assigned tasks			
Ability to work calmly under pressure, analyzing problems and using critical thought to plan, organize, and execute solutions			
<b>Overall Assessment of Graduate Research Assistant's Performance</b>			

**Additional Comments and Recommendations:** \_\_\_\_\_

*This evaluation has been discussed with me and I am aware that I may respond to this assessment in writing.*

\_\_\_\_\_  
 Signature of Student

\_\_\_\_\_  
 Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
 Signature of KSU staff member completing evaluation

\_\_\_\_\_  
 Date

**Appendix D: Comprehensive Exam Planning Document**



**Comprehensive Exam Planning Document**

Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_

**Committee Membership**

*(For each committee member, please provide name, title, and email address)*

	Name	Email Address
<b>Chair</b>		
<b>Member</b>		
<b>Member</b>		

**Preliminary Research**

*(Choose one of the three options below)*

	Research Type	Citation <i>(if applicable)</i>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Published manuscript in an appropriate journal</b> <i>(provide citation here and attach full text of the manuscript)</i>	
<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Publishable Manuscript</b> <i>(provide preliminary citation here and attach full text of the manuscript)</i>	
<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Dissertation Chapters</b> <i>(provide manuscript for first three chapters)</i>	

Received by Committee on: \_\_\_\_\_

Response due: \_\_\_\_\_

**Comprehensive Examination (9 hours)**

<b>6 hours minimum in house date:</b> _____	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Open Book
<input type="checkbox"/>	Closed Book

Take Home date received: \_\_\_\_\_

Take Home date due: \_\_\_\_\_

Oral Defense date: \_\_\_\_\_

Appendix E: Dissertation Committee Request



Dissertation Committee Request

Student: \_\_\_\_\_

**Topic:**

*(In one or two paragraphs, briefly describe the dissertation topic)*

**Committee Membership**

*(For each committee member, please provide name, title, and email address)*

Member	Name	Email Address
Chair		
CCI Member		
CCI Member		
Outside Member		

Approved by *(Associate Dean for Graduate Studies)*: \_\_\_\_\_

Approval Date: \_\_\_\_\_