

## Criteria for “Good Standing” in Communication Arts

All graduate students must stay “in good standing” in the department to be eligible for teaching assignments, awards, and fellowships, and in order to be considered to be making satisfactory progress in the program. Students whose progress is rated unsatisfactory by their faculty may face loss of funding and/or dismissal from the program.

The Departmental minimum criteria for “good standing” are:

- 1) Timely progress through the program, consisting of successful completion of MA and PhD requirements and compliance with coursework, advising, and dissertation expectations.
- 2) A cumulative grade point average for coursework within the Department of 3.75 or above.
- 3) No grades of “Incomplete” on the student’s record.
- 4) Fulfillment of responsibilities for Teaching/Project Assistantships or Lectureships.

Students are expected to carry a full load, defined as three courses (nine credits) plus Colloquium (one credit) per semester, unless a student’s advisor recommends an exception. Dissertators in residence must register for two Research and Thesis credits (CA990) plus Colloquium, for a total of 3 credits. Dissertators living outside Madison must register for 3 credits of Research and Thesis. Students must receive their advisor’s approval for each semester’s coursework before registration.

All students are assigned an advisor when they enter the program, and must have a dissertation advisor by the end of their first semester of PhD level study. It is the student’s responsibility to meet with the advisor on a regular basis (at least once a semester), to consult with him/her on selection of courses, and to receive feedback on progress through the program, including dissertator stage. Dissertators living outside of Madison must make sure that an acceptable substitute for such a meeting is agreed upon with the advisor. Failure to comply with these requirements may result in an “unsatisfactory” grade in Research and Thesis, and could lead to dismissal from the program.

The Department holds strict expectations for graduate students with respect to grades. Grades lower than an “A,” while they might occasionally occur, are generally considered an indication that the student is not performing at a desirable level. An “AB” grade given to work of any kind is an indication that there is room for improvement and that the student should address stated concerns. A grade of “B” indicates serious deficiencies and the student should meet with the faculty member to discuss concerns as soon as possible. A cumulative GPA below 3.75 over a period of two semesters will be considered a failure to meet the “good standing” criterion. Overall, students should strive not only to meet course expectations, but to excel. Any absence from class requires explanation, and should ideally be cleared in advance. All work should be handed in on time, and should aim for a professional level of research, writing and presentation. All work must be original and specific to each class.

The accumulation of grades of “Incomplete” can seriously hamper a student’s progress and, when prolonged, lead to the loss of a teaching assistantship or dismissal from the program. Outstanding incompletes disqualify students from consideration for fellowships and awards, and will hold up the granting of advanced degrees. Although a grade of “Incomplete” may occasionally be appropriate,

this must be an option taken only with the explicit prior consent of the professor. No student may have more than three outstanding incompletes. An incomplete must be cleared within one semester after the class in question, and ideally much sooner.

Students who wish to be considered for awards must be in good standing at the time of application. At the discretion of the Graduate Committee, those who fall short of good standing for two semesters in a row may lose their teaching assignments and/or be dismissed from the program.