

# COMMUNICATION & INFORMATION SCIENCES (CIS), PHD

## The collegewide doctor of philosophy degree in the College of Communication and Information Sciences is designed to:

- prepare communication scholars for positions of leadership in education, public service, the media, libraries, information-management positions, and other communication-related fields
- add to a student's usable body of knowledge in a chosen area of specialization within the field of communication and information sciences
- develop each student's research, teaching, and professional capabilities
- promote scholarly achievement and advancement of knowledge in the communication and information science disciplines, through basic and applied research

Representing four academic units of Advertising and Public Relations, Communication Studies, Journalism and Creative Media, and Library and Information Studies, C&IS offers a multidisciplinary doctoral program in communication and information sciences that enables students to either build an interdisciplinary plan of study or specialize in one of seven concentrations, in Advertising and Public Relations, Book and Publishing Studies, Health Communication, Interpersonal Communication, Media Processes and Effects, Rhetoric and Political Discourse, or Social Justice and Inclusion Advocacy. The interdisciplinary plan of study allows students to craft a curricular plan unique to their skills and interests while the concentrations provide students an opportunity to earn distinction through a prescribed suite of courses preparing them to contribute to the academe as distinguished scholars and teachers at a variety of institutions across the globe.

Alongside the concentrations, the program emphasizes three signature areas of interdisciplinary research: emergent media, health communication, and sports communication. A core group of world-class graduate faculty across various disciplines focus their research agendas around these three areas.

Students who take the interdisciplinary approach or select a concentration are encouraged to pursue their own research agendas in tandem with their coursework.

## Requirements for the Ph.D. Degree in Communication and Information Sciences

### Admission Criteria

Applicants to the doctoral program in communication and information sciences must meet the admission criteria of the Graduate School of The University of Alabama and those stated below.

An applicant whose credentials meet the following minimum criteria may be considered for regular admission to the doctoral program in communication and information sciences:

- An undergraduate grade point average (GPA) of 3.0 overall, 3.0 for the last 60 semester hours in a degree program, or 3.0 for a completed graduate degree program.

International applicants must score at least 90 on the TOEFL iBT language proficiency exam and also score at least 24 on the speaking and writing sections of the iBT exam. International applicants who meet

these criteria may also be invited to participate in a videoconference with the college application review committee.

Applicants may be considered for admission on a permission-to-continue basis if they meet either the GPA criterion for regular admission or the GRE score criterion for regular admission.

### Coursework

**Number of semester hours required in the program:** Forty-eight to 60 hours, as determined by a student's program advisory committee. An additional 24 hours of dissertation research will be taken, usually following admission to candidacy.

The student's program advisory committee determines, in consultation with the student, the specific courses the student must take to satisfy program and research requirements.

**Core requirement: Foundations.** CIS 610 Foundations Doctoral Study CIS, is required of all students.

**Core requirement: Theory.** Students must complete two of the following four courses:

- CIS 604 Mass Communication Theory
- CIS 605 Cultural and Critical Theory
- CIS 606 Knowledge & Information Theory
- CIS 607 Theory Constructn Epistemolgy

For students in one of the program's seven approved doctoral concentrations, there may be requirements regarding which of these core theory classes must be completed. For example, students in the Media Processes and Effects concentration must complete CIS 604 Mass Communication Theory as one of their two core theory classes.

**Core requirement: Research methods.** Students must complete six hours of research methods coursework. The College offers three 3-hour research methods courses that can count toward fulfilling the research methods requirement:

- CIS 603 Quantitative Research Methods
- CIS 608 Qualitative Research Methods
- CIS 609 Humanistic Research Methods

For students in one of the program's seven approved doctoral concentrations, there may be requirements regarding which of these core research methods classes must be completed. For example, students in the Social Justice and Inclusion Advocacy concentration must complete CIS 609 Humanistic Research Methods, which will provide three of the six required hours in the research methods core for students in this concentration.

If the student's program advisory committee determines that research methods courses other than CIS 603, CIS 608, and CIS 609 are more appropriate in the student's research methods core, students can count up to six credit hours of approved alternate research methods coursework toward fulfilling their core research methods requirement.

### Concentrations and focused areas of study

All students must either complete a concentration in the program or identify a focused area of study.

*Focused area of study.* Students will consult with their program advisory committee to identify a focused area of study. A minimum of 18 non-

dissertation credits must be designated by the program advisory committee as appropriate for the student's focused area of study.

**Concentration.** Students in a concentration in the program should consult the information below in this graduate catalog on the requirements for completing the concentration.

**Cognate.** Students will consult with their program advisory committee to identify a cognate area. Students may fulfill their cognate requirement through courses completed within or outside the College of Communication and Information Sciences. A course must be in an area outside the concentration or focused area of study to count toward fulfilling the cognate requirement. A minimum of nine non-dissertation credits must be designated by the program advisory committee as appropriate for the student's cognate area.

**Additional/elective credits.** Many students will find they have room in their program of study for one or more additional/elective courses after they have met the minimum credit hour requirements for core coursework, cognate coursework, and coursework in a concentration or focused area of study. Students will consult with their program advisory committee to identify appropriate additional/elective courses.

**Dissertation.** The University of Alabama Graduate School requires that students complete 24 hours of dissertation credit. In the College of Communication and Information Sciences, dissertation credits are completed by enrolling in CIS 699: Dissertation Research.

**Summary of required credits.** In sum, students allocate credit hours as follows:

- Core: 15 hours
- Concentration or focused area of study
  - Concentration: 12-15 hours
  - Focused area of study: 18-30 hours
- Cognate: 9-15 hours
- Additional/elective: 0-18 hours
- Dissertation: 24 hours

**Other requirements.** In addition to the credit hour and coursework requirements specified above, the following policies apply:

- A minimum of 36 hours of coursework must be completed after enrollment in the CIS doctoral program.
- Up to 12 of these 36 hours may be transferred from a student's masters program if approved by the student's program advisory committee. Credits so approved must have been earned within a period of no more than six years prior to the semester of admission to the doctoral program.
- A minimum of 24 hours of coursework must be at the 600 level. The remainder of hours of approved graduate course credit must be at the 500 or 600 level. A maximum of six hours of 400- or 400/500-level credit may be transferred if completed as part of a master's degree program.
- Each student must complete a minimum of three CIS doctoral seminar courses, which include all courses numbered CIS 650 through CIS 696. No doctoral seminar class that may be deemed by the student's program advisory committee to count toward fulfilling the research methods requirement may be counted toward this minimum number of three doctoral seminar courses. In other words, if a program advisory committee approves a doctoral seminar course as an alternate research methods course, this course cannot also be counted toward meeting the requirements for three doctoral seminar courses.

- It is not permissible to complete more than one doctoral concentration. That is, the degree awarded to students who complete a concentration will list one and only one concentration. However, students are permitted and encouraged to consider as additional/elective credits courses from across all seven concentrations in the program

## Required Plan of Study

By the time each doctoral student has completed 30 graduate semester hours of UA and/or transfer work toward the degree, the student must have a doctoral Plan of Study approved by the dean of the University of Alabama Graduate School. Failure to obtain approval of the Plan of Study by the completion of 30 hours may result in the student's having a hold placed on future registrations.

Students admitted to the doctoral program may be required to complete additional coursework to be prepared for doctoral-level (600-level) study and research in communication and information sciences, at the discretion of the student's program advisory committee or the CIS associate dean for graduate studies.

Doctoral students who begin the program with incomplete master's theses must complete the master's thesis during the first year of doctoral study. Students must provide official transcripts of their master's degree work as evidence that their master's degree has been awarded. If a student fails to provide the transcript, the College may refuse to administer the PhD preliminary examination and/or may withdraw financial support. The Graduate School may nullify the doctoral program admission.

## Scholastic requirements

A student must maintain cumulative grade point average of at least 3.00 on a 4.00 scale for graduate courses undertaken following admission to the doctoral program. A doctoral student whose grade point average falls below 3.00 at any time after 12 semester hours have been completed will be placed on academic warning by the Graduate School and the College of Communication and Information Sciences.

- A student on academic warning will not be permitted to apply for admission to candidacy and may not hold an assistantship.
- A student who earns a grade below "B" in more than two courses or who remains on academic warning for more than one semester is subject to removal from the program at the discretion of the college's associate dean for graduate studies.

Students who are dropped from the program may petition the college for readmission. The college may in turn make a request to the dean of the university Graduate School for approval of the student's readmission.

## Preliminary examination

A preliminary examination is required of all doctoral students. The examination is given no sooner than the semester in which the student will complete all required course work and other work prescribed by the student's program advisory committee. The examination is administered by the student's program advisory committee. The examination must be successfully completed at least six months before the degree is awarded.

Consult the program website for information regarding the structure of the examination and its administration.

University policy stipulates that failure to pass the examination on a second attempt will result in dismissal from the program.

## Admission to candidacy

A student is certified by the dean of the UA Graduate School for admission to candidacy for the PhD in Communication & Information Sciences after meeting the following requirements:

- completion of the program of coursework and other requirements prescribed by the student's program advisory committee, approved by the CIS associate dean for graduate studies, and approved by the dean of the UA Graduate School on the Plan of Study and Admission to Candidacy forms
- demonstration, by passing the preliminary examination, of competence in the theory, research methods, the focused area of study, and the cognate
- a successful defense of a dissertation proposal
- approval by the UA Graduate School of the Admission to Candidacy for the Doctoral Degree

A department-approved Admission to Candidacy for the Doctoral Degree is submitted to the UA Graduate School as soon as possible after passing the comprehensive (preliminary) examination.

## Dissertation committee

Following a successful completion of preliminary examinations, the candidate for the PhD in Communication and Information Sciences must form a dissertation committee.

The dissertation committee, with the director of the dissertation as its chairperson, supervises the preparation of the dissertation. The committee shall have not fewer than five members. The Graduate Faculty of the College of Communication and Information Sciences must be represented by at least three members. Other members may be from the College of Communication and Information Sciences or from a college or school outside the College of Communication and Information Sciences. One member *must* be from a college or school outside the College of Communication and Information Sciences.

All members of the committee must be members of the university Graduate Faculty. The chair of committee must be a full member of the Graduate Faculty. At least one committee member in addition to the chair must also be a full member of the Graduate Faculty. All other members may be associate members of the Graduate Faculty. No more than one temporary/affiliate member of the Graduate Faculty may serve on the committee. A majority of the committee members must be regular UA faculty.

The UA graduate dean's approval of the proposed dissertation committee must be obtained before significant progress is made on the dissertation—typically just before or just after the dissertation proposal meeting. For this purpose, the student submits the form for Appointment/Change of a Doctoral Dissertation Committee.

## Dissertation

After successful completion of the preliminary examination, degree candidates must submit a written proposal to their dissertation committee.

The proposal describes the importance of the proposed topic, outlines the hypotheses to be evaluated, provides an overview of relevant literature, specifies the methodology to be used, and includes a timetable for completion of the project. The dissertation must make a significant original contribution to the field of communication and information sciences and must demonstrate the candidate's ability to report that research in writing in a clear, comprehensive, and scholarly manner.

The student must submit the proposal, and later the dissertation, to the committee at least 14 days prior to the defense. After the proposal has been circulated among the members, the student's dissertation committee meets for the student's oral defense of the proposal. The candidate must complete the dissertation and all other degree requirements within seven years of the date of admission to the doctoral program.

## Final examination

The candidate must present a copy of the final draft of the dissertation to each committee member at least two weeks before the scheduled date of the final examination. After the dissertation has been completed and accepted by the candidate's dissertation committee for purposes of the examination, the candidate will be given a final oral examination by the dissertation committee.

The final examination is concerned primarily with the research embodied in the dissertation and with the field in which the dissertation lies, but it may extend over the student's entire primary field of study. The final oral examination is governed by the rules of the Graduate School of The University of Alabama.

The dissertation must comply with the regulations in A Student Guide to Preparing Electronic Theses and Dissertations. Graduate School deadlines, including each semester's dissertation deadline, are available at the Graduate School's homepage.

Electronic submission of theses and dissertations (ETD) is required. Consult the ETD website for details of ETD submission.

## Expedited Admission Track into the CIS Doctoral Program

The Expedited Admission Track into the CIS doctoral program allows highly qualified students to be admitted into the doctoral program after they complete an undergraduate degree. Such students will begin graduate coursework in a specific master's degree program of the College and complete their graduate degree as College-wide doctoral candidates, without having to reapply for admission or apply to transfer credit hours from the master's program into the doctoral program. In short, if admitted on the expedited track, candidates will be able to count as many as 24 hours completed in their master's program of study—rather than the college-stipulated maximum of 12 hours—toward their doctoral degree.

Students admitted on the expedited track would be required, upon completion of 24 hours of graduate coursework, to take a comprehensive, qualifying examination administered by their academic advisor, program committee, and two representatives of the doctoral program selected by the CIS associate dean for graduate studies. The doctoral program representatives will lead the committee's determination of the overall quality of the comprehensive exam answers. If the candidate passes the qualifying examination, the candidate will be approved to continue in the CIS doctoral program. The completed 24 credit hours then also will apply toward the minimum of 48 hours of graduate course work required for the PhD. Upon completion of graduate work, such candidates will receive the master's degree, along with the PhD. Students deemed not to have demonstrated sufficient mastery to qualify for continuing in the doctoral program will be permitted to complete the remaining requirements for their designated MA program and receive that degree from the College upon its completion.

### Criteria for Expedited Admission Track

Students who wish to apply for the expedited admission track must meet the following criteria:

- Hold regular admission status for a specific College master's program and for admission into the PhD program
- Submit a statement of purpose indicating interest and commitment to graduate work through the doctoral level
- Upon completing 24 hours of graduate coursework, passing a comprehensive, qualifying exam for continuing toward the doctoral degree
- Earn a certificate of completion, or equivalent, for the master's program, whereupon official admission into the doctoral program would be recognized

The UA Graduate School stipulates that the doctoral degree requires a minimum of 48 hours of graduate coursework and 24 hours of dissertation. The expedited track meets this requirement. It is recommended that during their master's program matriculation students complete 600-level CIS classes likely meet the theory and research methods requirements for the doctoral degree. See the Coursework section above for details about theory and research methods requirements in the CIS doctoral degree program. Also, please note in the Coursework section above the policy that doctoral students must complete at least 24 hours in 600-level classes. This is very feasible for expedited track students so long as they plan their master's program of study with this in mind.

## Advertising and Public Relations Concentration

Students in this concentration must select CIS 604 Mass Communication Theory in their program and then complete the following 15 hours of coursework:

Code and Title	Hours
CIS 682 Seminar Adv and PR	3
APR 551 Foundations of Integrated Comm	3
APR 524 Reputation Comm Strategy	3
CIS 650 Seminar in C&IS	3
CIS 684 Advanced Topics ADV and PR	3

## Book and Publishing Studies Concentration

Students in the concentration must select CIS 605 Cultural and Critical Theory and CIS 609 Humanistic Research Methods in their program core and then select **15 hours** of coursework from the following courses, with **at least one course from each category** (Physical Book, Theoretical Book, and Future Directions), and with at least 9 hours at the 600 level:

The Physical Book	Hours
BA 520 Elements of Letterpress	3
BA 530 Elements of Bookbinding	3
BA 541 Techniques of Hand Papermaking	3

The Theoretical Book	Hours
CIS 653	3
CIS 654	3
CIS 655	3
LS 555 Intro Archival Studies	3
LS 557 Archival Appraisal	3

Future Directions of the Book		Hours
CIS 656	Electronic/Contemporary Pub.	3
CIS 672	Media History	3

## Health Communication Concentration

Students in this concentration must select five courses from the following list to complete 15 hours of coursework, with no more than 6 hours of electives approved by their advisors:

Code and Title	Hours
CIS 650 Seminar in C&IS (Health Communication)	3
CIS 651 Interpersonal Health Comm	3
CIS 659 Health Information Seeking	3
CIS 664 Health Communication Campaigns	3
CIS 670 Health and Mass Media	3
Approved elective(s) at the 500-level or above in health communication and/or statistics	3

## Interpersonal Communication Concentration

Students in this concentration must select CIS 603 Quantitative Research Methods in their program core and then complete the following 15 hours of coursework:

Required Foundation Course	Hours
COM 563 Relational Communication	3

Three hours from one of the following three courses:	Hours
COM 513 Communication & Diversity	3
COM 565 Intercultural Communication	3
COM 569 Communication & Gender	3

Six hours of approved research electives, CIS 650 or above, within any approved area of interpersonal communication studies, including:	Hours
CIS 651 Interpersonal Health Comm	3
CIS 660 Interpersonal Comm Theory	3
CIS 662 Mediated Interpersonal Comm	3
CIS 663 Deception	3
CIS 667 Persuasive Communication	3

Three hours of approved College elective, 500 or above, in interpersonal communication studies.	Hours
500 or 600 level elective	3

## Media Processes and Effects Concentration

Students in this concentration must select CIS 603 Quantitative Research Methods and CIS 604 Mass Communication Theory in their program core and then complete the following 12 hours of coursework:

Code and Title	Hours
CIS 680 Sem. Media Processes/Effects	3
CIS 681 Advanced Quantitative Methods	3

CIS 650	Seminar in C&IS (Emergent Media, Health Communication, Political Communication, or Sports Media)	3	Meredith M. Bagley Jane Stewart Baker
CIS 683	Advanced Topics - Media P&E	3	Matthew Barnidge A.J. Bauer Jennifer Becker Beth S. Bennett Mark Berry Andrew C. Billings Kimberly L. Bissell Anneliese Bolland Courtney Boman Laurie Bonnici Robin Boylorn Dianne Bragg Rick Bragg Chip Brantley Nancy Brinson Brian Britt Rebecca Britt Adam Brooks Kenon Brown Michael Bruce Sarah Bryant John Burgess William Sim Butler Heather J. Carmack Chandra Clark Brandon Colvin Meredith Cummings Margaret D'Silva George L. Daniels Susan Daria James Elmborg Anna Embree Hengyi Fu Robert N. Gaines Karla K. Gower Andy Grace Darrin Griffin Nikita Harris Jameson Hayes Steven Holiday

## Rhetoric and Political Discourse Concentration

Students in this concentration must select CIS 605 Cultural and Critical Theory and CIS 609 Humanistic Research Methods in their program core and then complete the following **15 hours** of coursework:

Code and Title	Hours
CIS 650 Seminar in C&IS (Political Communication)	3
CIS 652 Sem Culture Criti Rhetor Stdy	3
COM 541 Contemp Rhetoricl Theory	3
COM 548 Sem Rhetorical Criticism	3
Approved 500 or 600 level elective in rhetoric or political discourse	3

## Social Justice and Inclusion Advocacy Concentration

Students in the concentration must select CIS 605 Cultural and Critical Theory and CIS 609 Humanistic Research Methods in their program core and then complete the following **15 hours** of coursework. All students in the concentration must complete:

Code and Title	Hours
CIS 668 Social Justice & Inclusion	3

Students must complete **12 hours** from the following courses, with **at least 3 hours from each category** (Foundations, Perspectives, and Applications) and at least 6 hours taken at the 600 level:

Foundations	Hours
CIS 652 Sem Culture Criti Rhetor Stdy	
CIS 667 Persuasive Communication	
COM 565 Intercultural Communication	
LS 583 Social Aspects of Information	

Perspectives	Hours
COM 513 Communication & Diversity	
COM 515 African American Rhetoric	
COM 525 Gender & Political Comm	
COM 569 Communication & Gender	
LS 582 Race Gender & Sexuality in LIS	

Applications	Hours
CIS 666 Information Policy	
LS 544 Cultural Diversity Programming	
LS 580 Outreach to Diverse Population	
LS 581 Universal Access	

## Faculty

### Associate Dean for Graduate Studies

William Evans

### Graduate faculty

Cory Armstrong

Kyle Holland

Suzanne Horsley

Randall Huffaker

Peter Jensen

Shaheen Kanthawala

Hyoungkoo Khang

Eyun-Jung Ki

Seoyeon Kim

Terry Kinney

David Lawson

Jiyoung Lee

Leah E. LeFebvre

Laura L. Lemon

Jeremy Levine

Wilson H. Lowrey

Steven L. MacCall

Jessica Maddox

Mary M. Meares

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Kaitlin Miller

Jamie C. Naidoo

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Jessy Ohl

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Caroline Parsons

Cynthia C. Peacock

Joshua R. Pederson

Joseph E. Phelps

Ann E. Prentice

Robert B. Riter

Christopher Roberts

Sean Sadri

Tracy Sims

Ethan C. Stokes

Miriam E. Sweeney

Matthew VanDyke

Alyxandra Vesey

Janet Walker

Kristen J. Warner

Gerald Waters

Damion Waymer

Jeffrey Weddle

Matthew Wisla

Steven Yates