

Media and Communication PhD

LEW KLEIN COLLEGE OF MEDIA AND COMMUNICATION

Learn more about the Doctor of Philosophy in Media and Communication.

About the Program

The PhD in Media and Communication offers a comprehensive curriculum in communication theory and research designed to provide advanced students with the breadth and depth of knowledge needed to make significant contributions in the academic and professional fields of mediated communication and, generally, communication.

Time Limit for Degree Completion: 7 years

Campus Location: Main

Full-Time/Part-Time Status: Media and Communication students are expected to be "in residence" during their first year of study, excluding summer sessions. Thus, they must register for at least 9 credits in each of the two consecutive terms of Fall and Spring. Although the Graduate School allows for PhD programs to be completed on a full- or part-time basis, students receiving funding are required to maintain full-time status during their tenure in the program.

Interdisciplinary Study: The Media and Communication PhD program encourages interdisciplinary coursework, research and interactions among faculty and students with interest in the humanities and social sciences.

Areas of Specialization: Faculty members specialize and offer coursework in diverse areas related to media and communication, including communication effects and psychological processes; emerging media and technology; global media, social change and activism; journalism studies; media, identity and representation; the media industry, law and policies; political communication; and popular communication.

Job Prospects: The Media and Communication PhD program is designed to prepare graduates for work as professors in colleges and universities around the world. Graduates also hold a variety of positions in the communication and other commercial industries as well as in nonprofit organizations.

Non-Matriculated Student Policy: Non-matriculated students are restricted to taking MMC 9001 Communication Theory I and MMC 9002 Researching Communication I. These courses may only be taken with the permission of the instructor. If the student is admitted to the program, these courses may be applied toward the degree.

Financing Opportunities: As part of the admissions process, all applicants are considered for funding for a small number of competitive fellowships and teaching assistantships that carry a stipend and full tuition remission of up to 9 credits per term. Starting in their third year, funded students are given the opportunity to teach their own class as the instructor of record. Funding offers are made on or before March 15. April 15 is the final date to accept or decline the offer.

Admission Requirements and Deadlines

Application Deadline:

Fall: December 1

Admission is open for the Fall term only. All applications are evaluated together after the deadline date. Admitted students may defer entrance to the program for one year, but students may not begin the program in the Spring term unless there are truly extenuating circumstances, as evaluated by the program director. Admission is based on several criteria, including:

- a match between the applicant's abilities and faculty's expectations;
- a match between the applicant's goals and the training and other attributes offered by the program;
- the applicant's academic and personal references;
- their demonstrated academic ability and research potential; and
- their standardized test scores.

APPLY ONLINE to this graduate program.

Letters of Reference:

Number Required: 3

From Whom: Letters of recommendation should be obtained from evaluators, particularly college/university faculty, who can provide insight into your academic abilities and talents, as well as comment on your aptitude for graduate study.

Master's Degree in Discipline/Related Discipline: A master's degree in Communication, Media Studies, or in the humanities or social sciences is required. A minimum graduate GPA of 3.25 is expected. Those with scores near this minimum typically have their references scrutinized rigorously.

Bachelor's Degree in Discipline/Related Discipline: All applicants must present credentials that are the equivalent of the baccalaureate degree at Temple University. A minimum undergraduate GPA of 3.0 is expected. Those with scores near this minimum typically have their references scrutinized rigorously.

Statement of Goals: In approximately 1,000 to 1,500 words, describe your specific interest in Temple's program, research goals, future career goals, and academic and research achievements. Your statement should name faculty with whom you are interested in working.

Standardized Test Scores:

GRE: Optional for Fall 2025 admission. Typically, only applicants who have a minimum total verbal and quantitative GRE score of 300, with a minimum verbal score of 150, are considered for admission. Candidates with scores near these minima typically have their references scrutinized rigorously.

Applicants who earned their baccalaureate degree from an institution where the language of instruction was other than English, with the exception of those who subsequently earned a master's degree at a U.S. institution, must report scores within two years of the test date for a standardized test of English that meet these minimums:

- TOEFL iBT: 96
- IELTS Academic: 7.0
- Duolingo: 110

Resume: Current resume or curriculum vitae is required.

Interview: In some cases, faculty may request an interview with applicants as part of evaluating their fit with the program and potential funding merit.

Writing Sample: Applicants should submit a formal academic paper that represents their best academic writing.

Program Requirements

General Program Requirements:

Number of Credits Required Beyond the Master's: 45

Required Courses:

Code	Title	Credit Hours
Core Courses		
MMC 8985	Teaching in Higher Education: Communications	3
MMC 9001	Communication Theory I	3
MMC 9002	Researching Communication I	3
MMC 9003	Doctoral Colloquium	1
MMC 9005	Colloquium II (2 terms)	2
MMC 9102	Researching Communication II	3
Advanced Research Methods Course ¹		3
Electives ²		21
Research Courses ³		6
MMC 9994	Preliminary Examination Preparation	
MMC 9998	Pre-Dissertation Research	
MMC 9999	Dissertation Research	
Total Credit Hours		45

¹ All students are required to take at least one advanced research methods course in Media and Communication. Beyond the first course, these advanced courses can be taken as electives. Students are encouraged to take additional advanced courses under the guidance of their program advisor.

² Electives may be taken in the Lew Klein College of Media and Communication, with up to 6 graduate credits taken in other schools and colleges at Temple University.

³ The six credits must include at least two credits of MMC 9999, which requires an approved dissertation proposal.

Culminating Events:

Preliminary Examinations:

Under the direction of an approved faculty committee, the PhD student must satisfactorily complete written and oral examinations prior to achieving formal PhD candidacy. Areas of examination and the constituency of the committee are tailored to the individual student. The subject areas are determined, in advance, by the student and their Doctoral Advisory Committee (DAC). The examinations consist of essay questions in three areas written by the members of the student's DAC. The exams are designed to demonstrate the student's critical and interpretive knowledge of specialized areas of media and communication. The exams evaluate the student's ability to apply specific research foci to related issues in the discipline.

The preliminary examinations should be taken no more than one term after the student completes the coursework component of the program. Students who are preparing to write their preliminary examinations should confirm a date and time with the chair of their DAC and register this information with Klein's Office of Research and Graduate Studies. The student and chair receive confirmation of the date, time and, where applicable, room and proctor for the examinations.

The DAC evaluates the examinations. The student must answer every question in order to be evaluated. The evaluators look for breadth and depth of understanding of specific research areas; a critical application of that knowledge to specific media and communication issues; and an ability to write technical prose in a manner consistent with media and communication research. Each committee member votes to pass or fail the student. In order to pass, a majority of the committee members must agree that the exams have been satisfactorily completed.

If a student's answers are deemed suitable and complete, they may be passed without an oral defense. Otherwise, examinations may be defended orally approximately three weeks after they are written. Examinations must be completed and passed before the student defends their dissertation proposal.

Proposal:

With the guidance of their academic advisor, who is a member of the Media and Communication faculty, and at least two other committee members, the student proposes, conducts and creates a written report of an original, theoretically motivated research project. The proposal should consist of the context and background surrounding a particular research problem; identification of the theoretical and, if relevant, practical importance of the problem; an exhaustive survey and review of literature related to the problem; and a detailed methodological plan for investigating the problem. The proposal should be completed and approved no more than one term after the student completes coursework. It cannot be defended before the preliminary examinations are taken. Upon approval, a timeline for completing the investigation and writing process is established.

Dissertation:

The doctoral dissertation is an original empirical study that makes a significant contribution to the field of media and communication. It should expand the existing knowledge and demonstrate the student's knowledge of both research methods and their primary area of interest. Dissertations should be rigorously investigated; uphold the ethics and standards of the communication field; demonstrate an understanding of the relationship between the primary area of interest and the broader field of media and communication; and be prepared for publication in a professional journal.

The DAC oversees the student's dissertation research and is comprised of at least three graduate faculty members. Two members, including the chair, must be from the Media and Communication program. Committee compositions must be approved by the Media and Communication faculty. The chair is responsible for overseeing and guiding the student's progress, coordinating the responses of the DAC members, and informing the student of their academic progress.

The Dissertation Examining Committee (DEC) evaluates the student's dissertation and oral defense. This committee is composed of the DAC and at least one additional graduate faculty member from outside the Media and Communication program. The outside examiner should be identified no later than the beginning of the term in which the student will defend the dissertation. The DEC evaluates the student's ability to express verbally their research question, methodological approach, primary findings and implications. DEC members vote to pass or fail the dissertation and the defense at the conclusion of the public presentation.

If a student needs to change a member of a committee, the new member must be approved by the program's faculty and registered with Klein's Office of Research and Graduate Studies and the Graduate School.

Students who are preparing to defend their dissertation should confirm a date and time with their DEC members and register with Klein's Office of Research and Graduate Studies at least 15 days before the defense. The date, time and room are arranged within two working days, and the student is forwarded the appropriate forms. After the defense has been set, the student must send a completed "Announcement of Dissertation Defense" form, found in TUportal under the Tools tab within "University Forms," to the Graduate School at least 10 days before the defense. The Media and Communication program announces the defense via e-mail.

Contacts

Program Web Address:

<https://www.temple.edu/academics/degree-programs/media-and-communication-phd-co-mdcm-phd>

Department Information:

Lew Klein College of Media and Communication
Office of Research and Graduate Studies
2020 N. 13th Street, 344 Annenberg Hall
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nmckenna@temple.edu
215-204-1497

Submission Address for Application Materials:

<https://apply.temple.edu/Klein/>

Department Contacts:

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