

COMM 5904 – Project and Report/Internship Guidelines

CATALOG DESCRIPTION: For students pursuing a non-thesis degree. Projects may involve guided research/scholarship or an internship. Variable credit course.

COMM 5904 is a practicum experience to be taken for three hours of credit after 18 credits have been successfully completed in the program. Comm 5904 has been approved to accept an EQ grade. An assigning of the EQ grade has no impact upon a student's GPA, but does indicate that the Project and Report/Internship requirement for non-thesis option students has been fulfilled. The specific form of Comm 5904 must be approved by the student's graduate committee and by the director of graduate studies, and will be supervised and evaluated by the student's advisor. The course will take one of two paths: Project and Report or Internship. The two paths are briefly described below:

- **Project and Report:** The project and report is a semester of guided and applied research and media writing/production which can take a variety of forms. It is generally considered the completion of what would be considered a professional project of publishable/telecast/webcast quality. The project may be an in-depth article or series of articles suitable for a magazine or newspaper, a documentary film for television broadcast or theatrical distribution, a CD-ROM or some similar professional project.

The project should go beyond what is typically considered a routine content in a medium. That is, it should be a significant piece of reporting or other non-fiction work based on significant research into both secondary and primary sources.

The student must prepare a prospectus describing the project, the methodology, the expected outcome and the benefit to the student's graduate education and career goals. The prospectus should also contain the results of the student's research into possible publishing/presentational outlets for the completed project. That is, the student must consider the outlet at the beginning, rather than the end, of the project. Once completed and approved by the advisor, the student must submit three copies of a completed "Project and Report Prospectus Approval Form" to the Director of Graduate Studies along with three copies of the final approved prospectus.

In addition to the project itself, the student must produce a paper describing the project and what was learned about the project. The length and specific form of this paper will be determined by the advisor. Finally, the student will orally present the results of the Project and Report in a public forum to the Communication Faculty, Staff, Students and other interested parties.

- **Internship:** An internship requires a work experience in a professional communication environment. Before the internship credit may be added to the student's schedule, the student must complete and have approved two forms which will be placed in the student's file: the Graduate-Level Internship Approval Form and the Graduate Student-Employer Agreement Form.

The student must work at a minimum the equivalent of 15 10-hour weeks during the Fall/Spring semesters, or six 25-hour weeks during one Summer session. The student is responsible for arranging the internship and negotiating a contract with the employer. The work must be significant in that it is more than menial labor; that is, it should be professional quality work directed at the student's career goals.

In addition, the student will write an analytical paper integrating the practical experience with theory from the classroom or from the literature of the discipline in which the internship was earned. Finally, the student will orally present the experiences and lessons from the Internship in a public forum to the Communication Faculty, Staff, Students and other interested parties. The presentation may take place the semester after the internship is completed, but in this case the student will receive an "Incomplete" grade until the presentation is successfully given.