



# THE THESIS



## We are a community of scholars

A thesis is often the graduate student's first major contribution to scholarly literature in their field. In this informal seminar — *which will be conducted rather formally* — we will work together to develop your thesis proposal (also called a prospectus) in time for a fall defense. Through readings, writing exercises, discussions and presentations, you will learn the ins and outs of becoming a scholar alongside your peers.

"If we knew what we were doing, it would not be called research, would it?"

- Albert Einstein

## Readings and required text

### REQUIRED:

Booth, W.; Colcomb, G., and Williams, J. (2008). *The craft of research*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press. (A PDF is available online.)

*I suggest you read one to two subsections of this book per weekday. There are 85 subsections in the book. There are 65 weekdays (excluding holidays) between Aug. 31 and Dec. 7. Plan accordingly. We will discuss some of the issues mentioned in the book in our face-to-face meetings.*

Additional readings will be posted online.

## Seminar structure

Thesis hours are largely self-directed. This workshop is designed to help you travel the road to finishing the thesis in good company, and make your first contribution to the literature.

Together, we will discuss a component of creating original research, learn about a research or writing practice, present and critique our work, and engage in focused writing time.

During the weeks that we do not have face-to-face meetings, I expect you to arrange a virtual office hours appointment with me and/or use the “off” time to complete that week’s assignment, conduct library/database research, and work on your proposal.

### **In order to earn satisfactory progress for thesis hours scheduled with me this semester, you must:**

- 1) Complete all assignments on time and to the standard befitting a graduate student.
- 2) Create and plan to submit a journal article based on your thesis research. I will be your second author.
- 3) Submit a electronic copy of your finalized thesis proposal to me no later than 11:59 p.m. on **Sunday, Nov. 13**.
- 4) Defend your thesis proposal on or before **Friday, Dec. 16**.

**My service as your adviser beyond Fall 16 is conditional based on the fulfillment of these requirements.**

*Contact me.*

*Dr. Meredith D. Clark*

*Office location:  
GAB 102-D*

*Mobile: 940. 437.0059*

*Skype:*

*Meredith\_D\_Clark*

*Twitter:*

*@meredithclark*

*Email:*

*[meredith.Clark@unt.edu](mailto:meredith.Clark@unt.edu)*

*Virtual office hours:*

*Tuesdays &*

*Thursdays:*

*2 p.m. - 4 p.m.*

*Additional one-on-ones  
can be scheduled on  
Wednesdays between 1  
p.m. and 3 p.m.*

*If you have a quick  
question, shoot me a  
direct message (DM)  
via Twitter. It's the  
fastest and easiest way  
to reach me.*

	In class	Deliverable	Deadline
<b>Week 1: Aug. 31</b>			
<b>Choosing a topic</b>	Write a brief introduction	<b>One-page research plan</b>	<b>Sunday, Sept. 4 at 11:59 p.m.</b>
<b>Week 2: Sept. 7</b>	Library session	<b>Synopsis of a thesis</b>	<b>Sunday, Sept. 11, at 11:59 p.m.</b>
<b>Entering the conversation</b>	The moves that matter in academic writing		
<b>Week 3: Sept. 14</b>	One-on-ones	<b>Annotated bibliography (at least 30 sources)</b>	<b>Sunday, Sept. 18, at 11:59 p.m.</b>
<b>Annotated bibliography</b>			
<b>Week 4: Sept. 21</b>	Choosing appropriate method(s)	<b>One-page description of method(s)</b>	<b>Sunday, Sept 25, at 11:59 p.m.</b>
<b>Choosing your method(s)</b>			
<b>Week 5: Sept. 28</b>	Mindmaps & outlines	<b>Literature review outline</b>	<b>Sunday, Oct. 2, at 11:59 p.m.</b>
<b>Literature review, Part I</b>			
<b>Week 6: Oct. 5</b>	No F2F meeting	<b>Methods section due</b>	<b>Sunday, Oct. 9, at 11:59 p.m.</b>
<b>Workshop (&amp; IRB)</b>			
<b>Week 7: Oct. 12</b>	One-on-ones*	<b>Introduction and literature review due</b>	<b>Sunday, Oct. 16, at 11:59 p.m.</b>
<b>Workshop</b>			
<b>Week 8: Oct. 19</b>	Thesis presentations and critiques		
<b>Initial presentations</b>			

	In class	Deliverable	Deadline
<b>Week 9: Oct. 26</b>	No F2F meeting	<b>First draft of thesis due in to your adviser</b>	<b>Proof due by Sunday, Nov. 6</b>
<b>Week 10: Nov. 2</b>	One-on-ones	None	
<b>Week 11: Nov. 9</b>	Revisions	<i>My advisees only</i>	<b>Revisions due by Sunday, Nov. 13</b>
<b>Revisions</b>			
<b>Week 12: Nov. 16</b> <b>Planning your research</b>	Planning your research: pitfalls & best practices	<b>Spring semester research plan + calendar</b>	<b>You should submit your finalized proposal to your adviser by this date!</b>
<b>Week 13: Nov. 23</b>	No workshop meeting	<b>Thanksgiving break!</b>	<b>Take an actual break!</b>
<b>Thanksgiving</b>			
<b>Week 14: Nov. 30</b>	Preparing for the defense	<b>Presentation slides</b>	<b>Due by Sunday, Dec. 4, at 11:59 p.m.</b>
<b>DEFENSE PREP</b>			
<b>Week 15: Dec. 7</b>	<b>DEFEND</b>	<b>YOUR</b>	<b>PROPOSAL</b>

## MSOJ Grad Syllabus Statements

### JOURNALISM REQUIREMENTS & GUIDELINES

#### RE-TAKING FAILED JOURNALISM CLASSES

Students will not be allowed to automatically take a failed journalism course more than two times. Once you have failed a journalism course twice, you will not be allowed to enroll in that course for one calendar year after the date you received the second failing grade. Once a student has waited one calendar year after failing a course twice, the student may submit a written appeal to the director to be approved to enroll a third time. Students will not be allowed to re-take a failed journalism course more than three times.

#### TEXTBOOK POLICY

The Mayborn School of Journalism doesn't require students to purchase textbooks from the University Bookstore. Many are available through other bookstores or online.

#### FIRST CLASS DAY ATTENDANCE

Journalism instructors reserve the right to drop any student who does not attend the first class day of the semester.

#### OFFICE HOURS

I hold virtual office hours from 2 to 4 p.m. Tuesdays and Thursdays. Face-to-face meetings can be scheduled by appointment at least one week in advance.

I will respond to emails within 24 hours, Monday - Friday.

#### ATTENDANCE

One absence in the course is the limit without penalty toward your final grade, unless you have communicated with me from the beginning about an extraordinary problem. Coming to class late or leaving early may constitute an absence for that day. This is a seminar course, and it requires your attendance and participation each class meeting.

#### ACADEMIC ADVISING

Students should meet with their Academic Advisor at least one time per long semester (Fall & Spring). It is important to update your degree plan on a regular basis to ensure that you are on track for a timely graduation.

- It is imperative that students have paid for all enrolled classes. **Please check your online schedule daily through late registration to ensure you have not been dropped for non-payment of any amount.** Students unknowingly have been dropped from classes for various reasons such as financial aid, schedule change fees, parking fees, etc. MSOJ will not be able to reinstate students for any reason after late registration, regardless of situation. It is the student's responsibility to ensure all payments have been made.

### IMPORTANT DATES FOR FALL 2016

Classes Begin.	Aug 29
Census.	Sept 12
Labor Day (no classes; university closed).	Sept 5
Beginning this date a student who wishes to drop a course must first receive written consent of the instructor.	Sept 13
Last day for student to receive automatic grade of W for nonattendance.	
Last day for change in pass/no pass status.	
Last day to drop a course or withdraw from the semester with a grade of W for courses that the student is not passing. After this date, a grade of WF may be recorded.	Oct 7
Beginning this date instructors may drop students with a grade of WF for nonattendance.	Oct 8
Last day to drop with either W or WF.	
Last day for a student to drop a course with consent of the instructor.	Nov 7
Beginning this date, a student who qualifies may request an Incomplete, with a grade of I.	Nov 14
Last day to withdraw (drop all classes).	
Last day for an instructor to drop a student with a grade of WF for nonattendance.	Nov 23
Thanksgiving Break (no classes, university closed).	Nov 24-27
Last Regular Class Meeting.	Dec 8
Reading Day (no classes).	Dec 9
<u>Final Exams.</u>	Dec 10-15
End of term.	Dec 16

### ACADEMIC ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

Understanding the academic organizational structure and appropriate Chain of Command is important when resolving class-related or advising issues. When you need problems resolved, please follow the step outlined below:



Individual Faculty Member/Advisor

Director, Mayborn Graduate Institute

Dean, Mayborn School of Journalism

### OFFICE OF DISABILITY ACCOMMODATIONS

The University of North Texas and the Mayborn School of Journalism make reasonable academic accommodation for students with disabilities. Students seeking accommodation must first register with the Office of Disability Accommodation (ODA) to verify their eligibility. If a disability is verified, the ODA will provide you with an accommodation letter to be delivered to faculty to begin a private discussion regarding your specific needs in a course. You may request accommodations at any time, however, ODA notices of accommodation should be provided as early as possible in the semester to avoid any delay in implementation. Note that students must obtain a new letter of accommodation for every semester and must meet with each faculty member prior to implementation in each class. Students are strongly encouraged to deliver letters of accommodation during faculty office hours or by appointment. Faculty members have the authority to ask students to discuss such letters during their designated office hours to protect the privacy of the student. For additional information see the Office of Disability Accommodation website at <http://www.unt.edu/oda>. You may also contact them by phone at 940.565.4323.

### COURSE SAFETY STATEMENTS

Students in the Mayborn School of Journalism are urged to use proper safety procedures and guidelines. While working in laboratory sessions, students are expected and required to identify and use property safety guidelines in all activities requiring lifting, climbing, walking on slippery surfaces, using equipment and tools, handling chemical solutions and hot and cold products. Students should be aware that the University of North Texas is not liable for injuries incurred while students are participating in class activities. All students are encouraged to secure adequate insurance coverage in the event of accidental injury. Students who do not have insurance coverage should consider obtaining Student Health Insurance for this insurance program. Brochures for this insurance are available in the UNT Health and Wellness Center on campus. Students who are injured during class activities may seek medical attention at the UNT Health and Wellness Center at rates that are reduced compared to other medical facilities. If you have an insurance plan other than Student Health Insurance at UNT, please be sure that your plan covers treatment at this facility. If you choose not to go to the UNT Health and Wellness Center, you may be transported to an emergency room at a local hospital. You are responsible for expenses incurred there.

### ACADEMIC DISHONESTY

Academic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to, the use of any unauthorized assistance in taking quizzes, tests, or exams; dependence upon the aid of sources beyond those authorized by the instructor, the acquisition of tests or other material belonging to a faculty member, dual submission of a paper or project, resubmission of a paper or project to a different class without express permission from the instructors, or any other act designed to give a student an unfair advantage. Plagiarism includes the paraphrase or direct quotation of published or unpublished works *without* full and clear acknowledgment of the author/source. Academic dishonesty will bring about disciplinary action which may include expulsion from the university. This is explained in the UNT Student Handbook. **Individual faculty should include penalties for academic dishonesty in their courses.**

### MSOJ ACADEMIC INTEGRITY POLICY

The codes of ethics from the Society of Professional Journalists, American Advertising Federation and Public Relations Society of America address truth and honesty. The Mayborn School of Journalism embraces these tenets and believes that academic dishonesty of any kind – including plagiarism and fabrication – is incongruent with all areas of journalism. The school's policy aligns with UNT Policy

18.1.16 and requires reporting any act of academic dishonesty to the Office for Academic Integrity for investigation. If the student has a previous confirmed offense (whether the first offense was in the journalism school or another university department) and the student is found to have committed another offense, the department will request the additional sanction of removing the student from the Mayborn School of Journalism. The student may appeal to the Office for Academic Integrity, which ensures due process and allows the student to remain in class pending the appeal.

### **CLASSROOM POLICIES**

Student behavior that interferes with an instructor's ability to conduct a class or other students' opportunity to learn is unacceptable and disruptive and will not be tolerated in any instructional forum at UNT. Students engaging in unacceptable behavior will be directed to leave the classroom, and the instructor may refer the student to the Center for Student Rights and Responsibilities to consider whether the student's conduct violated the Code of Student Conduct. The University's expectations for student conduct apply to all instructional forums, including university and electronic classrooms, labs, discussion groups, field trips, etc. The Code of Student Conduct can be found at [http://www.unt.edu/csrr/student\\_conduct/index.html](http://www.unt.edu/csrr/student_conduct/index.html).

The Mayborn School of Journalism requires that students respect and maintain all university property. Students will be held accountable through disciplinary action for any intentional damages they cause in classrooms. (e.g., writing on tables). Disruptive behavior is not tolerated (e.g., arriving late, leaving early, sleeping, talking on the phone, texting or game playing, making inappropriate comments, ringing cellular phones/beepers, dressing inappropriately).

### **STUDENT PERCEPTIONS OF TEACHING (SPOT)**

Student feedback is important and an essential part of participation in this course. The student evaluation of instruction is a requirement for all organized classes at UNT. The short SPOT survey will be made available **Nov. 21 - Dec. 6** to provide you with an opportunity to evaluate how this course is taught. For the spring 2016 semester you will receive an email on **Nov. 21 (12:01 a.m.)** from "UNT SPOT Course Evaluations via *IASystem* Notification" ([no-reply@iasystem.org](mailto:no-reply@iasystem.org)) with the survey link. Please look for the email in your UNT email inbox. Simply click on the link and complete your survey. Once you complete the survey you will receive a confirmation email that the survey has been submitted. For additional information, please visit the spot website at [www.spot.unt.edu](http://www.spot.unt.edu) or email [spot@unt.edu](mailto:spot@unt.edu).

### **FINAL EXAM POLICY**

Final exams will be administered at the designated times during the final week of each long semester and during the specified day of each summer term. Please check the course calendar early in the semester to avoid any schedule conflicts.

### **ACCESS TO INFORMATION**

As you know, your access point for business and academic services at UNT occurs within the my.unt.edu site [www.my.unt.edu](http://www.my.unt.edu). If you do not regularly check EagleConnect or link it to your favorite e-mail account, please so do, as this is where you learn about job and internship opportunities, MSOJ events, scholarships, and other important information. The website that explains Eagle Connect and how to forward your email: <http://eagleconnect.unt.edu/>

### **IMPORTANT NOTICE FOR F-1 STUDENTS TAKING DISTANCE EDUCATION COURSES**

To comply with immigration regulations, an F-1 visa holder within the United States may need to engage in an on-campus experiential component for this course. This component (which must be approved in advance by the instructor) can include activities such as taking an on-campus exam, participating in multiple on-campus lecture or lab activity, or other on-campus experience integral to the completion of this course.

If such an on-campus activity is required, it is the student's responsibility to do the following:



- (1) Submit a written request to the instructor for an on-campus experiential component within one week of the start of the course.
- (2) Ensure that the activity on campus takes place and the instructor documents it in writing with a notice sent to the International Advising Office. The UNT International Advising Office has a form available that you may use for this purpose.

**Because the decision may have serious immigration consequences, if an F-1 student is unsure about his or her need to participate in an on-campus experiential component for this course, students should contact the UNT International Advising Office (telephone 940-565-2195 or email [international@unt.edu](mailto:international@unt.edu)) to get clarification before the one-week deadline.**

### **EMERGENCY NOTIFICATION & PROCEDURES**

UNT uses a system called Eagle Alert to quickly notify you with critical information in an event of emergency (i.e., severe weather, campus closing, and health and public safety emergencies like chemical spills, fires, or violence). The system sends voice messages (and text messages upon permission) to the phones of all active faculty staff, and students. Please make certain to update your phone numbers at [www.my.unt.edu](http://www.my.unt.edu). Some helpful emergency preparedness actions include: 1) ensuring you know the evacuation routes and severe weather shelter areas, determining how you will contact family and friends if phones are temporarily unavailable, and identifying where you will go if you need to evacuate the Denton area suddenly. In the event of a university closure, your instructor will communicate with you through Blackboard regarding assignments, exams, field trips, and other items that may be impacted by the closure.

## Statement of Student Learning Outcomes, UNT Mayborn School of Journalism

Since 1969, the UNT Department of Journalism (Mayborn School of Journalism effective September 1, 2009) has been accredited by the Accrediting Council on Education in Journalism and Mass Communication. This national accreditation also extends to the Mayborn Graduate Institute of Journalism, the only accredited professional master's program in Texas. About one-fourth of all journalism and mass communication programs in the United States are accredited by ACEJMC. National accreditation enhances your education here, because it certifies that the department and graduate institute adhere to many standards established by the council. Among these standards are student learning outcomes, covered by journalism courses in all sequences.

This course, JOUR 5950, will help to meet the student learning outcomes that have been checked by your professor, Dr. Meredith Clark .

Each graduate must:

- 🍏 Think critically, creatively and independently
- 🍏 Conduct research and evaluate information by methods appropriate to the communications professions in which they work
- 🍏 Write correctly and clearly in forms and styles appropriate for the communications professions, audiences and purposes they serve
- 🍏 Critically evaluate their own work and that of others for accuracy and fairness, clarity, appropriate style and grammatical correctness