

This document establishes expectations for graduate students about communicating with faculty, administrators, and staff as well as coursework, teaching, and research obligations.

Expectations for Advising and Career Development

- *Role of Advisor:* A critical component of graduate education is working with an advisor related to (a) coursework and degree progress, (b) research/teaching obligations, and (c) career goals/expectations. Your advisor is a resource on these matters, and you should work collaboratively with them throughout your time in the department. Your advisor, along with the department chair, director of graduate studies, faculty instructors, and course supervisors, are also supervisory contacts who evaluate your program performance (in coursework, teaching, research, service, and degree progress).
- *Communication with Advisor/Committee:* Set expectations with your advisor about an appropriate level of advising communication via email and/or in-person/virtual (e.g. once a semester, once a month, once a week.). In addition, talk with your advisor about general timelines for submitting and receiving feedback on your work. Provide adequate time for your advisor and committee to review work such as comprehensive exams and theses/dissertations.
- *Graduate handbook:* Familiarize yourself with the requirements for your graduate degree in the handbook as well as benchmarks regarding degree progress. The handbook is posted on the graduate studies portion of the department website (see <https://www.usf.edu/arts-sciences/departments/communication/graduate/overview.aspx>)
- *Career goals:* Begin conversations early with your advisor (and later with your committee members) about your goals and expectations for your time in the program. You should carefully consider how the areas you would like to study (theoretical, conceptual, and methodological) may assist in meeting your (non)academic career goals.

Department/Community Expectations

- *Communication with Department Administrators/Staff:* Complete all professional requests from departmental administrators (e.g. yearly evaluations, requests for course and teaching schedule preferences, grade submissions, textbook orders) on time. Respond to work-related emails within 48 business hours. Treat department administrators and staff in a professional manner, including by allowing sufficient time for the completion of department and university paperwork. Last-minute requests for administrative assistance should be rare (as opposed to the pattern).
- *Department events:* The department periodically sponsors events, including colloquia, visiting speakers, COM Day, and beginning-of-the-year activities. These events are planned with students in mind. Please make reasonable attempts, within the constraints of your schedule, to attend events. Departmental citizenship and work socialization are skills to foster for future careers both in and outside of the academy.
- *Be mindful – time management:* Your time and attention are critical resources in a graduate program. Faculty are happy to chat about balancing competing demands, including requests from faculty or graduate students to work on multiple types of outside-the-classroom projects as well as employment opportunities that may arise outside of the department.
- *Ethics:* Exercise honest and ethical behavior in all academic pursuits, whether these undertakings pertain to course work, research, engagement, or teaching, as outlined in the USF student code of conduct (<https://www.usf.edu/student-affairs/dean-of-students/policies/student-conduct-policies.aspx>)

Coursework Expectations

- *Syllabi*: Review syllabi and course policies for each of your classes.
- *Attendance*: You are expected to attend all graduate classes and to arrive on time. Exceptions should be discussed well in advance of each class with the faculty member of the class.
- *Communication with Instructors*: Have conversations with your course instructors about class expectations, as well as any challenges understanding class material and progress toward completion of the course. Regular communication is important.
- *Feedback on your work*: Learning how to approach feedback is an important part of graduate education. The guidance/feedback received on submitted coursework should be approached seriously and professionally. Your ideas, arguments, and approaches will be challenged at times in the classroom as well as in your written work. If you have questions or need clarification about any feedback on assignments, discuss those with the course instructor.

Teaching/Teaching Assistant Expectations

- *Communication with Course Supervisors*: Have conversations with the course supervisor and/or instructor of record (for TAs) about class materials, expectations, and pedagogical challenges and opportunities that arise in your classroom.
- *Punctuality and Cancellation*: Graduate instructors are expected to arrive to teach on time. Class cancellations should be considered only in extenuating circumstances and should be communicated in advance both to students and department administrators/course supervisors.
- *Observation*: Plan to have your teaching observed by your advisor and/or course supervisor at least twice for doctoral student instructors of record and once for master's student instructors of record during your time in the program.

Expectations for Research and Productivity

- *Communication about Research Projects*: Communicate regularly with faculty advisors and course instructors on matters related to research (e.g., research projects initiated in classes, submissions to conferences and journals, possible collaborative opportunities).
- *Clarify Expectations*: Request clear guidelines of expectations from the supervising faculty member on research activities including authorship criteria and timelines for deliverables.
- *Independence*: Recognize that the faculty advisor and committee members are responsible for guiding graduate-student research but that students are responsible for conducting the independent research required for the graduate degree.
- *Awareness*: Recognize the time constraints and other demands imposed on faculty members and program staff.