



UNIVERSITY OF CENTRAL FLORIDA

Digital Media: Visual Language and Interactive Media MA Graduate Program Handbook

Last updated February 24, 2016

Table of Contents

Introduction	1
Curriculum	2
Timeline for Completion.....	2
Suggested MA Non-Thesis Degree Program Road Map* - 36 Credits	2
Examination Requirements	2
Comprehensive Examinations	2
Thesis Requirements.....	3
Thesis Option.....	3
University Dissertation Requirements	3
Thesis Defense	4
Internship Requirements	4
Criteria for Internship	4
Graduate Research	4
Financial Support.....	5
Assistantship Opportunities	5
Teaching Assistantship Resources	5
Graduate Student Associations	5
Professional Development.....	6
Internships / Teaching Opportunities.....	6
Pathways to Success Workshops	6
Support for Research Presentations	6
Scholarly Publications.....	6
Departmental Awards via College and University	6
Job Search.....	7
Career Services and Experiential Learning	7
Forms.....	7
Useful Links	7
Grad Faculty	8
Contact Info	9

Digital Media: Visual Language and Interactive Media MA

Together, the [Graduate Student Handbook](#) and your graduate program handbook should serve as your main guide throughout your graduate career. The Graduate Student Handbook includes university information, policies, requirements and guidance for all graduate students. Your program handbook describes the details about graduate study and requirements in your specific program. While both of these handbooks are wonderful resources, know that you are always welcome to talk with faculty and staff in your program and in the Graduate College.

The central activities and missions of a university rest upon the fundamental assumption that all members of the university community conduct themselves in accordance with a strict adherence to academic and scholarly integrity. As a graduate student and member of the university community, you are expected to display the highest standards of academic and personal integrity.

Here are some resources to help you better understand your responsibilities:

- [Academic Honesty](#)
- [Academic Integrity Training](#) - Open to all graduate students at no cost
- [Plagiarism](#)

Introduction

This MA track is embedded in a rich environment of digital media work at UCF and in the surrounding community. The following are active areas of work at UCF:

- Digital media in instructional applications
- Experience design
- Interactive performance
- Serious games for training and education
- Information architecture for the World Wide Web
- Social and collaborative media design
- Cultural heritage preservation using new media

The Digital Media faculty have extensive professional and academic experience in areas spanning film, video, multimedia, interactive and web design, simulation and training, game design and development, broadcast design and motion graphics, animation, visual language, immersive design environments, database design, e-commerce, digital storytelling, instructional design and educational technology.

During the first academic year, students take core courses as dictated by the student's plan of study and electives suggested by their adviser. The MA Graduate Program Coordinator is the adviser for all non-thesis students. The coordinator is also the adviser for all thesis students until a Digital Media faculty mentor agrees to work with the student. The faculty mentor then becomes the student's graduate advisor.

In the second year, students who select the thesis option will complete core and required course work as well as thesis research. Thesis students must be accepted by a faculty member for supervision in order to carry out the required thesis study. Thesis option students are encouraged to begin this process immediately upon entering the program by meeting faculty who work in areas of interest complementary to the student's. Non-thesis option students will complete core, required course work and electives as recommended by the MA program coordinator.

Typically, students entering or continuing professional careers following the MA should select the non-thesis option. Those who plan to enter doctoral programs should select the thesis option.

Curriculum

Please visit the [Graduate Catalog](#) to see the current curriculum for our program.

Timeline for Completion

Suggested MA Non-Thesis Degree Program Road Map* - 36 Credits

1st Year

Fall

- DIG 5487 Principles of Visual Language (3)
- DIG 6546 Previsualization and Concept Development (3)
- DIG 6647 Science and Technology of Dynamic Media (3)

Semester Total: 9 credit hours

Spring

- DIG 5137 Information Architecture (3)
- DIG 6432 Transmedia Story Creation (3)
- DIG 6136 Design for Media (3)

Semester Total: 9 credit hours

2nd Year

Fall

- DIG 5565C Digital Asset Management (3)
- ARH, ART, DIG or FIL Elective (3)
- ARH, ART, DIG or FIL Elective (3)

Semester Total: 9 credit hours

Spring

- DIG 6551 Applied Interactive Story (3)
- DIG 6812 Digital Interaction for Informal Learning (3)
- ARH, ART, DIG or FIL Elective (3)
- Comprehensive Exam

Semester Total: 9 credit hours

*Suggested sequence only: Course offerings are subject to change. Summer coursework may be offered.

Students interested in the thesis option of the Digital Media MA should consult with the Graduate Program Director and Graduate Advisor.

Examination Requirements

Comprehensive Examinations

All Digital Media MA students must take a Comprehensive Examination. The process is designed to evaluate both the students' basic knowledge and competencies, and their ability to synthesize and apply what they know in depth—that is, both the breadth and depth of student learning in the Program. It is not intended to test specific course content for which students have already been evaluated and graded. The exam is designed to test the student's ability to respond and substantiate the response in a professional and educated fashion.

The Comprehensive Examination consists of five general categories. Students answer four questions in a total maximum time of four hours. Students will be given the opportunity to select one question from any four of the five categories.

Students should plan on taking the Comprehensive Examination in the spring semester of their final year in the program.

Thesis Requirements

Thesis Option

Each candidate for the Master of Arts (Thesis Option) submits a thesis prospectus and preliminary bibliography on a topic selected in consultation with the adviser. The formal thesis is initiated by the preparation of a proposal that meets both departmental and university requirements for the thesis. Prior to enrollment into thesis credit hours, the adviser, in consultation with the student, designates a Thesis Committee to be further approved by the College Graduate Dean. This committee is chaired by the adviser and includes two or more additional faculty members from the Department of Digital Media.

The members of the student's thesis committee judge the proposal as the preliminary step to beginning the thesis. This committee must approve the Thesis Proposal before academic credit can accrue.

The thesis is a formal written document. The introduction cites similar, related, and antecedent work. The body explains the purposes of the project, the method of its production, and any evaluation that was performed. The conclusion includes plans for future work. The thesis also includes an archival copy of the resulting creative product. Both the thesis and the creative product must be delivered in digital form, acceptable by the UCF library according to its standards for digital dissertations and theses.

University Dissertation Requirements

The College of Graduate Studies [Thesis and Dissertation page](#) contains information on the university's requirements for dissertation formatting, format review, defenses, final submission, and more. A step-by-step completion guide is also available on [Thesis and Dissertation Services](#) Site.

All university deadlines are listed in the [Academic Calendar](#). Your program or college may have other earlier deadlines; please check with your program and college staff for additional deadlines.

The following requirements must be met by dissertation students in their final term:

- Submit a properly formatted file for initial format review by the format review deadline
- Submit the Thesis and Dissertation Release Option form well before the defense
- Defend by the defense deadline
- Receive format approval (if not granted upon initial review)
- Submit signed approval form by final submission deadline
- Submit final dissertation document by final submission deadline

Students must format their dissertation according to the standards outlined in [Thesis and Dissertation Webcourse](#). Formatting questions or issues can be submitted to the Format Help page in the [Thesis and Dissertation Services](#) site. Format reviews and final submission must be completed in the [Thesis and Dissertation Services](#) site. The Dissertation Approval Form is also available in the Thesis and Dissertation Services site.

The College of Graduate Studies offers several thesis and dissertation [Workshops](#) each term. Students are highly encouraged to attend these workshops early in the dissertation process to fully understand the above policies and procedures.

The College of Graduate Studies thesis and dissertation office is best reached by email at editor@ucf.edu.

Thesis Defense

In addition to a written thesis, the final step in completing the thesis requirement is an oral defense before the thesis committee. Candidates must present their creative or research work and explain its creation in an oral defense. These presentations are made to the student's committee in a public meeting that other faculty and students may attend.

Internship Requirements

Criteria for Internship

The basic criteria for designation as an internship course at UCF includes student experiential learning which:

- relates directly to a student's academic major or major-related career goal
- occurs in business, industry, non-profit, educational, or governmental agencies
- involves collaboration between campus and business community that aims to increase students' work, personal, and academic competencies
- provides appropriate supervision both on site through a professional with related training and skills and through guidance from faculty
- involves structure for learning, including application of classroom content and assignments for reflection that would result in the development of student competencies and go beyond simple assignment of a student completing a set number of hours experience in a setting outside the academic classroom
- involves a minimum of 45 hours per credit per semester at the participating worksite to provide real-world experience and to promote interaction between students and professionals toward the development of professional attitudes and behavior (more hours may be required; fewer hours may be justified by the concentration of the experience or the learning objectives)

All Directed Research, Independent Study and Internship must be accompanied by a syllabus with expectations and due dates. This document serves as a contract between the instructor of record and the student for the grade is determined.

Graduate Research

UCF has three fundamental responsibilities with regard to graduate student research. They are to (1) support an academic environment that stimulates the spirit of inquiry, (2) develop the intellectual property stemming from research, and (3) disseminate the intellectual property to the general public. Students are responsible for being informed of rules, regulations and policies pertaining to research. Below are some general policies and resources.

Research Policies and Ethics Information: UCF's Office of Research & Commercialization ensures the UCF community complies with local, state and federal regulations that relate to research. For polices including required Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval when conducting research involving human subjects (e.g. surveys), animal research, conflict of interest and general responsible conduct of research, please see their website: research.ucf.edu/ > Compliance.

UCF's Patent and Invention Policy: In most cases, UCF owns the intellectual property developed using university resources. The graduate student, as inventor, will, according to this policy, share in the proceeds of the invention. Please see the current UCF Graduate Catalog for details: catalog.ucf.edu/ > Policies > General Graduate Policies.

Financial Support

Digital Media MA students are eligible for different kinds of support:

Need-based assistance: The University provides need-based scholarships funded by the federal government. These are based on financial need as determined by the FAFSA form and are awarded in the middle of April. We encourage all students to complete a FAFSA application form online at fafsa.ed.gov.

Fellowships: These competitive, merit-based awards are usually reserved for newly admitted students. These awards pay a stipend and/or provide a tuition waiver. To be eligible, students must have their entire application on file by January 15. To view a list of fellowships and the eligibility requirements please visit: graduate.ucf.edu/fellowships/.

Assistantship Opportunities

Graduate students often receive assistantships in their departments or other university offices while pursuing graduate studies. Graduate assistants may teach, conduct research, or perform other tasks that contribute to the student's professional development. Graduate students may become Graduate Teaching Associates, Assistants, or Graders (GTAs), Graduate Research Associates or Assistants (GRAs), or Graduate Assistants (GAs). For eligibility, students must be accepted as a graduate student in a degree program and be enrolled full-time. Due to the evolving nature of the assistantship program, please consult the Graduate Studies website for the most current information: graduate.ucf.edu/graduate_teaching/.

Teaching Assistantship Resources

If you received a graduate teaching assistantship, you may be assigned teaching responsibilities as part of your stipend. The following information will be useful in fulfilling your teaching duties:

Instructor Training and Development: The Faculty Center for Teaching and Learning (FCTL) promotes excellence in all levels of teaching at the University of Central Florida. To that end, it offers several programs for the professional development of Graduate Teaching Assistants at UCF.

GTA Training (mandatory for employment as a GTA): This two-day workshop provides information and resources for students who will be instructors. The seminars cover a variety of topics, including course development, learning theories, lecturing, and academic freedom. Those interested in additional training can also attend an optional training session that normally follows the mandatory training.

Preparing Tomorrow's Faculty Program: This certificate program (12-weeks) consists of group and individualized instruction by Faculty Center staff and experienced UCF professors. Textbooks and materials are provided.

For more information about GTA Training, see fctl.ucf.edu > Events > GTA Programs.

Graduate Student Associations

The Conference of Southern Graduate Schools (CSGS) is an organization of over 200 graduate schools across the southern region of the United States. Its purpose is to consider topics relating to graduate study and research which are of mutual interest and concern to the member institutions. www.csgs.org

The Graduate Student Association (GSA) is UCF's graduate organization committed to enrich graduate students' personal, educational and professional experience. To learn more or get involved, please visit facebook.com/groups/UCFgsa/. For individual department or graduate program organizations, please see program advisor.

Professional Development

Internships / Teaching Opportunities

As part of the Digital Media curriculum, you may have the opportunity to obtain experience as a teaching assistant, research assistant, or teacher-of-record for an undergraduate level art course. We recommend that you take advantage of these opportunities if you are interested in them and as they become available to you.

Pathways to Success Workshops

Coordinated by the College of Graduate Studies, the Pathways to Success program offers the following free development opportunities for graduate students including workshops in Academic Integrity, Graduate Grantsmanship, Graduate Teaching, Personal Development, Professional Development, and Research. For more information and how to register, please visit graduate.ucf.edu/pathways-to-success/.

Support for Research Presentations

All full-time students enrolled in the Emerging Media MFA, Digital Media track or Digital Media MA (thesis-option) Visual Language and Interactive Media program are eligible to receive awards for support of travel expenses for presenting papers at national or international professional meetings or conferences, or for performing or exhibiting original work. The student's presentation must be officially recognized by the sponsoring organization. The limited funds available for travel support make this a highly competitive program. Travel support funding is contingent on annual budget allocations. Applicants are encouraged to read and follow the guidelines and application requirements. Applications may be requested from the Digital Media Graduate Administrative Coordinator.

The College of Graduate Studies also offers Presentation Fellowships to enrolled master's, specialist, and doctoral students to share their research at a professional meeting. For requirements and application deadlines, see [Presentation Fellowship](#).

Scholarly Publications

Scholarly publications are not required for the MA degree, but such publications may be professionally even for a studio artist. For more information about how to pursue these opportunities, consult with a faculty member, a member of your thesis committee, or the Program Coordinator or the Graduate Program Director for Art.

Departmental Awards via College and University

The university provides several achievement awards:

Graduate Excellence Awards

Each year, students can submit a portfolio for nomination of College and University level awards of excellence. These are intended to showcase student excellence in academic achievement, teaching, research, leadership, and community service.

- **Award for Excellence by a Graduate Teaching Assistant** - This award is intended for students who provide teaching support and assistance under the direction of a lead teacher. This award focuses on the extent and quality of the assistance provided by the student to the lead instructor and the students in the class. (This award is not intended for students who are teachers of record.)
- **Award for Excellence in Graduate Student Teaching** - This award is for students who serve as teachers of record and have independent classroom responsibilities. The focus of this award is on the quality of the student's teaching and the academic contributions of those activities.
- **Award for the Outstanding Master's Thesis** - This award recognizes graduate students for excellence in the master's thesis. The focus is on the quality and contribution of the student's thesis research. Excellence of the master's thesis may be demonstrated by evidence such as (but not limited to): publications in refereed or peer reviewed journals, the candidates' juried exhibitions and awards record, recognitions and awards from professional organizations, and praise from faculty members and other colleagues in the field. The university award will be forwarded to a national-level competition sponsored by the Council of Southern Graduate Schools (CSGS) when the thesis discipline corresponds to the annual submission request.

For more information about these awards, please see the College of [Graduate Studies website](#).

For more information about the Council of Southern Graduate Schools (CSGS) thesis and dissertation awards, please see their website: csgs.org/ > Awards.

Job Search

Career Services and Experiential Learning

Graduate career development issues are unique and include evaluating academic and non-academic career choices, discussing graduate school effect on career choices, as well as learning, evaluating, and refining networking and interviewing skills. Whatever your needs, the offices of Career Services and Experiential Learning offer services and resources to aid in the career exploration and job search of Master and Doctoral students in every academic discipline. (See www.career.ucf.edu)

Forms

- [College of Graduate Studies Forms and References](#)
A complete listing of general forms and references for graduate students, with direct links, may be found here.
- [Graduate Petition Form](#)
When unusual situations arise, petitions for exceptions to policy may be requested by the student. Depending on the type of appeal, the student should contact his/her program adviser to begin the petition process.
- [Traveling Scholar Form](#)
If a student would like to take advantage of special resources available on another campus but not available on the home campus; for example, special course offerings, research opportunities, unique laboratories and library collections, this form must be completed and approved.

Useful Links

- [Digital Media: Visual Language and Interactive Media Website](#)
- [Nicholson School of Communication and Media Website](#)
- [College of Graduate Studies](#)

- [Academic Calendar](#)
- [Bookstore](#)
- [Campus Map](#)
- [Counseling Center](#)
- [Faculty Center for Teaching and Learning](#)
- [Financial Assistance](#)
- [Golden Rule Student Handbook](#)
- [Graduate Catalog](#)
- [Graduate Student Association](#)
- [Graduate Student Center](#)
- [Housing and Residence Life](#)
- [Housing, off campus](#)
- [Institutional Review Board](#)
- [Knights Email](#)
- [Library](#)
- [NID Help](#)
- [Pathways to Success](#)
- [Recreation and Wellness Center](#)
- [Shuttles Parking Services](#)
- [Student Accessibility Services](#)
- [Student Government Association](#)
- [Student Health Services](#)
- [Thesis and Dissertation \(ETD\)](#)
- [UCF Alumni Association](#)
- [UCF Global](#)
- [University Testing Center](#)
- [University Writing Center](#)

Grad Faculty

Asterisk = has previous committee experience, which qualifies the person to serve as chair, co-chair or vice chair.

Fanfarelli, Joseph

College: Nicholson School of Communication and Media

Disciplinary affiliations: Digital Media

Contact Info: Joseph.Fanfarelli@ucf.edu

Harrington, Maria

College: Nicholson School of Communication and Media

Disciplinary affiliations: Digital Media

Contact Info: Maria.Harrington@ucf.edu

McDaniel, Rudy *

College: Nicholson School of Communication and Media

Disciplinary affiliations: Digital Media

Research interests: Interactive narrative, game design, information architecture, computing for the humanities

Contact Info: rudy@ucf.edu

Websites: <http://www.svad.ucf.edu/~rmcdaniel/>

Mosher, Matthew

College: Nicholson School of Communication and Media

Disciplinary affiliations: Digital Media

Contact Info: Matthew.Mosher@ucf.edu

Salter, Anastasia

College: Nicholson School of Communication and Media

Disciplinary affiliations: Digital Media

Contact Info: Anastasia.Salter@ucf.edu

Santana, Maria *

College: Nicholson School of Communication and Media

Disciplinary affiliations: Communication

Research interests: Women journalism, mass communication, visual literacy, global communication

Contact Info: santana@ucf.edu

Websites: <http://www.mcsantana.com>

Smith, Peter *

College: Nicholson School of Communication and Media

Disciplinary affiliations: Digital Media

Contact Info: Peter.Smith@ucf.edu

Stanfill, Mel

College: Nicholson School of Communication and Media

Disciplinary affiliations: Texts and Technology, Digital Media

Contact Info: Melissa.Stanfill@ucf.edu

Underberg-Goode, Natalie *

College: Nicholson School of Communication and Media

Disciplinary affiliations: Digital Media

Research interests: Folklore, popular culture, and new media, digital ethnography, visual anthropology, digital adaptation of folklore, collaborative approaches to using new media, Peru, Latin Americans in Southern U.S.

Contact Info: nunderbe@ucf.edu

Websites: <http://www.digitalethnography.dm.ucf.edu/>

Contact Info

- **Natalie Underberg-Goode**
Associate Professor
OTC 5155
Phone: 407-823-1140