

Organizational Management and Communication (OMC) Master's (MS) Program Graduate Student Handbook

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This document is intended as a brief overview of the facilities, academic programs, and administrative procedures for graduate students affiliated with the Organizational Management and Communication master's program, within the College of Applied Studies at Florida State University Panama City. More details can be found by clicking on the links provided throughout the document. Important sources of information for graduate students include the [FSU Graduate School](#) and, in particular, the [information for new students](#), which

includes a campus-wide Graduate Handbook. Other key sources include the [FSU Graduate Bulletin](#), and the General Bulletin's [academic year calendar](#).

About the Organizational Management and Communication Program

The Organizational Management and Communication (OMC) graduate program is housed within the College of Applied Studies at Florida State University's Panama City Campus. The program leads to a Master of Science in Professional Communication and is designed as a terminal degree for graduate students who are either currently employed or seeking to develop professional skills in leadership and staff management across a wide range of workplace, organizational, or group settings. The OMC major is offered fully online, providing the flexibility needed for working professionals and others who require a more adaptable graduate study experience.

By the conclusion of the master's program, students will be competent in essential leadership and management skills from the fields of Communication and Behavior Analysis/Organizational Behavior Management, which is the application of the science of behavior for leading groups of people and solving organizational systems- and employee performance-based problems. This online program has been built to include academic projects, research, and coursework that will be immediately applicable for all graduate students currently employed in any organization/business or working with others in any capacity.

The goals of the OMC program include:

- Prepare students for entry or advancement in their professional careers with integral leadership and management skills for any organizational or workplace setting
- Provide students experience in organizational communication planning, project management, and crisis communication planning
- Help students develop quantitative and qualitative skills in organizational communication and management contexts and be a critical consumer of research and information
- Equip students with advanced knowledge of behavior analytic approaches to leadership, management, and supervision
- Engage students in activities and hands-on experience in course projects that build their leadership and management repertoires

The skills to be developed include:

- Developing and implementing data-based strategies as a leader/manager for training staff, employees, or any individual in an organization, workplace, or group setting
- Managing and resolving conflicts in any organizational, group, or business setting
- Evaluating effectiveness of communication and behavior-based strategies

- Understanding the importance of effective communication and interpersonal skills with an emphasis on cultural competency and working with diverse groups
- Analyzing communication content and impacts of communication
- Critically evaluating behavior-based approaches to supervision and management and utilizing data for improvement
- Creating a motivating and reinforcing environment to enhance productivity and effectiveness of groups of people in any setting, organization, or business
- Behaviorally analyzing performance-based behaviors and creating effective systems in workplaces

Location and Facilities

The faculty and staff associated with the OMC program are located in the Holley Academic Center on the FSU Panama City Campus in Panama City, Florida. The physical space includes offices for core faculty and adjuncts, along with student study areas, student veterans lounge/study area, computer labs & a library learning center. The FSU Panama City campus also offers 9 graduate and 20 undergraduate degree programs.

The OMC program is an online major and access to Canvas is required for all students to participate in this program. Having reliable internet and technology will be essential for working in this program.

Admissions

Applicants to the MS OMC program must apply online through the FSU [Graduate Admissions Application Portal](#). Admission decisions are made by the Professional Communication Graduate Faculty. For questions about the application or admission process, please contact: Angie Sexton, Academic Program Specialist, at asexton@pc.fsu.edu or 850-770-2178.

Application Deadlines

Fall Admission Deadline: July 1

Spring Admission Deadline: November 1

Summer Admission Deadline: March 1

Application Requirements

To be considered for admission a student must have completed a bachelor's degree from an accredited university and attained a GPA (Grade Point Average) of at least 3.0 (on a 4.0 system) on all work attempted while registered as an upper-division student working toward a baccalaureate degree. Given the broad applicability of the skills learned in this graduate program, undergraduate degree areas may vary. Preferred qualifications include related professional experience in business or organizational settings and/or experience as a manager

or leader (demonstrated in CV/resume and described in the personal statement). While students may be admitted from any academic field, some students may need to complete extra course work to make up deficiencies.

All applicants for the OMC master's program must meet both university and departmental requirements.

Florida State University Graduate Admission Requirements

1. Complete and submit your graduate application online through the [Graduate Admissions Application Portal](#).
2. Pay a non-refundable application fee of \$30. Application packets will not be reviewed until the fee has been paid.
3. Submit a completed [Residency Affidavit](#). All applicants must submit this form, which is completed online.
4. Arrange for an official transcript from each college or university attended to be sent to the Office of Admissions. Transcripts may be sent digitally but must come directly from the institutions attended. An unofficial transcript may be uploaded for the College of Applied Studies for review.

OMC Graduate Admission Requirements

In addition to the university requirements, OMC program applicants must meet the program requirements listed below. A separate program application is not required. The university application specifies the program to which you are applying. Documents are submitted with your online university application.

FSU and the OMC program applies a holistic approach to the application review process. Consideration is given to all application components including GPA, statement of purpose, letters of recommendation, related experiences, and record of preparation.

Meeting the minimum GPA or experience requirements does not guarantee admission. Applicants with lower GPAs are encouraged to strengthen their application through strong letters of recommendation, a compelling statement of purpose, and relevant work experience. Admission decisions will be provided through the FSU admission application portal or by notification from the graduate program faculty or staff.

1. A minimum 3.0 GPA (on a 4.0 scale) undergraduate academic record from accredited universities.
2. In your FSU application, applicants should submit a self-authored, original, statement of purpose addressing their interest and fit for this program. This statement will be evaluated for its style, clarity of purpose, organization, grammar, and development of ideas. In the statement of purpose, all applicants should answer the following questions:
 - a) Why have you chosen to apply to this master's program?

- b) What are your career goals and how does this program help you meet them?
 - c) Describe your academic and applied professional/organizational experiences that make you a strong candidate for this program (make sure to address both academic and applied experiences)
 - d) What do you plan to do upon graduation to utilize this degree in your career?
*The statement of purpose should be thoroughly proofread, address all the questions listed above, and be 1-2 pages in length, double spaced, 12-point font.
3. Applicants must arrange for the submission of three letters of recommendation through the FSU application process that speak to your ability to succeed in this graduate program. At least one (1) letter is preferred to be from an academic source, one (1) should be from professional or organizational experience, and the final letter can be academic or professional/organization in nature.
 4. Submit/upload a resume or curriculum vitae, which is carefully proofread, professional in nature, and outlines all related academic and professional experiences relevant to this program.

Degree Options and Requirements

Students must complete a minimum of thirty-three (33) course hours, of which students must complete 30 hours of graduate-level coursework (5000 level and above). Twenty-seven (27) hours must be letter-graded. The program was built to meet these university requirements.

Students who have completed insufficient coursework in Communication at the undergraduate level (e.g., students who did **not** major in a communication-related area) may be required to take up to nine additional hours of letter-graded undergraduate course work as determined by their graduate advisors. Note: These additional hours will not count toward completion of the thirty-three (33) graduate-level semester hours.

Master of Science (MS) in Organizational Management and Communication

This program requires a minimum of thirty-three (33) hours of course work plus a comprehensive exam. This program is an online program, and students will complete an individualized academic program of study upon admission to the program. Students will be encouraged to complete (6) credit hours (2 courses) per semester year-round (Fall, Spring, Summer), which will allow graduation in two years.

Core Courses (12 credit hours)

These courses are shared with FSU's Corporate and Public Communication graduate program and provide foundational knowledge in communication theory, research, and leadership.

- Organizational Communication Theory and Practice (COM 5126 or equivalent) – 3 credit hours
- Assessing Organizational Communication (COM 5127 or equivalent) – 3 credit hours
- Interpersonal Communication and Conflict Resolution (COM 5807 or equivalent) – 3 credit hours
- Group Dynamics and Leadership (SPC 5442 or equivalent) - 3 credit hours

Required Communication Courses (9 credit hours)

These courses are aimed at furthering students' repertoire related to communication in organizational and business settings:

- Applied Project Management for Leaders (COM 5453 or equivalent) – 3 credit hours
- Strategic Global and Cross-Cultural Communication (COM 5435) (Previously SPC 6920) – 3 credit hours
- Capstone Course (COM 5947) – 3 credit hours
- Comprehensive Exam (COM 8966) – 0 credit hours

Required Behavior Analysis/OBM Courses (12 credit hours)

These courses provide a foundation in the science of behavior, focusing on performance management, leadership, and supervision within organizations.

- Ethics for Organizational Behavior Management (EAB 5781 or equivalent) – 3 credit hours
- Principles of Performance Management for Organizations (EAB 5745 or equivalent) – 3 credit hours
- Advanced Behavioral Strategies for Organizational Management (EAB 5746 or equivalent) – 3 credit hours
- Advanced Topics in Organizational Behavior Management – Supervision and Leadership (EAB 5742 or equivalent) - 3 credit hours

Graduation Requirement and Comprehensive Examination:

Students must complete all thirty-three (33) credit hours in the program with a “B-” grade or better, are expected to maintain a 3.0 average GPA throughout enrollment in the program, and successfully complete and pass the program’s comprehensive examination/capstone. All students enrolled in this program will be required to pass a comprehensive examination during their last semester of the program, which includes 1) a comprehensive exam integrating topics from the curriculum, and 2) completion of a

comprehensive, capstone portfolio, which demonstrates students' applied competencies in course content learned from their coursework.

Program of Study Worksheet

All students will have an individualized program of study that is agreed upon between the student and their faculty advisor. See our OMC website for more information. The program of study is completed by the student and the advisory committee prior to the end of the first semester of graduate work. After all signatures are obtained, a digital copy will be provided to the student to retain for reference.

Graduate Advisor

Dr. Nikki Dickens, OMC Faculty Program Coordinator, serves as the primary Graduate Advisor for all students admitted to the MS in Organizational Management and Communication (OMC) program. Additional advising is available through the College of Applied Studies Graduate Advisor who can be reached at appliedstudies@pc.fsu.edu or (850) 770 -2280. While regular advising is not required each semester, students should plan to meet with an advisor before they begin the program or early in the first semester to complete a program of study. Students are also encouraged to reach out for advising, especially when making changes to their academic plan. To ensure timely progress toward degree completion, students should follow the course recommendations provided by the Graduate Advisor.

Policies and Procedures on Exemption

Students who have previously taken and passed graduate-level courses required by the OMC program with a grade of B or better, or equivalent courses, are allowed to substitute other courses to meet program requirements. It is the intent of this provision to enable students to acquire more advanced training than would ordinarily be required as part of the OMC degree. Permission must be given by the Graduate Advisor, subject to the advice of faculty.

Leave of Absence Policy

Under special circumstances, graduate students may apply for a leave of absence from the university for a specific period of up to three consecutive semesters (includes summer term). The circumstances justifying a leave include but are not limited to: personal or family medical conditions, call to active military duty, parental leave, death in immediate family, or completion of an off-campus internship. The student must provide appropriate documentation and a rationale for the leave request. Students cannot be on leave during their semester of graduation and must be registered for a minimum of two hours that semester. The university's leave of absence policy may be found in its entirety in the university's [Graduate Bulletin](#). Please

consult with your graduate advisor Dr. Nikki Dickens (ndickens@pc.fsu.edu) prior to applying for a Leave of Absence.

Academic Dismissal Policy

Per university policy, academic dismissal constitutes a separation of the student from the University for academic reasons. Students on dismissal will not be permitted to register for courses, including registering as a non-degree student. However, at the time of dismissal, the major professor and/or department chair/director may petition the academic dean for consideration of special circumstances that the professor thinks constitute justification for an exception to this regulation, but under no circumstances will a student be allowed more than one additional term of probation after reinstatement. The university's policy may be found in its entirety in the university's [Graduate Bulletin](#).

Petitioning for Reinstatement

A graduate level student who has been academically dismissed from the university may petition for consideration to be reinstated. To be considered for reinstatement, a student must provide an explanation of the extenuating circumstances and/or reasons outside of their control that resulted in their academical dismissal and the student's plans for the upcoming semester to regain good academic standing and for future academic success. The graduate student's Petition for Reinstatement form (once completed by the student) should be emailed to appliedstudies@pc.fsu.edu.

All petitions for reinstatement shall be reviewed, and a final decision made by, the Assistant Dean for the College of Applied Studies, in coordination with the college's graduate program faculty, graduate coordinator and director for academic services. All decisions are final and are not subject to appeal. Contact appliedstudies@pc.fsu.edu to request the **Graduate Petition for Reinstatement** form.

Fees and Course Loads

For a detailed official description of graduate tuition rates, student fees, and related costs, consult the [FSU Panama City Financial Aid and Scholarships](#) webpage. Students who are not Florida residents may qualify for in-state tuition through the [Academic Common Market](#) (ACM). ACM eligibility must be established prior to matriculation.

Professional Conduct and Academic Integrity

All students affiliated with OMC program in any capacity are expected to demonstrate the highest professional standards in terms of personal behavior and ethics. Investigation and

resolution of alleged violations of the FSU [Student Code of Conduct](#) and the [Academic Code](#) are coordinated through the [FSU PC Student Rights and Responsibilities](#). OMC program students who have been accused of conduct or honor code violations should alert the OMC program advisors.

Appeals Process

The OMC program values collegial governance based on best professional practices. All actions or decisions of the faculty may be appealed to the Dean of the College of Applied Studies. Specific University procedures exist for grade appeals and other academic grievances, including Academic Honor Code violations. See [Regulations and Procedures](#) section of the Academic General Bulletin or the website of the [FSU PC Student Rights and Responsibilities](#) for details.

Resources for Graduate Students

Funded Awards and Recognition

Through the generosity of alumni, friends and faculty, OMC students may benefit from the following located on the [FSU Panama City Financial Aid and Scholarships](#) webpage. For details on funding and awards offered through The Graduate School, please visit the [Funding & Awards](#) webpage.