

# 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

OMC program is located in the College of Applied Studies, on the FSU Panama City Campus of Florida State University. The College of Applied Studies offers a terminal master's degree for graduate students currently employed in or seeking professional skills for leadership and management of staff in any workplace, organization, or group setting. The Organizational Management and Communication major is a fully online major in the **Professional Communication Master's Degree** program. The program was designed for working professionals and individuals needing additional flexibility in their graduate studies.

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 MS program 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 apply online through the FSU [Graduate Admissions Application Portal](#). Admission decisions are made by the Professional Communication Faculty. Questions concerning the application and admissions process should be sent to the Graduate Coordinator, Cristina Doan at [cdoan@pc.fsu.edu](mailto:cdoan@pc.fsu.edu) or 850-770-2148 or the Academic Program Specialist, Angie Sexton at [asexton@pc.fsu.edu](mailto:asexton@pc.fsu.edu) or 850-770-2178.

### Admission 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 or a combined verbal and quantitative score of at least 285 on the Graduate Record Examination (GRE). 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.

### Program Application Requirements

OMC program applicants must meet the program requirements listed below. All supporting documents must be uploaded to the Graduate Admissions Application Portal.

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

Applicants that meet the following requirements will be considered for the program but are not guaranteed admission. Admission decisions will be provided through the FSU application portal or by notification from the graduate program faculty or staff.

1. All applicants should complete and submit a graduate application online through the [Graduate Admissions Application Portal](#).
2. Upon submission of the graduate application, all applicants must pay the \$30 non-refundable application fee.
3. All applicants must arrange for one official transcript from each college or university attended to be submitted to FSU as part of their application. (Requirements may vary by institution, so be sure to check with the registrar's office of your previous universities.)
4. Submit your official GRE scores to FSU and include them in your application. When registering for the GRE, be sure to select FSU's location code, 5219, to send your scores.
  - a. If applicable, students may be eligible for a GRE waiver, per the following: [GRE Waiver](#)
  - b. The GRE requirement has been waived for all master's applicants applying through Fall 2026. GRE scores **will not be required but are preferred**.\* If applicants choose during this time to not include GRE scores, it is important to have strong GPAs to be considered for admission.
5. 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, with a 12-point font.
6. 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/organizational in nature.

7. 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 coursework, which includes a capstone course. It is possible to complete the program in as few as two years if some coursework is completed during summer sessions. All courses must be passed with a “B-” grade or better and students are expected to maintain a 3.0 GPA throughout enrollment in the program. The program requires students to take:

#### **CORE COURSES**

The program has 9 hours of core courses in common with the FSU Corporate and Public Communication Program, which includes:

- Three (3) hours of course work in Theory and Principles (Organizational Communication Theory COM 5126 or equivalent)
- Three (3) hours of course work in Research and Methods (Assessing Organizational Communication COM 5127 or equivalent)
- Three (3) hours of course work in Applications of Communication (Group Dynamics and Leadership SPC 5442 or equivalent)

#### **ADDITIONAL REQUIRED COURSES**

Twelve (12) additional hours of required Communication courses, aimed to further advance students’ repertoires related to communication in organizational and business settings:

- Applied Project Management for Leaders (COM 5453 or equivalent)
- Colloquium in Speech Communication – Intercultural Communication & Diversity (SPC 6920)
- Interpersonal Communication and Conflict Resolution (COM 5807)
- Capstone Seminar and Comprehensive Exam (COM 8966c)

Twelve (12) hours of required Behavior Analysis/Organizational Behavior Management courses, aimed to provide a foundation in the application of the science of behavior to leading and managing people in organizational and business settings:

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

### **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 & Cristina Doan serve as the general Graduate Advisors to all students admitted to the MS OMC program. OMC students should have at least one advising meeting

each semester. Enrolled students should take courses recommended by the Graduate Advisor, to ensure timely completion of their degree requirements.

## 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](mailto:ndickens@pc.fsu.edu)) or Cristina Doan ([cdoan@fsu.edu](mailto:cdoan@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](mailto: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](mailto: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.