

SECTION G

Frequently Asked Questions

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SECTION G

Frequently Asked Questions

G.1 Professional Paper/Thesis

1. Can additional reader(s) come from another HPU program or do they have to be from the College of Communication?

The additional reader(s) may be faculty in any HPU academic area but the first reader/thesis adviser is the COM 7200 professor from the College of Communication Graduate Council. If your additional reader(s) is/are from another academic discipline, your first reader must approve him/her/them when you begin COM 7200.

2. If I have completed COM 7100 successfully, can I complete the thesis/professional paper off-campus?

The College of Communication faculty strongly urges you to complete COM 7200 here on campus! Statistically, there is a much greater chance that you will not finish your paper, or that finishing it will be much more difficult, if you do not have frequent access to faculty on campus. Every student who has attempted it has stated that they regret their decision and has had greater difficulty because they did not have the guidance and feedback available from the faculty that they would have if they were here in Honolulu. Several have attempted it and have not been successful in completing their paper/thesis. It is not possible to go over a paper/thesis in detail or to discuss anything at length by email or phone, therefore, you will be attempting one of the most challenging tasks of your academic career without very much support.

You must have permission in advance in order to attempt to complete your paper off campus and you must communicate regularly and frequently with your COM 7200 faculty adviser by phone, email, or fax. You must also return to Honolulu to defend your work.

G.2 Electives

1. Can I take one of the other HPU certificate programs as my MA/COM electives?

Yes, as long as the coursework relates to your thesis/professional paper topic. The certificate programs and their requirements are listed in the HPU Academic Catalog on page 137.

G.3 Communication Careers

1. What kind of job can I get with my MA/COM degree?

The MA/COM will give you the ability to present your ideas cogently and dynamically, the ability to write well, the ability to gather and sort information, and develop your critical thinking skills. Can you think of any career field where those are not factors linked to success? Many MA/COM graduates become managers in a communication industry such as public relations or advertising. Others find that their graduate degree opens the door to new challenges in areas other than communication. While no degree can guarantee you a job, a graduate degree in communication can be applied to any endeavor.

2. Will the time and money I spend on my graduate degree pay off?

Most studies show that while an undergraduate degree increases your lifetime earnings by 75-80%, a graduate degree can triple what you would earn with a high school diploma. When you consider the fact that you can complete your graduate degree at HPU in two years or less, it's a very good investment. Research on communication careers and the impact of education can be found online at <http://www.workingwoman.com/salary/publishing.html> and <http://www.iabc.com/pdfs/profile.htm>. The last website, the Research Foundation of the International Association of Business Communicators, features a study done by IABC and the Public Relations Society of America. It has extensive information on a wide variety of communication professions.

G.4 The HPU College of Communication

1. What are some of the differences between the HPU MA/COM degree and those at other universities?

The major difference is probably the global view. The fact that a third of HPU's 9,000 students come from more than 100 countries permeates the curriculum, the faculty, and the social environment. You will meet people from all over the world and become sensitive to the intercultural differences that apply in social and professional interaction. In today's world marketplace, that gives you an edge.

Another difference is pragmatic. The HPU MA/COM degree provides you with practical skills with a theoretical base. These skills, and the knowledge of how and why they are effective that theory provides, can be applied in any career field. Many other graduate degrees are heavily theoretical, and while that is intellectually fulfilling, the knowledge or understanding gained cannot be directly applied to a job.

A third difference is the professional experience of the faculty in addition to the highest academic achievement. Every member of the HPU College of Communication faculty has attained the highest academic degree in his or her discipline. They also have professional experience and have worked in the academic area in which they teach. That may not always be true of programs where the professors learned their subject only from textbooks.

As a private institution, HPU is able to provide more current technology and equipment than most schools of comparable size. The Communication Video Laboratory, Internet access and computerized instructional equipment in most of the classrooms empowers the faculty to be creative and innovative in presenting their ideas.

2. I'd like to join a student organization but it would take time away from my studies. Should I?

We strongly urge you to become a campus leader through membership in a professional organization! There are several student groups that would contribute significantly to your career development and job placement including The International Association of Business Communicators (IABC), the Public Relations Student Society of America (PRSSA) and Akamai Advertising Agency, the HPU student chapter of the American Advertising Federation.

IABC has thousands of members all over the world and all of them instantly become part of your professional network. Campus chapters have speakers, field trips, and other activities. In addition,

you will be invited to the monthly meetings of the local professional chapter where you will have an opportunity to meet some of the leaders in the local community.

PRSSA serves their members by enhancing their knowledge of public relations and providing access to professional development opportunities PRSSA aides in the development of highly qualified and well-prepared professionals for the public relations community.

Akamai Advertising Agency sponsors the HPU entry in the National Student Advertising Federation, the most prestigious competition in the advertising industry. Student members are invited to attend the Hawaii Advertising Federation monthly meetings and to participate in other activities.

Although the Graduate Student Organization (GSO) serves just the HPU graduate community rather than a national or international profession, it can also be an important learning experience. Through active participation you will develop leadership skills and a network of other graduate students who are tomorrow's leaders in various industries all over the world!

Submit your question to communication@hpu.edu or call (808) 544-0825.