

Graduate Student Advisors' Checklist

Background/rationale

Each semester, the Department of Journalism & Digital Communication assigns new graduate students to an academic advisor from the graduate faculty.

Advising serves several functions:

- to ensure students are meeting all the basic requirements to remain in good standing with the University and graduate according to their individual timetable and goals
- to ensure students are taking the right electives and accessing the right co-curricular activities and resources to best meet their needs
- to prepare students for their culminating work, either a thesis or applied research project

From the Graduate School catalog:

"The advisor neither gives the student excessive guidance nor allows the student to struggle needlessly. The goal of this relationship is to foster student independence, which results in successful completion of the program of study."

Advising responsibilities/expectations

Advisors should schedule a 30-minute advising session with their advisees at the start of each semester, ideally before the end of add/drop week.

If questions or issues arise in an advising session that the advisor/advisee can't immediately resolve, they should be brought to the graduate program coordinator.

Topics to address

- Is the student enrolled full- or part-time?**
 - Students taking a minimum of nine (9) hours toward their degree in the fall or spring semester, or taking a minimum of six (6) hours in the summer semester, will be classified as Full-Time students for academic purposes.
- Does the student have a target graduation date? Are they on track to meet their goal?**
 - Students need 33 credits to graduate.
 - The DJD program entails four required classes, most of which are offered just once a year. Students should plan accordingly:
 - Fall — Law & Theory
 - Spring — Ethics
 - Fall & Spring — Multimedia Reporting
- How is the student performing? Any areas/classes of concern?**
 - Students need a 3.0 GPA to graduate.
 - There is no grade forgiveness at the graduate level. So a low grade, especially a "D" or "F," can drastically affect the overall GPA.
- Is the student finding what they need in the DJD curriculum? What's working well for them in this regard? What could be improved?**
 - The degree can be completed entirely online, but there are usually at least several in-person options available each semester.
- What are the students' overarching goals after graduation?**

- Some students plan a career change. Others want to teach. Some are coming straight from undergraduate studies and will be launching a career post-graduation.
- What kind of final project (thesis or applied research project) does the student want to take on?**
 - Students can complete either a 6 credit thesis or a 3 credit ARP (plus an extra elective) in their final semester. But they should start thinking about their project early on.
- What themes or areas of interest does the student want to explore in their culminating work?**
- Is the student meeting all enrollment requirements?**
 - All graduate degree-seeking students must be continuously enrolled. Continuous enrollment is defined as completing, with grades assigned, a minimum of six (6) hours of graduate credit every three (3) continuous semesters.
- Would the student benefit from a professional practicum?**
 - Students can work for news organizations and other companies and earn credit. The internship coordinator can provide details.