

2014-2015

Graduate Student Handbook: Merchandising

College of Merchandising,

Hospitality & Tourism

University of North Texas

2014-2015

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PURPOSE

This Handbook for MDR graduate students and faculty in the Department of Merchandising and Digital Retailing (henceforth MDR) has been prepared to:

- Supplement statements of policies and procedures related to graduate programs at the University of North Texas
- Set forth department policies, rules and procedures; and
- Provide information specific to the M.S. in Merchandising.

Specific policies, rules, and statements in this Handbook are not intended to repeat or replace policies set forth by the Toulouse School of Graduate Studies at the University of North Texas.

This Handbook is to be distributed to all MDR graduate students via email attachment during the first semester of enrollment. Additionally, hard copies will be provided at the Graduate Student Seminar, held just prior to the start of each long semester.

Forms associated with policies and procedures of the graduate programs in the Department of Merchandising and Digital Retailing will be available at the MDR website: <http://cmht.unt.edu/mdr/graduate>.

MISSION AND VISION

CMHT Vision: Lead the paradigm shift in learning and research of digitally networked, sustainable and socially responsible products and services for empowered consumers in a global experience economy.

CMHT Mission: Transform learning, research and engagement for a global experience economy.

MDR Mission: Develop talent for careers in the trend-driven global retail marketplace. The mission embraces innovative and diverse curricula, experiential learning, applied technologies, research experiences, industry involvement, and professional development of students.

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES: M.S. IN MERCHANDISING

1. Graduates will be able to conceptualize, organize, and propose solutions to complex merchandising problems using appropriate research methodologies, statistical procedures, and technological applications.
2. Graduates will be able to interpret qualitative and quantitative data in the critical analysis of merchandising processes and business practices.
3. Graduates will be able to demonstrate creative thinking and independent inquiry.
4. Graduates will be able to demonstrate leadership skills as they assume key merchandising positions in the industry.
5. Graduates will be able to integrate merchandising theories, principles and practices into the development, production, and distribution of fashion-oriented products.

M.S. in Merchandising Mission: The mission of the masters program in Merchandising is to integrate the critical analysis of consumers in a global market with merchandising theories, principles, and practices. Effective leaders are developed through core competencies, including solving complex problems, generating new knowledge, communicating effectively, and creating new product and business strategies.

GRADUATE PROGRAMS IN MERCHANDISING

In the Merchandising program, all courses are 3-hour courses. Regardless of option (Thesis, Non-thesis, 100% online, MBA/MS), the student must complete 36 hours for the M.S. in Merchandising degree.

Master of Science in Merchandising - Thesis Option

Research Tools (9 hours)

CMHT 5100 – Introduction to Research in Merchandising and Hospitality

CMHT 5300 – Research Methods in Merchandising and Hospitality Management

CMHT 5400 – Research Applications in Merchandising and Hospitality

Management

Merchandising Core Curriculum (3 hours)

MDSE 5500 – Merchandising Strategies

Individual Research (6 hours)

MDSE 5950 – Thesis

Support Curriculum (12-18 hours)

MDSE 5000 – Global Discovery in Merchandising and Hospitality Management¹
MDSE 5080 – Merchandising Ventures¹
MDSE 5090 – Virtual Merchandising¹
MDSE 5230 – Home Furnishings Industry²
MDSE 5240 – Global Fashion Retailing²
MDSE 5510 – Advanced Buying, Planning & Allocation¹
MDSE 5560 – Sustainable Strategies in Merchandising^{1,2}
MDSE 5620 – Socio-Cultural Analysis of Dress²
MDSE 5650 – International Sourcing²
MDSE 5660 – Advanced Merchandising Applications¹
MDSE 5750 – Digital Retailing²
MDSE 5790 – Field Experience in Merchandising²
MDSE 5850 – Brand Development¹
CMHT 5350 – Contemporary Issues and Trends in Merchandising & Hospitality Mgmt.
CMHT 5440 – Consumer Theory²
CMHT 5460 – Human Capital Development in Merchandising and Hospitality Mgmt.
CMHT 5550 – Promotional Strategies²
CMHT 5600 – Managing Customer Experiences²
CMHT 5700 – Service Excellence
CMHT 5800 – Seminar in various Areas of Concentration
CMHT 5810 – Teaching Practicum in Merchandising and Hospitality Management
CMHT 5830 – Legal and Regulatory Aspects of Merchandising and Hospitality Management

Electives (up to 6 hours)

Master of Science in Merchandising - Non-Thesis Option

Research Tools (9 hours)

CMHT 5100 – Introduction to Research in Merchandising and Hospitality
CMHT 5300 – Research Methods in Merchandising and Hospitality Management
CMHT 5400 – Research Applications in Merchandising & Hospitality Mgmt.

Merchandising Core Curriculum (3 hours)

MDSE 5500 – Merchandising Strategies

Individual Research (3 hours)

MDSE 5920 – Problem in Lieu of Thesis

¹ Students are limited to only 6 hours of dual-credit classes

² 100% online format

Support Curriculum (15-21 hours)

MDSE 5000 – Global Discovery in Merchandising and Hospitality Management³
MDSE 5080 – Merchandising Ventures³
MDSE 5090 – Virtual Merchandising³
MDSE 5230 – Home Furnishings Industry⁴
MDSE 5240 – Global Fashion Retailing⁴
MDSE 5510 – Advanced Buying, Planning & Allocation³
MDSE 5560 – Sustainable Strategies in Merchandising^{3,4}
MDSE 5620 – Socio-Cultural Analysis of Dress⁴
MDSE 5650 – International Sourcing⁴
MDSE 5660 – Advanced Merchandising Applications³
MDSE 5750 – Digital Retailing⁴
MDSE 5790 – Field Experience in Merchandising⁴
MDSE 5850 – Brand Development³
CMHT 5350 – Contemporary Issues and Trends in Merchandising & Hospitality Mgmt.
CMHT 5440 – Consumer Theory⁴
CMHT 5460 – Human Capital Development in Merchandising and Hospitality Mgmt.
CMHT 5550 – Promotional Strategies⁴
CMHT 5600 – Managing Customer Experiences⁴
CMHT 5700 – Service Excellence
CMHT 5800 – Seminar in various Areas of Concentration
CMHT 5810 – Teaching Practicum in Merchandising and Hospitality Management
CMHT 5830 – Legal and Regulatory Aspects of Merchandising and Hospitality Mgmt.

Electives (up to 6 hours)

MBA/MS

The MBA/MS requires a total of 54 hours for the dual degree. Students must be admitted into both the M.S. in Merchandising program and the MBA program. The application reviews are separate; a student may be accepted into one program or both. If accepted into both, the dual arrangement allows the student to graduate with both master's degrees, but by taking only 54 hours instead of the 72 required to earn them separately. Once the student completes all of the requirements for one of the degrees, it can be certified. Contact the Graduate School for details.

Some students accepted into the dual program decide to complete only one of the degrees. In this case, the student needs to notify the Graduate Coordinator for the program they are dropping and the Graduate School.

³ Students are limited to only 6 hours of dual-credit classes

⁴ 100% online format

Your Merchandising Degree Plan will contain:

Research Tools (9 hours)

- CMHT 5100 – Introduction to Research in Merchandising and Hospitality
- CMHT 5300 – Research Methods in Merchandising and Hospitality Management
- DSCI 5180 – Introduction to the Business Decision Process

Merchandising Core Curriculum (3 hours)

- MDSE 5500 – Merchandising Strategies

Individual Research (3-6 hours)

- MDSE 5920 – Problem in Lieu of Thesis (3 hours) OR
- MDSE 5950 – Thesis (6 hours)

Support Curriculum (15-21 hours)

- MDSE 5000 – Global Discovery in Merchandising and Hospitality Management⁵
- MDSE 5080 – Merchandising Ventures⁵
- MDSE 5090 – Virtual Merchandising⁵
- MDSE 5230 – Home Furnishings Industry⁶
- MDSE 5240 – Global Fashion Retailing⁶
- MDSE 5510 – Advanced Buying, Planning & Allocation⁵
- MDSE 5560 – Sustainable Strategies in Merchandising^{5,6}
- MDSE 5620 – Socio-Cultural Analysis of Dress⁶
- MDSE 5650 – International Sourcing⁶
- MDSE 5660 – Advanced Merchandising Applications⁵
- MDSE 5750 – Digital Retailing⁶
- MDSE 5790 – Field Experience in Merchandising⁶
- MDSE 5850 – Brand Development⁵
- CMHT 5350 – Contemporary Issues and Trends in Merchandising & Hospitality Mgmt.
- CMHT 5440 – Consumer Theory⁶
- CMHT 5460 – Human Capital Development in Merchandising and Hospitality Mgmt.
- CMHT 5550 – Promotional Strategies⁶
- CMHT 5600 – Managing Customer Experiences⁶
- CMHT 5700 – Service Excellence
- CMHT 5800 – Seminar in various Areas of Concentration
- CMHT 5810 – Teaching Practicum in Merchandising and Hospitality Management
- CMHT 5830 – Legal and Regulatory Aspects of Merchandising and Hospitality Mgmt.

Electives (9 hours)

⁵ Students are limited to only 6 hours of dual-credit classes

⁶ 100% online format

These will be MBA courses. Students may select any three courses that earn three credit hours each. Most students put marketing courses select marketing courses for this requirement.

ADVISING: THE MAJOR PROFESSOR

There are two meanings for “major professor”:

1. When you are accepted into the program, you are assigned a graduate faculty advisor. UNT uses the “major professor” terminology to denote the graduate faculty advisor. In some Colleges, the student selects the major professor; in CMHT the Graduate Coordinator assigns the major professor. This faculty member will help guide your degree plan and serve as your academic advisor. This faculty member will advise you on the degree plan option best for you given your skill set and career goals.
2. If you decide to write a thesis, you will choose the “major professor” to guide your thesis and serve as the chair of your thesis committee. This faculty member will be the primary mentor for your research. For practical reasons, this faculty member also needs to be your advisory major professor (#1 above) as they will be responsible for some of your graduate application paperwork. When your thesis major professor agrees to mentor your research s/he will notify your assigned academic major professor and the CMHT Graduate Coordinator. The Graduate Coordinator will update his/her records, and your file will be forwarded to your thesis major professor.
3. If you elect to complete a Problem in Lieu of Thesis, your advisory major professor (#1) will not change.

INDIVIDUAL RESEARCH

Thesis

Students may elect to conduct original research during the course of their graduate study. With the thesis option, the student will select their thesis major professor (TMP) -- the major professor defined in #2 above -- based on research interest. The student and TMP will develop an idea that is suitable for a comprehensive research project. The thesis option is beneficial for students entering industry or academia. However, for students with aspirations to pursue a Ph.D., the thesis option is strongly encouraged.

The thesis committee will consist of the TMP, who will guide the thesis project and will serve as chair of the thesis committee. In consultation with the TMP, the student will identify two committee members from the graduate faculty. At least one of the additional committee members will be a merchandising faculty member; the third member of the committee may be from a closely aligned area outside of the MDR department.

Additional Coursework

If the student is pursuing the MBA/MS in Merchandising, the TMP may require that the student complete CMHT 5400 – Research Applications, even though this is not the statistics class on the MBA/MS degree plan.

If the student is a 100% online student completing EPSY classes in lieu of CMHT 5300 (Methods) and CMHT 5400 (Research Applications), the merchandising faculty may determine that the thesis is not practical. The student must have a strong grasp of research methods and statistics application in order to work on a research project somewhat independently. The student may also be asked to demonstrate their academic writing ability prior to the start of the thesis process.

Continuous Enrollment and Thesis Grades

Once started, the student must continue to enroll in MDSE 5950 each long semester until the thesis is defended. If substantial work will be completed during the summer, the student is also expected to enroll in MDSE 5950 in the summer. The major professor can help determine whether summer enrollment is appropriate. The student must be enrolled in MDSE 5950 the semester they apply for graduation and the semester in which they defend the thesis. A minimum of six credit hours is required. The grade assigned may be:

PR – “Progress” – indicating the student is meeting the goals established for the semester

NPR – “No Progress” – indicating that the student is not achieving the goals established for the semester

When the thesis is completed and defended, a letter grade (A, B, C, D, or F) is assigned for the MDSE 5950 hours.

Thesis Time Management

In the MDR department, the student is allowed three long semesters to complete the thesis. If the student must register for a 4th semester, they must petition the MDR faculty (see related policy later in this Handbook). If the petition is not successful, the student must convert to the Problem in Lieu of Thesis (PILOT) option. In this case, the student may need to take additional coursework in order to complete the non-thesis curriculum.

Before beginning the thesis project, students should consult the *Dissertation and Thesis Manual* available on the Toulouse School of Graduate Studies website. Read the Manual. Note all dates on your planner. Examining the reality of the expectations is just as important as developing and executing the study.

It is critical that the student maintain regular contact with the thesis major professor. Weekly meetings are strongly advised.

Thesis Structure and Defense

The thesis consists of three parts:

1. The Proposal. During the proposal phase, the student develops an idea into a plan. The proposal demonstrates topic background, problem statement, hypotheses, methodology, research instruments, timeline, and budget. The student should plan to meet with the thesis major professor at least weekly during this phase of the project.

During the proposal phase, the student – with advice from the major professor – assembles their thesis committee. The committee consists of a minimum of three faculty members.

The proposal phase culminates in a “proposal defense.” This is a presentation of the proposed project to the committee. Others may also be invited to the presentation. After the presentation of the proposal, the committee will ask questions, make suggestions, and generally provide guidance for the completion of the project.

2. The Thesis. During this phase, the student executes the study which consists of obtaining IRB approval to collect data, collecting and analyzing data, and writing conclusions, while continuing to build the review of literature. The TMP will continue to be the primary advisor for this phase, with assistance from the other committee members as appropriate.

3. The Defense. Upon completion of the thesis, the student will submit a copy to their TMP and each member of the committee. The date for thesis defense cannot be scheduled during the first two weeks or the last two weeks of a semester. Students should not expect to defend their thesis in the summer unless they have received prior approval from their committee. The thesis defense, like the proposal defense, is a presentation of the study. The presentation is public and should include a Question and Answer session. Once the presentation is complete, the major professor will dismiss the audience and the committee will ask final questions and provide final guidance.

The committee can pass the student without revisions, pass the student with minor revisions, pass the student with major revisions, or not pass. The committee may not sign the final signature sheet until the document is in its final form ready for submission to the graduate school per established guidelines. Revision time should be considered in planning the timeline of the project – in other words, build revision time into the timeline.

If the student does not pass the thesis defense, they must reschedule the final defense for another date. If they pass with major revisions, they must complete their revisions to the satisfaction of their committee prior to obtaining final signatures for the thesis document. If the student passes without revisions or passes with minor revisions, the final signatures may be obtained at the defense.

At the end of each semester, a Presentation Day will be scheduled for students completing PILOT projects, Special Problems, and for thesis progress presentations. All thesis students are expected to deliver a presentation about their thesis project to date at this meeting.

Problem in Lieu of Thesis (PILOT)

The student should visit with their academic major professor about the PILOT project one semester prior to registration for MDSE 5920.

Students who are not interested in writing the master's thesis may elect to work with a faculty member on a research project by selecting the Problem in Lieu of Thesis (PILOT) instead of the thesis. The student should request to work with a faculty member whose research aligns with the student's research interest. If guidance is needed, visit with your major professor.

Generally, faculty limit the number of PILOT projects they mentor in a semester, so your first choice of faculty may not be available.

Students electing to complete a PILOT will not change their major professor assignment.

A PILOT project is completed in a single semester and may take one of four formats:

1. Research Report
 - a. Introduction Of The Topic
 - b. Literature Review
 - c. Methodology Or Conceptual Framework (Data Collection)
 - d. Data Analysis / Results
 - e. Conclusions / Recommendations / Implications
2. Case Study Analysis
 - a. Introduction
 - b. Situational Analysis
 - c. Problem / Issues Statement
 - d. Analysis Of Alternatives
 - e. Recommendations With Justification
 - f. Conclusion
3. Consultancy Report
 - a. Description Of The Specific Issue
 - i. Based On Data
 - ii. Built On Theoretical Framework
 - b. Expected Practical Outcomes
 - i. Relevance Of Issue In Implementation
 - ii. Impacts On Implementation
 - iii. Possible Barriers To Implementation
 - iv. Expected Results (Smart – Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Reliable, And Timeline)
4. Conceptual Paper
 - a. Define Concepts
 - b. Review Of Literature
 - c. Develop Theoretical Framework
 - d. Develop Propositions
 - e. Defend Position

POLICIES

Graduate Student Seminar

The MDR faculty will host a Graduate Student Seminar at the beginning of most long semesters. The orientation will consist of general information needed by the MDR graduate student body. Students will be divided into (1) first year students, and (2) second year students. Programming appropriate for each group will be provided.

Students who are 100% online will also be required to attend, either in person or via webcast.

The orientation is a required event for entering students. Failure to attend in the first semester will result in a registration hold being placed on the student account until the orientation is completed in a subsequent semester.

Presentation Day

At the end of each long semester, a Presentation Day will be scheduled for PILOT projects, special problems, and thesis progress presentations. Typically, this even will be scheduled during the week prior to final exams. All PILOT students are required to deliver a presentation about their project as part of the PILOT option. CMHT faculty and fellow graduate students will be invited to attend. Students unable to be on campus will participate via webcast.

Graduate Topical Seminars

The seminar format will be utilized periodically to explore particular topics relevant to the MDR curriculum and research agenda. Seminar topics will vary and may include student- and faculty-led discussions, presentations, etc.

Degree Plan

During the first semester in the merchandising program, the student must work with their assigned major professor to submit a degree plan to the Toulouse Graduate School. The major professor, the department chair, and the Toulouse Graduate School must approve the degree plan. Once filed, the major professor must approve any changes. Students who deviate from their degree plan must have permission from their major professor.

Note that the degree plan is a PLAN, not a contract. The plan can be changed for a variety of good reasons, such as a change in course rotation schedule or student work schedule. Your major professor will help you complete a Degree Plan Modification Form to include in your application for graduation.

Failure to file a degree plan in the first semester may result in a block being placed on your registration account until the signed degree plan has been submitted to the Toulouse Graduate School.

Special Problems (MDSE 5900, MDSE 5910)

Special Problems, MDSE 5900, is not a regularly scheduled course. This is a service number for a project completed outside the structure of a formal class. An example would be an independent research project that might complement the thesis or PILOT, or a unique opportunity that merits academic credit (such as the Forrester Group certification project of 2012). By default, the teacher listed will usually be the department chair. Any graduate faculty member can supervise a special problem; once registration has passed, the teacher of record may change to the teacher supervising the project. In all cases, regardless of the teacher name on the schedule, the professor with whom the student is working will assign the final grade.

The first Special Problems course a student registers for should be the MDSE 5900 course number. The second Special Problems course should be the MDSE 5910 course number. This mechanism is created to avoid grade replacement, which will remove the credit of the first special problems course. A student may not receive degree credit for more than two special problems courses in the M.S. degree plans.

Field Experience (MDSE 5790)

Field Experience is a graduate internship. The student must secure an appropriate internship experience prior to class registration. The major professor and/or the department chair must approve this experience. Generally, the internship must be management in nature and a work opportunity that will advance the student resume toward career goals. A student may be approved to complete an internship in their present employment, but they will need to do something substantially different than the job they have been doing for some time. Examples include a promotion with new responsibilities or a special project that will meet the expected rigor and the clock-hour requirement.

The course itself is online with weekly assignments and three major projects. The student must document 150 work hours in the position or on the project, and the

supervisor must agree to complete both a mid-term and a final evaluation of the student's performance.

Study Tours (CMHT 5000)

The MDR department arranges several study tours each year, most of which will be offered for graduate credit with the MDSE 5000 course number. A graduate student may participate in as many study tours as desired, but may not receive more than three hours of degree credit for study tour.

Registration Codes

Some classes require a code for registration. For the most part, the codes are only assigned to service courses (i.e. special problems, field experience, thesis, and PILOT). Occasionally a "regular" class will also have a code in order to ensure a reasonable number of seats for merchandising students in high demand classes. In all cases, students should contact the teacher of the class to obtain the registration code.

NOTE: MDR graduate faculty members have their own section of PILOT and thesis. You may have to use the drop-down box in the online registration screen to see the section assigned to your teacher.

Transfer Hours

A maximum of 6 hours of transfer work from another University may be applied to the M.S. in Merchandising degree. The acceptance of transfer work is at the discretion of the major professor and department chair. In most cases, these hours will count as electives on the degree plan.

Incomplete Grades

The MDR department adheres to UNT policy regarding the "Incomplete" grade assignment. This policy and the guidelines are in the Graduate Catalog. An Incomplete Grade ("I") is a non-punitive grade given only during the last one-fourth of a term/semester and only if a student (1) is passing the course and (2) has a justifiable and documented reason beyond the control of the student (such as serious illness or military service), for not completing the work on schedule. The student must arrange with the instructor to finish the course at a later date by completing specific requirements. If a

grade of “I” is appropriate, the faculty member will specifically document the requirements for the student to complete the course.

To remove the grade of “I”, the student must complete the remaining coursework in a time frame determined by the course instructor. However, a student must remove a grade of “I” within one year of receiving the initial grade by completing the stipulated work or the grade will revert to an “F” regardless of the student standing in the class at the time of the “I” grade assignment.

Per UNT policy, the student must be passing the class at the time the “I” is assigned. This is not an appropriate grade assignment for a student who is failing the class to go back and make up work missed in the semester. Again, it is assigned when extraordinary circumstances prevent the completion of coursework in the time frame of a given semester.

Time Limitations

Per UNT policy, the degree must be completed within five years. As individual courses exceed this time limit, they lose value for degree purposes. Students anticipating they will exceed the time limit should apply to the graduate school for an extension *before* the normal time period to complete the degree expires. Holding a full-time job is not considered in and of itself sufficient grounds for granting an extension.

Writing Style

The MDR department requires the APA writing style for all written assignments, including class projects, class assignments and thesis. The PILOT project may require a different writing style per the targeted academic research journal.

Thesis Enrollment and Semester Limit

In the MDR department, the student is allowed three long semesters to complete the thesis. If the student must register for a 4th semester, they must petition the MDR faculty. If their petition is not successful, they must convert to the Problem in Lieu of Thesis option. In this case, the student may need to take additional coursework in order to complete the non-thesis curriculum.

The petition consists of a letter of explanation from the student for the delay and request for a time extension. The letter should explain the progress made to date, the

tasks yet to be completed, and a timeline for completion. Submit the letter to the department chair to be placed on the agenda of the next scheduled MDR Faculty meeting.

The general timeline for thesis completion follows. The actual timeline depends on such factors as:

- The development stage of the project when the student first registers for MDSE 5950.
- The commitment level of the student. A thesis can be written in two semesters, but the student has to be willing to work on the project daily in order to meet that goal. If the student chooses to work on the thesis only one afternoon per week, or if they choose to take a few weeks off to handle other priorities, a two- or three- semester completion is unlikely.

The timeline below assumes one semester is a summer session. The student may or may not register for thesis credit during the summer session. UNT requires that the student be continuously enrolled in the long semesters once the thesis has begun; the thesis major professor may require that the student be enrolled if their mentoring involvement in the project will be extensive during the summer session. At any rate, the student must be enrolled when they apply for graduation.

- **Semester 1**
 - Select the committee members
 - Develop and present the proposal
- **Semester 2**
 - Re-format the proposal into thesis format
 - Continue to develop the review of literature
 - Obtain IRB approval for the use of human subjects (if applicable)
 - Collect and analyze data
 - Write the findings
- **Semester 3**
 - Write the conclusions
 - Defend the thesis
 - Write the first manuscript and submit for publication

An outline for the thesis proposal is in Appendix A of this document. An outline for the thesis in in Appendix B of this document.

IRB Approval for the Use of Human Subjects

If your research involves the use of human subjects, you must obtain approval from the Institutional Review Board. UNT policy dictates that only faculty members may request IRB approval, so while you may be designing the study (thesis option), the faculty member is responsible for your actions. In most cases, the faculty member will

ask you to complete the application and they will edit appropriately. The request for approval must be signed and submitted by the faculty member.

Approval for the use of human subjects comes in the form of a signed letter from the Office of Research Services. Generally, the approval is good for one calendar year. The approval forms and approval documentation should be included in the final thesis in an appendix.

- No data may be collected prior to IRB approval.
- No data collected without IRB approval may be submitted for conference presentation or for publication in a research journal.

Publication Policy

Merchandising faculty spend a considerable amount of time mentoring PILOT and thesis projects. The end product of all student research projects should be either:

- A manuscript submitted for publication in a peer-reviewed journal
- An abstract submitted to a learned conference for presentation
- Both of the above
- Additional campus venues may be appropriate as well

For a thesis, manuscripts should be presented for both publication and conference presentation. The student has six months following graduation to submit manuscripts and/or abstracts for presentation/ publication and be listed as first author, followed by the thesis major professor and committee members. After six months, or prior to that time if the student agrees, the TMP may take leadership for manuscripts and proposals for conference presentations and become first author. The student would be second author, followed by committee members. If the major professor develops a manuscript using the thesis data but not the thesis concepts, the faculty member(s) should be first authors. The graduate student and additional committee members will be given authorship according to contribution.

Data Grants

If the research topic aligns with the research agenda of the Global Digital Retailing Research Center (GDRRC), CMHT and/or MDR, there may be a possibility for a grant to fund data collection. If the data are funded by GDRRC, CMHT or MDR, the data will “belong” to the funding entity. This means that the major professor and CMHT colleagues may publish research from the data without necessarily including the student

as co-author if the particular variables and concepts in the faculty paper are not a focus in the thesis project. The faculty may submit as many manuscripts as desired from the thesis project and include the student as co-author in the order appropriate. In this instance, the six-month window for the student to initiate publication may be waived.

To apply for consideration of funding, a proposal that includes the purpose statement, research framework, hypotheses/ research questions/ objectives, and methodology (essentially Chapters 1 and 3) should be submitted to either the Dean of the College or the chair of the department as appropriate. The TMP will be a co-author on the grant proposal. Support is contingent on the availability of funds and quality of proposal.

Graduation Application / Thesis Defense Deadlines

Students must be aware of the graduation application deadlines and/or thesis defense deadlines for the semester in which they plan to graduate. The dates can be found on the Toulouse School of Graduate Studies website.

Comprehensive Exams – “Comps”

Students entering the program prior to Fall 2015 are required to sit for comprehensive exams during their final semester of coursework. The exam consists of four questions, one of which must be from CMHT 5300 (Research Methods) or CMHT 5400 (Research Applications), or the courses substituted for these. There is generally one question or a series of related questions from each of the classes selected. The student is expected to be prepared to give an in-depth answer to each of the questions.

The comp exam is given near the beginning of the fall and the spring semesters. The student submits paperwork indicating their intent to sit for comps during the prior semester. The major professor will guide this process. Students are encouraged to ask the professors for the chosen classes for study direction; providing study guidelines is the prerogative of the professor.

The exam lasts from 8:00 AM to 5:00 PM with a 1-hour break for lunch. A two-hour time limit is allowed for each course.

The student may petition to defer the exam only one semester after completion of coursework. Comprehensive exams are not administered during the summer semester.

APPENDIX A: PROPOSAL OUTLINE

Basic Difference Between the Proposal and the Thesis:

The proposal tells the reader what you are going to do.

The thesis tells the reader what you did and why it is important.

Download the UNT Guide to Theses and Dissertations and follow the guidelines from the beginning of your study. Also format your paper and follow APA guidelines from the beginning.

If you do not have an APA manual, purchase one today. Renting this book from the Bookstore is not advised.

Introduction

- I. Introduction that leads the reader to the problem statement, hypotheses/ research questions/ objectives, and model. This is not your review of literature, but a rationale for your study.
- II. Research framework – the presentation and explanation of model(s) used, and/or presentation of the theoretical framework for your study.
- III. Hypotheses / Research Questions / Objectives
- IV. Definition of terms – include operationalization of key terms used in the study.

Review of Literature

Begin the review of literature with an outline. The introductory paragraphs should lead to the problem statement. Include a section of every variable.

Methodology

- I. Introduction: Restates the purpose of the study.
- II. Method: Describes data collection
- III. Instruments: Describes the measure for each variable.
- IV. Data Analysis Plan: describes the plan for analyzing data. A tabular format is sometimes used (see example below).
- V. Timeline
- VI. Budget

Bibliography

Appendix

- A. Your instrument(s)
- B. IRB Application. This is not going to be submitted until after your proposal meeting with the committee, but a strong draft should be included.

Analysis Plan Example:

Hypothesis (or Research Question or Objective – whatever you are using)	Variables in this Hypothesis (or RQ, or O)	Question #'s in survey	Statistical Test
H1:			Examples here will be t-test, ANOVA, Regression, Correlation, Descriptive, Chi Square, etc.
H2:...			
H3:			

APPENDIX B: THESIS OUTLINE

Follow the UNT Guide to Theses and Dissertations. Your writing style will be APA. Commit to following the APA style guideline from the beginning in order to save structural editing time later.

Again, the proposal tells the reader what you are going to do. The thesis tells the reader what you did and why it is important. You will need to convert your proposal language (the purpose of this study will be to....) to thesis language (the purpose of this study was...).

The thesis format is just like your proposal format, with the addition of the Findings and Conclusions chapters, and the deletion of the Timeline and Budget.

Chapter 1 - Introduction

- Research framework – might be the presentation and explanation of model(s) used.
- Hypotheses / Research Questions / Objectives
- Definition of terms – define every variable that isn't already obvious (i.e. don't define male/female)

Chapter 2 – Review of Literature

Review of Literature – should have a section of every variable. Begin with an outline!

Chapter 3 - Methodology

Method – how did you collect the data? This chapter should be written in enough detail that someone else could read your paper and replicate the study.

Chapter 4 - Findings

Findings – data analysis

Chapter 5 - Conclusions

What do your findings mean? Answer the “So what?” question

Bibliography

Appendices

Appendix A is probably your IRB Application.

Appendix B is probably your complete instrument.