

Master's Degree Requirements

Application for Admission

Applications must be submitted online at www.applytexas.org. Application is made through the Toulouse School of Graduate Studies. Most master's degree programs require supplemental application materials. Contact the academic unit for additional information.

General Requirements

The candidate must earn 30 or more hours of graduate credit, depending upon the requirements for the degree sought. Specific graduate degree requirements are determined by the *Graduate Catalog* currently in force at the time the student's degree plan is approved by the graduate dean.

Consult subsequent sections of this publication for the specific course requirements for each master's degree.

Level of Work Required

All of the course work to be credited toward the master's degree plan must be numbered 5000 or higher. Deficiencies or background courses are completed in addition to course work to be credited toward the master's degree plan regardless of course number.

A maximum of 12 semester hours earned in non-degree or certification status prior to admission to a degree program may be counted toward degree requirements.

Time Limitations

All course work and other requirements to be credited toward the master's degree must be completed within the following time periods, depending upon the number of semester hours required for the degree.

| Semester hours required | Completion |
|-------------------------|------------|
| 42 or fewer | 6 years |
| 43 to 49 | 7 years |
| 50 or more | 8 years |

As individual courses exceed these time limits they lose all value for degree purposes. Credits more than six years old at the time of first registration for graduate work are not transferable from other institutions.

Time limits are strictly enforced. Students exceeding the time limit may be required to repeat the comprehensive exam, replace out-of-date credits with up-to-date work, and/or show other evidence of being up-to-date in their major and minor fields. Students anticipating they will exceed the time limit should apply for an extension two semesters before the normal time period to complete the

degree expires. Holding a full-time job is not considered in itself sufficient grounds for granting an extension. For time extension procedure/forms visit graduateschool.unt.edu/extension.htm.

Time spent in active service in the U.S. armed forces will not be used in computing the time limit. However, career members of the armed forces should consult the graduate dean concerning the credit given to work completed before or during active military service.

Leave of Absence

Leave of absence applies to students admitted to the master's or doctoral degree who wish to discontinue work toward the degree for a specified period of time due to exigent circumstances. Leave of absence may be granted by the academic program, which then notifies the Graduate School. If the student has begun thesis or dissertation and is under the continuous enrollment requirement, a waiver of continuous enrollment must also be requested and approved by the Graduate School. Degree requirements and graduation must be completed within the appropriate time limit for completion of the degree.

Use of Transfer Credit and Extension Credit

Subject to the approval of the graduate dean and the department, division, school or college concerned, a student who holds a bachelor's degree and who has been admitted to the Toulouse School of Graduate Studies at UNT may apply toward a master's degree the following amount of graduate work completed elsewhere:

1. up to 6 semester hours in a 30- to 35-hour program,
2. up to 9 semester hours in a 36- to 41-hour program,
3. up to 12 semester hours in a program of 42 hours or more.

Subject to the approval of the graduate dean and the department, division, school or college concerned, UNT extension credit may be applied toward the master's degree in the same ratio as transfer credit stated above, or in combination with transfer credit, so long as the total number of semester hours of combined transfer and extension credit does not exceed the limits stated above. Extension and correspondence credit earned at other institutions will not be counted toward a graduate degree at UNT.

It is the student's responsibility to make sure official transcripts of courses completed elsewhere are furnished to the office of the graduate dean, and graduate credit has been assigned by the other institution or institutions to whatever courses are to be counted toward the UNT degree. Such courses, although listed on the UNT degree plan, will not be counted toward the degree until official transcripts

showing graduate credit have been received and the credit has been approved by the graduate dean. All transfer courses are subject to the time limitation described previously.

If transfer credits do not show a B average, the student is required to make up the deficiency either at the institution where the credit was earned or at UNT.

In accordance with the rules of the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board, at least one-third of the semester hours required for any graduate degree must be completed in course work on the campus of UNT.

Degree Plan: Admission to Candidacy

The student who desires to become a candidate for the master's degree should, before or at the time of registration, confer with the major department concerning the selection of a major professor and, if a minor is desired, with the intended minor department concerning the selection of a minor professor. The major professor, minor professor and the chair of the major department or a representative designated by the chair will constitute the student's advisory committee. The major professor will act as chair of the committee.

The student's program is planned under the direction of the major and minor professors immediately after completion of the first term/semester of graduate study. The degree plan is submitted to the graduate school when all admission provisions are complete. When the degree plan is approved by the graduate dean the student will then be admitted to candidacy for the master's degree.

Certain degree programs require successful completion of a specific admission course for admission to candidacy. Consult the appropriate section of this catalog for the specific course requirement. Immediately after the student has completed the admission course, the proposed degree plan will be sent to the Toulouse School of Graduate Studies for final approval. When the degree plan is approved the student is admitted to candidacy for the master's degree.

All changes in the degree plan must be approved by the major professor and the department chair or departmental graduate advisor, and must be submitted in writing to the graduate dean.

Courses listed on the degree plan must carry letter grades, with the exception of those courses in which the student is engaged in individual research and is not attending an organized class. These courses, with the approval of the department, may be assigned pass/no pass grades.

No student whose academic or personal record is unsatisfactory will be admitted to candidacy for the master's degree.

Applicants will be notified by the dean of the Toulouse School of Graduate Studies of their admission to candidacy for a graduate degree.

Major and Minor Field

The candidate for the master's degree ordinarily is required to select a major and a minor field. To major in any field, the candidate must have completed a minimum of 24 semester hours of undergraduate courses in the field, including at least 12 hours of advanced courses prior to beginning graduate course work. Certain graduate majors require more extensive undergraduate preparation. Consult the section of this catalog describing the particular major desired for information concerning undergraduate preparation requirements.

A minor is defined as graduate work completed outside of the student's major department or school. Minor areas of study can only be chosen from academic areas in which the University of North Texas is already authorized to offer a major or concentration, or where specific Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board approval has been given to offer courses for the purposes of a minor.

When an official minor is required or opted, the candidate's graduate advisory committee must include a faculty member from that area who will verify accountability in the minor area through comprehensive examinations, thesis, problem in lieu of thesis, dissertation projects or other appropriate means.

For a master's degree, the student must complete at least 6 hours in a single area to have the area count as a minor. For master's students all hours counted toward a minor must carry graduate credit and must be numbered 5000 or above.

Twelve hours of undergraduate credit are the usual prerequisite for a minor in any field. (*Exception:* In the case of a minor in a foreign language, the student is required to have completed the second term/semester of the sophomore year of study in the intended minor language.) In departments that offer no freshman courses only 6 hours of undergraduate credit are required as prerequisite to a graduate minor in that field.

Minors are not required on certain graduate degrees. Consult subsequent sections of this publication for specific regulations governing the degree sought.

Foreign Language Requirement

Knowledge of at least one foreign language acceptable to the department in which the student is majoring is required for the *Master of Arts* degree.

Foreign language requirements may be satisfied in any one of the following ways:

1. By passing the Foreign Language Proficiency Examination administered each term/semester and summer session/term by the Department of Foreign Languages and Literatures (contact the Department of Foreign Languages and Literatures for examination requirements). The application, together with information on a prerequisite screening test, must be obtained in the office of the chair of the Department of Foreign Languages and Literatures (scheduled dates for taking the examination in the current academic year appear in the academic calendar at www.unt.edu/catalog/calendar.htm); or

2. By submitting a transcript of undergraduate credit showing completion of at least the sophomore year in a single foreign language, provided the grade on the last course completed is C or higher;

3. A student may use their native language (other than English) to satisfy this requirement if their native language is relevant to their degree program and proficiency can be established by the Department of Foreign Languages and Literatures.

Candidates for graduate degrees to be awarded at the close of any summer session/term must have satisfied the foreign language requirements for the degree sought prior to the first class day of the second summer session/term (5W2). Candidates for graduation at the close of the spring or fall term/semester must have satisfied the foreign language requirements prior to the last day for filing thesis or dissertation in the office of the graduate dean. Consult the online academic calendar at www.unt.edu/catalog/calendar.htm for the proper deadline.

The Master's Degree Thesis

In most departments the candidate for a master's degree is offered two means of meeting this requirement. In some departments, only Option I is available. Consult the department to determine if both options are available.

Option I: Thesis

1. The master's degree candidate should select a major of at least 18 semester hours, exclusive of the thesis, and a minor of at least 6 hours if required by the major department.

2. Membership of thesis examination committees will include representatives of the major field and the minor field, if the student is pursuing a minor area. The number of members on such committees will normally be three to five; at least three are required. In cases in which the academic unit has specified particular departmental or college procedures for thesis committee members, the student will follow these procedures.

The thesis chair is the student's mentor and guide through this process of the demonstration of independent scholarship. Therefore, the chair of

the thesis committee, who must be willing to serve, is selected by the student in consultation with the appropriate graduate faculty, graduate advisor or department chair in the student's discipline. The thesis chair must hold full membership in the graduate faculty. Students should consult the departmental policy for the selection of the remaining committee members.

A person who is not a regular member of the University of North Texas graduate faculty may receive a temporary graduate faculty appointment from the graduate dean in order to serve on a committee. For these appointments, the thesis committee chair should submit an associate membership nomination form, justification for the appointment, and a vita of the prospective committee member. Associate members may not chair the thesis committee. No more than one committee member without regular UNT faculty status may serve on a committee.

3. A thesis or final document consisting of the written report of an investigation or of a successful project is required. This project must be initiated, executed and reported by the candidate under the supervision of the major and minor professors.

It is strongly recommended that students meet with the graduate reader prior to beginning the thesis concerning the proper form and preparation of the paper.

The student is required to enroll in a minimum of 3 semester hours of thesis credit in the major department under the course number 5950 and must maintain continuous enrollment in 5950 through the semester of graduation. Grades of PR will be recorded at the end of each term/semester of enrollment until the thesis is filed with the dean, then appropriate grades and credit hours will be shown on the student's record. Only one enrollment in 5950 is required during the summer session/term (in any session/term) if the student is using university facilities and/or faculty time during that term/semester or to graduate in August.

The total number of semester hour credits recorded for the thesis may not exceed 6, regardless of the number of enrollments in the thesis seminar. No credit will be recorded until the thesis has been approved by the student's advisory committee, submitted to the Graduate Office and finally approved by the graduate dean. See the online academic calendar at www.gradschool.unt.edu/content/graduation for the deadline for submitting a thesis in any given term/semester. Detailed instructions for submission of the thesis are available from the graduate dean's office.

4. The candidate must pass a final comprehensive examination principally over the contents of the thesis and related matters. The comprehensive

examination may be oral and/or written, or include another form of assessment as determined by the department. The student should check the appropriate departmental section of this catalog for further information. The results of the comprehensive examination must be received by the office of the dean of the Toulouse School of Graduate Studies no later than the deadline date for submission of theses by students expecting to graduate at the end of the current term/semester or summer session/term. Students should file for graduation according to the graduate graduation deadlines and at least ten days prior to the date of the defense.

Format

Before beginning the thesis, the student should consult the graduate reader for information concerning the proper form for preparation of the paper.

Openness of Theses and Dissertations

The University of North Texas, as a member of the Council of Graduate Schools (CGS), ascribes to the fundamental tenant on openness and access of theses and dissertation research as stated in the CGS policy manual *The Doctor of Philosophy Degree: A Policy Statement* (CGS, 2005). In compliance with CGS, it is the policy at the University of North Texas that “an essential aspect of [thesis] and dissertation research and scholarship is the free and full dissemination of research results. Restrictions, either in the conduct of [thesis] and dissertation research or in the sharing of its results, are antithetical to that spirit.” Therefore, research that is classified by a government agency or that is proprietary in nature and restricted, insofar as it must be held to secrecy and cannot be openly evaluated or published, is unsuitable for master’s or doctoral research (CGS, 2005, pp. 29–30).

Faculty advisors of students conducting thesis and dissertation research shall advise their students and abide by the following:

1. If the faculty director of the thesis or dissertation is covered by a nondisclosure agreement (NDA), if either the faculty director and/or the student know in advance that the information or work planned for use in the thesis or dissertation is under an NDA or other restriction in which the work must be held to secrecy, or if at the time the topic of the thesis or dissertation is set there is any other substantial possibility that the work will lead to a thesis or dissertation that is secret (either in whole or in part), the student will not include this information or work as part of the thesis or dissertation.
2. If in the process of the student’s thesis or dissertation research the student is developing a patentable work, the Vice President for Research and Economic

Development must be notified as soon as possible and the utility patent filed so as to allow an open defense and publication of the thesis or dissertation.

3. In the circumstances in which the thesis or dissertation is close to completion or has been completed and a patentable work was unforeseen, the defense examination will be open only to the student’s committee and departmental faculty and the thesis or dissertation held from publication until the utility patent has been filed or for no longer than 90 days after the defense examination, whichever is the shorter time period, unless the Vice President for Research and Economic Development requests an additional limited period of time for the utility patent.
4. Students may restrict access to their thesis or dissertation. Restriction limits access to the UNT community only (persons with valid EUID) for a period of five years. Interlibrary loans are not permitted during the restriction period. The restricted electronic theses and dissertations (ETDs) will be made available to the entire Internet, via the UNT Libraries online catalog, beginning on the first day of the month following the fifth anniversary of the student’s graduation. Students may request a one-time extension for an additional two years. To allow students to receive informed guidance from their faculty advisors, restrictions must be approved by the major professor at the time the ETD is filed with the Graduate School.

[Attributions: Portions of this policy were taken from *The Doctor of Philosophy Degree: A Policy Statement* (Council of Graduate Schools, 2005) and *Openness in Research*, (Stanford University Research Policy Handbook, Document 2.6, 2001).]

Option II: Problem in Lieu of Thesis

In lieu of a thesis, the candidate must complete one or both of the problem courses numbered 5920 and 5930, as required by the major department.

The student is required to enroll for credit in the major department under the course number 5920 and 5930 (or 5930 only for cases in which the degree sought requires only one problem in lieu of thesis). If satisfactory progress is made, the grade of I is assigned at the end of the semester or term. If unsatisfactory progress has been made a failing grade is recorded. In the latter case, the student must enroll for 5920 or 5930 a second time. This procedure will be continued until the problem has been completed and approved. Continuous enrollment in Problem in Lieu of Thesis is not required.

As part of the requirements for each problem course the student must present in writing a formal report or essay based upon the work done in the course, which must be approved by the advisory committee.

The Master's Degree Without Thesis Requirement

In programs leading to the master's degree that do not require the preparation of a thesis or problem in lieu of thesis, required or elective courses are substituted for the thesis requirement. The graduate curricula at UNT foster research and/or independent learning including research experiences, mentoring between graduate faculty and graduate students, and practical training that allows for contributions to the field of study, the development of new knowledge and practical experience. These programs are identified and described in subsequent sections of this publication.

The candidate for the master's degree under the non-thesis option is required to pass a comprehensive final examination, scheduled in accordance with the rules governing the comprehensive examination. Information concerning this requirement is available from the student's major department or school.

Completion

When the thesis is completed and has received preliminary approval of the advisory committee, the student's major professor will schedule the final comprehensive examination and will notify the Toulouse School of Graduate Studies of the date and results of the examination. Students should apply for graduation with the graduate school in accordance with the graduate graduation deadlines and at least 10 days prior to the final defense of their thesis. The thesis may not be submitted to the dean of the student's college or the graduate dean until this final examination has been passed.

No thesis credit will be recorded until the thesis has been approved by the student's advisory committee, submitted to the graduate dean's office and finally approved by the graduate dean. Instructions for submission of the thesis may be obtained from the graduate dean's office.

Requirements for the Second Master's Degree

Subject to the approval of the graduate dean and the department, division, school or college concerned, a graduate student may be allowed to apply up to 12 semester hours previously earned at UNT and applied toward a master's degree at an accredited institution toward a second master's degree, providing the 12 hours are in a minor or related field of study for the second master's degree.

This provision is subject to the rules governing the maximum amount of transfer and extension work that may be credited toward any master's degree and the age of work offered on a master's degree. A student simultaneously pursuing two master's degrees must complete the requirements for

one degree in full before any final decision is made concerning application of any of the work on that degree toward the second degree.

Continuous Enrollment

A student must maintain continuous enrollment in a minimum of 3 semester hours of thesis during each fall and spring term/semester, including the term/semester the thesis is accepted by the dean of the Toulouse School of Graduate Studies.

Thesis registration in at least one summer session/term is required if the student is using university facilities and/or faculty time during that summer session/term or to graduate in August.

Master's students must maintain continuous enrollment once work on the thesis has begun.

Failure to maintain continuous enrollment through the semester in which the thesis is submitted to the office of the graduate dean will either invalidate any previous thesis or dissertation credits or will result in the student's being dropped from the degree program, unless granted an official leave of absence by the graduate dean in advance. Strict adherence to the on-time filing deadlines for graduation is required or additional registration in 5950 may be necessary.

Milestones for the Master's Student

Dean — Dean of Toulouse School of Graduate Studies

ADCom — Advisory Committee

MP — Major Professor

GA — Graduate Advisor

DC — Department Chair

| Procedure | Initiate Through | Approved By | Time |
|--|---------------------------|-----------------|---|
| 1. Apply for admission. Submit all official transcripts and an official copy of the appropriate standardized test score. | Dean | DC and Dean | At least six weeks prior to registration (seven to eight months prior to registration for foreign students). Note: Some programs have specific deadlines in advance of these suggested time periods. |
| 2. Become familiar with general regulations and appropriate master's degree section of catalog. | Student | | Before registration. |
| 3. Meet with graduate advisor assigned by department chair to plan course of study for first semester. | DC and GA | GA | Before first semester registration. |
| 4. Establish advisory committee; prepare proposed degree program. | GA and DC | MP, DC and Dean | Upon or before completion of 12 semester hours. |
| 5. Submit degree plan to the Graduate School for approval. | ADCom, MP, GA and Student | Dean | Upon or before completion of 12 semester hours. |
| 6. If thesis is required, determine procedure. | ADCom | Dean | Per departmental requirements. |
| 7. Apply for graduation. | Dean | Dean | See graduate deadline at www.unt.edu/catalog/calendar.htm . |
| 8. Check to be sure degree program and Advisory Committee are up to date and all course work is complete. | Student | | Well before final comprehensive examination. Follow regular procedures for changes. |
| 9. Schedule and complete final comprehensive examination or schedule final defense of thesis. | ADCom | | Follow deadlines at www.unt.edu/catalog/calendar.htm . |
| 10. Submit final defended copy of thesis. | ADCom and DC | Dean | By deadline date in academic calendar at www.unt.edu/catalog/calendar.htm . |
| 11. File graduate application to continue graduate study, if the student so plans. | Dean | DC and Dean | Immediately upon completion of all requirements for master's degree. |
| 12. Arrange for cap and gown at University Bookstore. | | | By deadline date for placing order. |