



Graduate Handbook

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CENTER FOR & DEPARTMENT OF MIDDLE EASTERN STUDIES
THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT AUSTIN

*CAL 528 • 204 W. 21st Street, F9400 • Austin, TX 78712 USA
Tel: (512) 471-3881 • Fax: (512) 471-7834 • <http://www.utexas.edu/cola/depts/mes/>*

The University of Texas at Austin

Master of Arts in Middle Eastern Studies

Doctorate in Middle Eastern Languages and Cultures

Graduate Handbook

2019-2021

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I. Middle Eastern Studies at UT Austin

I. About

The graduate program in Middle Eastern Studies encompasses a wide variety of critical methodologies and approaches to the study of the Middle East. Guiding students to conceptualize the Middle East regionally instead of limiting them to a narrow scope of nation- and language-based inquiry, the graduate program encourages comparative study of the cultures, histories, and languages of the Middle East. In keeping with its open and flexible conception of Middle Eastern Studies, the program emphasizes the study of more than one Middle Eastern language and familiarity with multiple Middle Eastern cultures.

MES is committed to preparing graduate students in a very practical way for their anticipated careers. By the time they have earned degrees from Middle Eastern Studies, they will have acquired a firm grounding in the current theory and practice of their specific discipline and often in one or more national tradition. They will have conducted research in a specific area of Middle Eastern Studies, such as history, film studies, comparative literature, Ancient Near East, Islamic Studies, etc. Furthermore, they will have acquired a thorough knowledge of at least one language that they might teach at the university level or use professionally after graduation. Finally, all MES doctoral students and the majority of MES MA students will have substantial experience teaching, usually in a language course. When they finish their degrees, MA students will be well-positioned to continue to a Ph.D. program and qualified to pursue careers with globally-oriented organizations. Ph.D. graduates will be qualified to seek positions in departments of Middle Eastern Studies or area studies, as specialists in one or possibly more languages and cultures, or, in many cases, in other disciplinary homes, such as History, Media Studies, or Comparative Literature. They will also be well prepared for careers in related fields that require advanced expertise in international humanistic studies.— 2019

2. Introduction

This handbook describes the structure of the Center for Middle Eastern Studies (CMES), requirements for the Master of Arts and relevant student resources; and the Department of Middle Eastern Studies (DMES) requirements for the doctoral programs.

The Office of Graduate Studies (OGS) is the central source of information for graduate students. Doctoral and master's degree evaluators provide information about procedures for submission of reports, theses, and dissertations. Important deadlines for graduation and other forms can be found through the OGS website.

The objective of graduate study is to develop the intellectual breadth and to provide the specialized training necessary to a career in teaching, research, the arts,

or other non-academic professions. Emphasis is placed on the knowledge, methods, and skills needed for scholarly teaching, original research and problem solving, intellectual leadership, and other modes of achievement in the student's discipline.

The policies and procedures in this handbook should be understood as governing the course of graduate study in the Center for and Department of Middle Eastern Studies at The University of Texas at Austin, in conjunction with the policies and procedures described in the University's Graduate Catalog. C/DMES policies and procedures may be amended by action of the C/DMES Chair/Director or the Graduate Studies Committee.

Each student is expected to read and keep a hard copy of the handbook, which contains the rules and guidelines that apply to that student and their particular cohort. Enrollment in the academic program acts as an agreement to adhere to the rules and standards contained within this handbook.

For questions about topics not addressed in this handbook, please contact the C/DMES Graduate Coordinator.

3. Graduate Studies Committee

A Graduate Studies Committee (GSC) is required for any academic area in which an approved graduate degree program is offered. The GSC consists of all assistant, associate, and full professors who are active participants in the program. Although members of a graduate studies committee are usually drawn from a single administrative unit (college or school), the C/DMES GSC is composed of members from several administrative units. The Department GSC is known by the acronym MEL, while the Center's GSC is distinguished as the MES. The GSC elects its own chair. The term of the GSC chair is normally three years but may be renewed.

The GSC is responsible for evaluating the students in the degree program(s) to ensure that they are making satisfactory progress toward a degree. If the GSC finds that a student is not making satisfactory progress, it may recommend to the graduate dean that the student be terminated from the program.

To continue in the UT Austin Graduate School beyond the first semester, the student must make satisfactory progress in absolving any admission conditions that were imposed, meet any requirements made in writing by the GSC and receive the approval of the Graduate Advisor and GSC. Additionally the student must meet the program's expectations for good academic standing: 1) be in compliance with all applicable university and program policies; 2) maintain a cumulative graduate grade point average of at least 3.5; 3) make satisfactory progress toward degree; 4) perform at the professional level expected of the program; 5) take all courses for a letter-grade; and 6) remedy any temporary incomplete (X) before the start of the following

semester.¹ Failure to meet any of these stipulations will be considered by the GSC that the student is making unsatisfactory progress toward degree and is not in good academic standing.

A graduate student whose cumulative graduate grade point average falls below 3.00 at the end of any semester or summer session will be warned by the Office of Graduate Studies that their continuance in the Graduate School is in jeopardy. The student must attain a cumulative graduate grade point average of at least 3.00 during the next semester or summer session he or she is enrolled or be subject to dismissal. During this period, the student may not drop a course or withdraw from the University (with the expectation of returning) without the approval of the Graduate Advisor and the Graduate Dean.

A graduate student who has been dismissed may be readmitted for further graduate study only by petition of the GSC in the student's major area or by the GSC of another program that will accept the student. The petition must be approved by the graduate dean. Academic dismissal is reflected on the student's permanent record.

4. Student Responsibility

While University faculty and staff give students academic advice and assistance, students are expected to take responsibility for their education and personal development. Successful completion of the degree is the responsibility of the student. The student must know and abide by the academic and disciplinary policies given in this handbook and from the Graduate School, including rules governing quantity of work, the standard of work required to continue in the University, warning status and scholastic dismissal, and enforced withdrawal.

Students must also know and meet the requirements of their degree program; must enroll in courses appropriate to the program; meet programmatic, course, project, and/or university deadlines; must meet prerequisites and take courses in the proper sequence to ensure orderly and timely progress; and must seek advice about degree requirements and other University policies.

The student must meet with the Graduate Advisor for advising prior to registration, complete the required forms, register by the deadlines given in the Course Schedule, and verify their schedule of classes each semester and keep documentation of all schedule changes and other transactions.

The student must give correct local and permanent postal addresses, telephone numbers, and email address to the Office of the Registrar and must keep contact

¹ Students in academic positions or funded by most fellowships are expected to complete incompletes prior to the start of the following semester. All other students are expected to complete incomplete coursework before they convert to a permanent incomplete grade (I).

information current via UT Direct. Official correspondence is sent to the postal or email address last given to the registrar; if the student has failed to correct this address, they will not be relieved of responsibility on the grounds that the correspondence was not delivered. The University considers email to be an official means of communication. Most correspondence from faculty, the Graduate Advisor, and Graduate Coordinator will be sent via email.

5. Information Sources

Students should be familiar with the following sources of information:

General Information Catalog gives important information about academic policies and procedures that apply to all students. It includes the official academic calendar, admission procedures, residence requirements, information about tuition and fees, and policies on quantity of work, grades and the grade point average, adding and dropping courses, and withdrawal from the University.

Graduate Catalog contains degree requirements for all graduate programs, rules that affect graduate students, descriptions of graduate courses, and a list of Graduate Studies Committee(s) members. Students are expected to be familiar with the protective and academic policies contained within and to use it as a resource throughout their time at UT.

Course Schedule is published by the Office of the Registrar and is available online before registration for each semester and summer session. The Course Schedule includes information about registration procedures; times, locations, instructors, prerequisites, and special fees of classes offered.

University Directory gives physical and email addresses and telephone numbers of University offices and of students, faculty and staff. Please note, it is possible to restrict one's personal information from appearing in the directory.

6. College of Liberal Arts Graduate Studies

The Office of Research & Graduate Studies collaborates with Liberal Arts departments, centers, institutes, and the Graduate School to support initiatives that increase graduate student success and improve students' work environment. In addition to steering College policies, this office participates in the university-wide conversations about graduate student parental accommodations, funding, professional development, placement targets, and more. The Office of Research and Graduate Studies investigates college, university, and national data on graduate education; designs and offers professional development opportunities for graduate

students; and works on best practices for student recruitment and support with fellowships and employment in academic job titles.

7. Parental Accommodation

The College offers four types of accommodations for graduate students with growing families. These accommodations, all of them for a long semester or summer, are available to full-time students (enrolled for at least nine credit hours each long semester and three hours in summer). After an accommodation period, students are expected to resume their regular activities and to progress towards their degree as all students in their graduate program. After an accommodation period, faculty are encouraged to remain flexible in their expectations so that students can meet the demands of graduate study while adjusting to new demands in their parental roles.

It is the responsibility of a graduate student anticipating a birth or adoption to inform their Graduate Advisor, Graduate Coordinator, and thesis/dissertation or research project supervisor of any anticipated accommodation needs as early as possible, and to submit the required documentation in support of the accommodation request.

8. Student Conduct and Academic Integrity

It is imperative that all students adhere to UT's honor code. Each year, the university reviews and updates the Institutional Rules on Student Services and Activities.

"Academic dishonesty' or 'scholastic dishonesty' includes, but is not limited to, cheating, plagiarism, collusion, falsifying academic records, misrepresenting facts, and any act designed to give unfair academic advantage to the student (such as, but not limited to, submission of essentially the same written assignment for two classes without the prior permission of the instructor), or the attempt to commit such an act."

The examples of academic dishonesty listed above are defined at length in chapter II of the *Institutional Rules*. Students are expected to review this section of the document carefully, as ignorance will not be accepted as a defense against accusations. Please note that, in language courses, having a native speaker revise

work done in the target language without the instructor's permission, and before submission of the assignment, is considered an act of collusion.

9. Title IX

Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 is a federal law that prohibits sex discrimination in education. It reads no person in the United States shall, on the basis of sex, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any education program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance.

The University is committed to providing an educational and working environment for its students, faculty, and staff that is free from sex and gender discrimination, sexual harassment, sexual assault, sexual misconduct, interpersonal violence (including domestic violence and dating violence), and stalking. The University encourages individuals to promptly report incidents to the University Title IX Coordinator or Deputy Title IX Coordinators. The University considers graduate students hired to work as Teaching Assistants and Assistant Instructors to be mandatory reporters. It is imperative that graduate students serving in these roles familiarize themselves with Title IX.

Title IX related incidents include many types of behaviors that are defined and governed by University policies. The full list of detailed definitions can be found in the General Information Catalog, Appendix D: Policy on Sex Discrimination, Sexual Harassment, Sexual Assault, Sexual Misconduct, Interpersonal Violence, and Stalking or the Handbook of Operating Procedures and 3-3031 Policy on Sex Discrimination, Sexual Harassment, Sexual Assault, Sexual Misconduct, Interpersonal Violence, and Stalking.

10. Good Academic Standing

In addition to the information provided by the Graduate School regarding Standard of Work and Student Responsibility, C/DMES requires students to meet the following in

order to be considered in good academic standing in C/DMES and the University of Texas at Austin. This includes;

- Compliance with all applicable university and program policies;
- Maintenance of a cumulative GPA of 3.50;
- Take all courses with a letter-grade and complete all coursework;
- Earning any of the following grades will be considered not in good academic standing: X, I, NC, C+, C, C-, D, F;
- Satisfactory and timely progress towards degree requirements and milestones;
- Maintain regular and consistent contact with instructors, supervisors and committees;
- Exhibit respect toward other students and during classroom discussions;
- Perform at the professional level expected of the program and faculty supervisor;
- Registration in no fewer than nine credit hours of course work each long semester;
- Participate in C/DMES events, especially those put on by your area and to recruit, welcome or orient new students.

II. Review Process

C/DMES is committed to providing feedback, guidance, and corrective action as is necessary for students. Therefore, all students undergo a semester and annual review process. Students will receive written notification after their review. Reviews may result in a student being placed on academic probation or recommended for dismissal from the program. The following circumstances are examples that will trigger probation, corrective action, and/or dismissal.

- Failure to meet or maintain academic requirements as stated in the University Graduate Catalog and/or the C/DMES Graduate Handbook.
- Scholastic dishonesty, including cheating, lying, plagiarism, failure to cite sources, collusion, falsifying academic records, or any act designed to give unfair academic advantage to the student. Faculty must adhere to university guidelines. For complete University policy and procedures, see General Information Bulletin, Appendix C, Section II. These matters may also be referred to Student Judicial Services.

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- Behavior judged to be in violation of the Student Honor Code or University Code of Conduct.
 - Any threat or attempt to harm another person. These matters may also be referred to Student Judicial Services.
 - Commission of a criminal act that is contrary to professional practice, occurring during the course of study or occurring prior to admission to the program and becoming known after admission.
 - Consistent pattern of unprofessional behavior (e.g. absenteeism, not communicating with faculty, disrespectful communication with faculty and staff, ignoring graduate program requirements, not performing duties associated with Teaching Assistantships, etc.)

12. Policies and Procedures for Review of Academic Performance

Three levels of review (Level 1, Level 2, Level 3 outlined below) can occur at the Center for and Department of Middle Eastern Studies graduate programs in reviewing student's academic performance. Non-academic infractions may go to Student Judicial Services.

Faculty and program coordinators will share pertinent information with each other for the professional purpose of identifying student issues and enhancing problem solving about the concerns. They will follow University procedures related to student performance issues.

Level I: Written Communication of Status

A Level I review involves a student, faculty member, C/DMES Graduate Advisor, and Graduate Coordinator. When a faculty member has concerns about a student enrolled in the program meeting any of the academic criteria, whether related to professional behavior or scholastic performance, the concerned faculty member may:

- Discuss those concerns directly with the student and seek to work with the student to resolve the difficulties (either in person or via email). Meeting should be documented via letter of instruction.
- Notify the C/DMES Graduate Advisor and Coordinator of the concerns in order to identify potential patterns and issues related to the student.
- Document dates and content of meetings and communication with students. This documentation will include a letter of instruction, including email correspondence,

to the student detailing the nature of the concern and actions necessary to correct the situation. Include a follow-up date with measurable goals for improving situation and consequences (Level 2) should the student not achieve said measures.

In many instances, meetings between faculty and students resolve the concerns and do not necessarily lead to further reviews, pursuant to this section. As noted, typically a Level 1 review will result in corrective feedback to the student - typically documented in written form as a letter of instruction from the Graduate Advisor or the Chair/Director.

Level 2: Meeting with Student

A Level 2 Meeting for Review involves the faculty member, student, Graduate Advisor, Graduate Coordinator, and C/DMES Chair / Director. The member(s) will meet with the student when the student is not meeting or following program or university standards, policies, and procedures; or when concerns have not been resolved at Level 1.

In the information gathering process, the C/DMES Graduate Advisor and Coordinator will work with the faculty to determine the nature of the concern and gather sufficient information to develop a plan to address that concern, if one is needed. No further action may be required, or the student may be asked, in writing, to modify his or her behavior and/or seek appropriate help. This process is designed to assist students in dealing with identified concerns that have an impact on their performance. The review committee may:

- Provide documentation with dates and measures for improvement; consequences for lack of improvement.
- Establish formal conditions for the student's continuance in the program. In these situations, specific conditions must be met in order for the student to remain in the program. Action may include establishing goals, a plan, a timeline, and appropriate monitoring; providing mentoring and support; placing the student on probation and monitoring the student during the probationary period; referring the student to counseling and/or advising services; allowing the student to follow a reduced course load; or requiring the student to withdraw from the program with the option of reapplying.
- Consult with and/or refer to the Dean of Students. In some instances, depending on the nature of the problem, the University's Office of the Dean of Students may be consulted. If a referral is made to that Office after consultation, the student will be notified in writing about the nature of the concern and the fact that the referral is taking place. Examples of situations that may result in referral to the Office of the Dean of Students/Student Judicial Services include scholastic dishonesty, hazing, racial or sexual harassment, discriminatory or hostile behavior, damage or destruction of University property, and conduct that endangers the health or safety of any University student, employee, or campus visitor.

A Level 2 review may result in a student being barred from registration or placed on academic probation by the C/DMES Graduate Studies Committee (GSC), particularly in the case of Scholastic Performance issues (i.e., receiving a grade of C+ or lower, lack of progress in coursework, significant problems in developing a thesis or report document). When a student is placed on academic probation, they will receive written feedback about the reasons for being placed on probation, the length of the probation, and the criteria for lifting probation.

Whether or not a Level 2 review results in a student being placed on academic probation, the C/DMES Graduate Advisor will assess the nature of these concerns with appropriate staff/faculty, consult with the MES/MEL GSC, maintain documentation, and decide if it is necessary to conduct a more comprehensive Level 3 review.

Level 3: Final Attempts at Resolution

Generally, this level of review is called when significant and/or persistent problematic patterns are identified with students. These issues often require formal consultation with faculty, other appropriate parties (faculty supervisors, University administrators, etc.), and the student.

A Level 3 review is usually conducted when concerns have not been resolved in prior reviews; when issues related to a student not meeting the criteria for academic performance (often involving professional or ethical behaviors); when the student has not met the conditions of academic probation, or when the student is being considered for termination or discontinuance in the program. In most instances, a Level 3 review is sufficient to deal with student performance and is the last decision-making step in the review process in the program.

When a Level 3 review is called, the C/DMES Graduate Advisor will convene a meeting with the appropriate faculty including members of the Graduate Studies Committee (GSC), the GSC Chair and/or Chair/Director, the Graduate Coordinator, and the student to gather information, determine the nature of the problem (if one is confirmed to exist), and identify alternatives for its remediation. Appropriate faculty to be involved in a review will include but are not limited to those who have direct knowledge of and experience with the student. The student will be notified in writing of the concerns and meeting date, with sufficient time to prepare for and attend the meeting.

After the review meeting has occurred, the Graduate Advisor and members of the GSC will meet to discuss the problem situation and make recommendations regarding the student. Based on this review and conference, and an objective assessment of the information provided, the C/DMES Graduate Advisor will inform the student of the decisions, which can include one or more of the following actions:

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1. Continue the student in the program with no conditions. In these situations, the concern has been addressed and no further action by the student or program is required.
 2. Counsel the student to change majors/degree programs and/or discontinue the student in the program. In some situations, it will be recommended that the student no longer continue in the program. The student will be counseled to voluntarily change majors or degree programs. If that does not occur, the student may be terminated from the program.

In any Level 3 review, there must be clear, concise documentation of the problem areas as well as verification that these concerns have been discussed with the student and attempted to be ameliorated, where appropriate. Students must be notified of the decision in writing of the review. It is the responsibility of the Graduate Advisor to communicate the decision to the student.

II. Program Information

1. Faculty

C/DMES has more than 20 core faculty who may offer courses in Middle Eastern Studies and/or languages. Additionally, there are many more associated faculty who have a scholarly or personal interest in the area. Faculty affiliates may teach any MES/MEL course. Because our graduate programs are interdisciplinary, we are able to have access to these diverse and valuable perspectives. The faculty directory, searchable by rank and affiliation, can be found on the C/DMES Website.

2. Program Staff List

Na'ama Pat-El

Chair, Department of Middle Eastern Studies
Associate Professor, Department of Middle Eastern Studies

Karen Grumberg

Director, Center for Middle Eastern Studies
Associate Professor, Department of Middle Eastern Studies

Lisa Parisi
Graduate Program Coordinator
Department of Middle Eastern Studies
Center for Middle Eastern Studies

Hina Azam
Graduate Advisor, Center for Middle Eastern Studies
Associate Professor, Department of Middle Eastern Studies

Bruce Wells
Graduate Advisor, Department of Middle Eastern Studies
Associate Professor, Department of Middle Eastern Studies

Dale J. Correa
Middle Eastern Studies and History Librarian
The University of Texas at Austin Libraries

Uri Koldney
Film and Video and Hebrew, Jewish, and Israel Librarian
The University of Texas at Austin Libraries

3. Graduate Advisor

The Graduate Advisor is a faculty member designated to advise students and represent the Graduate School in matters pertaining to graduate study. The Graduate Advisor provides information about the degree programs, including admission and degree requirements; graduate fellowships, teaching assistantships and graduate assistantships. The Graduate Advisor consults with newly admitted students and monitors the progress of all graduate students. The Graduate Advisor approves the student's course selections each semester as well as all formal documents during the student's program of study. Both the Center and the Department have their own Graduate Advisor.

4. Graduate Coordinator

The Graduate Coordinator is a staff member who assists the Graduate Advisor and other faculty members in the administration of the program, and also provides services to students. The Graduate Coordinator can help with many routine questions about courses, degrees, or the UT environment. The Graduate Coordinator is familiar with the University and C/DMES policies concerning application, admission, registration and graduation. The Graduate Coordinator informs and assists students in dealing with these policies. Additionally, the Graduate Coordinator

distributes information about the program, handles petitions and special requests, assists with registration, maintains student files, and compiles statistics.

5. Graduate Studies Committee (GSC):

A Graduate Studies Committee is required for any academic area in which an approved graduate degree program is offered. The MES/MELC GSC is composed of faculty members from several administrative units. When forming committees and selecting a supervisor, the student must ensure that the faculty member is on the MEL/MES GSC.

III. Graduate Study

1. MA Degree (CMES)

Offered by the Center for Middle Eastern Studies, the MA in Middle Eastern Studies is an interdisciplinary academic degree designed to broaden and deepen the student's knowledge of the languages and cultures of the Middle East. The program develops a strong knowledge base, preparing students for leadership positions as professionals in areas such as government, NGOs, business, consulting, foreign policy, international law, journalism, and translation.

2. Requirements

Students pursuing a master's degree in Middle Eastern Studies may write either a thesis or a report at the end of their coursework. The *thesis option* requires 36 semester hours of coursework, of which *six (6)* hours are earned in the thesis course. The *report option* requires 36 semester hours of coursework, of which *three (3)* hours are earned in the report course. The thesis option is strongly recommended for those who plan to pursue a doctorate.

a. Masters with Thesis

Core Degree	12 credits	MES Graduate courses
Concentration	6 credits	Concentration courses to be approved by the Graduate Advisor

Language	6 credits	Upper-division language courses: <i>Arabic, Persian, Turkish, or Hebrew</i> . In most cases, graduate students enroll in 381.
Thesis Work	6 credits	Thesis courses: MES 698A & 698B are taken sequentially on a CR/NC grade basis

b. Masters with Report

Core Degree	15 credits	MES Graduate courses
Concentration	9 credits	Concentration courses to be approved by Graduate Advisor
Language	6 credits	Upper-division language courses: <i>Arabic, Persian, Turkish, or Hebrew</i> . In most cases, graduate students enroll in 381.
Report Work	3 credits	Report course: MES 398R taken on a CR/NC grade basis

In addition, each student must demonstrate competence in the research skills appropriate to the student’s overall academic and career objectives and to the final thesis or report. Students may take up to 6 hours of *upper-division* (undergraduate) credit for their MA coursework. All courses must be taken for a letter-grade. Credit/No Credit (CR/NC) courses may not be applied to MA course requirements. Special approval from the Graduate Advisor is required for students who wish to take MES 389 *Conference Course* for the MA coursework.

3. *MES 386: Survey of Middle Eastern Literature and Film*

All students must complete the core foundation course:

MES 386: Survey of Middle Eastern Literature and Film: in this seminar, students will read literature and watch films from across the Middle East in Arabic, Hebrew, Persian, and Turkish (in translation). The course is intended to introduce to students key authors and filmmakers working in these languages, and to expose the conventions of identity that they represent or push against in their works. This seminar is primarily a discussion course; periodically, guest professors will lead our discussions of texts that fall within their areas of expertise. The main goals of the course are to help students acquire a familiarity with the cultural production of the Middle East region; to engage with the defining preoccupations that emerge from these representations, and to provide the

analytical tools to help students identify connections across boundaries of geography and language. While all the readings and films will be in English translation, students with advanced language knowledge are encouraged to read/view texts in the original.

4. Core Courses

The MA degree is comprised of three areas: Core Courses, Concentration Courses, and Language courses. Core courses are graduate seminars that have an official MES course number (MES 384, 385, 386). They are taught by either core or affiliated faculty and have been verified by the curriculum committee for having at least 30% of course content related to the Middle East.

5. Concentration Courses

Concentration courses are to pertain the student's thesis/report. This form of support can be in terms of *discipline* (history, literary theory, religious studies, gender studies) or in terms of *topic/area* (Islam, Arab Spring, dispute resolution). Though courses may include topics on the Middle East, they are not required to do so. Ideally, concentration courses will be *both* related to each other (same topic, area, discipline) *and* supportive of the thesis/report; if a two-fold relationship is not possible then these courses must support the thesis/report.

6. Course Categories

Conference course (MES 389) are specialized courses covering topics that are not regularly addressed in the curriculum, or designed to expand the student's opportunities for individual consultation. They are often taught on a one-on-one basis. While they make sense in terms of the topics they cover and the opportunities they offer, conference courses lack the important interaction with a peer group. The Graduate School limits the number of conference courses that can count toward a student's degree.

Upper-division courses are designated by the last two digits of the course number, x20-x79. A graduate student may receive credit for up to six hours (2 courses) of upper-division undergraduate coursework as part of their core degree requirements. Such courses are typically a specialized course in one's area of interest that is not offered at the graduate level.

Summer graduate courses are rarely offered at UT during the summer. Most faculty are away during the summer.

7. Course Limitations

Center students may not apply more a total of two of the following courses for the MA

degree:

- MES 389: Conference Course
- Upper-division: upper-division undergraduate course

The Office of Graduate Studies allows for a maximum of two courses from the above to count toward core degree requirements (MES core and concentration courses).

8. Cross Listings

A course that is cross-listed with MES may appear on the program of work regardless of the department under which a student registers for the course. For example, HIS 388K may apply to the degree without any special approval, if it is cross-listed with MES 385.

9. Non-MES Courses

A non-language course that is not cross-listed with MES cannot be applied to the MES degree (MES Core) without advance approval. To request this approval, a student must submit a non-MES course credit petition to the Graduate Advisor and Coordinator demonstrating that the non-MES course contains at least 30% Middle Eastern studies content. Petitions stating that the student will pursue final projects or individual assignments through the lens of the Middle East will not be approved. Middle East content should be represented in all aspects of the class, including lectures, readings, and assignments. This approval must be sought and granted before the 1st class day of the semester in which the non-MES course is taken. Retroactive approvals will not be granted. Courses taken outside of the Center that apply neither to the degree nor a dual degree program may be taken with the approval of the Graduate Advisor. With Graduate Advisor approval students may apply non-MES courses toward their concentration courses.

10. Language Courses

Lower-division language courses may not be used to satisfy Master's degree requirements. Degree requirements are met when a student completes, in-residence, two upper-division language courses. Students who place into an intermediate or advanced level their first year in the program continue their language study into their second year or pursue the Dual Language Track.

Native or heritage speakers of a Middle Eastern language may not use their native tongue to meet the Master's language requirement. They must complete the language requirement by pursuing a non-native Middle Eastern language, potentially from the

beginner level if the applicant does not already possess a strong background in this second language.

II. Language Sequences

All undergraduate language courses have three-credit graduate cross-listings that graduate students register for. The intent of these corresponding three-credit versions is meant to keep tuition down. However, students, in reality, are still taking a five- or six-credit course at the undergraduate level. "Content Courses" come after completion of the intermediate or advanced level. These courses are neither graduate-level courses nor seminars and cannot be applied to core degree requirements.

Meets-with undergraduate course numbers:

Arabic Sequence				
Arabic Lower-Division				
38iH	Intensive Grad Language Instruction I	60iC	Intensive Arabic I	Fall
38iJ	Intensive Grad Language Instruction II	61iC	Intensive Arabic II	Spring
Arabic Upper-Division				
38iK	Intensive Grad Language Instruction III	62iK	Intensive Arabic III	Fall
38iL	Intensive Grad Language Instruction IV	62iL	Intensive Arabic IV	Spring
38iM	Intensive Grad Language Instruction V	53iK	Intensive Grad Language Instruction V	Fall

38iN	Intensive Grad Language Instruction VI	53iL	Intensive Grad Language Instruction VI	Spring
		360L	Arabic Content Course	F & S

Hebrew Sequence				
Hebrew Lower-Division				
38iH	Intensive Grad Language Instruction I	60iC	Intensive Hebrew I	Fall
38iJ	Intensive Grad Language Instruction II	6iIC	Intensive Hebrew II	Spring
Hebrew Upper-Division				
		320K	Hebrew via Pop Culture	Fall
		320L	Hebrew through the Media	Spring

Persian Sequence				
Persian Lower-Division				
38iH	Intensive Grad Language Instruction I	60iC	Intensive Persian I	Fall
38iJ	Intensive Grad Language Instruction II	6iIC	Intensive Persian II	Spring

Persian Upper-Division				
		322K	Second-Year Persian I	Fall
		322L	Second-Year Persian II	Spring
		329	Persian Content Course	F & S

Turkish Sequence				
Turkish Lower-Division				
38iH	Intensive Grad Language Instruction I	60iC	Intensive Turkish I	Fall
38iJ	Intensive Grad Language Instruction II	60iC	Intensive Turkish II	Spring
Turkish Upper-Division				
		320K	Second-Year Turkish II	Fall
		329	Turkish Cinema	Spring

12. Language Content Courses

Content courses (ARA 360L, HEB 320 PRS 329, TUR 329) intend to foster language skills through the use of targeted vocabulary, readings, and activities that focus on the theme of the course (e.g. art and literature or media and film). These courses are still *language* courses in the sequence and are not be confused with *regular* graduate or undergraduate courses. As a result, language content courses may be

used to fulfill language coursework requirements, but they cannot be applied to the core and concentration areas of the MA degree.

13. Events

The Center for Middle Eastern Studies sponsors or co-sponsors over 40 events each semester. These events bring various dimensions of the Middle East to our campus, allowing you to expand your knowledge of the region beyond the classroom. CMES graduate students are **required** to attend two academic events per semester and to submit an events survey form for each. Please note that these events must be academic – not administrative – in nature.

Though most of your time as graduate students revolves around the classroom, events are an integral part of the university experience. The Center takes this requirement seriously and considers it part of graduate training. It is one of the factors considered when assessing academic performance and funding.

14. Degree planners

Copies of degree planners for the thesis or report option can be found on the website. In addition to these schedule planners, a graduate degree planner is available through UT Direct.

15. Advising

Each student is required to consult the Graduate Advisor and Graduate Coordinator prior to registration so that advising bars may be cleared. Students who do not attend an advising session will not be cleared to register. Changes made to a student's registration record after their advising session must be cleared by the Graduate Advisor and Graduate Coordinator. Since registration is a busy time, students should feel free to contact the Graduate Advisor throughout the semester to discuss more in-depth academic planning.

Academic advising and registration periods:

Registration & Advising for current students	
For Spring Semesters	late October - early November
For Fall Semesters	late April - early May

Registration & Advising for incoming cohorts	
For Fall Semester	Late August. Incoming students will register during Orientation

16. Advising and Registration Forms

Students must complete and email *all* relevant registration forms to the Graduate Coordinator and Graduate Advisor prior to their advising appointment. Forms are meant to track student progress; therefore, they must be updated and resubmitted when changes are made. Forms must be typed and digitally-signed. Scans and paper copies will not be accepted. Forms can be found on the Middle Eastern Studies website.

17. Progress toward Degree

The MES Master's degree is expected to be completed within two academic years (24 months).²

Year One	
<i>Fall</i>	<i>Spring</i>
Graduate Course	Graduate Course
Graduate Course	Graduate Course
Language Course ³	Language Course
Year Two	
<i>Fall</i>	<i>Spring</i>

² Dual degree students follow the same trajectory but complete both degrees in three years and enroll in four courses per semester.

³ Students are required to complete *at least* two intermediate (upper-division) language courses. Additional study may be required if students enter the program with beginner knowledge.

Graduate Course	Graduate Course
Graduate Course	Graduate Course
Thesis A*	Thesis B / Report ⁴

18. Dual Language

CMES encourages students to acquire at least intermediate knowledge of a second Middle Eastern language. This typically means that students extend their time-to-degree, making it an attractive option for Dual Degree students and students seeking graduate portfolios, and students awarded a FLAS. For MA students not seeking Dual Degrees or portfolios, the Dual Language option is possible with careful and strategic planning that may include summer language study. To achieve this goal, we prioritize Dual Language students for travel funding and waive their tuition for the Arabic Summer Institute.

19. MA Thesis/Report

The Thesis or Report is required by the Master’s Program and the Graduate School. It represents the final paper or research project that the student creates to culminate their coursework in Middle Eastern Studies. A student must be enrolled in the final Thesis or Report course (Thesis - MES 698B or Report- MES 398R) during the semester they intend to graduate. Before registering for the Thesis or Report course, the student must submit a Thesis/Report Proposal that includes a timeline and the Supervisor’s expectations to the CMES Graduate Advisor and Graduate Coordinator. The forms are located on our website.

The main difference between the Master’s Report and Master’s Thesis is that with the thesis, students collect original research to answer a specific research question. For reports, students review and critique a body of literature. The report may or may not focus on the practical implications of an area of research. Most students choose to do the master’s thesis, especially if they plan to apply to a Ph.D. program. A thesis will require two semesters to complete (MES 698A in the first semester, MES 698B during the second semester) versus one semester to complete the report (MES 398R). The thesis project also may require approval by the Institutional Review Board (IRB). The success of your project will depend on your ability to work well with your committee and meet deadlines.⁵

⁴ Students who pursue the Report option will substitute Thesis A for an additional graduate course.

⁵ The graduate advisor plays no role in evaluating the thesis or report project, its quality, or its completion.

The Committee

At least two faculty members must serve as thesis/report readers. It is most common to have a supervisor and a second reader. Two equal co-supervisors may also be acceptable but please first check with the Graduate Coordinator. In the first example, the supervisor must be on the Center's Graduate Studies Committee. In the second example, one of the co-supervisors must be on the GSC list.

When approaching a faculty member, you must have a prospectus explaining your topic and a tentative bibliography. One of the earliest things to negotiate with the committee is a timeline in which work will be submitted. Supervisors and/or readers reserve the right to disband the committee if the student is unable to meet established deadlines or formulate an adequate project.

Extensions

Students who do not complete their thesis or report project by the end of the spring semester must petition to both their committee and CMES to continue in the program for the summer semester. Extensions will only be granted when the committee supports the extension and the student has demonstrated timely progress throughout their project. Students who do not finish their project after the summer session will no longer be eligible to re-enroll in the fall.

20. Graduation Requirements

Procedures for Master's Degree Candidates:

- Be registered in the Graduate School in the semester or summer session in which they plan to graduate.
- Be enrolled in the final Thesis or Report course (Thesis - MES 698B or Report-MES 398R) in the semester or summer session in which they plan to graduate.
- Submit the online Master's Graduation Application and associated Program of Work via the Graduate School website by established deadline.⁶
- Submit the thesis or report to the supervising committee by the standard deadlines established by the program and the Graduate School.⁷
- Submit the thesis or report to the Office of Graduate Studies for final approval by the Graduate Dean no later than the published deadline, typically 3:00 pm on the

⁶ Dual degree Program of Work is still completed using paper forms. The Graduate Coordinator of each program will assist dual degree students in completing this Milestone.

⁷ CMES, Graduate Advisor, Supervisor, and Committee reserve the right to impose internal deadlines.

last class day of the semester. The thesis or report must be submitted in electronic format and follow the format guidelines published on the Graduate School's website.

- Submit a signature page containing the (digital or traditional) signatures of the thesis or report supervising committee to the Office of Graduate Studies no later than the published deadline.⁸
- Submit final PDF of thesis / report to CMES Graduate Coordinator by 3:00 pm on the last class day of the semester.

IV Graduate Study (MA/Ph.D. and Ph.D.)

21. MA/Ph.D. Degree

The Department's graduate program in Middle Eastern Languages and Culture (DMES) aims to educate and mentor scholars and teachers of the languages and cultures of the Middle East with the depth to support a sustained research career and the breadth to teach a range of courses on Middle Eastern topics. Students learn to design and execute research projects that will help redefine the frontiers of discovery in their field. Teaching experience helps prepare them to communicate new knowledge to experts and non-experts alike. Degrees are disciplinary-oriented, not language-oriented.

22. Core Requirements (Ph.D.)

Students pursuing a Ph.D. degree in Middle Eastern Languages and Cultures will meet both core degree requirements and area specifications. The core degree consists of a minimum of 30 hours of course work; 9 hours of language seminars; at least 3 hours of comprehensive exams; reading knowledge of French or German (or substitute language as approved by supervisor and Graduate Advisor; mastery in a Middle Eastern language; at least 6 credit hours of dissertation coursework.

⁸Proxy signatures are not permitted. Digital signatures must include certification (i.e. AdobeSign, DocuSign, etc).

<p>Middle Eastern Languages and Cultures</p> <p>Ph.D. Requirements</p> <p>2018-2022</p>	
<p>Core Degree</p>	<p>a minimum of 30 hours of MELC courses;</p> <p>9 hours of language seminars;</p> <p>at least 3 hours of comprehensive exams;</p> <p>reading knowledge of French or German;</p> <p>mastery in a Middle Eastern language;</p> <p>at least 6 credit hours of dissertation coursework</p>

With supervisor permission, students may take up to 6 hours of upper-division (undergraduate) credit for their coursework. All courses must be taken for a letter-grade; Credit/No Credit (CR/NC) courses may not be applied to degree or area requirements. Special approval from the Graduate Advisor and Department Chair is required for students who wish to take MEL 389 *Conference Course*. All coursework must be approved by the supervisor and/or Graduate Advisor prior to registration. Advising forms are located on the C/DMES website. Students are required to complete all necessary registration forms.

23. Requirements by Track

Hebrew Bible / Ancient Near East

The HB/ANE track is designed to immerse students in the critical, academic study of the Hebrew Bible in its ancient Near Eastern context. Students read the entire Hebrew Bible in four semesters, and they learn another ancient Semitic language to an intermediate level. They are prepared for the field of biblical studies via two years of seminars in which they are expected to write and respond as scholars in the field.

All students in HB/ANE must develop a second field as well, with an eye toward the kinds of positions that exist for Hebrew Bible specialists in these times. Second fields that have so far been selected include religious studies, New Testament, gender studies, linguistics, and the politics/war/strategy of the Ancient Near East.

Track Specifications and Requirements	
Hebrew Bible/Ancient Near East	<p>Courses must include 12 hours of the Bible in Hebrew;</p> <p>3 hours of <i>Comparative Semitic Grammar</i>;</p> <p>3 hours in <i>Theory & Method in Study of Religion</i>;</p> <p>12 hours in topics on the Ancient Near East;</p> <p>12 hours in a Minor field;</p> <p>12 hours of Near Eastern language work.</p>

Middle Eastern Languages and Cultures

This track provides graduate students with a comprehensive and in-depth training in Middle Eastern literary and cultural production. The course of study is engaged within and across national and linguistic boundaries, disciplines, genres, and historical periods. Students are trained in comparative and theoretical approaches to literature, film, and media. By interrogating conventional nationalist, cultural, and literary paradigms, students will deepen their understanding of the cultural dynamics of the region and confront complex questions as part of a larger humanistic inquiry.

In consultation with a supervisor from their chosen field, students devise a program of study that includes training in literary and cultural theory and close textual reading in original languages. MELC students have the unique opportunity to draw on a wide range of Middle East experts and literary and cultural theorists across the university. They are expected to take graduate seminars conducted in the Middle Eastern language of their primary specialization, and to contextualize and complement their chosen focus by taking seminars in other Middle Eastern literature and intellectual history, comparative literature, and in other relevant fields and departments. Some work in a second Middle Eastern language is also recommended. Students who complete this track will be equipped with the necessary critical methodologies and literary training that will strategically position them for the job market in Middle Eastern Studies.

Track Specifications and Requirements	
Middle Eastern Languages	<p>Courses must include 6 hours of literary theory and/or cultural studies;</p>

and Cultures	Students are strongly encouraged to acquire a second Middle Eastern language.
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Middle Eastern History

The Middle Eastern History track provides students with training in the discipline of History, with a geographic focus on the Middle East region, with the primary goal of training PhDs for academic jobs in history programs. Thus, the program of study is designed to be consistent with the training typically provided in history departments.

While students may take some non-history courses, the program is structured so that the coursework, exams, and dissertation are all overseen primarily by historians, both within the Department of Middle Eastern Studies and in other departments, such as History or Religious Studies. While most of these historians will be focused on the Middle East, students are also allowed to work with historians who are not focused specifically on the Middle East. Usually, this will be because of shared theoretical, thematic, and methodological interests, but it could also be because of the desire to develop a secondary area of research or teaching competence.

Track Specifications and Requirements	
Middle Eastern History	Students are required to reach Advanced / Superior in the language of their research field. A secondary research language may be substituted for French or German

Islamic Studies

The doctoral program in Islamic Studies provides in-depth multidisciplinary training in the study of Islam coupled with a strong grounding in languages and theoretical approaches in religious studies.

The core faculty consists of eight tenured and tenure-track members who offer courses in a range of subjects that include Islamic law, gender and women's studies, history, Shi'ism, Sufism, art, architecture, devotional poetry, diaspora, political theory, and sovereignty in Islam. Besides Arabic, students can take advantage of advanced teaching of Persian, Turkish, Urdu and other vernacular languages of Muslim societies. All students are also required to take a theory and method course in the study of religion and to develop a minor

field. Overall, the doctoral program strives to produce well-rounded and rigorous scholars of Islam who are experts in their own fields and capable of collaborating with colleagues in related disciplines.

Track Specifications and Requirements	
Islamic Studies	<p>Coursework must include 3 hours of the following seminars: <i>Trends in Islamic Studies</i>; <i>Theory and Method in Study of Religion</i>; <i>Supervised Teaching</i>.</p> <p>Students must also take 9 hours in the following fields: "Institutions and Traditions of Islam", "Thematic Approaches to Islam", and 9 hours from a Minor Area</p> <p>Students are required to have four semesters of approved language coursework, two of which must be at an advanced/research level.</p>

Linguistics

For those interested in linguistics, MELC offers courses in theoretical linguistics. Theoretical interests of MELC faculty include comparative Semitics, dialectology, historical linguistics, language contact, second language acquisition, sociolinguistics, and syntax. Students are encouraged to explore other areas as well by taking courses in the Linguistics Department in relevant subdisciplines. What distinguishes MELC from a degree in linguistics is that MELC students are expected to attain a high degree of language proficiency as well as cultural proficiency in their area. Entering students are expected to have advanced proficiency in one Middle Eastern Language and all students are encouraged to study an additional language or languages.

Track Specifications and Requirements	
Linguistics	<p>Students are required to choose a major field in <i>either</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) literature/culture <i>or</i> 2) language/linguistics; <p>Students are required to choose two minor fields.</p>

24. Master's Requirements

Students pursuing a master's degree in Middle Eastern Languages and Cultures may write either a thesis or a report at the end of their coursework. However, the thesis option is strongly recommended for those pursuing a doctorate. The *thesis option* requires 36 semester hours of coursework, of which *six (6)* hours are earned in the thesis course. The *report option* requires 36 semester hours of coursework, of which *three (3)* hours are earned in the report course.

Please refer to the MA Graduate Study section of the handbook for terminology, timelines, and policies regarding the Master program.

25. Advising

Each student is required to consult their supervisor and the Graduate Coordinator prior to registration so that advising bars may be cleared. Changes made to a student's registration record after their advising session must be cleared by their supervisor and sent to the Graduate Coordinator. It is the student's responsibility to seek any faculty or department approvals needed to add courses outside of MES.

Academic advising and registration periods:

Registration & Advising for current students	
For Spring Semesters	late October - early November
For Fall Semesters	late April - early May

Registration & Advising for incoming cohort	
For Fall Semester	Late August. Incoming students will register during Orientation

Since registration is a busy time, students should feel free to contact their supervisor throughout the semester to discuss more in-depth academic and professional planning.

26. Advising and Registration Forms

Students must complete and email *all* relevant registration forms to the Graduate Coordinator after their advising appointment. Forms are meant to track student progress, so they must be updated and resubmitted if changes occur. All forms must be typed and digitally-signed by the student and supervisor. Scans, paper copies, and incomplete forms will not be accepted. Forms can be found on the Middle Eastern Studies' website.

27. Progress toward Degree (Ph.D.)

Progress toward the degree is defined in terms of the relevance of courses taken to the student's course of study, the length of time a student spends in the program, the GPA maintained, number of courses taken on a credit/no-credit basis, and the number of incompletes. All graduate students are evaluated by the GSC on a yearly basis. During the meeting, the student's mentor or supervisor reports on progress and responds to questions from members of the GSC.

Doctoral students are required to review the degree plans, specific degree requirements, milestones, and estimated timelines to reach various benchmarks. You will be able to log in to the Graduate Degree Planner and check your progress to degree completion.

28. Milestones

Located on the Graduate School's website, all incoming doctoral students are expected to review their program's Milestones with their supervisor and the Graduate Coordinator.

Milestones	
<i>UT Austin Milestones</i>	<i>Expected Time of Achievement</i>
Review degree requirement and milestones agreement form with Advisor & Coordinator	By the first day of class of the first semester
Maintain a 3.50 GPA	Every semester
Complete all required, formal coursework	By the end of the third year (fifth year if MA/Ph.D. track)

Successful completion of all exams (oral and written) needed to advance to candidacy	By the beginning of the fourth year (sixth year if MA/Ph.D. track)
IRB (human testing) if needed	See dissertation supervisor
Dissertation completed, successfully defended, and approved by committee	By the end of the fifth year (seventh year if MA/Ph.D. track)
Student completes and files all paperwork for graduation	By the end of the fifth year (seventh year if MA/Ph.D. track)
Dissertation accepted by the Graduate School	By the end of the fifth year (seventh year if MA/Ph.D. track)

29. Master's Thesis / Report (MA/Ph.D.)

For students who do not previously have a MA, the Master's Thesis/Report represents the final paper or research project that the student creates to culminate their coursework in DMES. A student must be enrolled in the final Thesis or Report course (Thesis - MEL 698B or Report- MEL 398R) during the semester they intend to receive their MA. Before registering for the Thesis or Report course, the student must submit a Thesis/Report Proposal that includes a timeline and the Supervisor's expectations to the DMES Graduate Advisor and Graduate Coordinator. The forms are located on our website.

The main difference between the master's report and master's thesis is that with the thesis, students collect original research to answer a specific research question. For reports, students review and critique a body of literature. The report may or may not focus on the practical implications of an area of research. A thesis will require 2 semesters to complete (MEL 698A in the first semester, MEL 698B during the second semester) vs. 1 semester to complete the report (MEL 398R). The thesis project also may require approval by the Institutional Review Board (IRB). The success of your project will depend on your ability to work well with your committee and meet deadlines.

The Committee

At least two faculty members must serve as thesis/report readers. It is most common to have a supervisor and a second reader. Two equal co-supervisors may also be acceptable but please first check with the Graduate Coordinator. In the first example, the supervisor must be on the DMES Graduate Studies Committee. In the second example, one of the co-supervisors must be on the DMES GSC list.

When approaching a faculty member, you must have a prospectus explaining your topic and a tentative bibliography. One of the earliest things to negotiate with the committee is a timeline in which work will be submitted. Committees reserve the right to disband the committee if the student is unable to meet established deadlines.

Extensions

Students who do not complete their thesis or report project by the end of the spring semester must petition to both their committee and DMES to continue in the program for the summer semester. Extensions will only be granted when the committee supports the extension and the student has exhibited timely progress throughout their project.

30. Supervised Teaching

MEL 398T, Supervised Teaching. The department and the Graduate School require all students who hold Assistant Instructor positions to have completed a pedagogy course. With supervisor approval, students may take a 398T in an affiliated department, such as Religious Studies, Linguistics, Sociology, History, Government, Anthropology, etc.

31. Language Examinations

Students must pass the research language examination before starting the comprehensive examination. A secondary Middle Eastern language may be substituted for French or German with supervisor and Graduate Advisor approval. The examination consists of several pages of text that the student must translate into English. The text commonly is selected from a book chapter or journal article. The use of a dictionary is permitted.

Research Language by Area	
Hebrew Bible/Ancient Near East	Normally German. In HB/ANE, the exam is taken as soon as possible and not later than the beginning of the third year.
Middle Eastern History	French or German. A second Middle Eastern language may be substituted with supervisor and Graduate Advisor approval.

Islamic Studies	French or German
Linguistics	French or German
Middle Eastern Languages and Cultures	French

32. Comprehensive Exams

MEL 393, Comprehensive Exam: Preparation

Comprehensive exams are taken after all language exams and coursework have been met; typically, between the third and fourth years of the doctoral program. Before taking the written exam, the student will collect preliminary reading lists from each committee member. The purpose of the exams is to ascertain whether students possess a breadth of knowledge outside the dissertation specialization to participate in professional discussions in their area and be at the level expected of a new Assistant Professor. These exams test a student’s analytical and research skills through the completion of a series of essays followed by an oral defense.

MEL 393, Comprehensive Exam: Written Examination

Occurring over a span of **30 days**, during the written examination process students might be asked to prepare any of the following: analytical reviews, answers to synthesis questions, response papers, definitions of key terms, conceptualizations of particular events, or discipline knowledge. Students will submit work to the Graduate Coordinator and their committee.

MEL 393, Comprehensive Exam: Oral Examinations

Two to three weeks after the submission of the written exam, an oral examination is held in which the student defends before the committee their research, analyses, and arguments presented in their written exam. The committee will assign a grade of pass,

fail, or pass with conditions. Any conditions imposed must be met before the student advances to candidacy.

33. Dissertation Prospectus

This milestone takes place upon completion of the comprehensive exam process, **no later than 90 days** after the comprehensive exam was passed. The prospectus must be successfully defended before being eligible to advance to doctoral candidacy in the Graduate School. The prospectus committee is composed of faculty whose area or research methodology align with the proposed dissertation topic. The Graduate School requires three members to be from the MELC Graduate Committee, and one member not to be affiliated with the department. Prospectus formats vary widely and depend on the field and project, but most committees request a 15-20 page document that conforms to the standards of scholarly writing in the field and includes footnotes, references, and bibliographies.

Prospectus Defense

All dissertation committee members must attend the prospectus defense. However, with Graduate Advisor approval, any member may be excused, provided it is not a supervisor or, if applicable, co-supervisor. Members may attend electronically, including the supervisor/co-supervisor. If a regular committee member is absent, they must read and approve the prospectus prior to the prospectus defense. The Graduate Coordinator will maintain the approved version of the prospectus in the student's file.

34. Applying for Candidacy

Passing both the comprehensive exams and the prospectus defense allows a student to apply for candidacy and, therefore, begin official work on the dissertation. To complete the candidacy application, the student must establish a full dissertation committee, have defended a dissertation prospectus, and collected the necessary information requested by the Office of Graduate Studies. Some initial steps toward these requirements should be taken during the Comprehensive Exam process. A full dissertation committee consists of at least five faculty members, at least three of whom sit on the MELC Graduate Studies Committee. Students must apply for

doctoral candidacy in the Graduate School and Department before being eligible to enroll in dissertation coursework.

35. Dissertation

MEL X99W: Dissertation. At least two semesters of dissertation registration are required before being eligible to graduate. Dissertation courses are graded only on the CR/NC basis, in which a NC indicates that adequate progress was not made. Depending on funding requirements, students will enroll in either 399W, 699W, or 999W. Students are required to maintain regular contact with their committee members and meet all deadlines set forth by the supervisor and/or committee. Students in the dissertation phase will still undergo yearly reviews by the GSC.

36. Scheduling the Defense

You and your supervisor, in negotiation with the dissertation committee members, should determine a time and date for the defense. Each member of your committee must receive a copy of your dissertation **at least four weeks** prior to your dissertation defense date. You must schedule the dissertation defense with the Graduate School **at least two weeks** prior to the defense date by completing the Request for Final Oral Examination form, located on the Graduate School's website. All members of your committee must sign your request form indicating their intent to be present at your defense. Your Graduate Advisor must also sign this form to indicate you have been approved to defend.⁹ It is expected that all members of the committee attend the defense, either in person or electronically. Doctoral students' defenses are open to all members of the University community and the public unless attendance is restricted by the Graduate Studies Committee.

You must provide your Dissertation committee with your completed Dissertation no later than **four weeks before** your dissertation defense.

Starting in Fall 2020, defenses are required by the Office of Graduate Studies to take place **no later than two weeks** before the submission deadline.

37. Graduation Requirements

- Be registered in MEL X99W in the semester or summer session in which you plan

⁹ Only the Graduate Advisor is permitted to sign the defense form. The Graduate Coordinator is not permitted to sign in the absence of the Graduate Advisor.

to graduate.

- Submit the online Doctoral Graduation Application via the Graduate School Web site during the appropriate time period. Deadlines are posted on the Graduate School website at the start of each semester, students who do not submit the form by the deadline will not be eligible to receive their degree until the subsequent semester.
- Submit your dissertation to your committee at least four weeks prior to your dissertation defense.
- Schedule your dissertation defense with the MELC Graduate Coordinator and the Graduate School. Form located on the Graduate School's website.
- Submit dissertation to the Office of Graduate Studies for final approval by the Graduate Dean no later than the published deadline, typically 3:00 pm on the last class day of the semester. The document must be submitted in electronic format and follow the format guidelines published on the Graduate School's website.
- Submit required paperwork *and* a signature page containing (traditional or digital) signatures of supervising committee to the Office of Graduate Studies no later than the published deadline.¹⁰
- Submit final PDF of dissertation to the Graduate Coordinator by 3:00 pm on the last class day of the semester.

IV. Program Policies

1. Student Responsibility

Successful completion of the degree is the responsibility of the student. The Graduate Advisor and Graduate Coordinator are valuable resources for information on academic issues, administrative procedures, and University and C/DMES policy; students are, however, responsible for ensuring that they act within the rules and regulations of the department, college, and university; meet all deadlines; and fulfill the requirements of the degree program.

¹⁰ Proxy signatures are not permitted. Digital signatures must include certification (i.e. AdobeSign, DocuSign, etc).

2. Communication

Email

UT considers email an official means of correspondence; hence, if an administrator sends you an e-mail message, you are responsible for reading it and taking action in a timely manner. Pay attention to email messages from the Graduate Coordinator, administrators from C/DMES, the Graduate School, and the University; they will be full of information about deadlines, fellowship opportunities, events, and job possibilities. Make sure that the University and the Graduate Coordinator have your current email address. Students are expected to check email on a frequent and regular basis in order to stay current with University-related communications, recognizing that certain communications may be time-critical. It is recommended that students check their email daily.

Communication and the Student

It is the student's responsibility to communicate regularly with instructors, supervisors, committee members, the Graduate Advisor, and Graduate Coordinator about academic matters. C/DMES will not intervene if there is a breakdown in communication between the student and any of the above individuals.

Deadlines

Deadlines, whether they are course-specific or of thesis/report/dissertation variety, are critical. There is very little flexibility built into the system. The Graduate Coordinator and University often send reminders by email, but the responsibility is ultimately the student. Students who routinely miss programmatic, academic, and/or University deadlines will trigger a review process (see section I of Handbook).

3. The Review Process

All graduate students are evaluated by the GSC on a yearly basis or anytime in which the situation calls for intervention, such as a low GPA at the end of the semester, disrespectful or disruptive behavior, and/or making inadequate progress in coursework/research. During the meeting, the student's mentor or supervisor reports on progress and responds to questions from members of the GSC. Progress toward the degree is defined in terms of the relevance of courses taken to the student's course of study, the length of time a student spends in the program, the GPA maintained, courses

taken on a credit/no-credit basis, and the number of incompletes. Students will receive written evaluations on their standing and progress from the Graduate Coordinator.

4. Grades

Grading standards in each class will vary based on the course content and the instructor's grading policies. However, from a programmatic perspective, we consider an A or A- as strong or satisfactory performance, and B as below average performance. Grades of C, D, F, or I (permanent incomplete) indicate an unsatisfactory progress in the program. Incomplete courses will be questioned by the GSC.

Only courses in which a student earns a grade of C or better may be included in the program of work for a graduate degree at The University of Texas at Austin. This coursework must have been taken within a six-year time limit. While an average GPA of 3.0 is the minimum University requirement, students are expected to maintain a GPA higher than 3.5 in order to be considered as making satisfactory progress toward the degree.

5. Credit/No-Credit

All organized courses are to be taken for a letter-grade. Students who decide to change the grading option of a coursework to Credit/No Credit (CR/NC) must seek approval of their supervisor, the Graduate Advisor, and the Graduate Coordinator. These courses will not count toward degree requirements. All students who hold teaching appointments or fellowships are required to take their coursework for a letter grade. While CR/NC grades are not factored into the GPA, an NC is equivalent to failing the course and is indicative of unsatisfactory progress in the program. Students who earn a NC will be reviewed by the Graduate Studies Committee (GSC).

Credit / No-Credit in Thesis / Report / Comprehensive Exams / Dissertation

Thesis/Report/Comprehensive Exams/Dissertation courses are evaluated and graded each semester by the student's supervisor and assigned a grade of "CR" or "NC". A "CR" is appropriate when the student made satisfactory progress during the semester, and an "NC" is appropriate when the student did not make satisfactory progress during the semester. An NC is equivalent to failing the course and is indicative of unsatisfactory progress in the program. Students who earn an NC will be reviewed by the Graduate

Studies Committee, which may result in being placed on probation or a recommendation of dismissal from the program.

6. Incomplete Grades

If a student does not complete all the assignments in a course before the end of the course, the instructor may report work as incomplete (X) to the Office of the Registrar in place of a grade. Students who do not hold teaching appointments or fellowships are required to complete the course requirements by the last class day of the next long-session semester of enrollment. Students who hold teaching appointments or fellowships are required to complete the coursework before the start of the following semester, otherwise, their funding may be revoked or adjusted due to unsatisfactory progress toward degree requirements. The instructor must report a final grade by the end of the grade-reporting period in that semester. If these deadlines are not met, the X is converted to an I permanent incomplete. Permanent incompletes remain on the student's record and cannot be converted to a grade.

7. GPA Requirement

All students must maintain a minimum 3.50 GPA in order to remain in good standing. If a student happens to fall between a 3.00 - 3.50 in a given semester, they will enter probation and have one semester to bring their grades back above a 3.50. Failure to do so could result in dismissal from the program. Students must possess at least a 3.50 in order to graduate from the program.

8. Transfer Credit

The Graduate School does not allow transfer of credit for more than six hours, be it from a study abroad program or from another US institution. Only graduate courses in which your grade was an A or a B can transfer, and only if they have not been counted toward another degree. A master's student seeking to use coursework completed at another institution must provide the Graduate Studies Committee with an official transcript, the official explanation of the institution's course numbering system and grading system, and the course description from the catalog of the institution. Along with these documents, the Petition to Transfer a Graduate Course from Another Institution form should be submitted by the Graduate Advisor for approval by the Graduate Dean.

This form must be submitted before 12 hours of graduate coursework are completed at UT Austin.

9. Full Time Status and Course Load

The Graduate School recognizes nine semester hours during a long semester (spring or fall) and three hours during a summer session as a minimum full-time course load. The three-semester credit hour minimum course load for the summer session may be satisfied in one six-week term, or in the nine-week or twelve-week terms.

Under various circumstances, graduate students must be registered for and must remain registered for a full-time load, including: holders of Graduate School administered fellowships and scholarships; Assistant Instructors, Teaching Assistants, Academic Assistants, and Graduate Research Assistants, students living in university housing, students receiving certain student loans, and international students.

10. Time to Degree

Master's:

The College of Liberal Arts strives to matriculate outstanding master's students and provide them with the training, experience and support necessary for successful completion of their respective degrees. Within this framework, the College views time to degree as a strong indicator of program quality and student success.

Single-Degree Students

For these students, the MA degree must be completed within two academic years (typically 21 months). An exception to this is the Dual-Language Track or students seeking a Graduate Portfolio, where an additional year is permitted. The majority of

courses do not need to be taken in any particular order, but the thesis or report must be completed during the semester in which the student graduates.

Dual Degree Students

Students simultaneously earning an MA in Middle Eastern studies and a second degree from one of UT's professional schools are expected to finish their degrees in three academic years—with the exception of Law, which is a four-year program.

Doctorate:

Time to degree plays a significant role in planning for graduate student financial support. The College of Liberal Arts expects departments to have doctoral students enter candidacy at some point during their third year, but no later than their fourth year in the program. In general, the College expects students to complete their Ph.Ds no later than three years after having entered candidacy. With that expectation in mind, and allowing for exceptions in rare cases, the College will not support candidacy extensions for seventh-year doctoral students beyond the third year of candidacy status, or for students who have reached the end of their eighth year in the program.

11. Leave of Absence

Graduate students may apply for a leave of absence of no more than two semesters. If the student has not yet been admitted to candidacy for the doctoral degree, this request must be approved in advance by the Graduate Advisor. Granting leaves of absence for students not in candidacy is left to the discretion of the Graduate Advisor and Graduate Studies Committee. A form must be submitted to the Graduate School in advance of the semester for which a leave is granted. A student on an approved leave may reenter the graduate program by filing an Application for Readmission. Students who do not return from their leave will be expected to complete the application process again, including meeting standard deadlines. Depending on the length the student has been away, they might have to retake test scores and/or complete additional coursework.

12. Non-degree Seekers

The non-degree-seeker status was created at UT for special circumstances in which applicants wish to take UT courses at the graduate level without seeking a graduate degree (e.g., a high school teacher wishing to take a graduate course as part of their professional development).

C/DMES rarely admits non-degree seekers. Applications by non-degree seekers are considered only if a very strong case for admission is presented, and it is clear that the applicant, while in a position to function at the graduate level and, is indeed, not pursuing an advanced degree. We will not consider, for example, fall applicants who wish to take courses in the previous spring as non-degree seekers with the hope of applying these courses to their degree. Non-degree seekers admitted to DMES are expected to stay in the program no longer than one academic year.

13. Auditing Language Courses

Due to the intensive and interactive character of our modern language classrooms, auditing is not permitted in Arabic, modern Hebrew, Persian, and Turkish. For learners with previous experience in these languages who wish to register, we require a placement test to help us determine the appropriate level. Information and registration for the placement test are available on our website.

14. Final Exam Policy

Scheduling

The Office of the Registrar schedules all official University final exams each semester. “No-class” days and final exam days are listed in the official University academic calendar. No mandatory class meetings can be held on these days. No member of the University (faculty, staff, or student) has the right to alter examination dates or hold events on “no-class” days without the consent of the Faculty Council and the Board of Regents.

TA and AI Responsibilities

Teaching Assistants and Assistant Instructors are not permitted to leave campus at the end of each semester until released by their supervisor / instructor of the course. They are expected to fulfill job duties before, during, and after the final exam period, including, but not limited to, proctoring and grading final exams. Failure to remain in-residence and fulfill all related TA/AI duties may result in the loss of employee-level insurance and repaying the University for tuition waivers and any other tuition-related benefits afforded to student employees.

Complaints

Complaints related to final exam procedures should be made to the department chair, college dean, or the Office of the Ombudsperson.

15. Academic Employment Requirements

To be employed as a Teaching Assistant, Assistant Instructor, Graduate Research Assistant, Academic Assistant or Assistant, graduate students at The University of Texas at Austin must:

- Be making satisfactory progress toward a graduate degree without existing conditional admission requirements;
- Remain registered for at least nine semester hours of coursework in long semesters. Enrollment in three semester hours of coursework is required for students holding summer appointments;
- Maintain at least a 3.5 grade-point average; and
- Must not have more than two grades of X, I, NC, D, or F in any combination.

When a graduate student is employed in an academic job title by a unit outside their academic program the student must provide to the employing unit certification showing they are in good academic standing and making satisfactory progress towards their degree; the Graduate Advisor for the program makes this determination, and approval.

Special Requirements for Assistant Instructors

Students seeking an appointment as an Assistant Instructor must also meet the following requirements:

- Possess a master's degree or an equivalent level of achievement in professional accomplishment and graduate study (30 hours, including 18 hours of credit in the subject to be taught); and
- Have credit for 398T plus one semester of employment as a Teaching Assistant; or
- Have one year of teaching experience at an accredited college or school. (A letter of verification from the former employer must be submitted to the Graduate School.)

Assistant Instructors are employed to meet instructional needs at the undergraduate level, primarily in lower-division areas. Approval for an assistant instructor to teach an upper-division course may be requested by petition to the Associate Dean of the

Graduate School and must be approved before the student is assigned to the upper-division course.

16. Employment Restrictions

20/30 Rule

Assignments in a student job title at the university, including academic as well as non-academic positions, may not exceed 20 hours per week during the first two long semesters (fall/spring) of graduate study at UT Austin, and no more than 30 hours per week during the subsequent semesters, including summer.

International Students

International students may work as many as 20 hours per week during the fall and spring semesters. Full-time employment (21-40 hours per week) is allowed only during the following times for enrolled and continuing students:

- Spring Break (5 weekdays, plus the Saturday and Sunday before and after);
- Summer (day after May graduation through day before August classes start);
- Winter Break (day after December graduation through day before January classes start).

International students who will be employed as teaching assistants or assistant instructors must obtain the International Teaching Assistant English Certification.

17. Restricted Regions Travel Policy

The Travel Policy to Restricted Regions applies to UT-Austin graduate students, traveling internationally as individuals or in groups, with or without University funding, for any UT-sponsored, UT-administered, or UT-related activity or program. In these instances, and when the travel is academic-related (typically for research purposes or language programs), prior travel authorization is required, even in cases where it's the student's home country, and especially in cases where funding is involved (otherwise the funding will not be released). The only instances where it is

not necessary is when the student visits a country purely for personal purposes. This includes, but is not limited to:

- official study abroad programs
- conducting research
- internships
- field studies
- service learning
- volunteer, experiential, or work programs sponsored, endorsed, promoted, or administered by the University

Travel request process

There are time-sensitive deadlines related to when you will be traveling (usually mid to late April for Summer travel). Travel will usually be approved when there is a compelling justification and no suitable alternative opportunities exist. All requests must be strongly linked to academic goals and must adequately address major health, safety or security concerns. Forms require Chair / Director signature and must be submitted to the International Office prior to the stated deadline.

18. IRB Approval Process

The Office of Research Support and Compliance partners with students to maintain the integrity of research at the University of Texas at Austin. The RSC helps to protect the rights and welfare of human research participants as well as assist researchers in managing foreign relationships and activities and conduct responsible research by providing research ethics education. Students' whose research requires the use of human subjects and/or foreign involvement are required to submit IRB paperwork *prior to the start* of their research. The student's supervisor and/or committee should assist them with this process. The student will need a faculty member to sponsor their research and the IRB approval process. More information can be found on the Office of Research Support and Compliance website.