

**Journalism and Media
Graduate Student Handbook**

**Doctoral Program
2023-2024**

Table of Contents

<i>Introduction</i>	4
<i>Orientation</i>	5
<i>Registration</i>	5
<i>First-Year Mentors</i>	5
<i>The Supervising Committee and Supervisor</i>	5
<i>Independent Study</i>	6
<i>Graduate Adviser Approval</i>	6
<i>Annual Evaluations</i>	7
<i>Program Structure</i>	7
Year One:.....	7
Year Two:	8
Year Three:	8
Year Four:	8
<i>Curricular Areas</i>	8
<i>Description of Areas and Course Requirements</i>	9
Area 1: Methods.	9
Area 2: Theory.	9
Area 3 & 4: Additional Coursework.	9
<i>Proseminar, Statistics and 398T Pedagogy</i>	9
<i>Hours Required to Earn Ph.D. Degree</i>	9
<i>Graduate Coursework from UT-Austin or another institution</i>	10
<i>Minimum Grades and Incompletes</i>	10
<i>Progress through the Doctoral Program</i>	11
Doctoral Program of Work	11
Qualifying Comprehensive Examinations and Advancement to Candidacy	11
Dissertation Proposal Meeting.....	14
Dissertation and Final Oral Defense	15
<i>Evaluation Decisions for Doctoral Defense</i>	16
Pass	16
Re-defend.....	17

Fail	17
Documentation.....	17
<i>Working with your Supervisor and Committee:</i>	17
<i>Dissertation Timeline</i>	19
<i>Continuous Registration.....</i>	20
<i>Students with Disabilities.....</i>	20
<i>Academic Dishonesty Policy</i>	20
<i>Time Limits</i>	21
<i>Financing Your Graduate Education</i>	21
Teaching Assistantships	21
International Students	22
Student Loans.....	23
Recruiting Scholarships.....	23
Fellowships.....	23
Graduate School Continuing Fellowships	23
The Jesse H. Jones Fellowship.....	23
Merit Scholarships	23
Travel & Research Funding.....	24
<i>After Graduation.....</i>	24
<i>Checklists</i>	25
At the end of year one:	25
At the end of year two:.....	25
At the end of year three:	25
At the end of year four:	25

Introduction

We offer a Ph.D. degree in the dynamic and diverse field of journalism and media. With a core research and theory curriculum and an opportunity to develop two complementary areas of expertise, the Ph.D. degree prepares graduate students for academic careers in research firms or universities.

The following pages cover the degree requirements and policies in the School of Journalism and Media graduate program. This publication represents the combined information available from various official documents and from departmental and University graduate program practices. It is designed to help you understand the basic steps in obtaining the degree.

Academic policies and procedures do change, and we will do our best to keep students informed of and involved in any departmental or Graduate School program alterations. You should also refer to *The Graduate School Catalog* for important information. Once admitted into the program, it is the responsibility of each graduate student to be informed about all requirements pertaining to his/her/their program of study. Deadlines and requirements are available on various websites of the Registrar, Graduate School, School of Journalism and Media and from the Graduate Coordinator as well as in this handbook. Faculty and staff are not responsible for seeing that students are informed of the deadlines and requirements. Students are responsible for knowing and conforming to program requirements.

This handbook is meant to be a convenience to students and faculty, but official University catalogs supersede any information provided by departments. The responsibility for fulfilling all requirements ultimately rests with the student. The requirements set forth here pertain especially to the current Graduate Catalog. Students who wish to graduate under the rules in a previous catalog should consult the Department's Graduate Adviser. *The Catalog of the University (General Information, The Undergraduate Catalog, The Graduate Catalog, and The Law School Catalog)* is the document of authority for all students. The University reserves the right to change the requirements given in the catalog at any time. Please be aware that different admissions procedures apply to foreign applicants, U.S. applicants, and former University of Texas at Austin students.

The Journalism and Media Graduate Studies Committee, which is administered by an elected chair and composed of graduate faculty, is responsible for policies, curricula, and admissions. The Graduate Adviser, who is appointed by the Director of the School of Journalism and Media in consultation with the GSC and graduate students, directs the Graduate Program and advises graduate students. The Graduate Coordinator, in addition to assisting the Graduate Adviser and Graduate Studies Committee Chair in their duties, has responsibility for daily administration of the Graduate Program, including helping students and answering inquiries about the program and admissions. The dean of the Graduate School is the dean of all graduate students, not the dean of the Moody College or the director of the Journalism and Media School.

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Academic and Registration Policies and Resources from the Graduate School:

<https://gradschool.utexas.edu/>

Orientation

All entering students are required to attend the department orientation prior to the beginning of the semester. Usually this will be in the second to last week of August. Entering students will be **guided through the registration process at this time.**

Registration

Be sure to register and pay your bill each semester. If you will be paying with financial aid, check to make sure that the payment is credited to your bill before the payment deadline. The Registrar's calendar is available from <http://registrar.utexas.edu/>

A full course load for graduate students is 9 hours per semester. Graduate students can only register for a maximum of 9 hours in their first year of the program, but can register for up to 15 hours per semester after that.

Note: Classes with low enrollment at the end of pre-registration will be cancelled, so please register early.

First-Year Mentors

Upon admission, students will be assigned a faculty mentor. This person will guide the student during the first year in the program and assist with professionalization and academic development. Mentors will assist students on academic progress, provide help regarding submitting a paper to a professional conference by the end of semester two, and be available to consult on related professional and academic matters. Your mentor is someone who can give you informal advice and counsel while you work your way through the first year of the program.

Students and mentors are expected to meet at least once per semester during a students' first three semesters. Ultimately, graduate students will select a supervisor, who may or may not be this initial mentor. The supervisor assists with the thesis or dissertation and will work closely with you as you complete your degree.

The Supervising Committee and Supervisor

The School of Journalism and Media and the Graduate School assign great responsibility to the student's supervising committee and its chair, the student's supervisor. Students should take care in selecting their supervisor and in making sure that this is an informed decision. The supervisor must be a member of the School's Graduate Studies Committee (See the GSC faculty at: journalism.utexas.edu/graduate/graduate-studies-committee). Students can freely choose any faculty member as supervisor or committee member. However, no faculty member is obligated to serve or continue to serve as a student's supervisor. The student has the ultimate responsibility

for finding and retaining a supervisor. Once a supervisor has been declared and work has begun, changing the supervisor may only be done with the supervisor's consent, or in the case of retirement, departure from the University, illness or death of the supervisor.

Students may elect to also have a co-supervisor, especially in cases where a student's supervisor retires or leaves the University. In their first two semesters, students should meet with potential supervisors and, if possible, take courses from them. **A supervisor will be declared in the student's fourth semester with submission of a proposed Program of Work.**

Doctoral committees, formed around the student's proposed dissertation research, must include a minimum of 3 members on the Journalism and Media GSC, plus a fourth member from outside the program. The member selected from outside the program cannot also be serving on the Journalism and Media GSC. The chair must be on the Journalism and Media GSC. Emeritus faculty members are not GSC members but may co-supervise doctoral candidates. A complete list of Journalism and Media GSC members is at <https://catalog.utexas.edu/graduate/areas-of-study/communication/journalism-and-media/>. For any committee member who is not a member of a UT Graduate Studies Committee, a *curriculum vitae* and a *letter stating the member's willingness to serve at no expense to the University* must be sent to the Graduate School Degree Evaluators, who must approve the member. Students should be aware that the Department will not pay the expenses of an off-campus committee member to attend presentations or defenses.

Once a committee has been formed and reported to the Graduate School, which occurs once comprehensive exams are successfully defended, it is difficult to remove a committee member. The Graduate Adviser must approve and give the Graduate School the reason for the removal. Death, retirement, leaving the university, or illness that prevents the faculty member from serving are permitted reasons for removing a committee member, with his/her consent. Committee members cannot be removed because they do not approve of a dissertation or proposal; the purpose of a committee is to provide expert advice that improves the student's research. Students should work to improve their dissertation/proposal so that it satisfies the high standards of the committee. Committees cannot be changed within 30 days of the dissertation defense.

Graduate School rules regarding dissertation committees are published on the website at <https://gradschool.utexas.edu/academics/theses-and-dissertations/doctoral-candidacy> and in the Graduate Catalog at <http://catalog.utexas.edu/graduate/degree-requirements/doctor-of-philosophy/>.

Independent Study

Students sometimes take Independent Study courses to prepare for comprehensive exams or to obtain additional expertise in a subject domain outside of normal class offerings. In order to get permission to register for independent study you must complete a form, available on the website under "Forms," <https://journalism.utexas.edu/graduate/graduate-advising-registration>.

The topic of the independent study should be specified. Fill out the form, get the instructor's signature, and then give the form to the graduate coordinator, who will help you obtain the graduate adviser's signature. After the graduate adviser signs the form, the graduate coordinator will add you to the list of students with permission to register for the course and send you an email to notify you may register for it. If you have any problems adding the course after you've received the authorization notice, notify the graduate coordinator immediately.

Graduate Adviser Approval

The student must obtain approval for his or her course of study each semester from the graduate adviser in Journalism and Media until the fourth semester, when the student will formally choose

a dissertation supervisor. The dissertation supervisor will subsequently approve the student's registration choices.

Annual Evaluations

In May of each year, the Graduate Adviser asks each doctoral student to fill out an annual progress report. The GSC will provide all students with qualitative feedback on their progress, typically through small meetings with supervisors or mentors.

In this review the GSC considers grades, among other indicators of progress. Anything below a B, including a B-, is considered a warning sign, as are dropped classes, incompletes, or many courses (other than statistics) taken for Credit/No-Credit. Active participation in formal or informal research groups, and regular scholarly output such as conference papers, book chapters, and journal articles, are signs of good progress. Should you have any questions about your evaluation, please see your supervisor and the graduate adviser. Failure to make adequate progress in the program, as defined by the GSC, may result in termination from the program at any time.

Program Structure

Because the goal of the doctoral degree program in the School of Journalism and Media is to cultivate scholars who will be productive researchers in their careers, students must have a depth of knowledge about the content of the field and its research methods. The doctoral program prepares scholars to have a working knowledge of the field, encompassing a variety of approaches toward journalism and media. An engaged scholar should be cognizant of quantitative, qualitative, and critical perspectives, and of research at multiple levels of analysis. The graduate faculty in Journalism and Media believes that we owe our students, our field, and our alumni the assurance that our graduate students have been rigorously educated and are able to profess and defend their positions at high levels of discourse and argument.

A Ph.D. is a degree emphasizing research. Students will engage in research not just for their dissertation, but also throughout the entire program, in classes, outside of classes on their own time, and for their dissertation. Producing research throughout the program years prepares students to work independently on a dissertation. Showing adequate progress in research is paramount for Ph.D. students to continue in the program.

The School of Journalism and Media requires five semesters (45 credit hours) of successful classwork, the completion of a comprehensive exams with an oral examination, a dissertation research proposal that is successfully defended before a committee, and a publication-worthy dissertation.

For all research that uses human subjects, students must take the Human Subjects training, financial conflict training, file a proposal with the Institutional Review Board (IRB), and comply with all IRB requirements. Students may not start collecting data until IRB approval has been received; you must use the current IRB approved consent forms, and must report any amendments to the research, among other requirements. For more information, please visit the Office of Research Support website at: <https://research.utexas.edu/ors/>.

Here is a sample year-to-year schedule, which might be adjusted according to a student's academic record:

Year One:

Fall	Spring *
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Methods One	Methods Two
Theory One	Theory Two
Pro-Seminar	Statistics

*** Note: students are expected to complete a paper worthy of conference submission by the end of their first year.**

Year Two:

Fall	Spring **
Methods Elective	Elective
Theory Elective	Theory Elective
Elective	Elective

**** Note: students will submit their proposed program of work in their fourth semester. A supervisor will be declared in the student's fourth semester with submission of a proposed Program of Work.**

Year Three:

Fall	Spring ***
Elective	Comprehensive Exams and Proposal
Elective	
Elective	

***Students move into *candidacy* after comprehensive exams

Year Four:

Fall	Spring
Dissertation	Dissertation
Dissertation	Dissertation
Dissertation	Dissertation

Curricular Areas

Our program emphasizes an interdisciplinary approach. Working with the graduate faculty and the graduate adviser, students develop individual programs around three areas of concentration: Theory, Methods, and the student's area(s) of specialization. The Theory area must have a minimum of 12 credit hours; the Methods area must have a minimum of 12 credit hours. The School of Journalism and Media program requires the successful completion of a three-hour statistics course as part of the Methods core. The remaining electives should pertain to an area (or areas) of specialty relevant to the student's dissertation.

Journalism and Media core courses are required and must be taken in the order specified, as they are prerequisites to all other courses in the Ph.D. program. With the exception of Statistics, these required journalism courses must be taken for credit, not CR/NC, and students must earn a

B- or better. Any student not earning at least a B- can retake the course one time. Failure to earn at least a B- on the second attempt will result in termination from the program. In addition, no **incompletes may remain unresolved in required journalism courses upon penalty of termination.**

Description of Areas and Course Requirements

Area 1: Methods. The Methods area requires four semesters of methods courses taken in the first two years. The first semester includes an introduction to survey research, content analysis, focus groups, and experimental design. The second semester of the first year focuses on qualitative methods. Other courses may be chosen from our program or other programs offering methodological preparation. Statistics counts as a Methods course.

Area 2: Theory. The Theory requirement is four semesters of theory, including two semesters of the required Theory I and Theory II. The first semester Theory class is an introduction to media communication theory and theories of the audience. The second semester focuses on media structures, processes and content from critical and cultural perspectives. The other two theory courses can be chosen from a menu of courses in our School and elsewhere.

Area 3 & 4: Additional Coursework. Students' additional course work should **develop expertise that contributes to the dissertation research.** A specialty area might relate to media content (e.g., political communication), media structures (e.g., online news), media audiences (e.g., young adults), media theories (e.g., framing), media effects (e.g., agenda setting), media contexts (e.g., international news), or a host of other major topics, such as women and media, media economics, public opinion, media psychology, ethics, and communication technologies.

Proseminar, Statistics and 398T Pedagogy

In addition to the areas of concentration, students are required to take the Proseminar class and a Statistics course:

Proseminar, offered in the first fall semester, is an introduction to graduate study in journalism/media communication and the life of a scholar. The final project is either a conference or journal submission or a research proposal, depending on the student's abilities and interests. This is considered within Area 1 'Theory' on the Program of Work.

A comprehensive Statistics course. This required course is usually taken in the first year and may be taken CR/NC.

Although it is not required, a teaching course such as J398T is strongly recommended. It is required for a Ph.D. student to become an Assistant Instructor of a course. This is logged under "Other Required and Supporting Coursework."

Hours Required to Earn Ph.D. Degree

A minimum of 45 credit hours is required to earn a Ph.D. degree in the School of Journalism and Media. This includes 9 hours of Independent Study taken usually in the 6th semester to support qualifying exam preparation and proposal writing. No more than 20 percent (nine hours) of the 45 hours of organized coursework on the Program of Work may be taken on a Credit/No Credit basis. None of the required journalism school courses (other than statistics) may be taken on a Credit/No Credit basis.

Graduate Coursework from UT-Austin or another institution

In reviewing Programs of Work, the Graduate Studies Committee (GSC) may consider other hours from the master's degree at UT or a graduate program from another institution. Up to 9 credit hours may be included on the program of work as appropriate to the areas of study, thus reducing the number of hours a student must take in residence. This is subject to approval. (Although they may not be treated as officially transcribed courses by the university, these courses are, in essence, treated as "transfer" courses by the School toward doctoral coursework and may trim the time you need to complete your degree or allow you more options on electives.)

The Graduate Advisor reviews these hours as proposed by the student and approves them for relevance and fit within the context of each program during the student's third semester, in consultation with a student's mentors or supervisors. In some cases, required courses that the student has recently taken at another institution may be substituted for the required courses (Theory I and II, Introduction to Research Methods, Qualitative Methods, Introductory Statistics). The Graduate Adviser will hold an advising session each fall for second-year students to prepare the Program of Work and consider such transfers. Incoming students will be evaluated during Orientation for transfer courses that can substitute for first-year coursework. (Whenever possible, the Graduate Advisor may consult with the GSC Chair to provide an advisory opinion during the recruitment process about the likelihood of certain courses contributing toward the Program of Work (POW).

Minimum Grades and Incompletes

The School of Journalism and Media and the University Office of Graduate Studies strongly discourage students from delaying completion of work required by specific courses. Incompletes are only allowed for documented illnesses and other UT approved absences. No more than two incompletes can remain unresolved in the course of the degree.

In addition, when students take "Incompletes" ("X" on transcripts) for courses, they jeopardize their ability to obtain fellowships and University appointments. For example, a student with more than two grades of "X" or one grade of "X" and one grade of "I" cannot be appointed as a teaching assistant. The GSC monitors students with incompletes; if health or other circumstances make it impossible to complete coursework in a semester, the GSC advises taking a leave of absence or withdrawing from the program.

When a student receives a grade of incomplete, he or she has **one semester** in which to resolve the "X." Students are urged to get clarification from instructors on what must be done, and by when, to complete course requirements and receive a grade for the course. For more information, see the appropriate *General Information Catalog*.

A course with a grade of "X" (incomplete) or "I" (permanent incomplete) may not be used in the Program of Work.

Students are expected to make adequate progress, as defined by the GSC, throughout the course of their studies. Failure to make adequate progress will result in termination from the program. For medical issues that delay a student's progress, the student must register with the office of Services for Students with Disabilities; SSD will certify the disability and advise the department of the accommodations to be given.

For other issues that significantly delay progress, students should discuss a possible Leave of Absence (LOA) with the Graduate Adviser or withdraw from the program and reapply later. LOAs

are not automatic and must be approved by the GSC. Once in candidacy, anything that delays a student's progress toward degree should be immediately reported, with documentation, to the Graduate Adviser. <https://gradschool.utexas.edu/academics/policies/leaves-of-absence>

Progress through the Doctoral Program

Student progress is monitored by the Graduate Adviser. Students meet with the Graduate Adviser prior to registration until they are formally admitted to doctoral candidacy after successfully defending the comprehensive exams. Progress through the doctoral program includes:

1) Submission and approval of the program of work (fourth semester), 2) comprehensive examinations and advancement to doctoral candidacy (sixth semester), 3) the dissertation proposal meeting (sixth semester) and 4) dissertation completion and oral defense.

At all steps, doctoral students are expected to be familiar with Graduate School policies at <http://registrar.utexas.edu/catalogs/graduate>

Doctoral Program of Work

The Program of Work worksheet can be downloaded from the JAMgrad Canvas website or [here](#). Contact the Graduate Coordinator for questions and/or concerns.

Ph.D. students must choose a supervisor or co-supervisor who is a member of the Journalism and Media School Graduate Studies Committee by the fourth long semester. Students will work with their supervisor and the Graduate Adviser to put together a supervising committee.

The committee is composed of five people. At least three must be on the Journalism and Media Graduate Studies Committee and at least one must be on a GSC outside of Journalism and Media. If you want two people to co-supervise, one co-supervisor must be on the GSC.

Retired faculty may serve on a committee, and may co-supervise. They do not count toward the three Journalism and Media GSC members unless they have been granted GSC status by the faculty. Faculty who leave the University are no longer on the GSC; they can serve on the committee up to one year after their departure but do not count as one of the three Journalism and Media GSC members. Note: Some members of the School of Journalism GSC are appointed to departments outside the School of Journalism and Media, but as such, they serve as Journalism and Media **GSC members** and cannot serve as "outside" members.

The graduate advisor will review the Program of Work and submit to the GSC for additional review as necessary. Once approved by the GSC, supervisors cannot be changed without GSC approval and consent of the supervisor.

Minor amendments to the program of work, such as substituting up to two courses that are not offered or changing up to two committee members, must be approved by the supervising faculty member and signed off by the Graduate Adviser. Substantial amendments to the approved program of work such as changes in dissertation topic, chair, and more than 2 course changes, must be approved by the supervisor and Graduate Adviser and be re-submitted to the Graduate Studies Subcommittee for approval.

Qualifying Comprehensive Examinations and Advancement to Candidacy

Doctoral students in the School of Journalism and Media are expected to pass a series of comprehensive examinations in four areas (Theory, Methods, plus additional two specializations) upon completion of their approved coursework. Written examinations are followed by an oral

examination in the same semester. You must submit the Oral Examination Proposal Form obtained from the Grad Coordinator.

Comprehensive exams must be taken within one semester after completion of all courses listed and other requirements identified on the approved Program of Work or, at the earliest, during the last semester of coursework. Typically, a student will take 2 months to study for the comprehensive exams. Comprehensive exams must be taken and defended in the same semester. Comprehensive exams are not administered outside of scheduled semesters without prior arrangement from a student's entire committee and the graduate coordinator.

Comprehensive exams are "open book" and may be taken remotely. Examining professors may assign one of two formats:

- an eight-hour exam, which requires that the student include a works-cited list with their submission,
- or a four-hour exam, which requires the works-cited list to be submitted the next day.

Students should consult with each examiner about which format to expect.

Comprehensive examinations in the areas – research methods, theory, and areas of specialty – are given by an examination committee chaired by the faculty member who is the dissertation supervisor. A Journalism and Media faculty member must give the theory exam; any faculty member may give the methods and two topic area exams. Exams will be given by 4 of the 5 committee members, including the supervisor. The fifth committee member will join the process during the proposal meeting.

The process of the Comprehensive Examinations is as follows:

Consultation with the Graduate Adviser: During the semester a student expects to complete approved coursework, the student should schedule an appointment with the Graduate Adviser. During this meeting, the student and Graduate Adviser should verify that all coursework for his/her approved program of work has been or is nearly completed. Additionally, the comprehensive exam process and the examining committee are discussed.

Consultation with Dissertation Supervisor, Committee Members: The student will then consult with the dissertation supervisor to jointly decide which four of the five committee members will be responsible for examination in each of the four areas. The supervisor must give one of the exams. A Journalism and Media School faculty member must give the Theory exam. The student will then meet with the supervisor and each committee member to plan and prepare for the examination and develop a reading list consisting of books and journal articles that represent the core material in that topic. There is no set number of books or articles; however, the list should cover all of the important works on the topic. The list should be comprehensive enough to demonstrate that the student has achieved mastery of the topic area. A draft of each reading list will be submitted to the faculty members, who will then modify the list and approve the student to begin studying for the exam.

Nature of the Written Examinations: Each faculty member decides how much to disclose to the student about the number and nature of the exact question(s); one to three questions are typical. A faculty member may exercise the option of discussing with a student the general nature and type of questions to be asked, but the faculty member is under no obligation to do so. It is left to the discretion of each faculty member how much to tell the student about the exact wording of the exam question(s); some faculty will only tell the student the general nature of the question, while others will be more specific in the focus of the question(s). ***Under no circumstances will a faculty member inform a student in advance of the actual wording of comprehensive***

examination questions. Open or closed books and/or notes will be specified by each faculty member, and the student will be informed of this in advance. Some faculty will require a complete bibliography with the exam; others will not. Consult with each faculty member on these points.

Comprehensive exams are designed to test the student's ability to think critically about the topic, analyze and synthesize information, and develop new ideas of one's own; they are not designed to test a student's ability to memorize and repeat information. Students should be careful not to plagiarize on exam questions. Cite all ideas that are not your own. Verbatim use of more than 10 words should be contained in quotation marks and page numbers cited. Failure to do so will result in the student being reported to the university for academic dishonesty and consequences can include being terminated from the program and dismissed from the university.

Students are responsible for scheduling the exam dates and, in consultation with the Graduate Coordinator, notifying faculty of when their exam questions are due to the Graduate Coordinator.

Scheduling of the Examinations: All written comprehensive examinations must be completed between the first and last class days of a given semester. Students may not start exams in one semester and end in the next one. All written examinations must be completed within a two-week period. At least 10 business days must elapse between completion of the last written examination and the oral examination.

Administration of the Written Examinations: Committee members representing the student's program areas submit questions to the Graduate Coordinator via email. The administration of written examinations will be by the Graduate Coordinator via email. *Students should submit their responses to each examination to all examination committee members and the Graduate Coordinator via email in the time stipulated for each area.* The written exams must be completed within 10 business days. This does not include holidays.

The Oral Examination: Written examinations are followed by an oral examination scheduled at least 10 business days after the last written exam and no later than one calendar month after completion of the last exam. The written and oral exams must be taken in the same semester. The oral examination is open only to the student and the examining committee and is scheduled for 2 hours. Students are not allowed to bring food. The student is responsible for ensuring that faculty members' schedules allow for the meeting. The Graduate Coordinator will assist with booking a meeting room for face-to-face meetings.

Tip: During the time between written and oral exams, students can prepare for the orals by considering where they might have explained an answer better or expanded on it more. The oral defense is an opportunity to improve your performance on the written exams.

Typically, each faculty member will question the student, asking him/her to expand on an answer, explain something, or think about something beyond what was contained in the written answer. The purpose of the oral examination is to test the student's critical thinking and ability to "think on one's feet."

At the oral examination, the faculty will first confer without the student's presence, where the supervisor will poll the faculty on the quality of the written exams. If the quality of the answers is deemed acceptable, the student will rejoin the meeting for discussion and questioning of the written exams. If two or more members of the committee believe it should not proceed, then the committee will vote on one of three options--whether the student will be allowed to rewrite one or more of the examinations; whether written and oral examinations be rescheduled; or whether the

student be recommended for dismissal from the program. The consequences of failing one or more of the written comprehensive exams and/or failing the oral defense is termination from the doctoral program.

After successful completion of the oral examination, the student applies for candidacy using the online procedure at: <https://gradschool.utexas.edu/academics/theses-and-dissertations/doctoral-candidacy>. As part of the candidacy application, the student specifies the dissertation committee and writes a brief description of the proposed dissertation. This can be a rough draft, subject to change; the dissertation proposal is not set in stone at this point.

Important: File for candidacy in the same semester in which you complete your comprehensive exams in order to avoid being barred from registering the following semester. Students are not “candidates” until their application for candidacy is approved. Once approved, students should register for J X99W. **Note:** neglecting to apply for candidate bars a student from registering for dissertation hours.

After successful completion of the oral examination, the student’s Program of Work, dissertation committee and dissertation topic are submitted to the Dean of Graduate Studies through the Graduate School’s Application for Candidacy. Once approved, the student officially advances to doctoral candidacy.

As part of the application, the student must designate at least five members for the dissertation committee, typically by adding one faculty member to the four on the comprehensive exam committee, although the committee can be reconstituted at this point, with approval of the GA or GSC. At least one but no more than two members of the dissertation committee can be from a faculty other than the School of Journalism and Media. One outside member must be on a GSC. For details, see <https://gradschool.utexas.edu/academics/theses-and-dissertations/doctoral-candidacy>. Three members of the committee must be on the Journalism and Media GSC. Faculty who have retired, are emeritus, or who have left the University at the time of the defense are no longer on the GSC; they may be on the committee, but do not count toward the three GSC members. For a list of current GSC members, visit <https://catalog.utexas.edu/graduate/areas-of-study/communication/journalism-and-media/>. Once a student reaches candidacy, the dissertation committee is responsible for advising the student, replacing mandatory advising meetings with the Graduate Adviser.

Once this committee is appointed and reported to the Graduate School, changes to committee members are allowed only in rare circumstances, such as death, incapacitating illness, retirement, or leaving the university.

Dissertation Proposal Meeting

A dissertation is required for every candidate. It must be an original contribution to scholarship, an independent investigation in the major field, and constitute a contribution to knowledge.

No later than the end of the semester following advancement to candidacy, a student submits a proposal to the dissertation committee for advice and approval. Although the length of the proposal may vary, it includes a problem statement, literature review, proposed research questions or hypotheses, proposed methodology and plan of analysis, bibliography, and measurement instrument such as a questionnaire or codebook as appropriate. The supervisor, who advises the student as to the nature and scope of the dissertation proposal, approves it

before the student submits it to the other committee members. The candidate must give the dissertation proposal to the committee at least 10 business days before the proposal meeting.

The supervisor chairs the proposal meeting in which the committee asks questions and makes suggestions about the proposal, including the theory, method, measurement instrument, data analysis, and contributions to the literature. There is no required number of members who must be in attendance at the proposal meeting; all committee members must agree to read the proposal and request changes, which can be delivered electronically to the student and supervisor by the meeting date. The committee must be unanimous in approval of the dissertation proposal; this is a contract between student and committee members as to what is expected. Significant changes to the dissertation should be approved by all committee members; minor changes may be approved by the supervisor. Students may not bring food to the proposal meeting. Students will file the Dissertation Proposal Form with the Journalism and Media School Graduate Coordinator after a successful proposal defense.

Data should not be collected for the dissertation prior to the committee's approval of the proposal. Because IRB approval can take up to four weeks, we allow students to file an IRB application once the dissertation proposal has been given to the committee, with the understanding that any changes the committee requests at the proposal meeting will be incorporated and reported in an amendment to the IRB application. Once an application has been approved by the IRB, changes that do not increase the level of risk to participants do not require another waiting period for approval; simply send your IRB representative an email with the changes outlined, and upload to your online application, identifying it as an amendment. Generally, data for the dissertation should not have been used in previous studies; this is left to the discretion of the committee.

Dissertation and Final Oral Defense

At all stages of dissertation research and writing, the student is expected to work closely with the dissertation supervisor. The degree of consultation expected of other members of the dissertation committee varies; check with your supervisor and individual committee members as to their preference. Once a supervisor has approved a draft of the dissertation, the supervisor will submit the manuscript to committee members 30 calendar days prior to the date of the oral examination.

At least 10 business days before the Final Oral Examination, the student must submit the *Request for Final Oral Examination* to the Graduate School, with date, time and location of the examination, and required attachments. The form must be signed by **all** committee members and the graduate adviser. This is a requirement of the Graduate School, not Journalism, and no exceptions or extensions will be made. Late forms will result in postponement of the dissertation defense. See the Graduate Coordinator for this form.

Dissertation defenses cannot be scheduled during holiday or spring breaks.

Doctoral students who wish to defend their dissertations in the summer must check with committee members by the last class day of the spring semester to make sure the members are willing and available to defend in the summer.

Tip: As a rule of thumb, students must successfully submit the dissertation to the committee at least seven weeks prior to the end of a term in which they wish to graduate. This allows four weeks for the committee to read the dissertation and two weeks for revisions.

A dissertation defense may not be scheduled within two weeks of the semester's last class day.

For the dissertation defense, the Graduate School draws no distinction between physical attendance or virtual attendance. Though all committee members are expected to participate, one non-supervisory member may be absent from the defense. Their absence can be explained on the 2nd page (back) of the Request for the Final Oral Exam (file:///E:/Users/User/Desktop/Request_Final_Oral_Exam.pdf)(aka Request for Final Oral). Students **cannot** elect to use the old defense attendance rules (Traditional or Electronic).

The *Report of Dissertation Defense* is the responsibility of the dissertation supervisor. The supervisor may sign as proxy for any members not present if needed or the Graduate Coordinator may assist with obtaining electronic signatures from committee members.

The dissertation oral defense is an open meeting; others may attend and view the dissertation oral defense. Dates and locations of oral examinations are posted on the Graduate School web site. At this defense, the student has the opportunity to discuss and to defend his or her work as an expert in his or her chosen field. The final oral offers the chance for an intellectual exchange intended to leave the participants richer from the experience. Deliberations by members of the committee, however, are closed. Following the defense, the committee has three choices: pass, re-defend, and fail. Students may not bring food to the defense meeting.

Evaluation Decisions for Doctoral Defense

There are three possible evaluation decisions for the doctoral defense. All decisions—with the exception of "fail"—must be unanimous. The Graduate School language is at <https://gradschool.utexas.edu/faculty/evaluation-decisions-for-doctoral-defense>.

Pass

"Pass" requires that both the oral defense and the document (dissertation or treatise) are acceptable. **In some cases, the committee may require revisions**, which may be checked by the entire committee or by the supervising professor only. This should be agreed upon at the time of the defense and communicated to the student. While the supervisor should wait to sign the Report of Dissertation Committee until all revisions have been reviewed, the other committee members may choose to sign at the defense.

The committee should agree upon the length of time allowed for submission of the revised dissertation; this must be communicated clearly to the student. The completed Report of Dissertation Committee should be returned to the Graduate School only after the final revisions to the dissertation have been approved and the GSC designee has signed.

If the dissertation and/or defense are not acceptable to all members of the committee, the decision will change to either "re-defend" or "fail" as discussed below:

Note: it is common for committees to require revisions. Candidates must allow for at least two weeks prior to the Graduate School's official deposit date in order to graduate on time.

Re-defend

“Re-defend” indicates that the committee is not satisfied with the dissertation or with the oral examination, but believes that rewriting may make it acceptable. In this case, the fully signed Report of Dissertation Committee should be returned to the Graduate School by the Supervisor, with each member of the committee indicating their decision. Another scheduled defense will be required and a new report will be generated. Committee members should submit their individual [Report on Doctoral Dissertation forms](#) indicating their dissatisfaction.

Fail

“Fail” indicates that at least one member of the committee has decided that the dissertation is unsatisfactory and may not be rewritten. The fully signed Report of Dissertation Committee should be returned to the Graduate School by the supervisor, with each member of the committee indicating their decision. Committee members should also submit their individual [Report on Doctoral Dissertation forms](#) indicating their dissatisfaction. This decision normally results in the termination of a doctoral student’s program.

Documentation

A dissertation defense entails the following documentation:

- The supervisor should bring the Report of Dissertation Committee to the defense. The scheduling information on the Report must be correct; if the time or location changes, the Graduate School must be informed.
- All committee members sign the Report of Dissertation Committee, even if the member was not present at the defense. Scanned or electronic signatures will be accepted as long as they are legible and dark enough to be imaged. Typed names as a signature are not allowed. Electronic and digitally authorized signatures may be accepted in any font format so long as they include the insignia or logo of the e-signature software used showing authorization.
- Once all members have signed the report, the Graduate Studies Committee chairperson or designee should provide the final signature indicating that all coursework and other departmental requirements have been completed. All signatures should be on a single page.

Revisions to the dissertation are expected to be completed and turned in to the Graduate School within one calendar month of the date of the defense.

The student must submit the dissertation to the Office of Graduate Studies for publication. Students are responsible for promptly sending in all materials required by the Graduate School. Full details are on the Graduate School website, including a checklist. **Students bear sole responsibility for informing themselves of all requirements.**

Working with your Supervisor and Committee:

Please refrain from giving gifts to professors. The University prohibits professors from accepting gifts above a certain monetary level, however, the Journalism and Media School prefers no gifts of any amount. You may express your gratitude in the Acknowledgements section of your dissertation and conference papers or journal articles. Your success alone is thanks enough for committee members.

How Long Should I Wait for Faculty to Read My Proposal, Dissertation, Revisions etc.?

Of course, when you turn something in you want feedback right away. Also, the deadline to graduate, turn comps hours into J 399W, J 699W, or J 999W hours, etc. may be coming up soon. So, what amount of time is reasonable to expect your chair or committee members to have to read your exam, proposal, dissertation, or revisions? They no doubt have other students in the same position as you, and may have multiple proposals, exams, and dissertations to read all at the same time. Under no circumstances should faculty be rushed because a student has not met these deadlines. Here are some general guidelines for how long faculty should be given to read something:

Comprehensive Exams: Graduate School rules dictate 10 business days for faculty to read comprehensive exam answers. It is not appropriate to ask faculty to give you feedback on your answers before the oral defense; that is the purpose of the oral defense.

Dissertation Proposal: Allow your supervisor a minimum of 2 weeks (10 business days) to read your proposal and return it to you for revisions. Once you have submitted your revised proposal, allow another 2 weeks for your supervisor to read that. Should more revisions be required, give 2 weeks for your supervisor to read your revised proposal. Many supervisors will not take this long, and you can certainly ask how long they will need, but do not email, call, or stop by to encourage them to hurry up. Allow 2 weeks and be candid with your supervisor about best ways to communicate during the course of the process.

Once your proposal has been submitted to the other committee members, allow at least 2 weeks for them to read it before a proposal meeting is scheduled. The proposal meeting is when you will receive feedback from committee members; it is not appropriate to ask ahead of time.

Dissertation: Allow your supervisor 3 weeks to read the first draft of your dissertation. After that, allow 2 weeks for reading of revisions each time revisions are required. Once your supervisor has approved your dissertation for submission to the other committee members, allow 30 days for them to read it. You may ask if they will be able to read it in a shorter time, and if all agree, then you will be able to schedule a defense sooner. However, Graduate School rules require the defense be scheduled no sooner than 2 weeks from the time you give your dissertation to your committee.

The dissertation is not to be distributed to the committee by the student. The oral defense is when you will receive feedback on your dissertation that is pertinent to possible revisions.

All times given above refer to University of Texas business days. So, 2 weeks = 10 business days. If UT is closed for a break or otherwise not in session, those days are not business days and you cannot count them in the time faculty have to read something. Meetings and defenses may not be scheduled during times when school is not in session. "Business days" also includes normal business hours between 8 a.m. and 5 p.m.

You should always clarify in advance with faculty how long they will need to read your materials. If they will need longer than these times to read something, you need to plan accordingly. If faculty take longer than agreed upon, you should first discuss it with them. If there is not a satisfactory resolution to the problem, follow the protocol for grievances outlined at the beginning of this handbook.

It is the student's responsibility to know and meet the Graduate School deadlines for graduation, advancement to candidacy, conversion to dissertation hours, etc. The Graduate School is inflexible on this. The Graduate Adviser will not ask the Graduate School for exceptions. Turning something in the day it is due is never a good idea; Graduate School evaluators have to approve of something before it goes to the Graduate School. If you do not give the evaluators enough time to do their job, you will miss the Graduate School deadline. Plan ahead.

A Reminder: The Catalog of the University (General Information, The Undergraduate Catalog, The Graduate Catalog, and The Law School Catalog) is the document of authority for all students. The requirements given in the catalog supersede information issued by any academic department. The University reserves the right to change the requirements given in the catalog at any time. Please be aware that different admissions procedures apply to foreign applicants, U.S. applicants, and former University of Texas students applying for readmission.

Dissertation Timeline

Typically, students take two semesters to complete and defend a dissertation. Once a student is admitted to candidacy (after successful defense of comprehensive exams), he or she will have a maximum of two years in which to complete and defend the dissertation. This includes the dissertation proposal meeting. After two years, the Graduate School requires the Graduate Studies Committee to review the student's progress at that time and annually thereafter. Failure to meet this deadline may result in the GSC recommending termination of the student's candidacy to the Graduate School. Extensions to the deadline are not automatic and are granted for only one or two semesters at a time. [See p. 24 of the Graduate Catalog at <http://catalog.utexas.edu/graduate/degree-requirements/doctor-of-philosophy/#reviewofprogress>.]

Once in candidacy, students with medical issues that delay progress must notify their supervisor and graduate adviser, and file with the office of Student Disability Services at the time of the event; SDS will certify the disability and inform the department of appropriate accommodations. Students with other issues that delay progress should discuss a Leave of Absence with the graduate adviser; LOAs are not automatic and must be approved by the GSC. Extensions are not granted for reasons of financial hardship, work, family responsibilities, medical issues not certified by SDS, or other adverse life events. Additionally, medical issues not reported at the time of occurrence will not be considered as reasons for extensions. Students with the graduate adviser's approval may use the *Petition for Leave of Absence (for students in doctoral candidacy)* form. Students must petition for readmission following a leave of absence.

The student needs to submit a *Doctor's Degree Candidate Form* from the Graduate School early in the semester (fall, spring, or summer) in which they plan to graduate. The form is valid for one semester only. See this and other requirements at <https://utdirect.utexas.edu/ogs/forms/gradform/dgr1.WBX>. *It is each student's responsibility to notify the Journalism School of any changes in mailing or email addresses.*

Tip: *Students should work with their supervisor on a schedule for periodic checks on their work. Everyone's work-style is different, but agreeing upon deadlines for writing progress is can ensure success.*

Continuous Registration

After completion of the required 18 dissertation hours, continual registration **for at least three hours** in the dissertation course is required in each long session until graduation. Under various circumstances, graduate students must be registered for and must remain registered for a **full-time (9 hours long session, 3 hours summer) load**. The Graduate School will automatically register eligible students for the spring and fall semesters. Students must pay the fees to remain registered, however. The student is expected to graduate within two years of gaining candidacy, three for students with a leave of absence. See <https://gradschool.utexas.edu/academics/policies/continuous-registration>.

Students with Disabilities

Most of the policies, procedures, and accommodations for students with disabilities are the same for graduate students and undergraduate students. If you used accommodations at UT Austin as an undergraduate student, your accommodations will continue if you decide to pursue Graduate School at UT Austin.

If you have specific questions about accommodations as a graduate student, please contact the Disability and Access office directly: access@austin.utexas.edu

Full-time status is typically required for graduate students who are seeking or maintaining an appointment as a TA, AI, GA, or GRA. D&A can help students maintain full-time status while taking a reduced course load if their disability prevents them from managing a full course load and an appointment. Students must be registered with D&A in order to use this accommodation and they are encouraged to discuss this accommodation with the graduate advisor to learn how this may affect their progress in their program of study.

For doctoral students who have finished classes and are in their dissertation phase, most classroom accommodations are no longer relevant. However, D&A can still provide support and advice on an individual basis. This often involves assistance with navigating the dissertation process, working with graduate advisors and dissertation committees, and balancing their disability with their academic demands. Graduate students who are also employed at UT may be eligible for employment-related accommodations.

Grievance Procedures

Grievances related to academic or nonacademic matters should begin with attempts to resolve problems informally with the faculty member where the differences arise. If no satisfactory agreement is reached, grievances then proceed to the graduate adviser, and Graduate Studies Committee chair, in that order. If you are not satisfied with their decisions, you may be directed to the Dean of Graduate Studies and Vice Provost. The last step in the process is to the Executive Vice President and Provost. Official grievance procedures are listed in the *Handbook of Operating Procedures* at <http://www.policies.utexas.edu/policies/graduate-school>.

The Director of the Journalism and Media School does not oversee the graduate program, nor is the Dean of the Moody College of Communication the dean of graduate students. The Dean of the Graduate School is the Dean for all graduate students at UT.

Academic Dishonesty Policy

The University defines academic dishonesty as cheating, plagiarism, unauthorized collaboration, falsifying academic records, and any act designed to avoid participating honestly in the learning process. Scholastic dishonesty also includes, but is not limited to, providing false or misleading information to receive a postponement or an extension on a test, quiz, or other assignment, and

submission of essentially the same assignment for two courses without the prior permission of both instructors. You must always cite words and ideas that are not your own. Students who violate University rules on scholastic dishonesty are subject to disciplinary penalties, including the possibility of failure in the course and/or dismissal from the University. *Visit the Student Judicial Services Web site: <https://deanofstudents.utexas.edu/conduct/> <http://deanofstudents.utexas.edu/sjs>.*

Time Limits

The Ph.D. program is designed to take between 3 and 4 years to complete. Incoming students will sign a “Milestones Agreement” with the graduate school outlining the timeline that they are expected to meet. See <http://journalism.utexas.edu/graduate/tracking-progress-doctoral-program> for more information. Failure to meet any of these milestones can result in termination from the program. Doctoral students must successfully defend comprehensive examinations within one semester from completion of coursework. Once comps are successfully defended, the student becomes a “doctoral candidate;” until then, it is appropriate to refer to yourself as a “doctoral student.” Once reaching candidacy, students must then hold a successful dissertation proposal meeting within one semester after defending comprehensive exams. Ideally, the comprehensive exams and proposal meeting will be held in the same semester rather than being stretched out over two. Defense of the dissertation is expected to occur within two years of advancement to candidacy. Students’ progress is monitored by the GSC; students who do not progress according to this timeline or who are deemed to be unable to produce high quality scholarly research at any point in their program, will be reviewed by the GSC as to whether they should remain in the program. Termination can be made at any time for students who are not performing adequately in the GSCs estimation or who fail to meet any of these timeline requirements.

For students who do not complete the dissertation within two years of advancement to candidacy, the Graduate School will ask the Graduate Studies Committee to assess the student’s progress annually and recommend whether the student be allowed to continue in the program. The Graduate Studies Committee may terminate the student from the program. No doctoral student will receive funding or support such as a TA position or in-state tuition waivers after 4 years from the time they entered the program.

The University of Texas requires “continuous registration” between the time of advancement to candidacy and the dissertation defense and graduation. Students must register for 3 to 9 credit hours each long semester and pay tuition until they have either graduated, withdrawn, or been terminated. Failure to register will jeopardize a student’s ability to graduate.

Financing Your Graduate Education

The Graduate School has an informative web page listing sources of funding and financial information to help finance your graduate education at <https://gradschool.utexas.edu/finances>.

Teaching Assistantships

The School of Journalism and Media employs a number of currently enrolled master's and doctoral students as teaching assistants to assist faculty members teaching undergraduate courses.

Appointments of 20 hours per week, include health insurance, tuition assistance, and resident tuition entitlement. See the following link for more information:
<https://gradschool.utexas.edu/finances/student-employment>.

Doctoral students who have completed their course work, have worked as a TA for at least one

semester, have completed the J 398T supervised teaching course or have 1 year of teaching experience, and are enrolled in dissertation writing may be considered for Assistant Instructor position. Students who provide evidence of having taught for at least one year at a college or university are eligible to be AIs without taking the supervised teaching course.

Support as a TA/AI is limited to four years from the time the student enters the PhD program.

To be eligible to be a Teaching Assistant in the long semesters, you must be registered for nine hours. There are very few TA positions in summer; they require registration of three hours. For more information, see: <https://gradschool.utexas.edu/finances/student-employment>. To apply for a TA position, fill out a form and return to the Graduate Coordinator by the deadline. TA positions are assigned based on departmental need, the student's skills, performance, student evaluations, and other factors. TA positions are assigned one semester at a time. Having a TA one semester does not guarantee having one in future semesters.

Each fall, there is a mandatory orientation for TAs and mandatory multimedia training. Failure to attend these sessions will result in the revocation of a Teaching Assistantship contract.

Teaching assistantships are also available to our students in departments outside of Journalism. There is no central clearinghouse for these, you just have to find them on your own. The Graduate Adviser can give you a list of departments that have hired our students in the past. If you do obtain a TA outside the department, you **MUST** fill out the Resident Tuition Entitlement Appointment Eligibility form from the Office of Accounting, have the GA sign it, and return it to OA in order to receive in-state tuition with your TA. Failure to file this form will result in your TRB being revoked. Only students who are within four years of being admitted to the doctoral program may receive in-state tuition with a TA outside Journalism and Media.

International Students

International students are subject to different rules required by the U.S. federal government, their visas, and their home countries. For international students who will be working as a TA, a U.S. Social Security number is required. Students who do not already have U.S. SSNs must arrive on campus at least 3 weeks before classes begin in order to complete the SSN process by the deadline for employment. Failure to meet the deadlines can result in the TA position, tuition waiver, and health insurance being forfeited, and charges for international student health insurance being imposed. Be sure to follow closely all instructions from the Graduate Coordinator in a timely fashion. Students are responsible for knowing all requirements and fulfilling them. For more information, see the website of the International Student & Scholar Services, <https://global.utexas.edu> <https://world.utexas.edu/iss/students>. For medical requirements, please visit: www.healthyhorns.utexas.edu/internationalstudents.html

For International students who wish to work or train off campus, Optional Practical Training (OPT) hours are available for a fee. Approval generally takes 90 days. Contact ISSS for details <https://global.utexas.edu/iss/immigration/f-1/employment> <https://world.utexas.edu/iss/students>. Doctoral students are **not** eligible for Curricular Practical Training (CPT) hours during the long semesters; these hours are reserved for international master's students doing internships. Use of CPT hours stipulates that the program must require all students to do the internship, assistantship or training; there is no such requirement in the Journalism School doctoral program. This is a rule of the U.S. federal government and international VISAs, not the Journalism School, so no exceptions can be made.

Student Loans

The mission of the Office of Student Financial Services is to help remove financial barriers and make the financial aid process as simple and easy to understand as possible. Lots of useful information is posted on their website at <http://finaid.utexas.edu>
Information on Tuition/Cash loans is available from the Office of Accounting website at <https://financials.utexas.edu/sar/tuition-cash-institutional-loans>

Recruiting Scholarships

New applicants admitted to the program will automatically be considered for recruiting scholarships. You do not need to apply for them. The GSC admissions committee will evaluate all applicants and notify those chosen if they have been awarded or nominated for a recruiting scholarship. Recruiting scholarships are one-time payments (usually paid out over 2 semesters) and are not recurring; after the first year, students are eligible for the competitive Continuing Fellowship, described below.

Fellowships

Currently enrolled students who will be continuing in the program the following year are eligible for the following continuing fellowships. An email announcing the call for self-nominations will be sent by the GSC chair through the graduate coordinator in spring semester. Students must be enrolled for 9 credit hours during the time these fellowships are awarded.

Graduate School Continuing Fellowships

Awards are based on major accomplishments since entering Graduate School, a well-defined program of research, strong personal statement, and letters of recommendation. Emphasis is placed on publication in peer-reviewed journals with preference given to sole and first authorship and progress toward the degree. Financial need will be considered. The Journalism School is allowed to nominate up to three students per year, but award of the fellowship is not guaranteed to the school's nominee. In 2021-22, the fellowship carried a stipend of \$30,000, health insurance, and tuition assistance benefit. A call for applications for Continuing Fellowships is sent out in fall.

The Jesse H. Jones Fellowship

The College of Communication annually awards the Jesse H. Jones Endowed Centennial Fellowships to graduate students who possess exceptional ability in advertising, communication sciences and disorders, journalism and media, radio-television-film, or communication studies. The fellowships are awarded each spring for the following academic year. The fellowships are open to graduate students in their second or subsequent years in their programs. Preference is given to candidates with a strong, interdisciplinary track record. Students are expected to make a presentation on their research. In 2021-22, the Journalism School's Jesse Jones Fellowship carried a stipend of \$6,500. Calls for applications will be sent by email in late fall or early spring by the College of Communication. See criteria and additional information at <https://moody.utexas.edu/prospective/jesse-h-jones-fellowships>
<http://communication.utexas.edu/prospective/graduate-students>.

Merit Scholarships

The following smaller fellowships are awarded competitively and are based on merit, which for Ph.D. as well as Master's R&T students are judged by research productivity. Amount and number of awards varies. The call for self-nominations will be made in spring and one application allows you to be considered for all of them. Financial need is a consideration for some. All require

enrollment of 9 credit hours in the following year. Calls for applications will be sent by email by the GSC chair via the Graduate Coordinator in late fall or early spring.

The Ada Frances Miller Endowment Fellowship

The Pic Wagner Fellowship

James W. Tankard Jr. Excellence in Graduate Education Award

Nettie Doscher More Endowed Fellowship given by the Texas Exes

Travel & Research Funding

Funding to travel to conferences in order to present your original research is available. To apply for this funding, a call for applications will be sent from the GSC chair via the Graduate Coordinator in spring. You may use this funding retroactively to be reimbursed for conferences already attended, or to attend conferences through the end of the academic year. Funding is only available for presenting original research, not for those attending a conference to see others present, be on an invited panel, or other reasons.

Funding is also available for those conducting dissertation and thesis research (class research projects, research group projects, and individual or group research is not eligible). To be eligible, students must be enrolled in dissertation or thesis hours. A call for applications will be sent with the call for travel funding, described above. Students may apply for both of these sources of funding.

After Graduation

Please be sure to update your personal email address and new physical address at https://utdirect.utexas.edu/utdirect/bio/address_change.WBX

Stay in touch! Update your information with the College at <https://web-apps.communication.utexas.edu/usher/Forms/Alumni/>

Stay connect through <https://uthookedin.com>.

Checklists

Every student is different, and some of these milestones will vary, but as a rule of thumb, here are the steps for success:

At the end of year one:

- Successfully complete 18 credit hours
- Submit a paper for conference
- Submit materials for annual review
- Complete Graduate School Milestones

At the end of year two:

- Successfully complete 36 credit hours
- Submit a paper for publication
- Choose Committee Supervisor
- Submit POW to the GSC for approval in the spring
- Submit materials for annual review
- Complete Graduate School Milestones

At the end of year three:

- Successfully complete coursework in fall
- Continue to submit papers for conferences and publication
- Complete Comprehensive Exams in the Spring
- Defend Proposal in the Spring
- Submit materials for annual review
- Complete Graduate School Milestones
- Apply for candidacy after comprehensive exams successfully defended

At the end of year four:

- Continue to submit papers for conferences and publication
- Apply for Graduation
- Defend Dissertation in the Spring
- Submit materials for annual review
- Complete Graduate School Milestones
- Buy that gown and walk the stage!