

# CREEES Graduate Handbook

## 2023-2024

Master of Arts in Russian, East European  
and Eurasian Studies

Master of Public Affairs/  
Master of Arts in Russian, East European  
and Eurasian Studies

Master of Global Policy Studies/  
Master of Arts in Russian, East European  
and Eurasian Studies

Master of Arts in Media Studies/  
Master of Arts in Russian, East European  
and Eurasian Studies

Master of Business Administration/  
Master of Russian, East European and  
Eurasian Studies

J.D. Law/Master of Arts in Russian, East  
European and Eurasian Studies

Graduate Portfolio Program in Russian,  
East European and Eurasian Studies

**DUAL DEGREE MAS**



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# WELCOME!

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Center for Russian,  
East European,  
and Eurasian Studies  
The University of Texas at Austin

The purpose of this handbook is to provide graduate students at the Center for Russian, East European and Eurasian Studies (CREEES) with essential information concerning the structure of the M.A. program, its requirements, procedures, and standards. All students in the program should read it upon entering the program and continue to consult it throughout their course of study. Since the M.A. program at CREEES is guided by policies of the Graduate School at the University of Texas, some of these policies are summarized in the Handbook; others are not, or are only referenced. It is therefore essential that, in addition to the Handbook, students consult the [Graduate Catalog](#) and the website of the [University of Texas Graduate School](#).

## ABOUT CREEES

The Center for Russian, East European and Eurasian Studies (formerly Post-Soviet and East European Studies) was established in 1984 at The University of Texas at Austin. It now brings together [over 80 faculty members](#) from over 20 different departments and administrative units across campus. The Center promotes the study of our region in the form of: language study; providing courses on the culture, history, geography, and politics of the region; creating opportunities for study and internships abroad; and assisting students in pursuing work opportunities connected to Russia, Eastern Europe and Eurasia. CREEES also serves civic, nonprofit, and business associations with various activities on the region; academic leaders and institutions from the region with collaborative agreements with UT and the general public in Texas and the US, whose world outlook includes our region.

The U.S. Department of Education designated The University of Texas as a National Resource Center for Russian and East European Studies in 1988. CREEES was awarded funds from the US Department of Education as a National Resource Center and for [Foreign Language and Area Studies \(FLAS\) Fellowships](#) for the periods 1988–2010, 2014–2022. As a National Resource Center funded by a Title VI grant, CREEES sponsors major conferences, workshops, faculty interest groups, K-12 and post-secondary outreach events as well as teacher trainings, and scholarly symposia. CREEES provides Foreign

Language and Area Studies (FLAS) fellowships to students pursuing graduate and undergraduate degrees relating to Russia, Eastern Europe and Eurasia in any department or major. CREEES awards [FLAS fellowships](#) to graduate and undergraduate students developing language skills in the languages of our region (such as Russian, Bosnian-Croatian-Serbian, Czech, Polish and Ukrainian, as well as occasional opportunities to learn other regional languages, such as Romanian, Bulgarian, Uzbek, Kazakh, etc).

CREEES has a firm commitment to developing campus resources and courses that will give students the training they need to participate in an international arena in which Russia, Eastern Europe and Eurasia play a key role. By highlighting an interdisciplinary course of study and by offering a degree plan that is not limited by traditional disciplinary boundaries, CREEES can respond to political and private sector demands for integrated studies that include both academic study and professional training.

CREEES is committed to reaching out to the campus community, as well as the broader region, to provide access to speakers from Russia, Eastern Europe and Eurasia, and activities that will promote interest in the region. As part of the largest university in the state of Texas, CREEES has a special responsibility to support continued international development and to educate students who can play a fundamental role in an international community in which Russia, Eastern Europe and Eurasia are critical actors.

## GRADUATE STUDIES AT UT

The University of Texas offers graduate degrees in over 100 fields. Most of these are discipline specific and housed in traditional departments. Some graduate programs, however, are administered by interdisciplinary centers on campus and involve course work and research in several departments. Such is the case with the M.A. degree in Russian, East European and Eurasian Studies.

All graduate work at the University of Texas is administered by its Graduate School, under the direction of the Vice Provost and the [Dean of Graduate Studies](#). The Graduate School coordinates and oversees UT's policies for graduate level admissions, academics, registration, employment, fellowships, etc.

[The College of Liberal Arts Office of Research and Graduate Studies](#) supports initiatives that aim to foster graduate student success and improve students' work environment. Led by the Associate Dean of Research, the office participates in university-wide conversations about graduate student parental accommodations, employment in academic job titles, thesis and dissertation embargo, university and college funding, offering professional development opportunities, career placement, and more.

The [UT Graduate Student Assembly](#) is the graduate student-run legislative body at UT serving as the official voice of graduate students at the University of Texas at Austin to

UT administrators, staff, and faculty, as well as to the Texas Legislature and UT Board of Regents. Its mission is to advocate for graduate & professional student needs on the forty acres and beyond. Every fall, each graduate program at UT is asked to appoint a voting member as a representative to the GSA. This position is open to incoming and continuing students in the CREEES MA program.

Each individual degree is administered by a [Graduate Studies Committee \(GSC\)](#), a group consisting of all assistant, associate, and full professors who are active in that degree program. The GSC recommends admission requirements and procedures for the program, sets program-specific requirements for the graduate degrees in that area and other policies and procedures pertaining to the graduate program. Graduate education in each program is the responsibility of the Graduate Studies Committee. One member of the GSC serves as the graduate adviser to register and advise all graduate students, to maintain records, and to represent the Graduate School in matters pertaining to graduate work in that area.

## THE CREEES M.A. PROGRAM

The Master of Arts (M.A.) degree in Russian, East European and Eurasian Studies is a two-year multidisciplinary program that offers advanced training for those qualified students who seek an integrated knowledge of the language, history, society and culture of Eastern Europe and Eurasia, including the former Soviet Union. This region of the world, covering over one-sixth of the globe, is made up of countries that differ enormously in language, ethnicity, religion, culture, political history and economic development. Since the mid-1980s, the processes of reform, collapse and reconstruction in the region have led to a heightened interest in the area and the need for serious and scholarly understanding of its economic, socio-political, and cultural dynamics. It is the mission of the Center for Russian, East European and Eurasian Studies to facilitate such understanding.

The Master of Arts program is designed for students preparing for careers in the professions and for those seeking an intermediate, interdisciplinary master's degree before pursuing a doctorate in a particular discipline. Within the requirements of the program, students may choose an individual course of study to meet their needs, with a broader choice of courses than is possible in a traditional disciplinary master's degree program. The course of study may involve work in any of the following academic disciplines: anthropology, architecture, art history, business, comparative literature, economics, geography, government, history, information science, law, linguistics, music, philosophy, public affairs, radio-television-film, sociology, Slavic languages and literatures, and Turkic languages. Upon graduation, students will have an extensive understanding of the country or countries of specialization, including knowledge of one of the region's languages.

# DUAL MASTER'S DEGREES

[PUBLIC AFFAIRS](#) • [GLOBAL POLICY STUDIES](#) • [MEDIA STUDIES](#) •  
[JD LAW](#) • [BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION](#)

In addition to the standard M.A. program in Russian, East European and Eurasian Studies, the Center currently offers five dual-degree programs. These allow students to work simultaneously towards graduate degrees in two disciplines at The University of Texas. The dual-degree programs typically require three years to complete. Students must fulfill all requirements for both programs.

Students have found that this multidisciplinary approach allows them to respond to an increased need in both the public and private sectors for specialists with a thorough understanding of the culture, economics, geography, history and politics of the former Soviet Union and Eastern Europe. Students must apply to both programs in order to be considered for the dual-degree program.

*Admission deadlines for other programs may be earlier than the deadline for the CREEES program.*

## PUBLIC AFFAIRS

The Center for Russian, East European and Eurasian Studies and the Lyndon B. Johnson School of Public Affairs offer a dual-degree program that combines advanced policy studies with interdisciplinary area studies and language. The [Masters in Public Affairs](#) focuses more on domestic policy issues and understanding the economic, political, analytical and management principles of policymaking. Students interested in foreign policy issues should consider the Global Policy Studies program. Please note that the admission deadline for the [Lyndon B. Johnson School of Public Affairs](#) is earlier than the deadline for the CREEES program.

## GLOBAL POLICY STUDIES

The LBJ School and the Center for Russian, East European, and Eurasian Studies (CREEES) also offer a dual-degree program leading to a [Master of Global Policy Studies \(MGPS\)](#) and a Master of Arts in Russian, East European and Eurasian Studies (M.A.). The dual-degree program combines an interdisciplinary understanding of global policy issues, as well as a grounding in analytical and professional communication skills, with a focus on the politics, economy and cultures of the former Soviet Union and East European world area. Please note that the admission

deadline for the [Lyndon B. Johnson School of Public Affairs](#) is earlier than the deadline for the CREEES program.

## MEDIA STUDIES

The Center for Russian, East European and Eurasian Studies and the College of Communication offer a dual-degree program that combines interdisciplinary area studies and language with advanced communication studies through the [Master of Arts, concentration in Media Studies](#) at the renowned [Moody College of Communication](#).

## JD LAW

This dual-degree program is designed for those students who wish to receive a JD from UT's renowned [UT School of Law](#) while studying at CREEES. The dual degree program will benefit students who expect to be involved in government service or legal practices with an international and specifically Eastern European or Eurasian focus. Students who complete the degree requirements of both programs receive two graduate degrees in four years or less, rather than the five years it would normally require to complete two graduate degrees.

## BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION

The Center for Russian, East European and Eurasian Studies and the renowned [Red McCombs School of Business](#) offer a dual-degree (MBA and M.A.) program that combines the skills needed to lead, build and manage enterprises in a dynamic, global economy with interdisciplinary area studies and language. Students admitted to the MBA program average 6 years previous work experience. For more information on admission requirements for the MBA program, reference the [McCombs admissions page](#).

## PORTFOLIO PROGRAMS

Graduate students at CREEES are eligible to apply for one of the numerous graduate [portfolio programs](#) at the University of Texas at Austin. Portfolio programs are opportunities for students to obtain credentials in a cross-disciplinary academic area of inquiry while they are completing the requirements for a Master's or doctoral degree in a particular discipline.

A portfolio program usually consists of thematically related graduate coursework and a research presentation; for Master's portfolio programs, a practical experience related to the program of choice may replace the presentation.

The full list of portfolio programs currently offered at the University of Texas at Austin can be viewed here: <https://gradschool.utexas.edu/academics/programs/portfolio-programs>

## PROGRAM ADMINISTRATION

### GRADUATE STUDIES COMMITTEE

Each graduate program at UT is administered by a Graduate Studies Committee (GSC). For CREEES, this committee consists of all assistant, associate, and full professors affiliated with the Center. Although the members of a GSC usually belong to the same department, the interdisciplinary character of CREEES dictates that its committee is drawn from different academic units on campus: Slavic and Eurasian Studies, History, Anthropology, the LBJ School, Government, and others. The supervisor (sometimes known as first reader) of a CREEES M.A. student's thesis or report must be on the REE Graduate Studies Committee. The full list of faculty members currently on the GSC can be viewed here: [https://utdirect.utexas.edu/apps/ogs/auth/gsc/nlogin/gsc\\_members/?gsc\\_code=REE&role\\_code=&role\\_eid=](https://utdirect.utexas.edu/apps/ogs/auth/gsc/nlogin/gsc_members/?gsc_code=REE&role_code=&role_eid=)

### GRADUATE ADVISOR

The Graduate Adviser is a CREEES faculty member designated to advise students in the M.A. Program and act as a representative of it to the Graduate School. The Graduate Adviser fulfills the following functions:

- heads the Graduate Admissions Committee and approves admission decisions;
- guides students in the selection of courses toward their degree, taking into account each student's academic interests, prior preparation, and career objectives;
- oversees students' progress through the degree's milestones;
- monitors the fulfillment of the Program's language requirement;
- advises students on the choice of thesis/report supervisors;
- reports to the GSC on the state of the Program and the progress of each individual graduate student;
- supervises the Writing Colloquium each spring;
- signs all formal documents mandated by the Program and Graduate School.

## GRADUATE COORDINATOR

The Graduate Coordinator is a CREEES staff member who assists in the administration of the graduate program and is the first contact for a variety of routine, administrative concerns such as registration, program of work, academic employment, leaves of absence, etc. The Graduate Coordinator is responsible for

- coordinating the process of admission to the graduate program and consulting incoming graduate students;
- scheduling the orientation for new graduate students, setting up advising appointments, and organizing various Program-related events;
- counseling students on the policies and procedures for admission, registration, and graduation and assisting them with the filing of the necessary forms;
- distributing information about career opportunities, scholarships, internships, and teaching appointments;
- updating information pertaining to the graduate program on the CREEES website;
- maintaining student records;
- administering surveys and compiling statistics;
- coordinating the assignment of Teaching Assistants by the Center;
- coordinating the application process for FLAS fellowships and other Center scholarships.

## REQUIREMENTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

[DEGREE REQUIREMENTS](#) • [LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY](#) •  
[TIME TO DEGREE](#) • [STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES](#)

It is each student's responsibility to fulfill the expectations associated with graduate study and be proactive about questions that arise with regards to degree requirements, the certification of language proficiency, the securing of funding, timely completion of the program, etc.

### DEGREE REQUIREMENTS

The requirements of the program are designed to give students a broad background in the Russian, East European and Eurasian region. Students may choose either the [thesis option](#), consisting of at least thirty-one semester hours of coursework, including two thesis courses; or the [report option](#), consisting of at least thirty-four semester hours,

including the report course. Under either option, at least 18 hours must be in graduate-level coursework that deals primarily with the Russian, East European and Eurasian region.

The M.A. degree plan, also called program of work, should include

- A seminar in Russian, East European and Eurasian Civilizations and Cultures (REE 381 — 3 credit hours)
- One course in Literature and Culture (REE 386 — 3 credit hours)
- One course in Economics, History, and Government (REE 387 — 3 credit hours)
- One course in Anthropology, Sociology, and Geography (REE 388 — 3 credit hours)
- One approved [Research Methodology course](#) (3 credits)
- A Masters [Writing Colloquium course](#), while enrolled in the thesis or report course (1 credit hour)
- Area-studies elective courses (9 credit hours for the thesis option, 15 hours for the report option).

AND EITHER

- Thesis option: REE 698A (3 credits) and REE 698B (3 credits), a two-semester sequence of work concluding with the timely presentation of an acceptable M.A. thesis in the major field of concentration.

OR

- Report option: REE 398R (3 credits), a one-semester course concluding with the timely presentation of an acceptable M.A. report.
- All courses counted toward the degree, including electives, must have significant (30% or more) content relevant to the former Soviet Union or East/Central/Southeast Europe and must be taken for a letter grade (not credit).
- For more information on approved courses and course policies, see [Courses, Grades and Credit](#).

## LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY

Each graduate student at CREEES must pass an oral proficiency test in the selected language at the American Council of Teachers of Russian intermediate-mid level, though students are encouraged to attain advanced proficiency in their chosen language. Credit earned in fulfilling the language requirement may not be counted toward the degree since language competence is a necessary tool for graduate study in Russian, East

European and Eurasian Studies; however, content courses taught in a foreign language at the advanced (4th-year) level may be counted as electives towards the M.A. degree if instruction is conducted entirely in that language and the course is structured like a content course rather than strictly a language course.

Native or heritage speakers of languages from the region are encouraged to learn another language from the region during their time in the graduate program and attain the required level of proficiency in that language.

While Russian studies is the area of greatest departmental strength, with the most regular course offerings, students are very much encouraged to work with faculty specializing in Czech, Polish, South Slavic/Balkan and Ukrainian studies.

## TIME TO DEGREE

Full-time students are expected to complete the CREEES M.A. program in four regular semesters (six semesters if pursuing a dual degree). Extensions on the expected time-to-degree period will be granted if the student has demonstrated satisfactory progress on the thesis or report project or engaged in an activity that has pushed their time-to-degree back, such as semester-long study abroad. Full-time students who have exceeded the expected time to degree will not be priority candidates for CREEES funding.

Full-time students will not be allowed to continue in the program after their sixth semester (eighth semester for dual-degree candidates). Exceptions to this rule can be made only in extraordinary circumstances, and must be detailed in a written petition to the CREEES Graduate Studies Committee, no later than the beginning of the sixth semester of study (eighth semester for dual-degree candidates).

Students encountering extraordinary circumstances and considering a [leave of absence](#) from the program may initiate this process with the support of the Graduate Adviser. UT graduate students are allowed up to two long semesters of leave. Leaves of absence do not count against a student's time to degree.

The road map below represents the standard two-year path of a M.A. candidate, with a summary of milestones for each semester along the way.

## 1.1. Fall Semester, Year I

- attend departmental and university orientation sessions
- meet with grad advisor, discuss interests, goals, degree path
- plan for additional language training, if necessary
- take REE 381, collect ideas & faculty advice on topics of interest
- decide on thesis or report option

## 1.2. Spring Semester, Year I

- continue taking courses, honing on research ideas
- apply for funding to do research and/or language study (abroad)
- identify a thesis/report supervisor, discuss ideas, research plans
- advising with graduate adviser and coordinator
- submit form to enroll in REE 698A (if thesis)
- identify second reader for the thesis/report

## 1.3. Summer Semester, Year I

- conduct research and/or additional language study (abroad)

## 2.1. Fall Semester, Year II

- submit Thesis Reader Form with faculty supervisors by 12<sup>th</sup> class day
- update your supervisor on the progress of your thinking and research
- work out detailed schedule (in writing) for the various stages of the writing project
- by mid semester, at the latest, submit thesis prospectus and reading list
- advising with graduate adviser and coordinator
- submit form to enroll in REE 698B/398R
- by semester's end, complete literature review, extensive outline of thesis

## 2.2. Spring Semester, Year II

- submit Report Reader Form with faculty supervisors by 12<sup>th</sup> class day
- enroll in REE 698B or REE 398R
- enroll in the CREEES writing colloquium
- remain in regular contact with your supervisor through the writing process
- by mid semester, submit a complete draft of the thesis/report to your supervisor
- present your work at the CREEES Graduate Research Symposium
- submit final draft of your thesis/report at least two weeks before end of classes
- complete final language assessment



CREEES MA  
ROAD MAP

## STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES

In advising sessions, class meetings, and on impromptu occasions, students in the Program will receive guidance on various aspects of graduate studies and university life. However, it is still the responsibility of students to take charge of their education and ensure that it follows a proper course and comes to a successful completion. M.A. students at CREEES are expected to

- abide by the program-specific guidelines outlined in this handbook and the general policies of the University of Texas and its Graduate School;
- be cognizant of degree requirements and all pertinent deadlines for registration and required paperwork, the submission of course assignments, written work, scholarship and grant applications, and other important documentation;
- prepare and submit necessary forms and keep a record of all administrative transactions;
- make satisfactory progress toward the degree and showcase a quality of intellectual work in line with the Program's standards;
- cultivate their language skills, through formal instruction and otherwise, in order to attain the required level of language proficiency by the time of graduation;
- proactively seek and apply for funding, internal and external, to support their graduate studies, language training, and research initiatives;
- participate actively in the intellectual life of the Center, volunteer in the organization and staffing of Center-sponsored events;
- proactively solicit academic guidance and take the requisite steps toward professionalization (publishing, attending conferences, giving presentations, applying for internships, establishing professional contacts, etc.);
- know the standards of appropriate, professional behavior toward faculty, staff, and peers, and abide by those standards at all times;
- know the standards of academic integrity and abide by them in all intellectual endeavors (courses, independent projects) undertaken while enrolled in the Program;
- fulfill the obligations associated with specific fellowships and grants, carry out in full the contractual duties of a Teaching or Research Assistant;
- communicate regularly with committee members during work on the thesis or report;
- check email frequently and respond in a timely manner to inquiries and requests by professors, supervisors, and administrators (optimally, within a day or two during the academic year);
- maintain up-to-date contact information with the Office of the Registrar (all official correspondence will be sent to the email address on record).

# FUNDING

TEACHING ASSISTANTSHIPS • FLAS FELLOWSHIPS •  
TRUITT FELLOWSHIP • PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT AWARDS •  
OFFICE ASSISTANTSHIPS • EMPLOYMENT POLICY •  
TUITION EXEMPTION • OTHER SOURCES

Each year CREEES endeavors to support as many of its graduate students as possible through a number of means, most commonly Teaching Assistant positions, scholarship funds, and out-of-state tuition waivers. Unfortunately, Center resources are limited. Financial support is not guaranteed for all deserving students. Funding decisions are made on the basis of the following three criteria:

**Utility:** serving departmental needs and budget constraints.

**Academic merit:** attracting good students to the program and retaining them.

**Professional promise:** providing our students with practical training for a future career.

In allocating positions and funds, the Program aims to balance certain factors such as the various areas of focus offered by the Center, the needs of continuing students on track to graduate versus incoming students, and distributing teaching experience among eligible and promising students. Students are expected to apply for any and all eligible internal and external sources of funding available. Time to degree is also a factor in allocating funding to students.

## TEACHING ASSISTANTSHIPS

The Center assigns a limited number of Teaching Assistantships each semester. Factors taken into account in the selection of students for a particular TA position are: faculty request, experience and knowledge of the assigned topic(s) (e.g., linguistic expertise, when assisting in language classes), academic research interests, and current standing in the Program. Support for continuing graduate students is prioritized. The number of available TA-ships depends on the courses being offered by the Center as well as the annual College-allocated budget, and will vary from term to term. University policy mandates that a Teaching Assistant can be assigned to a course only once a certain level of enrollment has been reached. As enrollment figures fluctuate from semester to semester, it is often difficult to guarantee in advance that a certain position—and the funding it carries—will be available.

With limited opportunities for TA funding through the Center, and the uncertainty associated with course enrollments, graduate students are strongly encouraged to seek

teaching or research appointments in other academic units on campus when there is not a position available to them through the Center (the Graduate Coordinator periodically distributes information about such opportunities).

- **Duties and benefits:** A TA assists a faculty member in the instructional program, but is not permitted to conduct regular classroom instruction. TAs are appointed as part-time University employees (usually 20 hours/week), entitling them to certain benefits, including health insurance and the right to pay tuition and fees at the in-state rate. It is the responsibility of the student to apply for the out-of-state tuition waiver based on their TA appointment. A tuition reduction benefit (typically covering all or most of the in-state rate for 9 semester credit hours) is also applied to the students' tuition, significantly reducing the financial burden of enrollment for the semester(s) during which they are employed as a TA.
- **Qualifications and conditions:** A TA must have been admitted to the Graduate School without conditions or deficiencies, must be in good academic standing (GPA > 3.0), and must be making satisfactory progress toward the degree (with no more than one grade of Incomplete from the previous semester or summer term). During each semester of the appointment, the TA must be registered as a full time student, for at least nine (9) semester hours of coursework.

When taking on a TA appointment outside CREEES, a student must provide documentation showing that s/he is in good academic standing and making satisfactory progress toward the degree. The decision to approve the appointment is made by the Graduate Adviser or Coordinator of the program in which the course is offered.

International students seeking a teaching appointment at the University must obtain the International Teaching Assistant Certification through Texas Global: <https://global.utexas.edu/english-language-center/students/intl-teaching-assistants>

## FLAS FELLOWSHIPS

As a recipient of a Title VI grant from the U.S. Department of Education, CREEES disburses a number of [Foreign Language Area Studies \(FLAS\) Fellowships](#) each year for which the grant is awarded. This funding is made available to support both graduate and undergraduate students in the learning of regional languages. The competition for FLAS Fellowships is open to students from any department/school at the University of Texas. The recipients are selected on the basis of merit and need. FLAS Fellowships are awarded for language study during the regular academic year, as well as during the summer.

To be eligible for a FLAS Fellowship, a student must be a US citizen or permanent resident. Students may NOT be native speakers of the language nor possess fluency equivalent to educated native speakers in the language for which the award is sought. Otherwise FLAS funding for graduate students can be used for any level of language training, from beginning to advanced. However, only intermediate and advanced learners can use

FLAS funding for language study abroad. Beginning learners can use the award to study the language of their choice at the University of Texas at Austin (or another approved language program in the US).

Students should consider applying for FLAS Fellowships with CREEES but also other relevant FLAS-granting centers at UT, such as the [Center for European Studies](#), or at other [FLAS-granting institutions](#), as relevant to their research interests.

## TRUITT FAMILY FELLOWSHIP

Each year, at least one deserving graduate student (incoming or continuing) is awarded a [Truitt Graduate Fellowship](#) of \$1,000+ based on academic merit and professional promise. Out-of-state recipients of the Truitt Graduate Fellowship are also eligible for a non-resident tuition exemption waiver.

## PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT AWARDS

Graduate students are encouraged to apply for [CREEES Professional Development Awards](#). These small awards are intended to support professionalization in the field of Russian, East European and Eurasian Studies. Applications must demonstrate that the activity in question relates to the REE region: the former Soviet sphere of influence, Central/Eastern Europe, Southeast Europe/former Ottoman Empire, Central Asia, the Caucasus, etc.

Awards are to be used for covering costs associated with competitive internships, job interviews, research/fieldwork, external language programs or presenting at academic conferences. Typically up to \$1,000 per student will be awarded to cover international travel costs, or \$500 per student for domestic travel, depending on funding source and number of deserving applicants.

Undergraduate and graduate students in any major at UT Austin are eligible to apply. Registration is required during the long semester in which the funds are to be used (or [ISR enrollment](#) if abroad). Summer tuition will be waived if the student was registered for the prior spring semester.

## OFFICE ASSISTANTSHIPS

On occasion, CREEES may be able to offer part-time student employment opportunities in the office for graduate and undergraduate students. Students employed in the CREEES office will assist the staff with administrative tasks, program and event coordination, grant writing and/or reporting, international program coordination, website maintenance, and more. Positions range from 10 to 19 hours, and pay is based on academic classification and student qualifications. Unfortunately, UT employee health benefits and tuition reduction benefits are not available for Office Assistants.

## POLICY ON EMPLOYMENT

Paid employment at the University of Texas, in academic and non-academic positions, may not exceed 20 hours per week during the first two long semesters (Fall and Spring) of graduate studies. In subsequent semesters, including summer sessions, employment may not exceed 30 hours per week.

## TUITION EXEMPTION WAIVERS

The College of Liberal Arts awards each department a limited number of non-resident tuition exemption / academic scholarship waivers for students with out-of-state residency to be considered for in-state tuition rates. Waivers are granted to major scholarship recipients in a program. Tuition waivers are also available for (and must be claimed by) students holding a TA or GRA appointment each semester of their appointment.

## OTHER SOURCES OF FUNDING

A comprehensive list of fellowships administered by the UT Graduate School can be found online at: <https://gradschool.utexas.edu/finances/fellowships>.

After their first year, students with an outstanding record are eligible for 'continuing' fellowships. These awards are made based on the students' records since entering graduate school, research proposals, personal statements, and letters of recommendation. The awards are granted, funded, and administered by the UT Graduate School. The Center can nominate outstanding candidates for these prestigious fellowships, which impose no duties on the recipient.

Guaranteed student loans, Basic Education Opportunity Grants, Work/Study, and other forms of financial aid are available through the [UT Office of Scholarships and Financial Aid](#). The Financial Aid Office also assists students in searching for external funding from private foundations and government agencies, which offer a panoply of fellowships, grants, and loans to support graduate education. The various sources of funding available are detailed here: <https://onestop.utexas.edu/managing-costs/scholarships-financial-aid/types-of-financial-aid/>

A great resource for students seeking outside funding is the [Texas Grants Resource Center](#). After participating in an orientation, students gain access to an incredible foundation and award database, and email themselves relevant funding opportunities.

**Texas Global** offers a number of scholarships to support education abroad. The list of these scholarships can be found here: <http://utdirect.utexas.edu/student/abroad/globalassist.WBX>

**Texas Exes** administers a whole host of scholarships including need-based and merit-based awards, specifically for graduate students. All students are encouraged to

apply. Information on these scholarships and on how to apply is available at [texasexes.academicworks.com](http://texasexes.academicworks.com)

## ORIENTATION, REGISTRATION, AND ADVISING

### NEW STUDENT ORIENTATION

A mandatory CREEES M.A. Program orientation for all incoming students is held the week before the academic year commences. All prospective M.A. students are expected to be on campus during that week and attend the orientation. This is an occasion to welcome the new graduate cohort, introduce them to faculty and staff, provide practical advice and assistance as they begin their graduate life at UT, and communicate important information about the Center and its M.A. program.

Incoming students should plan to attend also the general [Graduate Student orientation](#) hosted by the Graduate School, usually scheduled on the Friday prior to the first week of classes.

### ADVISING AND REGISTRATION

Before each registration period in the Fall and Spring semesters, the Graduate Adviser and Graduate Coordinator conduct advising sessions with all continuing (and incoming M.A. candidates each summer). Each student in the program must sign up for an advising interview and come to it with a completed [Advising Form](#). Advising interviews with newly-admitted students and those studying abroad can be conducted over the phone or by video conferencing.

After the Graduate Adviser has approved the course work for the following semester, the student's advising bar will be cleared by the Graduate Coordinator and s/he will be able to register for classes. All subsequent changes to courses selected for the CREEES program of work (and entered on the Advising Form) must be approved by the Graduate Adviser.

## COURSES, GRADES, AND CREDIT

[DEGREE STATUS](#) • [INCOMPLETE GRADES](#) • [CREDIT/NO CREDIT](#) • [TRANSFER OF CREDIT](#) • [CONFERENCE COURSES](#) • [UNDERGRADUATE COURSES](#) • [CROSS-LISTED COURSES](#) • [NON-CREEES COURSES](#) • [RESEARCH METHODOLOGY COURSES](#) • [WRITING COLLOQUIUM](#)

## DEGREE STATUS

To be in **full-time status**, a graduate student must be registered for 9 hours of course work during a long semester (Fall or Spring), or 3 hours during the summer session. Maintaining full-time status is required for a number of fellowships, appointments, and employment opportunities. Full-time status is not required for the CREEES MA program; CREEES allows students to be enrolled in the program as part-time students as necessary (less than 9 semester credit hours in long semesters).

Students must maintain a status of "**good academic standing**" throughout their time in the CREEES MA program. In order to do so, a student must maintain a grade-point average (GPA) of 3.0 or above. This average is calculated from graduate and upper-division undergraduate courses taken for a letter grade. Should a student's GPA fall below 3.0, the Graduate School will issue a status warning. During the following semester (or summer session), the student must return to good standing or be subject to dismissal. During this probation period, a student is not allowed to drop courses without the prior consent of the Graduate Adviser and Graduate School Dean. While on probation, a student cannot be appointed as a Teaching Assistant (TA), Graduate Research Assistant (GRA), or Assistant Instructor (AI). Exceptions to this rule can only be granted by the Graduate Dean.

## INCOMPLETE GRADES

An incomplete grade (X) is recorded whenever a student has unfinished assignments in a course. It is a Graduate School policy that the student must make up the outstanding course work by the end of the subsequent long semester. Failure to do so will result in a permanent incomplete grade (I) for the course in question. Once recorded, a permanent incomplete (I) grade cannot be amended; it remains permanently on the student's record. The policy on incomplete grades is stricter for students who hold University fellowships or have been assigned to teaching positions. Those students will need to ensure that the "X" they have received is changed to a letter grade by the beginning of the following semester. Failure to do so may result in a forfeiture of funding, as an incomplete grade betokens unsatisfactory progress toward the degree.

## CREDIT/NO CREDIT

With one notable exception, all courses in a student's program of work must be taken for a letter grade. This also applies to individual instruction conference courses. A student may decide to change the grading option for a course from letter grade to "CR/NC" during the course of a semester, if s/he obtains the approval of the Graduate Adviser by the Graduate School deadline. In such a case, the course could no longer be used to satisfy any of the degree requirements. While "CR/NC" grades are not factored in student's GPA, a mark of "NC" will be treated as indicating unsatisfactory progress toward the degree.

The exception to this grade policy are the final thesis (698A/B) and report (398R) courses. For those, students can only receive a "CR" (credit) or "NC" (no credit) grade.

## TRANSFER OF CREDIT

A student pursuing a Master's degree at CREEES can transfer up to six (6) credit hours of relevant graduate-level course work earned at another institution (including study-abroad programs). Only courses in which the student has received a grade of A or B are eligible for such transfer. The credit may not have been applied toward any other previous academic degree. For additional requirements for the transfer of credit to the University of Texas, see <https://gradschool.utexas.edu/academics/policies/transfer-credit>

## CONFERENCE COURSES

Conference courses are special individual instruction arrangements meant to satisfy educational needs not met by a program's existing curriculum. They are usually conducted in a one-on-one format, and should only be used as needed.

When making a request for conference course, students should be mindful of faculty members' busy work schedules (professors at UT offer such courses as an overload to their regular teaching duties). Students may only count two conference courses in the program of work or degree plan for the M.A. degree.

It is expected that students will enroll in regularly offered seminar classes and take conference courses only when a topic of interest is not covered by the curriculum and necessary for the student's research or funding (such as a language course not otherwise offered for a FLAS Fellowship). No more than one conference course can be taken in a given semester. .

## UNDERGRADUATE COURSES

Master's students may count up to two upper-division undergraduate courses toward their degree.

No language courses may be included in the program of work, with the exception of 4th-year/advanced content courses conducted entirely in an REE area foreign language. These can be used to satisfy the program's elective degree requirement. Typically, students are expected to enroll in the graduate section of such an advanced language course.

Regardless of the amount and character of work a graduate student performs in an undergraduate class, such a course can only be counted as an elective; it cannot be used to satisfy the core requirements of the MA degree.

## CROSS-LISTED COURSES

Graduate courses housed in other departments or schools at UT and cross-listed with CREEES can be included in a student's program of work, or degree plan, irrespective of the department through which they are offered. Students can register for such courses without special approval from the Graduate Adviser.

## NON-CREEES COURSES

Graduate courses that are not cross-listed with CREEES cannot be included in the M.A. Program of Work without prior approval by the Graduate Adviser. This approval must be sought and granted before the fourth class day of the semester in which the course is to be taken. Retroactive approvals will not be granted.

In petitioning for courses outside the Center, students must demonstrate that at least 30% of the course content is directly related to the region of Eastern Europe, Russia, and Eurasia. Region-specific content should be represented in all aspects of the course: lectures, readings, and assignments.

## RESEARCH METHODOLOGY COURSES

In preparation for their graduation project (thesis or report), students are required to take a specialized course on research methodology. The choice of such a course will depend on the kind of work the student expects to undertake for the thesis or report (historical/archival research, textual analysis, ethnographic work, case studies, data analysis, etc). These courses may be offered through CREEES or another department or college at UT.

CREEES keeps a non-exhaustive list of potential [research methodology courses](#), which are already approved as satisfying this requirement.

Students are encouraged to seek out other course offerings of interest to their graduate research. Research methods courses not included on the CREEES research methodology course list must be approved by the Graduate Adviser prior to the fourth class day in the semester during which the course is to be taken.

## WRITING COLLOQUIUM

The Writing Colloquium is a one-credit course required of all M.A. students in their final year before graduation. Conducted over the first ten weeks of the spring semester, the colloquium is intended to provide a structured environment in which students can solicit and receive feedback from their peers on their thesis/report writing. The schedule of regular meetings and discussions is meant to serve as an agent of (much-needed) socialization during the writing process, while also acting as a motivation for steady progress toward completion of the thesis or report.

# FINAL RESEARCH PROJECT

The Graduate School at the University of Texas recognizes four options for completing a Master's degree. The two relevant options for completing the CREEES M.A. program are thesis or report. This section is meant to provide students with information to make an informed decision on which format best suits their needs, choosing a supervising committee, as well as enrollment and other requirements related to the final research project.

For detailed guidelines and helpful suggestions, students should consult the [CREEES Thesis/Report Manual](#).

## THESIS VS REPORT

The thesis and report differ in length and nature of the scholarly investigation. In a few words, a thesis is the product of original research that aims to answer a specific question of academic interest. This usually involves work with primary-source materials, may require fieldwork, and is potentially more theory-driven. A report provides an in-depth survey and assessment of scholarly literature on a particular subject. As the Graduate School gives no firm guidelines on the length and format of theses and reports, the parameters of each particular project are to be worked out jointly by the student and faculty adviser.

Work on a thesis is organized in a two-semester sequence: three hours of REE 698A Thesis (reading) and three hours of REE 698B Thesis (writing). The final product is usually in the 50-100 page range. Students must complete REE 698A prior to registering for 698B, and must be registered for 698B in their final semester in the program.

Students who opt for a report as their final research project are required to have two additional 3-hour elective courses on their program of work. The typical length of a report is 30-50 pages. Students who have chosen the report option must be registered for REE 398R during the final semester of their studies.

Both theses and reports are subject to the **foreign language source requirement**: at least 25% of the sources cited must be in one or more of the languages of the REE region.

When deciding between the two options, students should consider, in the first place, their career goals. They should consult with the Graduate Adviser and their supervisor of choice.

For detailed guidelines and helpful suggestions, students should consult the [CREEES Thesis/Report Manual](#).

## SUPERVISING COMMITTEE

Whether writing a [thesis or report](#), each student is responsible for forming a supervising committee consisting of at least two persons: the main supervisor and a co-supervisor (also referred to as second reader). The main supervisor is required to be a member of the CREEES [Graduate Studies Committee](#). (Members may be added to the GSC with approval of the GSC Chair.)

The thesis or report supervisor is typically a professor with whom the student has worked previously. This person may be able to suggest an appropriate second reader for the thesis/report. In all cases, the supervising committee's membership is subject to approval by the Dean of Graduate Studies. [Dual degree](#) students may be required to choose a second reader from their other program's affiliate faculty list or Graduate Studies Committee. This should be confirmed with the other program's Graduate Adviser and/or Coordinator.

In some cases, the second, or third, reader may be a specialist from another university. Occasionally, a scholar with non-faculty appointment at UT can serve on the supervising committee as a third reader.

## APPROVAL PROCEDURES

All students planning to conduct research that involves human participants (interviews, focus groups, participant observation) are required to obtain approval from the [Institutional Review Board \(IRB\)](#) at the Office of Research Support and Compliance (RSC). The IRB review process has been instituted to ensure that all persons who are, in one way or another, used to source information for scholarly research are treated in an equitable and humane manner.

Students need to submit a research proposal to IRB and be approved prior to engaging in fieldwork involving human subjects. The proposal must be sponsored by a faculty adviser, who should be able to assist the student with filing the necessary documentation. Failure to apply for and receive approval for a final research project involving human subjects may result in the denial of degree by the UT Graduate School. (Ignorance as to whether a project requires IRB approval does not constitute a legitimate defense.) The RSC advises that paperwork be filed at least a month before research is set to begin. Considerably more time (at least two months) should be budgeted whenever the project involves travel abroad.

Full information about the review process for human-subjects research can be found on the RSC website: <https://research.utexas.edu/ors/human-subjects/>

A similar procedure is in place for research involving animals: <https://research.utexas.edu/ors/animal-research/>

## GRADUATE RESEARCH SYMPOSIUM

The CREEES Graduate Research Symposium is an annual forum held during the spring semester of each academic year. It serves as an open venue for the presentation of CREEES graduate student research to the UT community. Participation in the symposium is expected of all students who are enrolled in the Writing Colloquium and/or planning on graduating from the Program before the following spring. Supervising faculty are invited to attend their student's presentation. Each presentation is followed by a short Q&A session involving those in attendance.

## GRADUATION

At the beginning of the semester in which they plan to graduate, students should communicate their intention to the Graduate Adviser and Graduate Coordinator. The latter will advise the candidate for degree about the process, deadlines to be met, and required documentation. Candidates for graduation should also consult with the supervising committee of their thesis or report and establish definite deadlines for the submission of written work.

In order to complete the Masters degree and graduate, a student must

- be registered in the Graduate School for that term (regular semester or summer session);
- submit the [Master's Application for Graduation](#) (through the Graduate School website) by the published deadline;
- be enrolled in either REE 698B or REE 398R during the final semester;
- complete all the course requirements for the degree;
- submit a final draft of the thesis or report by the deadline agreed upon with the Supervising Committee (usually, at least two weeks before the end of the semester);
- submit the completed thesis or report to the Graduate School for final approval by the published deadline;
- submit to the Graduate School a page with the signatures of the thesis or report committee;
- (when relevant) submit the approved Statement on Research with Human Participants by the published deadline for submission of the thesis or report to the Graduate School;

- (when relevant) submit the approved [Restricted Region travel authorization request](#) by the published deadline for submission of the thesis or report to the Graduate School;
- submit a PDF copy of the thesis or report to the CREEES Graduate Coordinator by the last day of the semester;
- provide documentation to the Graduate Coordinator certifying that s/he has attained the required level of proficiency in one of the languages of the REE region two weeks prior to the end of the final semester.

## SERVICES, FACILITIES, AND FORMS

### SERVICES AND FACILITIES

**STAFF:** The Center for Russian, East European and Eurasian Studies employs a team of [staff members](#) who make possible the day-to-day operations of the Center and assist in the organization of its numerous events and outreach initiatives. Graduate students with Office Assistantships are employed as student staff members on a part-time basis.

**LIBRARIAN:** A CREEES-dedicated [librarian](#) serves the research needs of faculty and students and curates the collection of library holdings, databases, and digital resources related to the region. The CREEES Librarian can be an invaluable aid for graduate students in all phases of the research process.

**MAILBOXES:** Upon entering the Program, each student is assigned an unlocked mailbox in the Center's main office. This should be checked frequently, as important information (such as an employment offer letter or office key form) is often distributed by mail.

**COMMON SPACES:** The CREEES lounge, on the fourth floor of Burdine Hall, is a common area for work and socializing open to all students in the Program, as well as to undergraduate CREEES majors and faculty in the Department of Slavic and Eurasian Studies. Books and periodicals found in the lounge are to be used on site. CREEES administers three rooms in Burdine Hall that can be reserved for class meetings, events, and other gatherings: the CREEES Conference Room (BUR 231), the Fusion Room (BUR 480), and the Language Lab (BUR 560). Requests for reservation should be addressed to the CREEES Administrative Assistant. Students can check the availability of rooms for particular times [here](#).

**PHOTOCOPYING:** Students with office or teaching appointments are provided with access codes to the photocopy machine in Burdine Hall, Room 486. The machine is for administrative and instructional use only. For specific rules on photocopying, students should consult the responsible staff member at CREEES.

## FORMS

The following is a list of the forms most commonly used in the course of graduate study at the Program for Russian, East European and Eurasian Studies.

- [Graduate Advising Form](#) - Students should fill out this form and bring it to every advising session. The Graduate Coordinator will place the completed and signed form on file and clear the student's advising bar.
- [Degree Planning Form](#) - Students should use this form to plan their course elections over the course of the M.A. degree.
- [Restricted Course Authorization Form](#) - In order to register for a "restricted course" offered by CREEES, including conference courses or Thesis A/B or Report courses, students should complete this form, obtain the signature of the course supervisor, and the approval of the Graduate Adviser.
- [Thesis/Report Committee Form](#) - In order to begin working on their thesis or report, students must form a supervising committee consisting of a minimum of two faculty members. The primary supervisor must be on the CREEES GSC, while the co-supervising faculty can be any UT faculty member with expertise in the subject matter of your thesis. After obtaining the consent of committee members, students are required to complete and submit the Thesis/Report Committee Form by the 12th class day of the semester in which they first enroll in the Thesis A or Report course. The form will need to be re-filed any time there is a change in the supervising committee before the graduation application is filed, so that the correct committee is recorded on the student's graduation application).
- [Oral Proficiency Evaluation Form](#) - This form, certifying the required level of language proficiency (or higher), must be on file two weeks prior to the last day of the semester in which a student plans to graduate. (In lieu of it, a student can file documentation issued by an accredited organization such as ACTR or the US government).
- [Professional Development \(Travel\) Award Form](#) - This form is to be used to apply for Title VI professional development funding (for travel costs related to competitive internships, job interviews, research/fieldwork or presentations at conferences) and student professional development awards from the Graduate School.
- [COLA Teaching Assistant Agreement](#) - CREEES requires all Teaching Assistants and faculty supervisors to turn in this form, created by the COLA Dean's office, by the 4th class day of the semester. This document, a contract of sorts, is to be reviewed, completed and signed by the employee and the faculty member teaching the course prior to the start of each semester. Both parties to the agreement should retain a copy of the form; another copy should be given to the Graduate Coordinator.

## DEPARTMENT STAFF LIST

An up-to-date staff list is always available on the department website on the left hand side near the bottom.

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