

The University of Texas at Austin

Department of Asian Studies



The University of Texas Tower viewed from the Turtle Pond

Information for Master's students in Asian Studies (ANS)

2026 - 2027 Graduate Catalog

Table of Contents

Administration and Governance.....	3
Student Responsibilities	4
Degree Programs	5
Master's in Asian Studies (ANS) Degree Requirements.....	6
Individual Program of Work	6
Coursework.....	6
Grades & Grading	7
Portfolio Programs at UT Austin	8
Withdrawal and Leave of Absence	8
Research and the Institutional Review Board.....	8
Thesis/Report Completion and Graduation.....	9
Professional Development	10
Annual Report.....	10
Going Abroad.....	10
Funding and Financial Aid.....	11
Academic Accommodation for Graduate Student Parents	11
Statement on Equal Educational Opportunity.....	11
Campus Resources.....	12

.....

No person shall be excluded from participation in, denied the benefits of, or be subject to discrimination under any program or activity sponsored or conducted by The University of Texas System on any basis prohibited by applicable law, including but not limited to race, color, national origin, religion, sex, sexual orientation or disability.

Not printed with state funds.

All inquiries should be emailed to dasgrads@austin.utexas.edu

Telephone 512.471.5811 • Fax 512.471.4469

Revised: November 2025

The information in this brochure is available online at <https://liberalarts.utexas.edu> and may be printed freely.

This handbook, and the Asian Studies Graduate Program website, reflect changes in effect for the 2025-2026 Graduate Catalog. Every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy of the material herein. In the event of discrepancy between printed or web materials and the contents of the official 2026-2027 Graduate Catalog, the Graduate Catalog takes precedence.

Administration and Governance

ROLE OF THE GRADUATE ADVISER

The Graduate Adviser for 2026-27 is Dr. Kirsten Cather. Her office is located in WCH 4.112.

The Graduate Adviser administers the graduate program, is Chair of the Graduate Studies Committee, the Graduate Program Committee, and the Graduate Admissions Committee, and is the program's principal representative to the Graduate School.

The Adviser assists each student in selecting a faculty mentor and then works with that student and mentor in planning a program of study tailored to every student's individual needs and interests. Students should make appointments to meet with their mentors at least once every semester.

In the latter part of each long semester, the Graduate Adviser meets individually with every student to plan the next semester's work.

The Graduate Studies Committee consists of members of the UT faculty, both inside and outside the Department of Asian Studies, for whom research on Asia is sufficiently central that they are considered internal for the purposes of forming dissertation and master's committees.

The Graduate Program Committee sets policy for the graduate program in all matters except admissions. The committee is composed of the Graduate Adviser and all tenured and tenure-track faculty with at least a part-time appointment in the Department of Asian Studies.

The Graduate Admissions Committee has responsibility for admission to the graduate program. It is composed of the Graduate Adviser and selected faculty representing different branches of the department.

The Graduate Program Committee must approve any significant change in the Department's graduate program.

ROLE OF THE GRADUATE COORDINATOR

The Graduate Coordinator is Dr. Shelby Oxenford. Her office is in WCH 4.116. The Graduate Coordinator can be reached via email at dasgrads@austin.utexas.edu.

The Graduate Coordinator handles the day-to-day technical aspects of graduate life — adding and dropping courses, finding out rules and regulations, etc. The coordinator is the first person you should seek help from for any bureaucratic problem.

OMBUDSPERSON

The current Ombudsperson is Dr. S. Akbar Hyder. His office is WCH 4.134.

The department appoints a professor each year to serve as Ombudsperson. The function of the Ombudsperson is to assist students with problems they might encounter regarding student-teacher relations, sexual harassment, or other similar non-academic problems within the Department. Please note that the departmental Ombudsperson is *not* a “confidential employee” as defined by Texas Senate Bill 212, and thus is required to report incidents involving sexual harassment, sexual assault, dating violence, and stalking to the University Title IX Coordinator.

Student Responsibilities

The most important responsibility of each student is to be familiar with the degree requirements as set forth in the official publications of the Graduate School and the Asian Studies programs.

General and specific requirements for degrees in the Graduate School may be altered in successive catalogs, but students are bound only by the requirements of the catalog in force at the time of their admission to graduate study. Students may choose to fulfill the requirements of subsequent catalogs, in which case they must fulfill all of those requirements, not part of them. Graduate catalogs may be found online at <https://registrar.utexas.edu/catalogs/graduate>.

The department's graduate office maintains a paper file for each student. Students may see all material in their files except the confidential letters of recommendation.

EMAIL

Every graduate student must have an email address on file with the Department. Email is considered an official form of communication by the University of Texas at Austin and will be the main means by which the Department notifies students of upcoming events, fellowships, meetings, etc. The University now mandates the use of an official university email address. Information about the free-to-students Outlook (EID@my.utexas.edu) email addresses is found online at <https://tech.utexas.edu/>.

MAILBOXES

Each graduate student has a mailbox located in the hallway of the fifth floor of the WC Hogg building. Students are responsible for checking their boxes occasionally for flyers, notes, and other materials.

WEBSITE

The Department of Asian Studies posts items of interest to students on its homepage, located at <http://liberalarts.utexas.edu/asianstudies/>. Students should be sure to access the site often to stay informed about happenings in the Department. Items of interest include dissertation defenses, speakers, seminars, and updates about students and faculty.

STANDARDS OF CONDUCT

The University's expectations for student conduct are grounded in the University Code of Conduct: "The core values of The University of Texas at Austin are learning, discovery, freedom, leadership, individual opportunity, and responsibility. Each member of the University is expected to uphold these values through integrity, honesty, trust, fairness, and respect toward peers and community."

University students are also expected to uphold the Student Honor Code:
"As a student of The University of Texas at Austin, I shall abide by the core values of the University and uphold academic integrity."

Information about UT's policies on Academic Integrity is located at
<https://deanofstudents.utexas.edu/conduct/avoiding-academic-misconduct.php>.

The University's standards of conduct are described at
<https://deanofstudents.utexas.edu/conduct/standards-of-conduct.php>.

Academic Dishonesty and Scholastic Dishonesty

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

Information about scholastic dishonesty can be found at <https://catalog.utexas.edu/general-information/appendices/appendix-c/student-conduct-and-academic-integrity/> and <https://deanofstudents.utexas.edu/conduct/avoiding-academic-misconduct.php>.

Degree Programs

The Asian Studies major includes the following graduate degree programs:

- Master's of Arts in Asian Studies (ANS)
- Master's of Arts in Asian Studies dual-degree programs in conjunction with the LBJ School of Public Affairs (Public Affairs/ANS and ANS/Global Policy Studies)
- Master's of Arts in Asian Studies dual-degree program in conjunction with the Red McCombs School of Business (Business Administration/ANS)

The M.A. programs in Asian Studies (ANS) provides a broad background of knowledge on Asia to students who wish to pursue a career in business, law, non-profit or government work, or who hope later to pursue a PhD either in Asian Studies or another field.

Students who demonstrate third-year language proficiency before admission to the program may have the language course requirement waived, pending approval of the Graduate Adviser. Please note that the required subject matter will be waived but not the hours.

Asian Studies Master's students may choose to complete either a traditional thesis or a report for their degree. A thesis is a two-semester project in which the student analyzes or interprets a body of material; a thesis is usually approximately 75 pages in length. A report is a one-semester project during which the student writes a report on a given topic or body of material that they have researched; the Master's report should be approximately 50 pages in length. Both the thesis and report require the approval of a faculty supervisor and a second reader. The supervisor must be a member of the Graduate Studies Committee.

Master's in Asian Studies (ANS) Degree Requirements

Thesis option:

- 12 hours of Asian Studies electives (with not more than 6 in any one discipline, such as literature, religion, visual culture, etc.)
- 3 hours Asian history
- 3 additional in Asian history (preferred) or social studies courses
- 6 hours in advanced Asian language courses (third-year level or beyond)
- 6 hours of Master's Thesis. Thesis is a two-semester course.

Report option:

- 15 hours of Asian Studies electives (with not more than 9 in any one discipline, such as literature, religion, visual culture, etc.)
- 3 hours Asian history
- 3 additional in Asian history (preferred) or social studies courses
- 6 hours in advanced Asian language courses (third-year level or beyond)
- 3 hours of Master's Report

Dual Degree Programs:

The Department of Asian Studies offers dual degree programs in conjunction with the [LBJ School of Public Affairs](#) and the [McCombs School of Business](#). Dual degree programs are structured so that a student can pursue graduate work in two fields and fulfill the requirements of two degrees; in programs leading to two master's degrees, the degrees are awarded simultaneously.

Individual Program of Work

All students have an online Program of Work (degree audit). This document lists all required courses for your degree and all courses you have taken to fulfill those requirements. You may access your web-based Program of Work through UT Direct.

Coursework

The majority of the coursework for the Master's degree should be graduate seminars with substantial content on Asia. Students are encouraged to enroll in graduate seminars with Asian Studies faculty.

At the discretion of the Graduate Adviser, graduate students may take individual instruction conference courses. These courses should not comprise the majority of the student's course work and should be on topics that are not offered in organized graduate courses. The student should find a faculty member to supervise the course; the topic of the course should be within the faculty member's research interests. The grading policy and other requirements are left to the discretion of the instructor. The student and faculty member should complete the graduate conference course agreement form located on the Asian Studies website and submit it to the Graduate Coordinator so that the student may be registered.

A Master's student in the Department of Asian Studies may count up to nine hours of upper-division undergraduate coursework toward their degree. The first number of a course indicates the number of credit hours (e.g., 3, 4, 5). The second number indicates whether the class is lower-division (0 or 1), upper-division (2-7) or graduate (8 or 9). Students may not count lower-division courses toward a graduate degree.

It is permissible for a graduate student to take an upper-division undergraduate course for graduate credit. This may be necessary if many faculty are on leave and there is a shortage of organized graduate courses. Graduate students enroll in a graduate conference course number and attend all scheduled meetings of the undergraduate class, plus at least 4 additional meetings with the professor outside of regular class meeting times. Graduate students attending undergraduate courses are usually required to do an additional research paper with bibliography including extra materials not required of undergraduate students. Whether or not other undergraduate requirements are waived (such as exams) is left to the instructor's discretion. The student and faculty member should complete the Undergraduate Course for Graduate Credit form located on the Asian Studies website and submit it to the Graduate Coordinator so that the student may be registered.

All coursework must be completed within six years.

Grades and Grading

Students must maintain a 3.0 GPA in both departmental courses and courses taken outside the department. Most students receive the grade of A or B in their coursework. The grade of C, which is seldom given, denotes unsatisfactory performance. Any course in which a student earns less than a C will not be counted towards their degree.

If a student receives a grade below B- in their primary language of study for two consecutive semesters, the student may be dismissed from the program.

A student is expected to complete a course in a single semester. In rare instances, for nonacademic reasons and at the discretion of the instructor, a temporary delay of the final course grade, symbol X, may be recorded. The student must complete the course requirements by the last class day in his or her next long-session semester of enrollment, and the instructor

must report a final grade by the end of the grade reporting period in that semester. If these deadlines are not met, the symbol X is converted to the symbol I (permanent incomplete), and the course will not count towards the student's degree.

Graduate students have the option of taking up to 20% of their total credit hours for their degree on a credit/no credit basis. For most Master's students, 20% of the total credit hours is equivalent to six credit hours. A student may not take courses in their primary language of study for credit/no credit.

Portfolio Programs at UT-Austin

Portfolio programs are opportunities for students across the campus in any discipline to obtain credentials in a cross-disciplinary academic area of inquiry while they are completing the requirements for a master's or doctor's degree in a particular discipline. A portfolio program usually consists of four thematically related graduate courses and a research presentation; for master's portfolio programs, a practical experience related to the portfolio program may replace the presentation. For a complete listing of portfolio programs available at UT, visit <https://gradschool.utexas.edu/academics/programs/portfolio-programs>.

Withdrawal and Leave of Absence

If you must drop all of your courses due to some emergency or other unforeseen circumstances, you must complete a *Withdrawal Petition and Refund Request Form* (available from the Graduate Coordinator). Prior to withdrawing, you should meet with the Graduate Adviser to discuss your situation. Students who withdraw will receive the symbol W instead of a grade in all courses that were in progress for the semester. Further information about withdrawal policies and procedures is available at <https://gradschool.utexas.edu/navigating/policies/registration/withdrawal>

Students seeking a Leave of Absence (LOA) should meet with the Graduate Adviser to discuss the circumstances surrounding the leave. Requests for leave are approved on an individual basis and may be granted for a period up to one year. Students must apply for a Leave of Absence prior to the first class day of the semester for which they wish to take leave. Further information about Leave of Absence policies and procedures is available at <https://gradschool.utexas.edu/navigating/policies/academic/leave-absence>.

In order to re-enroll as a graduate student after a withdrawal or Leave of Absence, you must apply for readmission at <https://gradschool.utexas.edu/admissions/apply/readmission> unless you are absent only for a summer session.

Research and the Institutional Review Board

If your research involves living human (or animal) subjects, you may be required to seek University of Texas Institutional Review Board (IRB) clearance before beginning work to demonstrate your compliance with research ethics requirements. Interviews with named individuals—for instance, an author whose work you are studying, or a public official—do not

require IRB pre-approval. Oral history research also does not require IRB involvement. But if your research involves interviews, surveys, or ethnography designed to produce general knowledge about some population—for instance, about intellectuals, contemporary Buddhists, taxi drivers in some city, *sadhus*, tourists, young Chinese officials, or any other *category of people*—you must generally seek IRB pre-authorization. Please note that some low-risk research projects may be deemed “Exempt” by the IRB, but that this categorization is the *result* of an IRB clearance application and is distinct from not having to apply in the first place. The IRB website with an explanation of application procedures can be found here: <https://research.utexas.edu/resources/human-subjects/>

IRB application procedures can be time-consuming and cumbersome, and can require the submission of sample surveys, interview questions, site permission letters, and other materials. We strongly advise that you begin your application no less than *three to six months* before beginning research. IRB clearance also requires periodic renewal, generally annually.

Please note that at the time you submit your final thesis or dissertation to the university, you will be required to complete a Statement on Research with Human Participants form and to attach an IRB approval letter if your research did involve human subjects. Some granting agencies also require documentation of IRB approval or application in appropriate cases.

Thesis/Report Completion and Graduation

The Master’s thesis or report should be completed under the guidance of and approved by a faculty supervisor, who must be a member of the Department of Asian Studies Graduate Studies Committee, and a second reader, who may be any faculty member.

At the beginning of the semester in which the student plans to graduate, they should consult the Graduate School’s Deadlines and Submission Instructions webpage, located at <https://gradschool.utexas.edu/navigating/graduation/deadlines>, to become familiar with all of the required forms for graduation.

The deadline for submission of the Master’s report or thesis, set by the Graduate School, is typically the last Friday in which class is in-session of the semester in which the student intends to graduate. Students should submit a completed draft to their supervisors and readers at least two weeks prior to the last class day in order to have adequate time for revisions.

GUIDELINES FOR ABSTRACTS FOR MA REPORTS AND MA OR PHD THESES

The abstract should state the subject of the research, the problem or problems that the research addresses, the major topics to be considered, the basic argument of the report or thesis, and the conclusions that have been reached. If there are several topics or issues discussed, the abstract should establish the coherence of the work by explaining the relationship among those topics and the reasons they are brought together in the study.

The abstract should present the analytical methods or theory used to address the topic of the report or thesis and, unless it is obvious, explain the choice of approach.

The abstract should describe the types of evidence utilized. Since the study is not likely to consider all possible evidence relating to a topic, the abstract should state the principles of data collection and evidence selection.

The abstract should briefly summarize previous work on the topic, explain how the report or thesis builds on that work, and state its specific contribution. A Doctoral dissertation must make an original contribution; a Master's report may be a synthesis and critical appraisal of previous work.

The abstract should address itself to a general scholarly audience, not just to specialists in the field of the research. Therefore, it should provide essential information about the subject of the research and the theoretical underpinnings of the study if this information is not likely to be commonly known.

Above all, the abstract should be clear about what the report or thesis will accomplish. What will we know after the work is done that we do not know now?

Professional Development

All Asian Studies graduate students are expected to be involved with professional development throughout their time in the program. Master's students should consult with their mentor to determine which activities to complete. Professional development activities may include: applying for external fellowships and grants, attending and presenting at conferences and workshops, publishing original research, performing outreach at local schools, auditing courses, completing internships and teaching positions.

Annual Report

All graduate students in Asian Studies must submit an Annual Report in the spring semester. The Annual Report includes information on degree requirements completed and professional development performed. The faculty mentor provides a written evaluation of the student's progress on the last page of the report. The Graduate Program Committee reviews all of the Annual Reports and provides students with feedback on their performance over the past academic year. The Annual Report form can be found on the Graduate Student Forms and Links webpage of the Asian Studies website <https://liberalarts.utexas.edu/asianstudies/forms-links-resources/graduate-students.html>

Going Abroad

All Asian Studies graduate students are encouraged to study abroad for a minimum of ten weeks to complete language study or conduct research.

Students going abroad for an academic reason, including language study, conducting research, or attending conferences, must abide by the "Student Travel Policy for International Locations"

and must register their travel following the guidelines here:

<https://global.utexas.edu/risk/travel>

Students who plan to be abroad for one or more long semesters should consult with the International Office about registering for Independent Study and Research (ISR). Students enrolled in ISR may a registration fee that is significantly less than the cost of regular tuition and are considered full-time students. The ISR website is located at

<https://global.utexas.edu/abroad/programs/independent-study-research>

Students should consult the UT Restricted Regions list prior to planning travel. Students traveling to a Restricted Region must obtain prior permission from the International Oversight Committee. Proof of permission is required when a student applies to graduate. Information about Restricted Regions is located at <https://global.utexas.edu/risk/travel/restricted-regions>.

Funding and Financial Aid

The Department of Asian Studies strives to fund as many graduate students as possible. Priority for funding is given to PhD students and Master's students in Asian Cultures and Languages who are making progress towards their degrees. Very few Asian Studies Master's students will receive funding from the Department.

Graduate students may be funded through fellowships; grants; and student employment such as teaching assistant (TA), graduate research assistant (GRA), or assistant instructor (AI) positions. Students are expected to apply for funding from other UT departments, which frequently have TAship openings, and external agencies. More information about funding may be found on the Asian Studies website at <https://liberalarts.utexas.edu/asianstudies/graduate-programs/financial-aid.html>.

Academic Accommodation for Graduate Student Parents

The College of Liberal Arts provides academic accommodation for graduate students who are parents or become parents during their course of study. The policy for accommodation is located at <https://gradschool.utexas.edu/grad-life/families-childcare> and a copy of the accommodation form may be accessed here:

<https://utexas.app.box.com/s/146s1277vonk9a28jf833bnm7prbhs36>.

Statement on Equal Educational Opportunity

The University of Texas at Austin is committed to an educational and working environment that provides equal opportunity to all members of the University community. In accordance with federal and state law, the University prohibits unlawful discrimination on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, gender, age, disability, citizenship, and veteran status. Discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation is also prohibited pursuant to University policy.

Discrimination, harassment, and/or retaliation on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, sex, pregnancy, age, disability, citizenship, veteran status, genetic information, sexual

orientation, gender identity, and gender expression can be reported to the **Department of Investigation and Adjudication**: <https://compliance.utexas.edu/programs/dia>.

The University of Texas **Title IX Office** is committed to supporting the University's mission to create and maintain an educational and work environment free from all forms of sexual harassment, sex discrimination, exploitation and intimidation where all students, faculty, and staff can learn, work and thrive. Students who experience or learn of incidents of sexual harassment, sexual assault, dating violence, or stalking are encouraged to report them online at the Title IX Office website, by email at titleix@austin.utexas.edu, or by phone at 512-471-0419. As stipulated by Texas Senate Bill 212, employees must and student employees (such as TAs) are encouraged to report any such incidents of which they gain knowledge.

Campus Services

Center for Asian American Studies offers resources for Asian American students in addition to its academic programs. <https://liberalarts.utexas.edu/aas/>

Counseling & Mental Health Center (CMHC) provides counseling, psychiatric, consultation, and prevention services to all UT students. Services are low-cost and confidential. <https://healthyhorns.utexas.edu/cmhc/>

Division of Recreational Sports <http://www.utrecsports.org>

Center for Teaching and Learning offers workshops and programs to assist graduate students in becoming better instructors. <https://ctl.utexas.edu/>

Graduate Research <https://liberalarts.utexas.edu/research/student-research-in-cola/graduate-research.html>

Graduate School administers all graduate programs at UT and gives final approval on all graduate student matters. The Graduate School website has many services and resources available to you. <https://gradschool.utexas.edu/>

Graduate Student Assembly is the elected governing body of The University of Texas' approximately 12,000 graduate students. The Graduate Student Assembly has a mission to advocate for graduate & professional student needs on the forty acres and beyond! To this end, it serves 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. <https://graduatestudentassembly.utexas.edu/>

Legal Services for Students <http://deanofstudents.utexas.edu/lss/>

Liberal Arts Career Services <https://liberalarts.utexas.edu/career-services/>

Sanger Learning and Career Center also offers a variety of resources and tools to assist graduate students. <http://ugs.utexas.edu/slc/grad>

Disability and Access determines eligibility and helps implement reasonable accommodations for students with disabilities at the University of Texas at Austin. We also engage in outreach across campus in order to make campus a more inclusive, accessible and welcoming environment for people with disabilities. For more information, see <https://disability.utexas.edu/>.

Student Emergency Services works with campus and community organizations to provide a number of services to assist students, and in some cases their families and friends, during an emergency or crisis situation. <https://deanofstudents.utexas.edu/sos/how-we-can-help.php/>

Student Veteran Services <https://registrar.utexas.edu/veterans>

Texas Global oversees international travel and international student issues. <https://global.utexas.edu/>

University Health Services (UHS) provides healthcare services to all UT students. Services are low-cost and confidential. <https://www.healthyhorns.utexas.edu/index.html>

University of Texas Libraries offer research assistance in various forms. <https://www.lib.utexas.edu/>

University Writing Center offers individualized writing help and various programs for graduate students. <https://uwc.utexas.edu/>

Even more campus services <https://gradschool.utexas.edu/grad-life>.