



The University of Texas at Austin

Department of Mexican American & Latina/o Studies

College of Liberal Arts

Graduate Student Handbook 2025-2026

Master of Arts Degree

Doctor of Philosophy Degree

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1. PROGRAM OVERVIEW

Introduction

In the 1960s, Mexican American student activists at The University of Texas at Austin agitated for the creation of an academic program responsive to their lives, experiences, and ways of knowing. From their efforts, in 1970, UT Austin created the Center for Mexican American Studies (CMAS), with Américo Paredes named its first director. Over the past fifty years, UT Austin has become an important scholarly center for Mexican American, Chicano/a/x, and Latino/a/x Studies. What was once a small center borne of struggle is now the Center for Mexican American Studies (CMAS), the Latino Research Institute (LRI), and the Department of Mexican American and Latina/o Studies (MALS).

MALS was launched in the fall 2014 after UT Austin President Bill Powers tasked Nicole Guidotti-Hernandez (founding Chair of the Department) and Domino Perez (then CMAS Director) with creating the infrastructure for the new department. MALS took over the academic curriculum from CMAS, and the MA degree in MALS launched simultaneously with the department. The PhD program admitted its first class for the Fall 2018 semester.

MALS is comprised of faculty members whose teaching and research are at the forefront of innovation in multiple areas of study, including the following: borders, carcerality, class, culture, digital humanities, disability, gender, immigration, indigeneity, language, performance, political participation, public health, race, and sexuality.

The Doctor of Philosophy Degree is designed to prepare graduates not only for traditional academic employment in the field of Mexican American and Latina/o studies and related fields, but also for careers in the arts, advocacy and related professions in which advanced knowledge of Mexican American and Latina/o studies is crucial. Emphasis is placed on the knowledge, methods, and skills needed for scholarly teaching, original research, intellectual leadership, creative expression, and problem solving in both the interdisciplinary field of Mexican American and Latina/o/x Studies and in core disciplines identified by each student.

Program Structure

The MALS Graduate Studies Committee (GSC) is comprised of all tenure-line MALS faculty, as well as any affiliates who have been approved by a majority positive vote of the MALS Executive Committee. The MALS Graduate Policy Committee (GPC) is generally constituted by the Chair of the Department, the Associate Chair of the Department, and the Graduate Advisor. The GPC is responsible for graduate program policies and practices regarding graduate student admissions, instruction, advising, progress evaluation, and supervising reports and dissertations. It also determines graduate funding allocations on an annual basis. The GPC is also responsible for revising and updating the Graduate Student Handbook as needed. All GPC recommendations are brought to the GSC for final approval.

The Graduate Program Administrator is responsible for the administrative and procedural aspects of the graduate program. These responsibilities include administering applications

for graduate school; maintaining student records; facilitating student requests for departmental travel funds for scholarly presentations; administering qualifying exams; submitting department-sponsored fellowship and award nominations; circulating departmental information about upcoming events, opportunities, and resources for graduate students; and more.

The Department Manager is responsible for administering rules and procedures regarding the personnel, compensation, and benefits aspects of graduate residence and departmental financial support. These include filing initial employment forms for AIs, TAs, and RAs; facilitating enrollment in health insurance and other benefits for AIs, TAs, RAs, and fellows; processing reimbursements for funded travel by graduate students; and more.

Key Contacts

Graduate Advisor: Dr. Maria Cotera (maria.cotera@austin.utexas.edu)

Graduate Program Administrator: Luis V. Guevara (lvg@austin.utexas.edu)

Department Manager: Soo Aldrich (saldrich@austin.utexas.edu)

2. ADVISING

Advisor/Advisee Roles

The faculty advisor serves to assist students in acquiring the highest level of knowledge and competence possible in a specific area of concentration, to guide the student through key stages in graduate education, and to coordinate faculty evaluation of successful student progress toward the degree. During a graduate student's period of coursework, the faculty advisor will assist the student in selecting courses appropriate for the student's program of study. During the exam stage of graduate study, the faculty advisor will work with the student to assemble an exam committee and to determine the appropriate areas of evaluation. During the thesis/dissertation stage of graduate study, the faculty advisor will work with the student to develop a suitable thesis/dissertation topic, assemble a committee, develop a prospectus, read and edit chapter drafts, and coordinate defense of the prospectus and the thesis/dissertation.

The advisee is responsible for knowing the procedures and requirements of The University of Texas at Austin and the Department of Mexican American and Latina/o Studies. The advisee is also responsible for maintaining satisfactory progress towards the degree and for sharing with the advisor regular information on progress towards the degree at all stages of graduate study. Since each advisor-advisee relationship is distinct, the advisee is responsible for discussing roles and expectations with the advisor or prospective advisor. *Both advisor and advisee have a responsibility to make their expectations clear to each other.*

Selecting a Faculty Advisor

Although an initial advisor is assigned to each student during the summer prior to starting in the graduate program, students should seek out a faculty advisor by the end of their first year in residence. (Some exceptions, such as a prospective advisor being on leave and/or otherwise unavailable during a student's first year, may extend this timeline to the middle of the second year.) The faculty advisor should be a MALS GSC member whose research interests and methodological expertise match closely to those that the student intends to acquire. While no faculty member is obliged to accept a student's request to serve as advisor, invitations are usually accepted except where the faculty member judges that a different advisor would serve the student's needs and interests better. Students wishing to name an advisor outside of the department must secure a letter of support from the faculty member and consult with the Graduate Advisor, who will decide whether to petition the MALS Executive Budget Council to admit that faculty member to the MALS GSC.

Assignments of initial faculty advisors are made through discussions among faculty in the Department. Faculty consider an incoming graduate student's background, research interests, and stated preferences in making decisions about initial assignments. Because area faculty seek to match students with faculty members who share their interests, initial faculty advisors often become a new graduate student's regular advisor, as both faculty member and student confirm a mutual set of interests and a productive working relationship. However, since research interests develop over time and since students may

come to know faculty relatively unfamiliar to them prior to starting the program, the Department encourages all students to consider actively whom among the faculty may best serve as their regular advisor.

Questions for Prospective Faculty Advisors

A faculty advisor may be the most influential person shaping a student's program of study and academic experiences in graduate school. Conversations with advisors often extend beyond academic program matters to issues of professionalization, such as readying research for publication and preparing for the job market. For these reasons, students should select their advisor with care.

Below are some questions students may wish to ask prospective faculty advisors. Many of these questions are not simple and may not elicit a quick answer. However, any advisor should be willing to discuss these important issues with students. Students also may wish to discuss these issues with other students who are currently working with a prospective advisor. This list is by no means complete; students should spend some time thinking about what is most important in their graduate training.

1. What types of research projects have you advised in the past?
2. What kinds, if any, of research approaches, perspectives, and methods do you favor?
3. In general, how available will you be to answer questions that I have?
4. What is your philosophy regarding the amount of guidance the advisor should provide to a student during preparation of the dissertation proposal, dissertation, etc.?
5. What are your expectations for the amount of time each week I should spend working on my project?
6. What is your philosophy regarding preparing students to attend professional meetings, presenting papers at these meetings, and networking with other scholars in the field?
7. Do you encourage your students to submit manuscripts to peer-reviewed journals, and, if so, what do you see as your role in mentoring students through this process?
8. How long do you think it should take me to get my degree?
9. What are your former graduate students (if any) doing now?
10. What is your general philosophy of graduate training and what goals do you have for your graduate students?

Changing Faculty Advisors

A student who later decides that a different faculty advisor would be preferable should discuss this with the current advisor as well as the prospective advisor and then feel free to seek the change. Students may consider switching advisors at different points in their graduate careers, including the end of academic years, in preparation for exams, or upon transition into candidacy. As with the selection of an advisor, a change of advisors should be based on students' assessment of who will be able to guide them best into their chosen area of research. Any student changing regular advisors should notify the Graduate Program Administrator, who will enter the necessary information into the student's records.

3. MASTER OF ARTS DEGREE

MALS does not offer a Master of the Arts (MA) as a terminal degree. That said, students who enter the MALS PhD program without a master's degree can earn the degree on route to earning the PhD. On occasion, the MALS faculty or a student will determine that a student who originally entered the PhD program is, for some reason, unable to complete the PhD. In these instances, the student can earn a terminal MA degree by completing degree requirements and submitting a Master's Report.

Degree Requirements (Master of Arts)

To be awarded the MA degree, students must complete a minimum of 36 credit hours of coursework, including 6 hours of required coursework, which includes Mexican American Studies 395C, *Theories in Mexican American and Latina/o Studies*, and Mexican American Studies 395M, *Interpretive Methods*. In addition to these required courses, students must complete 30 hours of supporting coursework, which includes no more than 6 hours of Mexican American Studies 382, *Conference Course in Mexican American Studies and Latina/o Studies*, 15 hours of Mexican American Studies 392, *Topics in Mexican American and Latina/o Studies*, and no more than 9 hours of graduate coursework outside the department.

Students who complete these requirements and pass the PhD qualifying exam are awarded the MA degree. Students who complete these requirements and choose to leave the program, or do not pass the PhD qualifying exam must take Mexican American Studies 398R, *Master's Report*, to be awarded the MA degree.

4. DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY DEGREE

Coursework Requirements

Students pursuing the Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) degree are required to complete 45 credit hours of coursework including the credit hours required for the MA degree and 9 credit hours of dissertation work. With the approval of the Mexican American and Latina/o Studies Graduate Studies Committee, this may include up to 6 credit hours of graduate-level coursework transferred from another institution. Students must earn a minimum grade of B (3.0) in all coursework taken in satisfaction of PhD program requirements.

Required Courses (6 SCH):

- MAS 395 C: Theories in Mexican American and Latina/o Studies
- MAS 395 M: Interpretive Methods in Mexican American and Latina/o Studies

Required Dissertation Courses (9 SCH):

- MAS 399W: Dissertation
- MAS 699W: Dissertation
- MAS 999W: Dissertation

Required for Students Seeking Employment as Assistant Instructors (3 SCH):

- Supervised Teaching in Mexican American and Latina/o Studies (MAS 398T) (may be taken outside the department with the permission of the Graduate Advisor when not offered in MALS)

Elective Coursework (27 SCH)

In addition to the required courses, students in the PhD program must complete 27 credit hours of elective coursework, including at least 5 graduate-level courses (15 SCH) offered by MALS and up to 4 graduate-level courses (12 SCH) offered by other departments or interdisciplinary programs/institutes (such as African and African American Studies, Native American and Indigenous Studies, Latin American Studies, or Women's and Gender Studies, selected in consultation with the student's primary advisor and the MALS Graduate Advisor. Of these nine courses, at least one should be a humanities course and at least one should be a social sciences course (one that interrogates or employs quantitative and/or qualitative methods as a primary frame of analysis).

Language Proficiency Requirement

Before completing the program, all PhD students must demonstrate language proficiency in one language in addition to English (preferably Spanish, Portuguese, or a relevant Indigenous language) through means to be determined in consultation with their primary faculty advisor, such as an oral exam, a written report evaluation or relevant coursework.

Qualifying Examination

All students in the PhD program must complete a Qualifying Examination in the Fall or Spring term of their Third Year, prior to defending the dissertation prospectus and

advancing to candidacy. Students are expected to register for MAS 396Q, or 696Q, or 996Q (Qualifying Exam Prep) during each long semester until they complete the Qualifying Examination. The purpose of the Qualifying Examination is for students to show their ability to work independently, synthesize scholarship in their areas of study, and offer their own take on ongoing scholarly conversations within their field. Students may opt to take their oral exam in the Fall or Spring semester of Year Three. In either case, they are expected to schedule their oral examination and submit their finalized Reading Lists to the committee **before the Fall Semester of Year 3**.

Qualifying Exam Committee

By the end of the **Spring Semester of Year 2**, students should select a three-person Qualifying Exam committee and choose a member of the committee as a primary advisor. At least two committee members must be members of the MALS GSC and all committee members must be UT faculty members. The advisor must also come from the MALS GSC. Committee members should be chosen based on their expertise in the fields and/or methods that the student will pursue for the dissertation.

Reading Lists

As part of the Qualifying Exam, students will develop three Reading Lists each consisting of 40-80 secondary and/or primary texts. The primary advisor must sign off on the categories for the three lists, but the student will work with one committee member on each list. MALS is an interdisciplinary department and as such, the subjects of the three lists will be different for each student. The department requires that one list consist of key readings in Mexican American and Latina/o Studies. The other two lists should incorporate theory, methods, and subjects of the students' proposed dissertation work. The sources should be academic books and peer-reviewed journal articles. In some instances, works such as novels, films, performances, or art works may be included on reading lists; however, news articles or other primary source materials are generally not appropriate for inclusion on reading lists.

Students who wish to take the Qualifying Exam in the Fall semester must schedule their Written and Oral Examinations and submit their finalized Reading Lists to members of the Qualifying Exam Committee by the end of **Year Two (May)**. Those who choose to take their Written and Oral Examinations in the Spring semester must schedule their exams and submit finalized Reading Lists before the start of Fall Semester of **Year Three (August)**.

Written and Oral Examinations

The two-part Qualifying Examination consists of a **written examination** and an **oral examination**. The written portion of the exam will respond to a question generated by the student's three-person committee based on their Reading Lists. The oral examination will take place two weeks after the written portion of the exam is submitted to the committee.

Part One: Written Exam

The written portion of the exam will consist of a 1500 to 2000-word essay in response to a question presented by the exam committee. The question from the committee will be provided to students six weeks prior to the scheduled oral exam. Students will have two options for completing the written exam:

- Option 1: Students may elect to write a 1500-2000-word response at home and submit it to the committee two weeks prior to the scheduled oral exam.
- Option 2: Students may elect to come into the MALS offices to write the exam during a 6-hour period (with their notes if desired, and with time for a 30-minute lunch break) two weeks prior to the scheduled oral exam.

In either option, students are assessed on the quality of their ideas and the originality of their response to the question. While a certain level of quality is expected in graduate student writing, students are not evaluated on their writing, rather, they should think about the written exam as the material upon which the conversation in the oral exam will be based.

Part Two: Oral Examination

A two-hour oral examination will take place two weeks after the written exam is submitted to the Exam Committee. The oral exam is an opportunity for the student to clarify or revise their written response and to answer questions from the committee about their lists. For each list, the student must be prepared to provide an overview of the topic area as well as a discussion of how the topic area, and its key texts, relate to the field and their dissertation topic. Students should demonstrate interdisciplinary breadth in Mexican American and Latinx Studies and integrate methods from other disciplines such as: Anthropology; American Studies; Education; Architecture; Ethnic Studies; Music; Art History; Geography; Philosophy; History; Communication; Law; Rhetoric; Sociology; Literature; Women's Studies; and other relevant fields.

At the end of the oral examination, the committee may decide to pass the student, or it may ask the student to rewrite the written response. If students are asked to rewrite, they must return revisions to the committee within one month of the oral exam date. After reading the revision, the committee will either pass or fail the student on the exam. In rare instances, the committee may ask for another written revision before determining whether a student has passed the comprehensive exam. Students will not participate in more than one oral exam.

Qualifying Exam Timeline

Timeline	Fall Qualifying Exams	Spring Qualifying Exams
Spring, Year 2	• Select Exam Committee & Advisor • Develop Reading Lists with committee	• Select Exam Committee & Advisor • Develop Reading Lists with committee

	• Schedule Written and Oral Exams & submit finalized Reading Lists to Committee (no later than May)	
Summer, Year 3	• Read for Exams	• Schedule Written and Oral Exams & submit finalized Reading Lists to Committee (no later than August)
Fall, Year 3	• Register for MAS 996Q • Receive Exam Question (six weeks before Oral Exam) • Submit Written Exam (two weeks before Oral Exam) • Take Oral Exam (no later than December)	• Read for exams
Spring, Year 3	• Register for MAS 996Q • Work on Dissertation Prospectus • Submit Prospectus (two weeks before Defense) • Prospectus Defense (no later than May) • Advance to Candidacy	• Register for MAS 996Q • Receive Exam Question (six weeks before Oral Exam) • Submit Written Exam (two weeks before Oral Exam) • Take Oral Exam (no later than May)
Summer, Year 4	• Dissertation research	• Work on Dissertation Prospectus
Fall, Year 4	• Dissertation research	• Prospectus Defense (no later than September) • Advance to Candidacy

Dissertation Prospectus

Upon passing the Qualifying Examination, students must complete the following program requirements in order to write and approve their Dissertation Prospectus:

- Assemble a four-member dissertation committee consisting of an advisor or co-advisors, **and at least two other faculty who are members of the MALS Graduate Studies Committee (GSC). At least one committee member must be from outside the MALS GSC.**
- Outside faculty members are eligible to serve as dissertation co-advisors, provided that the other co-advisor is a MALS GSC member. Students wishing to name a sole advisor outside of the department must secure a letter of support from the faculty member and consult with the Graduate Advisor, who will decide whether to petition the MALS Executive Committee to admit that faculty member to the MALS GSC.
- Submit and defend a Dissertation Prospectus (10-15 pages) and have it approved by the dissertation committee. The prospectus is an instrument of communication between the student and the committee. The prospectus identifies a research problem, justifies the significance of this problem, explains how the student will address this problem, and demonstrates competency to execute the dissertation.

Advancement to Candidacy

In order to become a doctoral candidate and begin work on the dissertation, students must do the following:

- Submit online application for doctoral candidacy to the Graduate School.
- Have PhD candidacy application certified/approved by the Graduate Advisor, Graduate Studies Committee, and Dean of the Graduate School.

Dissertator Phase

Following admission to candidacy, doctoral candidates must register for MAS 399W, or 699W, or 999W (Dissertation Writing) during each long semester. Note that students in candidacy must be continuously enrolled in dissertation hours each long semester until graduation.

In either year five or six of the PhD program, students are expected to complete the dissertation and defend it before the student's dissertation committee. The dissertation defense is a closed session for the student and faculty committee only. Two months prior to the scheduled defense, students must schedule their dissertation defense with the Graduate School and provide written approval of the advisor to the MALS Department Chair. *If the student wishes to graduate during the spring of an academic year, the defense must be scheduled 3 weeks prior to the last class date.*

<https://gradschool.utexas.edu/navigating/phd/oral-exams>

At the defense, the committee will orally examine the student about the contents of the dissertation, ask for revisions, and provide consult about turning the dissertation into a book or series of articles depending on the student's placement upon completion.

Once the dissertation supervisor has signed off on any revisions requested by the committee, the student will upload the dissertation in an approved electronic format (pdf) to the Graduate School and file all required paperwork with the Graduate School by the published submission deadline.

<https://gradschool.utexas.edu/navigating/graduation/deadlines>

Note: The MALS GSC will review the progress of students who have not completed the doctoral degree by the end of two years from admission to candidacy; the committee will review each student's progress annually thereafter. The committee may recommend that the student's candidacy be extended for up to one year, that the student take additional courses or examinations, or that the candidacy be terminated for lack of satisfactory academic progress. Recommendations are forwarded to the graduate dean for approval.

Degree Milestones

The following degree milestones are required by the Graduate School and implemented by the department. Students should discuss upcoming milestones with the Graduate Advisor during advising appointments each semester and should also discuss them regularly with their advisor.

UT Austin Milestones	Expected Time of Achievement
Review degree requirements and milestones agreement with advisor	End of Spring Term, First Year
Complete all required, formal coursework	End of Spring Term, Second Year
Successful completion of all exams (written and oral) needed to advance to candidacy	End of Spring Term, Third Year
Complete prospectus and advance to candidacy	Beginning of Fall Term, Fourth Year
IRB approvals (if needed)	Beginning of Fourth Year
IACUC (if needed) approvals	n/a
Dissertation completed, defended, and approved	End of Fifth Year
Student completes and files all paperwork required for graduation	End of Fifth Year
Dissertation accepted by Graduate School	End of Fifth Year
Exit interview completed and submitted to Survey of Earned Doctorates	End of Fifth Year

Expected Program Timeline

YEAR 1, FALL

- MAS 395M
- MAS 392
- MAS 392
- Review Milestones Agreement

YEAR 1, SPRING

- MAS 395C
- MAS 392
- MAS 392 or non-MALS elective course
- Professional Activities Report

YEAR 1, SUMMER

- MAS w382

YEAR 2, FALL

- MAS 392
- MAS 392 or non-MALS elective course
- MAS 392 or non-MALS elective course
- Selection of Exam Committee

YEAR 2, SPRING

- MAS 392 or non-MALS elective course
- MAS 392 or non-MALS elective course
- MAS 392 or MAS 398T
- Select Exam Committee members and Primary Advisor (by May 1st)
- Schedule Oral Exams in consultation with Primary Advisor and submit finalized Reading List to Exam Committee (if taking Qualifying Exams in the Fall of Year 3)
- Professional Activities Report

YEAR 2, SUMMER

- MAS w382
- Finalize Reading Lists
- Schedule Oral Exams in consultation with Primary Advisor and submit finalized Reading List to Exam Committee (if taking Qualifying Exams in the Spring of Year 3)

YEAR 3, FALL

- MAS 996Q
- Take Written and Oral Exam (if scheduled in the Fall of Year 3)

YEAR 3, SPRING

- MAS 996Q
- Take Written and Oral Exam (if scheduled in the Spring Term)
- Defend Dissertation Prospectus and advance to candidacy (for those taking exams in the Fall of Year 3)
- Professional Activities Report

YEAR 3, SUMMER

- Work on Dissertation Prospectus (for those taking exams in the Spring of Year 3)
- Dissertation research & IRB Approval (for students who have already advanced to candidacy)

YEAR 4, FALL

- MAS 996Q then switch to MAS 999W
- Defend Dissertation Prospectus and advance to candidacy (for those taking exams in the Spring of Year 3)

YEAR 4, SPRING

- MAS 999W
- Professional Activities Report

YEAR 4, SUMMER

- Course registration not needed

YEAR 5, FALL

- MAS 999W

YEAR 5, SPRING

- MAS 999W
- Professional Activities Report

YEAR 6, FALL (if needed)

- MAS 999W

YEAR 6, SPRING (if needed)

- MAS 999W
- Professional Activities Report

5. ENROLLMENT

Enrollment Requirements

As a general rule, students are expected to be enrolled full-time during the fall and spring semesters (nine hours each) throughout the duration of their PhD program. Graduate students who must register and remain registered for a full-time course load include holders of Graduate School-administered fellowships and scholarships; students appointed as AIs, TAs, and RAs; students living in University housing; students receiving certain student loans; and international students.

Doctoral candidates who need to maintain full-time enrollment status may do so by registering for nine hours of dissertation in the long terms and three hours in the whole summer session. Doctoral candidates with no such requirements or concerns may register for as few as three hours of dissertation during the long semesters. If a student is planning to graduate during the summer, he/she must register for a dissertation course for the summer semester.

Leave of Absence

Graduate students may apply for a leave of absence of no more than two semesters. Requests for a leave of absence must be approved in advance by the graduate advisor and the graduate dean. Applications from students who have been admitted to candidacy will be approved by the graduate dean only in rare and unusual circumstances.

A student on approved leave must apply for readmission in order to return to the University, but readmission during the approved period is automatic and the application fee is waived.

A student on leave may not use any University facilities; nor is he or she entitled to receive advice from any member of the faculty. A leave of absence does not alter the time limits for degrees or coursework.

<https://gradschool.utexas.edu/navigating/policies/academic/leave-absence>

6. SATISFACTORY ACADEMIC PROGRESS

All graduate students must stay in “good standing” in the department to be eligible for teaching assignments, awards, and fellowships, and in order to be considered to be making satisfactory progress in the program. Students whose progress is rated unsatisfactory may face loss of funding and/or dismissal from the program.

Criteria for Good Standing

The following are the minimum criteria for “good standing” for PhD students in MALS:

- Timely progress through the program, consisting of successful completion of milestones and degree requirements, and compliance with coursework, advising, and dissertation expectations.
- A cumulative GPA for coursework within the Department of 3.5 or above.
- Earn a grade of B or higher in all courses. If a student earns a grade lower than a B, that class will not count toward basic course credit hour requirements and must either be re-taken or replaced.
- No outstanding grades of “incomplete.” Any grade of “Incomplete” on the student’s record must be changed to a letter grade by the end of the semester following that for which the incomplete was issued. Graduate students are generally discouraged from taking an incomplete, and a history of frequent incompletes may count against a student’s qualification for awards and teaching assignments, except in cases of established hardship.
- Fulfillment of responsibilities for Assistantships.

Professional Activities Report

To demonstrate satisfactory progress towards the degree and to facilitate determinations of good standing, graduate students must complete a Professional Activities Report (PAR) each spring. The PAR indicates a student’s academic and professional activities on and off campus each year. A copy of a completed PAR must be submitted electronically to the Graduate Program Administrator and Graduate Advisor, as well as to the student’s advisor. Faculty will use the PAR in their annual evaluations of student progress. The PAR represents one means of communication between graduate students and faculty, providing graduate students with an opportunity to enumerate their activities in a single document. Feedback will be provided to each student submitting a PAR by the Graduate Advisor.

Below is an outline of the PAR form, which the Graduate Program Administrator will circulate to students during April every spring term.

Professional Activities Report: 2024-2025
Department of Mexican American and Latina/o Studies
The University of Texas at Austin

Instructions: List any relevant scholarship, teaching, or service completed between June 2025 and May 2026. Students should only answer questions that apply to their activities.

Student Name:

Student EID:

Faculty Advisor name:

Courses taken at UT Austin (list):

Examinations completed or in preparation (include names of committee members):

Thesis/dissertation proposal defended or in preparation (include names of committee members):

Thesis/dissertation research and writing (include names of committee members):

Public presentations made at forums or meetings (list locations and titles of presentations):

Non-Academic publications (provide citation of publication):

Academic papers presented at professional conferences or meetings (list conferences, locations, and paper titles):

Scholarly publications (provide citation of publication and indicate which entries have been accepted for publication/have been published and which entries are under review for publication):

Assistant Instructorship (AI), Teaching Assistantship (TA), Research Assistantship (RA), and/or paid student hourly work (list course names, supervising faculty [if any], and observations):

Fellowship status:

Awards, fellowships, and/or grants received:

Service to the Department, University, discipline, or community:

Other major professional activities (e.g., creative or editing work):

Probation Policy

At the end of each year the MALS GSC meets to discuss the record of each student. If the GSC determines that a student is not performing satisfactorily in the graduate program, that student may be placed on probation for an initial duration of one academic year. For the purposes of this policy, satisfactory student performance is evaluated based on the following dimensions: labor performed as TA, AI, or GRA; classroom performance including attendance, grades, and incompletes; satisfactory progress on qualifying exam, dissertation proposal, or dissertation; and, as relevant, departmental and professional participation including events, meetings, colloquiums, and conferences.

The MALS GSC discussion and the PAR form the basis of the Graduate Advisor (GA), Primary Advisor (PA), and Department Chair's decision to place a student on probation. Students placed on probation will be notified in writing as a part of their annual review process. Students placed on probation must meet with the GA, PA, and Chair by September 15 of the upcoming academic year to discuss the terms of the probation and a Performance Improvement Plan (PIP). These terms and the PIP will then be given to the student in writing. The PIP must include specific benchmarks attached to specific dates that a student must achieve. The GA and PA must keep written records documenting student progress. The student should meet with the PA monthly and with the GA at least once per semester.

At the end of the academic year, if the student has met all the benchmarks outlined in the PIP, the GA and PA will recommend to the GSC that the student be removed from probation, and they will be assumed to be meeting or exceeding expectations for the purposes of the annual review. If the student has only met some of the benchmarks outlined in the PIP, the GA and PA will recommend that the GSC keep the student on probation for an additional year under an enhanced performance improvement plan (EPIP). Like the original PIP, the EPIP must include specific benchmarks attached to specific dates that a student must achieve. If the student has met an insufficient number of the benchmarks, the GA and PA may elect to recommend losing funding or expulsion from the graduate program at this time.

7. PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT AND ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

Professional Conduct

Graduate students should maintain the highest levels of professional standards, academic integrity, and ethical and respectful conduct while in graduate school at The University of Texas at Austin. This behavior should extend to professional activities on and off campus, including travel to conferences and other meetings, where graduate students necessarily serve as representatives of the Department and the University. Serious violations of professional conduct may result in dismissal from the graduate program.

Professional conduct entails practices as a scholar, teacher, and colleague that include representing oneself honestly, committing oneself to sound and ethical practices of research and teaching, recognizing the contributions and values of others, contributing helpfully to group situations, and making a positive impact on the intellectual and collegial life of MALS. They also include respecting diverse opinions, perspectives, and cultures; striving to gain knowledge and contribute to others' understandings; accurately representing work and acknowledging the contributions of others; demonstrating honesty and integrity in academic pursuits; interacting respectfully and appropriately with faculty, staff, and students; honoring commitments and schedules; offering constructive criticism of others' work; and preparing oneself for class and other program activities.

Professional conduct enables graduate students to realize their educational and professional goals and sustains an environment where all may do so.

Academic Dishonesty (see Sec. 11.402 of the General Information Catalog)

- The dean of students or a faculty member may initiate disciplinary proceedings under subchapter 11–500 against a student accused of academic 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 or courses without the prior permission of the instructor), or the attempt to commit such an act.
- “Cheating” includes, but is not limited to,
 - copying from another student’s test, paper, project, or other assignment;
 - failing to comply with instructions given by the person administering a test, project, or other assignment, or given in conjunction with the completion of course requirements;
 - using or possessing materials that are not authorized by the person giving the test, project, or other assignment, including but not limited to class notes, calculators, electronic devices, and specifically designed “crib notes”; the presence of textbooks constitutes a violation only if they have been specifically prohibited by the person administering the test;
 - providing aid or assistance to or receiving aid or assistance from another student or individual, without authority, in conjunction with a

- test, project, or other assignment;
 - discussing or providing information about the contents of a test with another student who will take the test;
 - capturing or divulging the contents of a test or other assignment when the instructor has not given permission for students to keep or distribute such information;
 - substituting for another person or permitting another person to substitute for oneself to take a class, a test, or any class-related assignment;
 - using, buying, stealing, transporting, soliciting, or coercing another person to obtain answers to or information about an administered test, project, or other assignment;
 - falsifying research data, laboratory reports, other academic work offered for credit, or work done in conjunction with the completion of course or degree requirements;
 - taking, keeping, misplacing, or damaging the property of the University, or of another, if the student knows or reasonably should know that an unfair academic advantage would be gained by such conduct; or altering a test paper, project, or other assignment to gain an academic advantage.
- “Plagiarism” includes, but is not limited to, the appropriation of, buying, receiving as a gift, or obtaining by any means material that is attributable in whole or in part to another source without any indication of the original source, including words, ideas, illustrations, structure, computer code, and other expression or media, and presenting that material as one’s own academic work being offered for credit or in conjunction with a program course or degree requirements.
- “Collusion” includes, but is not limited to, unauthorized collaboration with another person in preparing academic assignments offered for credit, and collaboration with another person to commit a violation of any section of the rules on academic dishonesty.
- “Misrepresenting facts for academic advantage” to the University or an agent of the University or The University of Texas System includes, but is not limited to, providing false grades or résumés; providing false or misleading information in an effort to receive a postponement or an extension on a test, quiz, or other assignment for the purpose of obtaining an academic or financial benefit for oneself or another individual; and providing false or misleading information in an effort to injure another student academically or financially.

General Misconduct

The University may discipline a student for engaging in general misconduct ranging from violation of local, state or federal laws to sexual misconduct, to theft or property damage and more. Please see Chapter 11 of the General Information Catalog for what qualifies as general misconduct.

Academic dishonesty and general misconduct can result in disciplinary action including dismissal from the program. If a student engages in academic dishonesty or general misconduct, the primary advisor may consult with the MALS GSC and the Dean of Students to determine if disciplinary action or dismissal is recommended.

<https://catalog.utexas.edu/general-information/appendices/appendix-c/student-conduct-and-academic-integrity/>

8. GRIEVANCE PROCEDURES & REPORTING MISCONDUCT AND CRIME

Graduate students at The University of Texas at Austin have the right to seek redress of any grievance related to academic or nonacademic matters.

Every effort should be made to resolve grievances informally between the student and the faculty member involved or with the assistance of the graduate advisor or department chair. If the grievance cannot be resolved informally, students have recourse to formal grievance procedures.

Grievance Procedure for Graduate Students

To use this MALS grievance procedure, the person who the grievance is against must be an employee of the Department of Mexican American and Latina/o Studies, the Center for Mexican American Studies or the Latino Research Institute. For grievances against someone not employed by the above entities, see the next section.

1. If possible, the student should first talk with the person against whom the grievance is directed. Alternately, if it seems more appropriate, the student should contact the Graduate Program Administrator. Most issues can be settled at this level. If the complaint is not resolved satisfactorily, the student may continue to step 2.

2. The student should contact the graduate advisor. If the complaint is against the graduate advisor, the student should contact the Graduate Program Administrator, who will refer the complaint to another member of the Graduate Studies Committee. Upon receipt of the complaint, the graduate advisor or committee member will speak separately with the student and the person named in the complaint. The graduate advisor or committee member will attempt to resolve the complaint satisfactorily. If the complaint is not resolved satisfactorily, either party may continue to step 3.

3. The student or person against whom the complaint is filed may submit a written request for a hearing to the graduate advisor or a committee member. Upon receipt of a written request, the graduate advisor or committee member will seek a written response from the other party. Also, within 30 days of receiving a written request, the graduate advisor or committee member will schedule a hearing of the full Graduate Studies Committee, which will meet separately with the student and the person against whom the complaint is filed. Should any member of the Graduate Studies Committee be named in the complaint, they would not participate in the committee meeting with the student. The Graduate Studies Committee will render a decision regarding the grievance. If the complaint is not resolved satisfactorily, the student may continue to step 4, while the faculty or staff member may appeal to the department chair.

4. The formal Graduate School grievance process.

<https://gradschool.utexas.edu/academics/policies/grievances>

Academic Grievances

To begin the formal academic grievance process, a graduate student may file a written grievance with the Graduate School. Academic issues that have been addressed through the formal grievance process include, but are not limited to:

- Program termination
- Changes in supervising committee membership
- Adherence to program degree requirements

Students filing grievances are protected from program recrimination. Due process in the conduct of a formal grievance may require an extended review period. The formal grievance process is outlined in the Handbook of Operating Procedures.

<https://compliance.utexas.edu/university-policy-office>

Grade Disputes

Grade disputes are to be filed with the department offering the course in question, and the dean of the college or school offering the course makes the final decision on an appeal of the departmental ruling.

Nonacademic Grievances

For nonacademic issues that deal primarily with misconduct, contact Student Judicial Services in the Office of the Dean of Students. Student Judicial Services is responsible for investigating alleged violations of institutional rules and for implementing the discipline process. <https://deanofstudents.utexas.edu/conduct/>

Employment Grievances

Employment grievances for teaching assistants and assistant instructors are outlined in the Handbook of Operating Procedures. There is also a process for handling employment disputes involving graduate research assistants. There is no formal grievance process for other academic and non-academic positions. Students in those positions should try to resolve any employment issues within their department, first with their supervisor and then with their department director or chair, vice president or dean as appropriate.

<https://compliance.utexas.edu/university-policy-office>

Other Disputes

Grievances concerning any form of discrimination are to be filed with the Office of the Dean of Students. <https://deanofstudents.utexas.edu/>

The Office of the Student Ombuds provides services to the university's student body by assisting students who have "university-related complaints of a non-legal nature." Such assistance includes but is not limited to conducting an impartial investigation of concerns, offering neutral advice and providing mediation. <https://ombuds.utexas.edu/student>

Hate and Bias Incidents

In March 2017, UT Austin issued a new hate and bias incident policy that unequivocally condemns and prohibits: acts of intolerance, hate, bias, and prejudice when manifested in threatened or actual violent conduct against a person; harassment; and incitement to

imminent violations of law. In accordance with federal law and state law, the University prohibits unlawful harassment on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, gender, gender identity or gender expression, age, disability, citizenship, veteran status, sexual orientation, ideology, political views, or political affiliation. For information on how to report a hate or bias incident, please visit: <https://policies.utexas.edu/policies/hate-and-bias-incidents>.

9. ACADEMIC EXCEPTION PETITION

Academic Exceptions Policy

Academic exceptions are considered on an individual case-by-case basis and should not be considered a precedent. Deviations from normal progress are highly discouraged, but the program recognizes that there are in some cases extenuating academic and personal circumstances. Petitions for exceptions to the Satisfactory Progress Expectations (academic or conduct) shall be directed to the Graduate Advisor. Depending on the circumstances, the Graduate Advisor may refer the petition to the full Graduate Studies Committee. The following procedures apply to all petitions:

1. The specific requirement/rule/expectation pertinent to the petition must be identified.
2. The student's academic advisor must provide written support for the petition.

More generally, the Graduate Advisor, in consultation with the student's advisor and/or the GSC, may grant extensions to normal progress requirements for students who face circumstances (similar to tenure extensions) as noted in university regulations; this includes childbirth, adoption, significant responsibilities with respect to elder or dependent care obligations, disability or chronic illness, or circumstances beyond one's personal control. Where warranted, the petition should provide good evidence of plans and ability to return to conformance with the standard and to acceptably complete the program. The normal extension will be one semester; anything beyond this will be granted *only in the event of highly extraordinary circumstances*.

10. FUNDING AND FINANCIAL INFORMATION

Funding Guarantee

Upon admittance into the MALS PhD program, MALS students will be given a letter that details the nature of the funding package offered over the course of their time in the program. Funding packages usually involve ten semesters of guaranteed funding, provided the student remains in good standing. Funding will usually be provided through a combination of fellowships, teaching assistantships and assistant instructorships, although sometimes a student may receive an appointment as a research assistant. Each letter will be slightly different and it is important that students carefully read this letter and regard it as their contract with MALS.

Funding packages are offered for the 9-month academic year and include a stipend, tuition remission, and health insurance.

Assistantships and Instructor Appointments

Graduate students receiving an appointment as a Teaching Assistant must be in good standing with the Graduate School (i.e., 3.00 grade-point average or better), registered for at least nine semester hours of course work in the long semester they are appointed, and making progress toward their graduate degree. See Academic Employment Policies—Teaching Assistants; <https://gradschool.utexas.edu/funding/student-employment/academic>

Graduate students receiving an appointment as an Assistant Instructor must also be in good standing with the Graduate School (i.e., 3.00 grade-point average or better), registered for at least nine semester hours of course work in the long semester of the appointment, and making progress toward their graduate degree. Applicants must also have a master's degree or an equivalent level of achievement in graduate study (e.g., 30 hours including 18 hours of credit in the subject to be taught) and professional accomplishment. Applicants must have credit for a 398T (i.e., supervised teaching course) plus one semester of employment as a teaching assistant or have one year of teaching experience at an accredited college or school. See Academic Employment Policies—Assistant Instructors; <https://gradschool.utexas.edu/funding/student-employment/academic>

Student Hourly Employment

In addition to regular appointments, on occasion, some faculty may ask graduate students to assist them with research or other projects on an hourly basis. The type of work and the hourly rate will be discussed in advance and students will file their hours with the Administrative Manager. Domestic students with a regular half-time TA, AI or RA appointment or those on fellowship may work no more than 10 additional hours per week. International students with a half-time appointment may not work additional hours.

Maximum Appointment Levels

A teaching assistant or assistant instructor holding a half-time appointment (which is the typical appointment for MALS PhD students) will be expected to devote an average of

twenty hours per week to assigned duties. Appointments may not exceed twenty hours per week during the first two long-session semesters of graduate study at the University and thirty hours per week during subsequent long-session semesters. However, international students may only work up to 20 hours per week during the long sessions.

TA, AI and GRA Workload Expectations

All TAs, AIs, and GRAs will all be supervised by a member of the MALS faculty or an affiliate. Faculty should clearly outline expectations at the start of the semester, and regularly check in with the TA, AI or GRA throughout the semester to ensure expectations are being met and to develop plans for improvement in the case expectations are not being met.

TAs must be evaluated by a faculty supervisor each semester. Faculty are required to submit a MALS Teaching Assistant Evaluation Form as part of this evaluation to document how well the graduate student has carried out basic responsibilities during the semester. Future assignments are contingent upon completion of the form. Faculty affiliates are required to provide written remarks as circumstances warrant. Finally, faculty affiliates are encouraged to write a letter to the MALS Graduate Advisor noting exceptional (or less than satisfactory) performance by a teaching assistant or assistant instructor.

Below is an outline of the MALS Teaching Assistant Evaluation Form that a faculty member should submit to the Graduate Program Administrator for each student they supervise at the end of the semester:

Teaching Assistant Evaluation Form
Department of Mexican American and Latina/o Studies
The University of Texas at Austin

Lecture Attendance: student attended all scheduled lectures per course guidelines and provided timely notice in case of emergencies

Instructional Performance: student held all section meetings, administered quizzes or homework assignments, and made arrangements for review sessions, Blackboard exercises, and other course activities as requested

Grading Performance: student graded assignments per the course guidelines and deadlines

E = Excellent; **S** = Satisfactory, **P** = Problematic

Lecture Attendance: _____ Instructional Performance: _____ Grading Performance: _____

Comments:

Internal Fellowships

Students in MALS may compete for fellowships internal to the department and the university.

IUPLR/Mellon Fellowship

The Inter-University Program for Latino Research (IUPLR)/Mellon Fellowship Program supports ABD doctoral students in the humanities who are writing dissertations in Latina/o studies. Doctoral students in the social sciences whose research uses humanities methods may also be considered. The fellowship facilitates completion of the dissertation and provides professional development, job market support, and mentoring for students.

Applicants must have advanced to candidacy (ABD status) and be completing a Latina/o Studies dissertation in the humanities or in a humanities-adjacent discipline. Applications will not be accepted from candidates who have not yet defended their dissertation proposal. As this is a dissertation completion fellowship, all applicants should already have a significant portion of the dissertation drafted. Finally, applicants should be planning to pursue a career in teaching or research.

During the fellowship year, students must be enrolled at their home institution. Fellows will be expected to forego other employment during the year. The fellowship includes a stipend and travel support to attend IUPLR conferences and a required two-week summer institute in Chicago. Matriculation fees and health insurance will be paid by the department, provided that the fellow is in residence.

External Funding and Fellowships

Graduate students may apply for one of two types of externally funded fellowships: those administered at least in part by the Graduate School and those that are wholly extramural. <https://gradschool.utexas.edu/finances/fellowships/externally-funded>

Funding for Study Abroad, Conference and Research Travel

Both the Graduate School and the Department offer support for student travel for purposes of professional development. In order to receive funding, students must fill out a Travel Authorization Request in advance of the conference--ideally 30 days in advance. <https://travel.utexas.edu/travelplanning/travel-authorizations>

Graduate School Professional Development Award

Professional Development Awards provide support for students to attend major professional meetings at which they present an original paper based on their research. The Graduate School allocates travel funds to each program at the beginning of each academic year. The Graduate Adviser and the Graduate Program Administrator can nominate students for these awards, which are approved and administered by the Graduate School.

Amounts can vary, but the recommended range is \$250-1,000, with it suggested that students be limited to one award per academic year. Students must be registered during the semester the funds are to be used. (Summer registration will be waived if the student was registered for the prior spring semester.)

<https://gradschool.utexas.edu/finances/travel-awards/professional-development-awards>

MALS Student Professional Development Award

The MALS Student Professional Development Award is intended to support the professional development of enrolled graduate students in Mexican American and Latina/o Studies or the Graduate Portfolio Program in Mexican American and Latina/o Studies. Recipients must demonstrate superior qualifications and be completing a program of work consistent with the scholarly aims of the Department of Mexican American and Latina/o Studies.

The award will be applied directly by MALS toward the travel costs for a student to attend a major professional meeting to present an original paper or to travel to a research site in the continental United States to conduct research in support of a thesis or dissertation project. Travel can be by airline or by car (mileage to be reimbursed based on UT Austin criteria). MALS will determine the most cost-effective option. Awards can also be applied toward the registration fee to attend a conference, so that applicants can request funds for both travel and conference fees up to \$500.

<https://liberalarts.utexas.edu/mals/graduate-program/awards.html>

Financial Aid

For students who need additional financial support beyond fellowships or assistantships, financial aid is available. <https://finaid.utexas.edu/>

Graduate students at UT may apply for federal, state and institutional financial aid programs administered by the Office of Scholarships and Financial Aid by completing a Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA). Financial Aid also offers students an affordability overview.

<https://gradschool.utexas.edu/finances/financial-aid>

99-Hour Rule

Graduate students at The University of Texas at Austin with more than 99 doctoral hours may be required to pay nonresident tuition—a provision known as the “99-Hour Rule.”

Most students who qualify for resident tuition will not be affected by the 99-Hour Rule. A student can study at the university full-time for seven academic years before earning enough credit to be subject to the rule. Even students enrolled for more than seven years may be eligible for a programmatic or individual exemption from the rule; see:

<https://gradschool.utexas.edu/academics/policies/99-hour-rule>.

11. PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND CAREER PLANNING

Department Resources for Professional Development

MALS, CMAS and the LRI offer numerous opportunities for professional development designed to enhance your intellectual and professional growth including lectures, cultural and political events, and seminars. These events will be advertised throughout your time in MALS, and you are expected to attend as many of these as possible.

MALS graduate students are **required** to do the following during their time in the graduate program:

- Submit an article to a scholarly journal
- Attend two job talks
- Attend the monthly MALS colloquium while enrolled and in residency
- Present a paper at a minimum of two professional conferences while matriculating in the MALS PhD program
- Deliver one research colloquium
- Submit two fellowship applications prior to graduation

Faculty Reviews of Graduate Student Teaching

The MALS Graduate Student Instructor Evaluation Form that all faculty supervisors are expected to complete for TAs and AIs (see Section X, “TA, AI and RA Workload Expectations”) will be a helpful source of feedback on teaching. In addition to this feedback, students, particularly AIs, may ask their advisor or another faculty member to evaluate their teaching by visiting a class and offering written feedback.

Campus-wide Resources for Professional Development

The University and the College of Liberal Arts offer numerous resources and opportunities for professional development, including:

- University Writing Center, <https://uwc.utexas.edu/>
- Center for Teaching and Learning, <https://ctl.utexas.edu/>
- Career Success, <https://careerengagement.utexas.edu/graduate-students/>
- Office of Graduate Studies, <https://gradschool.utexas.edu/grad-life/career>
- Office of Graduate Education (CoLA), <https://liberalarts.utexas.edu/graduate-education/>

12. OPPORTUNITIES FOR STUDENT INVOLVEMENT

Department Opportunities

MALS students are required to participate in the department colloquium and should feel free to suggest speakers or topics to the colloquium director. It is important for MALS students to also attend other CMAS, MALS and LRI events as they emerge throughout the semester. Other opportunities will be regularly shared with graduate students throughout their time in the program.

Graduate Student Assembly

The Graduate Student Assembly (GSA) is the primary legislative student organization for students enrolled in the Graduate School and The University of Texas School of Law. Professional Organizations. The GSA 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/>

Professional Organizations

Students in MALS will likely become members of professional organizations and attend annual meetings in their chosen core discipline (e.g., History, Rhetoric, Literature, etc.). Students should consult with their advisor to determine which organizations and conferences may be important for them to participate in.

In addition to professional organizations in core disciplines, there are several Mexican American and Latina/o Studies organizations that MALS students may consider joining:

Latina/o Studies Association (LSA)

The LSA is a national learned society whose primary mission is to organize a bi-annual conference for scholars, organizers, culture workers, artists, and social entrepreneurs with expertise on the history, cultures, political and social experiences of Latina/os in the United States. The LSA conference will largely consist of panels, workshops and round-tables presenting research and scholarship in Latina/o Studies, as well as cultural and social events. The LSA conference will be open to dues paying members of the LSA who register to attend. <https://latinxstudiesassociation.org/>

National Association of Chicano and Chicana Studies (NACCS)

NACCS is the academic organization that serves academic programs, departments and research centers that focus on issues pertaining to Mexican Americans, Chicana/os, and Latina/os. The Association was formed in 1972, during the height of the Chicana/o movement, calling for the development of a space where scholarship and Chicana/o students could develop their talents in higher education. For more than 30 years, students, faculty, staff, and community members have attended the NACCS annual conference to present their scholarly papers--many of which have spun into important intellectual pillars. www.naccs.org.

Mujeres Activas en Letras y Cambio Social (MALCS, Women Active in Letters and Social Change)

MALCS is an organization of Chicanas/ Latinas and Native American women working in academia and in community settings with a common goal: to work toward the support, education and dissemination of Chicana/ Latina and Native American women's issues. Chicanas/Latinas and Native American women from a variety of institutions gather at this yearly Summer Institute to network, share information, offer support and re-energize. The MALCS Summer Institute is one of the few places Chicanas/Latinas and Native American women can come together without the influence of male and/or Euro-American consciousness or opinion. www.malcs.org.

Association for Joteria, Arts, Activism and Scholarship (AJAAS)

AJAAS' mission is to nurture queer Latina/o, Chicana/o, and Indigenous individuals and communities through practices that recognize the importance of linking art, activism, and scholarship. AJAAS holds conferences regularly (though not annually). <http://www.ajaas.com>.

Native American and Indigenous Studies Association (NAISA)

NAISA began through exploratory meetings hosted by the University of Oklahoma in 2007 and by the University of Georgia in 2008, incorporated in 2009, and has since become the premiere international and interdisciplinary professional organization for scholars, graduate students, independent researchers, and community members interested in all aspects of Indigenous Studies. <https://naisa.org/>

13. STUDENT HEALTH AND WELLNESS

Securing Health Insurance Coverage

Students with funding will receive a supplement as a part of their award package in order to purchase health insurance. UT Austin partners with Blue Cross Blue Shield to provide student health insurance and information on enrollment and plan options is here:

<https://utexas.myahpcare.com>

University Health Services

An outpatient health care facility, University Health Services (UHS) provides medical care and health promotion services to the campus community. Clinical services include general medical care as well as women's health, sports medicine, and immunization and allergy shot specialty clinics. UHS is open Monday – Friday from 8 – 5 pm by appointment. UHS is located in the Student Services Building (SSB) at 100 W Dean Keeton St, and the appointment line phone number is (512) 471-4955. Visit:

<https://www.healthyhorns.utexas.edu/index.html>

Urgent Care

The UHS Urgent Care Clinic is similar in scope to a minor emergency center and provides services for students whose symptoms need to be evaluated before the next available UHS appointment. It is located on the first floor of SSB, and hours vary.

Information at (512) 471-4955 or visit: <https://www.healthyhorns.utexas.edu/uhs/urgent-care.html>

Nurse Advice Line

The UHS Nurse Advice Line is staffed 24 hours a day, every day of the year. Call for advice on how to care for an illness or injury at home or guidance about whether and when to see a healthcare provider. Call (512) 475-6877 (NURS)

Disability Information

Disability and Access determines eligibility and approves reasonable accommodations for students with disabilities at the UT-Austin. They engage in outreach across campus in order to make campus a more inclusive, accessible and welcoming environment for people with disabilities. For assistance, email: ssd@austin.utexas.edu, call (512) 471-6259, videophone (512) 410-6644, visit the webpage,

<https://community.utexas.edu/disability/>

Mental Health Resources

UT's Counseling and Mental Health Center provides an array of mental health services for students, including groups and classes, short-term individual counseling, and a 24-hour confidential crisis line (512) 471-CALL (2255). For more information about all of CMHC's services, call (512) 471-3515 or visit: <https://cmhc.utexas.edu>. CHMH is also located in SSB.

14. INFORMATION FOR NEW STUDENTS

Managing your UT EID

The UT EID is an electronic identifier – a “user name” with The University of Texas at Austin. Everyone associated with the University or needing to complete online transactions with the University, must have a UT EID. To manage your UT EID, go to this website and follow the instructions: https://idmanager.its.utexas.edu/eid_self_help/

Getting a UT Photo ID Card

Every student is required to have a University photo identification card issued by the ID Center, which is located on the first floor of the Flawn Academic Center (2304 Whitis Ave). Once you have your EID, you can get your photo ID. The proximity-enabled photo ID card is needed for many purposes, including use of the libraries and University Health Services and access to residence halls and other University buildings. ID cards may also be used for purchases at stores that accept Bevo Bucks and for admission to athletic and other special events. https://ut.service-now.com/sp?id=ut_bs_service_detail&sys_id=dc428de34fa69e0031eb7bcd0210c70c

Students receive their first ID card at a cost of \$10. This ID card is intended to be used throughout the student’s enrollment at the University. It is not replaced unless changes in data are required, the card is defective or damaged through normal wear and tear, or the card is lost or stolen. In some cases, an additional \$10 replacement fee may apply. Students should report lost or stolen ID cards; found cards should be returned to the ID Center on the first floor of the Flawn Academic Center. https://ut.service-now.com/sp?id=kb_article&number=KB0011345

University community members are expected to maintain control and possession of their photo ID cards and to have them in their possession whenever they are on University grounds. The ID card should not be loaned to others, and its benefits are not transferable. Those who lend their cards or use them for fraudulent purposes are subject to disciplinary action. https://ut.service-now.com/sp?id=kb_article&number=KB0018954

Capital Metro Bus System

UT students, faculty, and staff may ride Capital Metro mainline buses free by presenting a valid UT photo ID upon entering the bus. For more information on the Capital Metro system, visit: <http://parking.utexas.edu/transportation/capmetro/>

Orientation Events

Each fall, the Graduate School presents an orientation designed specifically for new graduate students. MALS will also offer an orientation that will coincide with the Graduate School’s. Both orientations are required for new MALS PhD students and so you are expected to be on campus and attend. Dates, times and locations will be provided to you early in the summer before you arrive.

Graduate Student Offices, Computers and Printing

Students who work as AIs or TAs in MALS courses will have shared office space in the

MALS office suite with computer access. These computers will print to the main printer in the MALS office. Students on fellowship or GRAs will not have their own offices or office computers, but they can use the computers and printer in the Gloria Anzaldúa Student Activity Room in GWB 2.104.

Media and IT Resources

The College of Liberal Arts Instructional Technology Services (LAITS) provides a variety of services to faculty and staff, including TAs and AIs.

Computer Support

The Liberal Arts Academic Technology Support (LAITS) team provides computer support for all Liberal Arts faculty and staff. <https://laits.utexas.edu/services/>

Classroom Support

LAITS maintains and supports faculty use of the classroom media consoles. <https://laits.utexas.edu/services/classroom-support/>

Web & Digital Media Services

LAITS provides web design, audio and video production, and application development to the College. <https://laits.utexas.edu/services/dev-studio/>

UTBox

UTBox is a cloud storage solution offered at no additional cost to faculty, staff, and students at the University of Texas at Austin. UTBox offers a secure cloud-based file-sharing platform for business and academic purposes. All UTBox accounts for faculty and staff are currently provisioned with unlimited storage quotas. Use your EID to login here: <http://utbox.utexas.edu>.

Canvas

Canvas is an online course platform that provides a variety of resources to either host online courses, or to create an online component for face-to-face courses. Visit: <http://canvas.utexas.edu>.

15. INFORMATION FOR INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS

International Student and Scholar Services (ISSS)

ISSS is a division of UT's International Office and provides materials to help students and scholars navigate around campus and Austin. ISSS is a one-stop shop for new students and will help you prepare before arriving on campus and offer resources to adjust once here. ISSS also offers current students information on online platforms, technology resources, assessment tests, certifications and expert guidance.

<https://global.utexas.edu/issv>

Student Visas

International students with visas are required to obtain and maintain the appropriate visa in order to enroll and continue at UT. <https://global.utexas.edu/issv/immigration/f-1>

Documents Required of New International Students

As a new international student at UT, you are required to attend Immigration Briefing and Check-In (IBC). At IBC, you will learn about immigration, work eligibility in the U.S., how to obtain U.S. forms of identification (i.e. driver's license and Social Security Number), and health insurance requirements. <https://global.utexas.edu/issv/advising-services>

The university classifies all incoming students UT Austin, who are not U.S. citizens or permanent residents, as international students, even if you are a Texas Resident for tuition purposes. New students have an international bar on their Registration Information Sheet. After attending IBC, your international bar will be waived or removed from your record. You will **not be able to register** for classes until you have attended IBC.

<https://onestop.utexas.edu/registration-and-degree-planning/registering-for-classes/registration-times/>

English Proficiency

In order to be eligible for a TA or AI appointment, non-native speakers of English must receive ITA English Certification.

The goal of ITA English Certification is to assess and enhance the skills ITAs need to be effective educators in the classroom. Certain exemptions apply and some departments may have additional requirements. <https://global.utexas.edu/english-language-center/resources/international-teaching-assistants>

Students with J-Hold Requirements

Instituted by the Graduate School, the J-Hold is a hold placed on certain graduate students' records, which requires them to go through English screening before they can register for classes. These students should refer to the following website:

<https://global.utexas.edu/english-language-center/resources/j-hold>

Funding for International Students

New international students with assistantships should work with International Student and Scholar Services (ISSS) to obtain a social security number. New students with fellowships and no other appointment types are not considered employees and are not eligible for social security numbers. These students should work with ISSS to obtain an International Taxpayer Identification Number. Please refer to the following website:

<https://global.utexas.edu/iss/life-at-ut/ssn>

ConTex Doctoral Fellowship for Students from Mexico

The ConTex office was established by the University of Texas System to support a program of cooperation with Mexico's National Council of Science and Technology (CONACYT). This new program will expand current collaboration with CONACYT and many other first-rate academic institutions in Mexico.

A key feature of the program is 5-years of support for Ph.D. students. Funding for selected Ph.D. students will include tuition, a monthly stipend of \$1,100, and health insurance costs for up to five years – four years from CONACYT and one year of funding provided by the UT System. Eligible students from Mexico must first apply and be admitted to a UT Ph.D. program and then can contact ConTex and apply for funding. Preference may be given to high priority areas of study and a supplement to the stipend may be needed depending on college/school requirements.

<https://contex.utsystem.edu/doctoral-fellowships-2025>

Undocumented Students

Students who are not US citizens or visa holders (undocumented students) can attend UT and also receive funding through fellowships or assistantships. TEXAS Global has compiled a list of resources to help undocumented students, with or without the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA), navigate their time both prior to arriving at UT and during their stay: <https://global.utexas.edu/iss/immigration>