

# Journalism Graduate Students' Handbook

## Guide to the Master's Programs

We offer a Master of Arts Degree in the dynamic and diverse field of journalism. Depending on which of the tracks a master's student chooses—professional, hybrid or research and theory—the Master of Arts Degree trains graduate students for professional, academic, and research careers.

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

Academic policies and procedures do change, and we will do our best to keep students informed of and involved in any Departmental or Graduate School program alterations. You should also refer to *The Graduate School Catalog* for important information. Once admitted into the program, it is the responsibility of each graduate student to be informed about all requirements pertaining to his/her program of study. Deadlines and requirements are available on various Registrar, Graduate School, Journalism School web sites, as well as in this handbook.

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

The Journalism Graduate Studies Committee, which is administered by an elected chair and comprised of graduate faculty, is responsible for policies, curricula, and admissions. The Graduate Adviser, who is appointed by the Director of the School of Journalism in consultation with the GSC and graduate students, directs the Graduate Program and advises graduate students. The Graduate Coordinator, in addition to assisting the Graduate Adviser and Graduate Studies Committee Chair in their duties, has responsibility for daily administration of the Graduate Program, including helping students and answering inquiries about the program and admissions.

**R.B. Brenner**, Director, School of Journalism, 512-471-1845, [rbbrenner@austin.utexas.edu](mailto:rbbrenner@austin.utexas.edu)

**Iris Chyi**, Ph.D., Graduate Adviser fo Ph.D, Master's R&T & Hybrid students, 512-471-0553, [irischyi@gmail.com](mailto:irischyi@gmail.com)

**Rusty Todd**, Ph.D., Graduate Adviser for Professional Master's, 512-471-1967, [rgtodd@gmail.com](mailto:rgtodd@gmail.com)

**Stephen Reese**, Ph.D., Graduate Studies Committee Chair, 512-471-1666, [steve.reese@austin.utexas.edu](mailto:steve.reese@austin.utexas.edu)

**Sylvia Edwards**, Graduate Program Coordinator, 512-471-5933, [sylvia.edwards@austin.utexas.edu](mailto:sylvia.edwards@austin.utexas.edu)

For information on Academic and Registration Policies and Resources from the Graduate School, please see <https://gradschool.utexas.edu/>

## Orientation

All entering students are required to attend the mandatory department orientation prior to the beginning of the semester, and to meet with the Graduate Adviser to discuss their program of study prior to registering for classes in the fall semester. Normally this will be in the second to last week of August. Entering students will be guided through the registration process at this time.

## Registration

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

A full course load for graduate students is 9 hours per semester.

Master's students may take up to 6 hours of upper-division undergraduate courses; no lower-division undergraduate courses are allowed.

Journalism school core courses are required and must be taken in the order specified as they are prerequisites to all other courses in the program. These required journalism courses must be taken for credit, not CR/NC, and students must earn a B- or better. Any student not earning at least a B- can retake the course one time. Failure to earn at least a B- on the second attempt will result in termination from the program. In addition, no incompletes may be taken in required journalism courses.

Note: Do not use graduate courses as placeholders as this can cause last-minute cancellations of graduate seminars, disrupting schedules of graduate students and faculty. You may register up until the 12<sup>th</sup> class day.

## Incompletes

The School of Journalism and the University Office of Graduate Studies strongly discourage students from delaying completion of work required by specific courses. Incompletes are only allowed for documented illnesses and other UT approved absences. No more than two incompletes, even if converted to a grade, can be taken in the course of the degree. A student with more than two grades of "X" or one grade of "X" and one grade of "I" cannot be appointed as a teaching assistant.

When a student receives a grade of incomplete, he or she has **one semester** in which to resolve the "X." Students are urged to get clarification from instructors on what must be done, and by when, to complete course requirements and receive a grade for the course. For more information, see *General Information, 2014-2015*.

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

## Advising and the Supervising Committee

The School of Journalism and Graduate School assign great responsibility to the student's supervising committee, made up of a "first and second reader." All students will have at least one

reader from Journalism, including Dual Degree students. Students should take great care in selecting their committee members and in making sure that this is an informed decision. Changes are not allowed except at the request of the faculty members or in event of their death, retirement, or departure from the University. The supervisor, or first reader, **must** be a member of the School's Graduate Studies Committee (See [journalism.utexas.edu/graduate/graduate-studies-committee](http://journalism.utexas.edu/graduate/graduate-studies-committee)). Students are under no obligation to choose any faculty member as supervisor or committee member. Similarly, no faculty member is under obligation to serve or continue to serve as a student's supervisor. The student has the ultimate responsibility for finding and retaining a supervisor. Once a supervisor has been declared and work has begun, changing the supervisor may only be done with the supervisor's consent, or in the case of retirement, departure from the University, illness or death of the supervisor. In their first two semesters, students should meet with potential supervisors and, if possible, take courses from them.

For any committee member who is not a member of a UT Graduate Studies Committee, a *curriculum vitae* and a *letter stating the member's willingness to serve at no expense to the University* must be sent to the Graduate School Degree Evaluators, who must approve the member. Students should be aware that the Department will not pay the expenses of an off-campus committee member to attend presentations or defenses. Graduate School rules regarding committees are published on the web site at <https://gradschool.utexas.edu/academics/theses-and-dissertations/masters-candidacy> and in the Graduate Catalog at <http://catalog.utexas.edu/graduate/degree-requirements/masters-degree/>.

### **Thesis/Independent Study/Internship**

In order to get permission to register for thesis, master's report, independent study, or internship, you must complete a form. The forms are available on the website under "Forms," <http://journalism.utexas.edu/graduate>.

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

### **Grievance Procedures**

Grievances related to academic or nonacademic matters should begin with attempts to resolve problems informally with the faculty member where the differences arise. If no satisfactory agreement is reached, appeals then proceed to the graduate adviser, Graduate Studies Committee chair, and departmental director, in that order. Appeals may be directed to the Vice Provost and Dean of Graduate Studies. The last appeal is to the Executive Vice President and Provost. Official grievance procedures are listed in the *Handbook of Operating Procedures* at <http://www.policies.utexas.edu/policies/graduate-school>.

### **Academic Dishonesty Policy**

The University defines academic dishonesty as cheating, plagiarism, unauthorized collaboration, falsifying academic records, and any act designed to avoid participating honestly in the learning process. Scholastic dishonesty also includes, but is not limited to, providing false or misleading information to receive a postponement or an extension on a test, quiz, or other assignment, and submission of essentially the same assignment for two courses without the prior permission of both instructors. You must always cite words and ideas that are not your own. Students who

violate University rules on scholastic dishonesty are subject to disciplinary penalties, including the possibility of failure in the course and/or dismissal from the University. *Visit the Student Judicial Services Web site:* <http://deanofstudents.utexas.edu/sjs>.

## **MASTER'S PROGRAMS OF WORK**

The University of Texas School of Journalism offers an outstanding education that prepares students to succeed in the journalism profession in the 21st century. Now, our focus is even sharper, reflecting an evolving industry and emphasizing the expertise of our national and international scholars and former news media executives and journalists. Our curriculum for the professional master's degree has been revamped to allow students to specialize in one of four tracks – accountability journalism, culture/entertainment/sports, visual storytelling, and international journalism. This degree requires 36 hours of coursework and a professional project at the end.

This revamped professional master's program recognizes that no single program can be all things to all students. For example, we don't offer a graduate degree in broadcast journalism or science and medical reporting. Instead, we focus on what we at the UT School of Journalism know best. Our curriculum for the professional master's degree has been revamped to allow students to specialize in one of four tracks:

### **Accountability Journalism**

Traditional news reporting, what some would consider the watchdog function of the media, this track emphasizes public affairs journalism, politics, investigative reporting and business – the hard news reporting and explanatory journalism that is a vital function of the Fourth Estate.

### **Culture, Entertainment & Sports**

What better laboratory for learning to cover arts, culture, lifestyle, entertainment and sports than Austin, Texas, the live music capital of the world? Where the UT Longhorns excel in football, basketball, baseball and every other sport imaginable, and F1 racing has just established a new U.S. track. Where cuisine from haute to hot reigns supreme. Where theater, art, dance, and fashion have strong footholds as well. Experience an array of classes with seasoned journalists who have covered all these subjects and more.

### **Visual Storytelling**

Our world-renowned photojournalism program has now been combined and expanded with new forms of visual storytelling – video, infographics, web design, data visualization and even creating apps for mobile media.

### **International Journalism**

At the gateway to Latin America, Texas is the perfect launching pad for reporting on issues and cultures around the world and to cover issues of concern to the world from home. Our faculty specializes in Asia, the Middle East, and Latin America especially, with opportunities in other countries, as well.

For those who wish to specialize in one of the above four areas, the Professional Master's Track is designed for three types of students:

- Students who already have an undergraduate journalism degree and/or professional experience, who want to expand and focus their abilities, or switch career paths within journalism, for example, from daily journalism to foreign correspondence, or from writing to visual storytelling.
- Students who have little journalistic background but want to switch careers entirely, such as from engineering, political science, or business to journalism.
- The third type of student has journalism experience in non-U.S. media and seeks to develop an understanding of the purpose, principles, and process of journalism in the U.S.

The program is designed to take 2 years and requires 36 hours of course work.



Students in the Professional track produce a professional master's report (such as a substantial long-form article based on investigative reporting). Students must register for J 398R, Report, in the semester in which they graduate.

Specialty Courses include:

*Accountability journalism:*

- Advanced Public Affairs Writing & Reporting
- Business & Financial Reporting
- Covering Politics
- Opinion Writing
- Internet & Politics
- Investigative Reporting
- Environmental Reporting
- Reporting Texas
- Entrepreneurial Journalism
- Covering the Latino Community in the U.S.

*Culture, Entertainment & Sports:*

- Media, Culture & Civic Engagement
- Sports Writing
- Sports for Reporting Texas
- Business of Sports Media (COM 32)
- Business of Sports Television (ADV)
- Lifestyle Journalism
- Music Journalism
- Creative Non-Fiction for Books & Magazines
- Audio Storytelling
- Social Media Journalism
- Living in the Information Age

*Visual Storytelling:*

- Advanced Visual Journalism – Video
- Advanced Visual Journalism – Photo
- Advanced Visual Design
- Advanced Photo Editing & Design
- Web Design for Journalism
- Photojournalism Portfolio
- Photography for Reporting Texas
- News Editing for Online & Print
- Data Visualization
- Mobile Programming (Mobile News App Design)
- Visual Media & the News

*International Journalism:*

- Reporting Latin America
- Reporting the World
- Covering the Global Economy
- Policy Making in a Global Age (PA 383G)
- Nature of International Systems (PA 387G)
- International Economics (PA 393H)

**MA Research & Theory Track:**

**Required courses (12 hours):**

- J 380 Introduction to Research Methods (fall only, 1<sup>st</sup> semester).
- J 384 Mass Communication Theory (fall only, 1<sup>st</sup> semester).
- J 395 Advanced Social Science Research Methods (spring only, 2<sup>nd</sup> semester).
- J 395 Mass Communication Theory II (spring only, 2<sup>nd</sup> semester).

For descriptions of these courses, see the Ph.D. Handbook.

Twelve additional hours (four courses) supporting research topic. A minimum of 6 hours must be taken outside of the School of Journalism:

- \_\_\_\_\_ Supporting course – Outside the School of Journalism
- \_\_\_\_\_ Supporting course – Outside the School of Journalism
- \_\_\_\_\_ Supporting course – Inside or Outside the School of Journalism
- \_\_\_\_\_ Supporting course – Inside or Outside the School of Journalism

- J 698A Thesis.
- J 698B Thesis.

A total of 30 hours is required.

**Notes:**

- May enroll in a maximum of three independent study hours.
- May take up to six hours of upper-division undergraduate courses.
- May take up to six hours CR/NC (credit/no credit) (does not include J698A or J698B, report/thesis). Required courses may not be taken CR/NC.
- Must have a GPA of 3.0 or above.

**MA Professional Research Hybrid Track:**

**Required courses (12 hours):**

- J 380 Introduction to Research Methods (fall only, 1<sup>st</sup> semester).
- J 384 Mass Communication Theory (fall only, 1<sup>st</sup> semester).
- J 395 Advanced Social Science Research Methods (spring only, 2<sup>nd</sup> semester).
- J 380V Visual Journalism (fall only, 1<sup>st</sup> semester).

For descriptions of the first three courses, please see the Ph.D. student Handbook

Twelve additional hours (four courses). A minimum of 6 hours must be taken outside of the School of Journalism.

- \_\_\_\_\_ Outside the School of Journalism
- \_\_\_\_\_ Outside the School of Journalism
- \_\_\_\_\_ Inside or Outside the School of Journalism
- \_\_\_\_\_ Inside or Outside the School of Journalism

A total of 30 hours is required.

- J 698A Thesis.
- J 698B Thesis.



Notes:

- May enroll in a maximum of three independent study hours.
- May take up to six hours of upper-division undergraduate courses.
- May take up to six hours CR/NC (credit/no credit) (does not include J698A or J698B, report/thesis). Required courses may not be taken CR/NC.
- Must have a GPA of 3.0 or above.

Students in the Hybrid track and Research & Theory track produce a thesis, which is original research using social scientific methods. For theses that use human subjects, students must take the Human Subjects training, file a proposal with the Institutional Review Board, and comply with all IRB requirements. Students may not start collecting data until IRB approval has been received; must use the current IRB approved templates and forms, and must report any amendments to the research, among other things. Please visit the Office of Research Support website at: <https://research.utexas.edu/ors/>. Students who produce original research and present their findings at academic conferences may apply for travel grants to defray the cost of attending these conferences. For more information, see the graduate coordinator.

**MA Dual Degree Track (for students entering Fall 2015 or later; for those entering Fall 14 or earlier, the program of work is the same as the Professional Master’s listed above):**

**Required Courses\*:** (21 hours)

All students take a set of 7 required core courses:

_____ J 380W	Writing and Reporting (fall only, 1 <sup>st</sup> semester)
_____ J 380V	Visual Journalism (fall only, 1 <sup>st</sup> semester)
_____ J 395	Media Law (fall and spring)
_____ J 395	Reporting with Data OR Social Media Journalism
_____ J395T	Reporting Texas 1 (pre-req J380W)
_____ J 389E	Professional Experience in Journalism
_____ J 3_____	One of the following: Storytelling in the Digital Age Long-form Journalism One of the Advanced courses under Visual Storytelling

Students select one of the four specialty areas listed above, then take a minimum of 4 courses for that specialty (list below; courses may change and list is not comprehensive; see adviser for details). Typically, dual degree students will take these courses from their other degree program, resulting in the degree taking 3 years instead of 4. These courses are included in the spaces below:

**Dual Degree Master’s Specialty:** (12 hours)

- Total of four courses (12 hours) in approved area of specialty from the list below, including a minimum of two (6 hours) out-of-department courses.

_____ (non-J)	_____ (J or non-J)
_____ (non-J)	_____ (J or non-J)

**Final Master’s Project:** (3 hours)

_____ J 398R	Master’s Report
--------------	-----------------

Notes:

- May enroll in a maximum of three independent study hours.
- May take up to six hours of upper-division undergraduate courses.
- May take up to six hours CR/NC (credit/no credit) (includes J389E, but does not include J398R). Required courses may not be taken CR/NC.
- Must have a GPA of 3.0 or above.

Students in the dual degree track produce either a thesis or a professional master's report (such as a substantial long-form article based on investigative reporting). Students must register for J 398R, Report, in the semester in which they graduate. Dual degree students **MUST** have one of their thesis/report readers from Journalism. Students are expected to complete the report and graduate in one semester; in unusual circumstances, a student may take Report a second time, but no more. No exceptions will be made.

## **Transfer of Credits**

Ordinarily all work for the master's degree must be done at the University of Texas at Austin; however, under **rare** circumstances, a maximum of 6 semester hours of graduate credit which have not been counted toward any other degree may be transferred from another institution and applied toward the M.A. degree at the University of Texas at Austin. In unusual cases of this sort, the credit is transferred on the basis of petition, with final approval by the Dean of Graduate Studies.

## **Graduate Adviser Approval**

The student must obtain approval for his or her course of study each semester from the graduate adviser in Journalism.

## **The Master's Report Proposal**

Candidates for the Masters Degree in the Professional Track of the School of Journalism, are required to file an "Intended Masters Project Proposal" by Sept. 15 of their incoming year. Please spell out, in no less than 1,000 words, what you anticipate your masters report will be about. Be as specific as possible. We recognize that your report will be something you will work on, pursue, refine – and perhaps change – during your two years in the School of Journalism. The purpose of this "Intended Masters Project Proposal" is to expedite your determination of a suitable topic – and to also allow us to help you in the best way possible. Please tell us what you are passionate about, what you can see working on over the next two years, so that this capstone work of journalism – your Masters Report – will be something you will be proud of, and that will be publishable. By declaring your intended project early in your career at the School of Journalism, we will be able to point you to the best resources, the best courses, and the best faculty across the university to serve as your masters report supervisors. Again, we recognize that your topic might be apt to change: But we urge you to think long and hard about finding a topic that is worthy of your dedication and hard work over the next two years. The Masters Report is meant to be the full realization of your time spent at the School of Journalism. It is your legacy work, your capstone work.

For Master's students, the committee should include two "readers." The "first reader" or chair, must be a member of the Journalism Graduate Studies Committee at the University of Texas at Austin. The "second reader" may be from within the Journalism School or outside the School. If the second reader is not on a GSC, he or she must be approved, as described in the Master's Degree section above.

Students are expected to complete the report and graduate in one semester; in unusual circumstances, a student may take Report a second time, but no more. No exceptions will be made.

## The Master's Report/Thesis: Guidelines

Early in the final semester of the MA program, the student must file the *Master's Graduation Application Form* with the Graduate School by the deadline. For more information on this and other Graduate School deadlines, see

<https://gradschool.utexas.edu/academics/graduation/deadlines-and-submission-instructions>.

Theses and reports need to be approved and signed by the Supervising Committee well before the last class day. First readers must be given 10 business days to read and make comments on the first draft of the thesis or report. Allow enough time for you to make the requested changes before submitting it to the first reader for final approval. After the first reader has approved, the student should submit the thesis or report to the second reader, allowing 5 business days for the second reader to approve. ***This generally requires the student to have a draft of the final report or thesis to the first reader approximately four weeks before the last day of class.*** Failure to allow enough time for the first and second reader to read and approve of the report/thesis, will result in delayed graduation. In addition, students must have their theses/reports formatted according to the Graduate School requirements and have their formatting checked by the Graduate School before submitting. Failure to do so will result in delayed graduation. Students are responsible for knowing the deadlines and making sure the report/thesis is given to both readers and Graduate School no later than these deadlines.

The master's report may be in one of several formats, depending on the student's professional and research interests (see below). The faculty strongly encourages public presentation, publication, web posting or broadcast of the student's report.

All reports will feature extensive original research or reporting and employment of multiple sources by the student.

**Formats:** Students may prepare the report in one of two general formats – for the professional track, this is a journalistic product, either written, visual, or multimedia; for the hybrid and R&T tracks, it is a research paper. Professional track students must do a professional project.

The following guidelines represent the minimum requirements. Individual professors serving as first and second readers may have additional requirements. All professional projects should show mastery of skills the student has learned in his or her graduate program. All projects should be original work, comprised of original reporting, photographs, and/or design. *(Note: Some projects will require the use of archival materials and inclusion of that material in the final work will be considered on a case-by-case basis by the instructor).*

For all types of projects, no copyrighted material of any kind (including music) can be used without written permission from the copyright holder(s). All material must be properly sourced according to journalistic guidelines. Plagiarism of any kind will result in failing the report project and further disciplinary procedures.

All professional projects should focus on substantive topics in such areas as politics, the economy, health, medicine, the environment, immigration, race relations, religion, urban affairs, the arts, sports, business, international affairs (localized), cultural groups in American society, alternative communities, or the fashion industry.

Professional journalism projects are not subject to Institutional Review Board approval, as they are not considered to be research with human subjects. *Therefore, when you file your professional project with the Graduate School, and fill out the Statement on Research with Human Participants, check “no” to the question about whether you used human subjects.* This question applies to academic research only, not professional journalism projects and does not pertain to you having interviewed, photographed or video recorded people in the conduct of your reporting. Students doing a thesis must file with IRB.

Projects should be submitted to professional media outlets for publication. While not a requirement for the degree, the Journalism School strives to have students produce professional work that is seen by wider audiences. Students producing a thesis should submit it to an academic conference and journal.

Students are required to work with at least two supervisors – a first and second reader. The first reader must be a professor on the GSC in the School of Journalism; the second reader can be a qualified instructor in Journalism or another field relevant to the subject matter of the report or an individual outside the university who is deemed by career experience to be an acceptable supervisor. Readers must have master’s degrees or higher. Students are also encouraged to select their supervisory team with an eye to individuals who can assist them with both visual and written components of their reports. Readers cannot be replaced without their consent or in the event of their death, retirement, or departure from the University.

Occasionally, a student will want to work most closely with a first reader who is not on a GSC. In that case, the student will list that person as “second reader” but he or she will perform the duties of first reader. The other reader (listed as “first” but performing duties of second reader) **must** be on the GSC.

Dual degree students **must** have one of their readers from each program – one from Journalism and one from the other program.

A. Written Journalistic Products: Written reports are long-form journalism, such as an extended magazine article or series of articles, a series of newspaper articles, etc. A print piece will be a minimum of 4,000 words. The specifications will be determined in advance by the report’s readers. In addition, the student will submit a brief report outlining the techniques used and the sources (and for persons and groups quoted, contact information) consulted in preparing the product. Source contact information does not need to be submitted to the Graduate School for publication with the Report. The student is responsible for removing it.

B. Multimedia or Visual Projects: Multimedia and visual projects should be comparable in scope and amount of work to the written professional project, which requires 4,000 words of long-form journalism. All projects require 2,000 words in addition to the photographs and/or multimedia.

If students are doing a design-based project, online products must be created significantly by the student. Plagiarism, including plagiarism of designs or visual material, will result in failing the report project and further disciplinary procedures.

Visual Projects Minimum Requirements

Students may do one of the following, or some combination approved by first and second readers. Whichever option is chosen, the key point is that the student's project represent quality storytelling – that the main visual essay/story be a compelling, well reported, fully realized story that will signify a substantial addition to their portfolio and a capstone to their work with us.

1. A photojournalism portfolio or in-depth photo essay that includes at least two-dozen images accompanied by 2,000 words of written text.
2. Three pieces of multimedia such as Sound Slides or Final Cut Pro, each 4 to 5 minutes in length, that represent professional photojournalism storytelling and, ideally, consider an over-arching theme, accompanied by 2,000 words of written text.

#### Multimedia Project Minimum Requirements

Students may do one of the following, or some combination approved by first and second readers. Whichever option is chosen, the key point is that the student's project represent quality storytelling – that the main visual essay/story be a compelling, well reported, fully realized story that will be a substantial addition to their portfolio and a capstone to their work with us.

1. A website of at least 10 pages of original design, 2,000 words of text, and 12 or more images created by the student. No templates such as Wordpress, Blogspot or others may be used unless significantly customized and approved by the first reader.
2. A multimedia presentation featuring one to three elements using SoundSlides or FinalCut Pro, at a total length of eight to 10 minutes, with total of 2,000 words of accompanying text that adds value and makes points not easily realized in the visual elements.

**B. Research Paper:** Students in the R&T and Hybrid tracks will write a thesis, which *must* demonstrate mastery of at least one traditional research technique and include data or evidence beyond that gathered by the student for credit in some prior course: data can be from prior research if the report involves significant new analysis or reanalysis. The research paper will be a minimum of 4,000 words of text, including references. Research projects involving research on human subjects must be approved by the Departmental Review Chair and IRB (see the Journalism website for details).

Students must adhere to the following timeline:

1. At least nine to 12 months before the Master's Report/Thesis is scheduled for completion students should begin thinking about a topic and which individuals they might ask to supervise their project. Students are encouraged to begin a conversation with prospective supervisors to determine their availability and suitability, and share with them a preliminary proposal.
2. Students should bear in mind that they will be required to submit both a rough cut of visual work and a rough draft of written work at least one calendar month before the deadline for submitting their Master's Report/Thesis to the Office of Graduate Studies according to the schedule published on the OGS website.
3. First submit the draft to the first reader only, allowing 10 business days for the first reader to return comments.

4. During this time, the student should visit the Graduate School for formatting approval.
5. Allow enough time to revise the project based on the first reader's comments, usually at least one week.
6. Resubmit the revised project to the first reader, allowing 5 business days for reviewing. Upon approval of the first reader, submit the final project to the second reader, allowing 5 business days for review.
7. Bear in mind that should the second reader ask for revisions, the student must allow enough time for those before the Graduate School deadline.

*Failure to provide enough time for readers to read the report/project and the student to revise it accordingly will result in delayed graduation.*

**Process:** The student is responsible for orderly progress in writing the report. Any material changes in the form or substance of the report from that stipulated in the proposal must be approved, in writing, by the readers.

**Timetable** Semester before student enrolls in J398R for Master's Report, attend advising information session to understand the process and expectations.

**Proposal with Timetable** Develop a 500- to 800-word proposal with timetable for completion. The proposal should give details about the project, its format and the projected outlet for the work. The projected outlet should be specific: a magazine, for example, might be named, along with information about its readership: a research paper should designate the conference or journal to which it would be submitted. (It is recommended that the student include one or two back-up ideas on proposal.)

**Master's Report Form and Proposal** Attach Proposal with Timetable to Reader Assignments for Master's Report Form.

**Meet with Prospective Readers** Identify appropriate first and second readers. Make appointment with first reader prospect to discuss proposal, back-up ideas, timetable, and meetings to discuss report progress. The first reader must be a Graduate Studies Committee faculty member in the Journalism School. The second reader may be another faculty member in the Journalism School, a faculty member elsewhere or, in unusual circumstances, someone from outside the University (consult the *Graduate School Policy Manual* for details).

**Signatures for Report Form** Find a first reader and get signature. Consult with first reader on choice of second reader. Find a second reader and get signature.

**Paperwork for Graduate Coordinator** Turn in Master's Report form and proposal to Graduate Coordinator by the pre-registration deadline. The graduate coordinator will help you get the signature of the Graduate Adviser.

**Enroll in J398R** Register for J398R, Master's Report. Meet regularly with first reader through report writing process. Update second reader.

**Draft to First Reader** Turn in report draft to first reader one month prior to Graduate School deadline. Receive feedback and make revisions. Turn in revisions to first reader within one week.

**Draft to Second Reader** After approval of revisions by first reader, turn in approved draft to second reader for review one week prior to graduation deadline. Get feedback from second reader and make revisions.

**Get Signatures** Make final revisions and turn in to first reader for signature, then get signature from second reader.

**Submit Report** After all parties have signed final Master's Report, upload your report and submit other required forms to the Graduate School. Students who fail to meet the Graduate School deadline for submission of the report will be assigned a continuation (\*) grade in J398R and will be required to re-register for it, and to complete the report no later than the next long semester.

Master's students are required to submit the thesis/report to the Texas Digital Library, which will be made available to the public through the Texas Digital Library on an Open Access basis.

## **Applying to Continue in the Doctoral Program**

If you're planning to graduate from the MA R&T or Hybrid program and want to continue to our doctoral program, you must apply by the regular admissions deadline, which is typically **December 15**. Contact the Graduate Coordinator for more information. Note that the application process for those currently in the program differs from the process for new applicants or those returning after a lapse in enrollment.

## Financing Your Graduate Education

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

## Teaching Assistantships

The School of Journalism employs a limited number of currently enrolled master's students as teaching assistants to assist faculty members teaching undergraduate courses, usually those with significant newsroom experience or skills taught in the classes.

For appointments of 20 hours per week, salaries begin at approximately \$5,000 for master's students per long semester and include health insurance, tuition assistance, and resident tuition entitlement. See the following link for more information:

<https://gradschool.utexas.edu/finances/student-employment>.

Support as a TA/Al is limited to two years from the time the student enters the Master's program.

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

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

## Student Loans

The mission of the Office of Student Financial Services is to help remove financial barriers and make the financial aid process as simple and easy to understand as possible. Lots of useful information is posted on their website at <http://finaid.utexas.edu>

Information on Tuition/Cash loans is available from the Office of Accounting website at <http://www.utexas.edu/business/accounting/sar/il.html>

## Fellowships

**Currently enrolled** students are eligible for the following fellowships. A call for self-nominations will be issued in Spring. One application allows you to be considered for all these fellowships. All require students to be enrolled in 9 credit hours during the semesters in which they are awarded.

*The Ada Frances Miller Endowment Fellowship*

*The School of Journalism Pic Wagner Fellowship*

*Nettie Doscher More Endowed Fellowship* given by the Texas Exes.

## After Graduation

Please be sure to update your personal email address and new physical address at [https://utdirect.utexas.edu/utdirect/bio/address\\_change.WBX](https://utdirect.utexas.edu/utdirect/bio/address_change.WBX)



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

Also, the Texas Exes offer email forwarding. See <http://texasexes.org/online/email.asp> .