



# TEXAS LBJ School

The University of Texas at Austin

Lyndon B. Johnson School of Public Affairs

**2023-2024**

PhD Program in Public Policy (Doctor of Philosophy)

Student Handbook

This is the 2023-2024 Student Handbook for the LBJ PhD Program and reflects changes to the degree program approved by the LBJ PhD Graduate Studies Committee as of April 2022. Students who enrolled in the program prior to Fall 2022 will be “grand-fathered” into the degree program requirements outlined in the Student Handbook for their year of admission. As specified in this document, students will have the opportunity to follow new policies and procedures as outlined in this 2023-24 Handbook. Questions and concerns about these procedures should be directed to the PhD Graduate Advisor, Dr. Mary Evans, at [mary.evans@austin.utexas.edu](mailto:mary.evans@austin.utexas.edu).



Welcome from the Dean:

Welcome to the LBJ School of Public Affairs. You're starting your public policy journey in a place that has it all: The LBJ School is the only public policy school tied to a Tier I research university, a presidential library and a state capital, due north of the longest foreign border in the U.S. Combined with its connections, alumni and other opportunities, we offer a truly distinctive educational experience.

After completing your doctoral training, you will be:

- Able to identify the best evidence-based policy solutions;
- Proficient in the latest analytical methods;
- Ready to facilitate difficult, sometimes painful, public conversations;
- Capable of leading public and nonprofit organizations through turbulent times.

These are but a few of the competencies our students develop.

Through case discussion, problem sets, fieldwork, and experimental research with world-class faculty, you will become proficient in the skills and knowledge to tackle contemporary and emerging challenges.

But that is not all. You will become a member of our diverse, esteemed and ever-expanding LBJ community of Professionals committed to expanding prosperity, justice, equality and security.

Over 50 years ago, President Lyndon B. Johnson challenged us to build a great society. We are excited to have you join us on this ongoing journey.

Hook 'Em

JR DeShazo  
Dean, LBJ School of Public Affairs

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Notes: Students are bound by the requirements of the handbook in force at the time of their first registration in the program. The student may choose, however, to fulfill the requirements of a subsequent handbook. If the student doesn't fulfill handbook requirements within six years of their first enrollment in the program, then they are bound by the requirements of the subsequent handbook. For more information on the Graduate School's policies associated with graduation under a particular catalog, see: <https://catalog.utexas.edu/graduate/degree-requirements/graduation>.

## **Section 1: Overview**

The LBJ School’s Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) program in Public Policy is an explicitly research-oriented course of study designed to train scholars pursuing careers in public affairs, policy, and management in research universities and policy research institutions.

This student Handbook is designed to (1) introduce PhD students to the requirements, policies, procedures, and deadlines of the Lyndon B. Johnson School of Public Affairs (LBJ School) and The University of Texas at Austin (UT) Office of Graduate Studies’ (OGS) and (2) familiarize students with important campus resources. Information contained within this Handbook is current as of its printing August 2023. Subsequent changes or updates will be made to the online version and distributed through the main student listserv (lbjstudents@utlists.utexas.edu). The Handbook is available in electronic format on the Forms, Policies and Procedures page of the LBJ School’s website at: <http://lbj.utexas.edu/forms-policies-and-procedures>.

Please read this information thoroughly, as it will answer many of your questions about the PhD program. If you have any questions that the Handbook does not address, please do not hesitate to contact the Graduate Advisor or the Office of Student Admissions and Affairs (OSAA) at [lbjstudentaffairs@austin.utexas.edu](mailto:lbjstudentaffairs@austin.utexas.edu) Please be sure to always include your UT EID when your correspond with the OSAA office.

### **1.1. Ethics and Professional Conduct**

#### **1.1.1 The University of Texas Honor Code**

The core values of The University of Texas at Austin are learning, discovery, freedom, leadership, individual opportunity, and responsibility. Each member of the University community is expected to uphold these values through integrity, honesty, fairness, and respect toward peers and community.

#### **1.1.2 Excerpts from UT Compliance and Ethics Guide**

##### ***Obligation to Report Wrongdoing***

All University employees have a personal and professional obligation to report, or cause to be reported, and to assist in any investigation by persons authorized or responsible for such matters, the following (collectively referred to as “wrongdoing”): Illegal or fraudulent activity; financial misstatements, or accounting or auditing irregularities; conflicts of interests or dishonest or unethical conduct; violations of the institution’s code of conduct; and violations of other laws, rules, or regulations.

##### ***Use of Intellectual or Copyrighted Property***

Copyrighted material, which includes almost everything written or recorded in any medium, including software, is protected under the federal Copyright Act and generally may not be copied or used without the owner’s permission. Generally, such materials may be copied without the copyright owner's permission only within narrow exceptions under the U.S. Copyright Act.

Any copying or reproduction of copyrighted software on University computing equipment must comply with the Copyright Act and any applicable software license agreement. Further, faculty, staff, and students may not use unauthorized copies of software on University owned computers or networks or computers housed in University facilities. However, one exception, known as “fair use,” allows copyrighted materials to be copied or otherwise used without the copyright owner's permission: <https://www.copyright.gov/fair-use/more-info.html>.

### **1.1.3 Important Note on Academic Integrity**

Students are expected to respect the LBJ School's standards regarding academic dishonesty. You owe it to yourself, your fellow students, and the institution to maintain the highest standards of integrity and ethical behavior. A discussion of academic integrity, including definitions of plagiarism and unauthorized collaboration, as well as helpful information on citations, note taking, and paraphrasing, can be found at the [web page of the Office of the Dean of Students](#).

The University has also established disciplinary procedures and penalty guidelines for academic dishonesty, especially Sec. 11.304 in Appendix C of the Institutional Rules on Student Services and Activities section in UT's General Information Catalog.

### **1.1.4 Acceptable Use Policy**

The UT Austin Acceptable Use Policy (AUP) serves as a supplement to the UT Austin [Information Resources Use and Security Policy](#). University [information resources](#) consist of the computer devices, data, applications, and the supporting networking infrastructure. These technologies are critical to the multifaceted mission of the university, a mission that includes teaching, research, and public service.

### **1.1.5 Professional Ethics at the LBJ School**

All LBJ School students are members of the LBJ School community, as well as members of a public service profession. Both have high standards for professional and ethical conduct. All students have an obligation to report wrongdoing and be familiar with Intellectual and Copyrighted Property, UT's Academic Integrity standards, and the Acceptable Use Policy. Please note that these expectations for professional conduct extend to behavior outside of the LBJ School, including on social media.

We also encourage all LBJ School students to familiarize themselves with the Code of Ethics formulated by the [American Society of Public Administration \(ASPA\)](#).

### **1.1.6 Student Responsibilities**

LBJ School students are responsible for knowing and satisfying program degree requirements, meeting administrative and academic deadlines, seeking academic advice when needed, and enrolling in appropriate courses to ensure progress toward degree completion. The Office of Student Affairs and Admissions (OSAA), the Graduate Advisor, and faculty mentors will be there to help, but students are responsible for their own education.

UT's Office of Graduate Studies (OGS) sets the most critical deadlines. Check the OGS (<https://gradschool.utexas.edu/>) and Office of the Registrar (<https://registrar.utexas.edu/>) websites for deadlines.

Students are expected to promptly and thoroughly read informational emails sent by OSAA staff and the Graduate Advisor. Please include your full name and UT EID when contacting the Graduate Advisor or OSSA for assistance.

## 1.2 Communication

Email is the official form of communication at UT Austin. Students are required to provide the LBJ School and The University of Texas with current and accurate contact information at all times, including email address, local and permanent physical addresses, and telephone number.

If your contact information changes during your enrollment, you need to [update your UT Direct profile](#) by clicking [here](#). You will also need to notify OSSA of the change so that we can update the LBJ School's internal records.

The LBJ School maintains several listservs to keep in touch with students. You will be added to each list at the start of your first semester. You will be able to opt out of some. You will see emails from the following listservs:

**The lbjschool listserv** contains official correspondence from the Dean's Office and from OSAA: it is not a listserv from which you can opt out.

**The lbjstudents listserv** is a moderated listserv to which you can submit school-related messages, and which you can customize to receive messages immediately or as a digest. To send a message, send an email to [lbjstudents@utlists.utexas.edu](mailto:lbjstudents@utlists.utexas.edu).

**The lbjphd listserv** is a moderated listserv to which you can submit messages related to LBJ School PhD students. This list will also be used by the Graduate Advisor and OSSA to deliver program-specific academic and advising information—please read messages carefully. To send a message, send an email to [lbjphd@utlists.utexas.edu](mailto:lbjphd@utlists.utexas.edu).

### **Important Communications from The Office of Student Affairs and Admissions (OSAA)**

OSAA is oftentimes the "hub" of important communications for the school. From academic deadlines to job postings, event reminders and other important announcements, the communications from OSAA are very important. We ask that you take the time to read all OSAA emails, check the Canvas site and become familiar with the LBJ website. OSAA uses the following channels to communicate important information to our students—please make sure you check each regularly:

- Student Listserv emails
- Enrolled Student Canvas Site



- Weekly Student Newsletter
- Postings on bulletin boards around the LBJ building
- Social Media -- OSAA Instagram Account
- Communications disseminated through student orgs, such as the Graduate Public Affairs Council (GPAC)

### 1.3 Academic & Student Affairs Program Contacts (as of Fall 2023)

Associate Dean for Academics Dr. Pat Wong <a href="mailto:patwong@austin.utexas.edu">patwong@austin.utexas.edu</a>	Assistant Dean for Academics Dr. Lorinc Redei <a href="mailto:lredei@austin.utexas.edu">lredei@austin.utexas.edu</a>
PhD Graduate Advisor Dr. Mary Evans <a href="mailto:mary.evans@austin.utexas.edu">mary.evans@austin.utexas.edu</a>	Assistant Dean for Enrollment & Student Services Ms. Shannon Chapman <a href="mailto:lbjosaadirector@austin.utexas.edu">lbjosaadirector@austin.utexas.edu</a>
OSAA Director of Student Professional Development and Career Services Ms. Lauren Berryhill <a href="mailto:lbjprofessionaldev@autin.utexas.edu">lbjprofessionaldev@autin.utexas.edu</a>	OSAA – Director of Admissions / Graduate Coordinator for the PhD Program Mr. Stuart Bone <a href="mailto:lbjstudentaffairs@austin.utexas.edu">lbjstudentaffairs@austin.utexas.edu</a>
OSAA Career Resources Specialist Ms. Emily Mills <a href="mailto:lbjcareers@austin.utexas.edu">lbjcareers@austin.utexas.edu</a>	LBJ School Fellowship Specialist Ms. Ariana Buchanan <a href="mailto:lbjfellowships@austin.utexas.edu">lbjfellowships@austin.utexas.edu</a>

## Section 2: Program Administrative Structure

### The University Level

The Graduate School of The University of Texas at Austin is the overarching academic policy body responsible for more than 100 graduate programs. The Graduate School consists of the Office of Graduate Studies (OGS) and the University’s Graduate Studies Committees (GSCs). Each department or program offering a graduate degree at The University of Texas has a GSC composed of all assistant, associate, and full professors, as well as other specially approved members, actively involved in the graduate program in that area. The legislative body of the UT Graduate School is the Graduate Assembly, which is comprised of GSC representatives from each degree-granting program at UT. The Graduate Assembly has the power to legislate all matters having to do with the academic character of graduate programs of the University. You may find more information about the regulations and procedures that affect graduate students by visiting <https://gradschool.utexas.edu/>.

### **PhD Program Governance**

The LBJ *PhD Graduate Studies Committee (GSC)* is comprised of tenured and tenure-track faculty members, as well as specially appointed non-tenure track faculty members. Faculty members of the GSC are eligible to serve on PhD dissertation committees. In addition, the GSC is the faculty governance committee that is responsible for overseeing the curriculum and other requirements of the PhD program.

The LBJ *PhD Graduate Advisor* is the faculty member who serves as all PhD students' main point of contact for general advising on program requirements. The PhD Graduate Advisor, appointed by the Dean. The Graduate Advisor works closely with PhD students to ensure program requirements are met, as well as with OSAA, the LBJ Fellowships Office, and the LBJ Dean's office, to manage PhD fellowships, GTA assignments, and logistical support of students' progress through the PhD benchmark requirements discussed below (the qualifying paper, dissertation proposal and dissertation defense)

The *PhD Admissions Subcommittee* manages the admissions process. A student will not be admitted to the program unless two faculty members indicate a willingness to serve as the student's principal academic and research mentors for the first two years of the program. The PhD admissions committee is comprised of at least three PhD GSC faculty members, appointed by the Dean.

### **Section 3: Academic Advising**

The PhD program in Public Policy is a research-oriented doctorate that emphasizes rigorous grounding in scientific theory and methodologies, as well as in practical, action-oriented goals. The PhD program strives to foster a practical and intellectual apprenticeship environment. Students work closely with faculty members actively engaged in policy research and take a leadership role in exploring topics of mutual interest. The central feature of this environment is a sequence of advising from LBJ School faculty that supervise each PhD student's progress from the time of matriculation to the point the dissertation is successfully defended.

While the PhD Graduate Advisor provides general degree program advising, it is the student's faculty advisors, organized as First and Second Year Faculty Mentors and then as the Dissertation Committee, that take the lead in recommending course work outside of the LBJ School and in working with the student to formulate and undertake doctoral-level policy research. Over the course of study leading to the PhD, each student works with faculty in the following sequence:

#### **3.1 First and Second Year Faculty Mentors**

Upon admission, each student is assigned two faculty mentors. The faculty mentors are responsible for assisting the student in identifying and selecting appropriate courses and establishing a research trajectory during the first two program years. One of the faculty mentors will oversee the student's Research Apprenticeship year. The faculty mentors may, but are not required to, eventually serve on the student's dissertation committee once the student passes their dissertation proposal defense and advances to dissertation candidacy.

### **3.2 The Dissertation Committee**

At least two weeks prior to the dissertation proposal defense, every PhD student wishing to move forward to candidacy must organize a provisional Doctoral Dissertation Committee and notify and review it with the Graduate Advisor by person or via email. The provisional Dissertation Committee is usually a superset of the two faculty mentors. This committee is responsible for evaluating the oral defense of the dissertation proposal, advising the student on their dissertation research and writing, and approving the final oral defense of the proposal. Upon approval of the dissertation proposal, the student files for candidacy with the Graduate School and declares the membership of the official Dissertation Committee. The LBJ School PhD GSC recognizes UT policy that a PhD candidate's approved Dissertation Committee has responsibility for approving both the form and content of the candidate's dissertation.

The Dissertation Committee is also the primary vehicle for advising students on job placement upon graduation. From the University's perspective, the Dissertation Committee is officially appointed by the Vice Provost and Dean of Graduate Studies, upon the recommendation of the PhD Graduate Advisor and the Dissertation Committee chair (supervisor) by means of a formal application for candidacy (see Section V, below, on PhD candidacy). In accordance with [Graduate School rules for candidacy](#), the Dissertation Committee must consist of at least four members, (although normally it consists of five or six), at least three of whom (including the dissertation supervisor or co-supervisor, otherwise known as the "chair") must be members of the LBJ School's GSC, and at least one of whom must be outside of the LBJ School. Changing the composition of the Dissertation Committee after it has been officially approved by the Graduate School can only be accomplished by special petition to the Vice Provost and Dean of Graduate Studies with the approval of the LBJ School's PhD Graduate Advisor. Any such changes must be made at least six weeks prior to the dissertation defense.

**Section 4: Paths to the PhD**

**4.1 Typical PhD Pre-Candidacy Curriculum**

**Sample Plan of Study (first 3 years)**

<p><b>Year 1 Fall Semester</b>          Foundations of Public Policy (3 cr)          RDM-I (3 cr)          Field or Methods Course (3 cr)          PhD First Year Colloquium (0 cr)</p>	<p><b>Year 1 Spring Semester</b>          RDM-II (3 cr)          Field or Methods Course (3 cr)          Field or Methods Course (3 cr)          PhD First Year Colloquium (0 cr)</p>	<p><b>Year 1 Summer Semester</b>  <i>Students should work on a review of the relevant literature (empirical and methodological) for their QP topics., with supervision of their faculty mentors.</i></p>
<p><b>Year 2 Fall Semester</b>          Field or Methods Course (3 cr)          Field or Methods Course (3 cr)          PhD Research Colloquium (3 cr)</p>	<p><b>Year 2 Spring Semester</b>          Field or Methods Course (3 cr)          Field or Methods Course (3 cr)          PhD Research Colloquium – (3 cr)</p>	<p><b>Year 2 Summer Semester</b>  <i>Qualifying Paper Due May 1</i></p>
<p><b>Year 3 Fall Semester</b>          Field or Methods Course / Diss Prep Course (3 cr)          Field or Methods Course / Diss Prep Course (3 cr)          Field or Methods Course / Diss Prep Course (3 cr)</p> <p><i>Y3 December: Dissertation Proposal Submitted</i></p>	<p><b>Year 3 Spring Semester</b>          Field or Methods Course / Diss Prep Course (3 cr)          Field or Methods Course / Diss Prep Course (3 cr)          Field or Methods Course / Diss Prep Course (3 cr)</p> <p><i>Y3 Jan-May: Dissertation Proposal Oral Defense</i></p>	<p><b>Year 3 Summer Semester</b>          Completion of dissertation proposal defense, if not already completed.          Start of dissertation fieldwork, research and writing.</p>

Students, under advisement of their faculty mentors and/or Graduate Advisor, may take some of these courses out of order, if the pursuit of other disciplinary training takes priority. Each student should work actively with their faculty members prior to registering for courses.

**4.2 Deadlines for Satisfactory Progress in the PhD Program**

At the end of each semester, the PhD Graduate Advisor evaluates the progress of each student to determine if the student is making satisfactory academic progress. Students who are not assessed as making satisfactory progress may require additional advising and interventions. In rare circumstances, a student who is not making progress across several semesters may be advised to leave the program.

Below is a list of key tasks and milestones that students should focus on to remain on track and in good academic standing. The tasks or milestone marked with \* are formal requirements.

<u>Key Task or Milestone</u>	<u>Absolute Deadlines and Sanctions</u>
Review degree requirements and milestones agreement with Graduate Advisor.	No later than first semester
Review plan of study with faculty mentor(s) and submit to Graduate Advisor	No later than end of first semester; revised as needed and reviewed annually until candidacy
Submit the Qualifying Paper	End of fourth semester (due May 1)
Revise and resubmit the Qualifying Paper (if needed)	Summer after fourth semester
Form Provisional Dissertation Committee to supervise dissertation proposal writing	Submit to the Graduate Advisor and OSA Graduate Coordinators ( <a href="http://LBJStudentAffairs.austin.utexas.edu">LBJStudentAffairs.austin.utexas.edu</a> ) at least two weeks (normally one month) before the proposal defense.
Submit and defend Dissertation Proposal	Normally in the fifth semester, but no later than the end of eighth semester.
File for candidacy with Graduate School	Upon successful defense of Dissertation Proposal. LBJ rule: No later than end of eighth semester. Graduate School rule: Prior to end of sixth year (as first-year courses expire); any extensions require the approval of the LBJ School's GSC. Upon approval to candidacy, student must be registered every semester in the Dissertation Writing course until Dissertation Defense.
File for graduation	Shortly after the 12 <sup>th</sup> class day of the semester of graduation, or risk being dropped from the graduation rolls.
Defend Dissertation	LBJ PhD GSC can impose final deadlines. Grad School rules: LBJ School GSC must submit annual report for students that have been more than two years out in candidacy.

**The PhD Program in Public Policy consists of the following overall sequence of events:**

### **4.3 Matriculation and Development of a Plan of Study**

The summer prior to matriculation, every entering PhD student must, in consultation with their faculty mentors, develop a Plan of Study (see above for a sample). The typical course load during the first two

years of the program is nine credit hours (three courses) per semester, plus the zero-credit PhD Colloquium in the first year.

The Plan of Study should outline likely courses for at least the next two academic years. Course selection should reflect the student's research and professional goals. The purpose of the Plan of Study is to encourage each doctoral student to construct a coherent vision of their doctoral program, identify any deficiencies meriting attention, and design a timetable toward completion of all the program requirements.

The Graduate Advisor meets at least once a year with every student in pre-candidacy to review the student's progress towards their Plan of Study. The Graduate Advisor provides a summary report of student progress to the PhD GSC every year.

#### 4.4 Coursework

All PhD students are required to successfully complete the four core courses:

- **Foundations of Public Policy (first year, fall semester):** This course serves as a foundation and overview of major issues and theories in contemporary public policy-making, incorporating perspectives and analytical frameworks from a variety of disciplines. Its aims are to provide exposure to, and an appreciation for, the classic and contemporary texts that have informed and shaped public affairs-related scholarship, and to identify questions and debates in the foundational literature that shape the way we think about and refine theory to address public policy questions and problems. In other words, this is a course on *how to think about public policy*.
- **Research Design & Methods I and II (first year, two semesters):** This two-semester sequence introduces students to interdisciplinary social science approaches to the design of policy research, as well as the use of appropriate quantitative and qualitative methods. Together, these two semesters provide a survey of methods used in public policy, with the goal of making students critical consumers of different methods, conversant in the disciplinary methods utilized in public policy research, and able to select and justify their own choice of methods in any future research. The first semester focuses on basic principles of research design and an introduction to qualitative methods, while the second semester continues with a survey of various quantitative methods used in public policy research.
- **Professional Development Colloquium (first year, two semesters):** This is a weekly, zero-credit, 90-minute lunchtime course that introduces first-year students to what it means to complete a PhD in public policy. It focuses on professional development, socialization, and training, with the goal of preparing students for success in the public policy doctoral program, and later, successful navigation of academic and policy fields in public affairs. It includes topics such as creating a strategic plan for your time in graduate school; choosing a dissertation advisor and committee members; funding research; how to prepare for conferences and presentations;

publication strategies and navigating peer review; learning to teach; and academic and policy job market preparation.

- **Research & Writing Colloquium (second year; two semesters):** This course is designed to provide a structured forum for students in their second year of the Ph.D. program to regularly present, receive and provide feedback on work in progress, as well as be exposed to other scholars' research. The seminar will explore what research looks like at various stages: concept or proposal stage; draft papers and manuscripts; conference papers; papers that have an R&R; or published pieces. The seminar will focus on supporting students' work on their Qualifying Papers by breaking down the process for writing original research papers and providing a structure for delivering and receiving feedback on draft components of the QP.

Students are also expected to enroll in additional graduate-level courses, approved by their faculty mentors, which are deemed relevant to their area of dissertation research. Above and beyond the core course requirements, the LBJ School's GSC expects every PhD student who petitions for candidacy to have successfully completed at least 18 credit hours of additional graduate-level coursework exclusive of dissertation writing courses (to achieve the OGS minimum total of 30 hours for a graduate degree) approved by their faculty mentors. These typically include courses in theory and research methods and those related to substantive policy fields of interest. These courses will often be offered by other academic units at UT. Students will work with their faculty mentors and the Graduate Advisor to identify courses that align with their research and professional goals.

These courses may include conference courses but students in pre-candidacy must seek approval from the PhD Graduate Advisor to take more than one conference course per semester.

#### **4.5 Research Apprenticeship**

A distinguishing feature of the LBJ School's PhD program is its research apprenticeship. One year of the PhD program will involve a research apprenticeship with your primary faculty mentor. During this year, you will be funded via fellowship and will work collaboratively with your faculty mentor on a research project of joint interest. During your apprenticeship year, you will learn-by-doing and start to establish your research agenda. In planning your course of study, your faculty member will advise you on the best timing for your apprenticeship year. For most students, the apprenticeship year will likely be the second or third program year.

#### **4.6 PhD Candidacy**

The central milestone in a program of doctoral study is sometimes referred to as the "All But Dissertation" (ABD) stage. Students must complete all requirements of the Program of Work before filing for candidacy. Additionally, students must file the Graduate School's Application for Candidacy form upon the successful oral defense of the dissertation proposal. Any student failing to achieve candidacy by the end of the fourth year (eighth semester) is required to have the Graduate Advisor and the student's faculty mentors offer an explanation to the PhD GSC. The GSC has the authority to terminate the student's participation in the PhD program at that time or may establish explicit expectations and

deadlines for candidacy that it will continue to monitor. Failure to meet these expectations and deadlines may lead to dismissal from the program.

#### **4.7 Writing the Dissertation**

Once candidacy is achieved, PhD students must be continuously registered for a minimum of three credit hours in graduate-level coursework at The University of Texas at Austin for each long semester until the dissertation is successfully defended. Note that nine hours (three in summer) is required for TA or GRA employment, whether in candidacy or not. Some fellowships and international student visas also require full time registration.

Once a student has advanced to candidacy up through the semester of the dissertation defense, the student must continuously register for the Dissertation Writing course (PA 399W, 699W, or 999W) every semester in addition to any additional course work. There is no distinction between the 399, 699, or 999 courses other than the number of associated credit hours (three, six, or nine).

As stated above, financial aid, fellowships, and student visa requirements are factors that typically dictate the choice among the three-dissertation credit-hour options. At least two semesters of the Dissertation Writing course are required in order to qualify for graduation. In accordance with the rules of the Graduate School and the PhD GSC will pay special attention to the program of study and progress of students who take more than three years from the date of advancement to PhD candidacy to complete the dissertation. The PhD GSC is required to file an annual report to the Vice Provost and Dean of Graduate Studies on the status of students who fall into this category. The status report includes an outline of specific expectations and deadlines that the PhD GSC has established with each candidate. With the approval of the GSC, the Graduate Advisor is required to formally extend the candidacy of these students and report it to the Office of Graduate Studies.

#### **4.8 Defending the Dissertation**

The Graduate School has strict rules for defending the dissertation. Among other things, the Graduate School requires that any dissertation defense be formally scheduled through the Office of Graduate Studies at least two weeks in advance by filing the [Request for Final Oral Examination form](#). At that time, the student is also required to notify the LBJ School PhD Graduate Advisor.

Prior to your dissertation defense, [complete this form](#), the Report of the Dissertation Committee. The Report of the Dissertation Committee must be available to your committee members ON THE DAY OF YOUR DEFENSE. You may complete this form in advance to route it to them before your defense date. Once completed, you will receive a link to download the form. This form must be submitted to the Graduate School along with the other Required Printed Pages for your dissertation.

#### **4.9 Filing for Graduation**

A student who is prepared to defend their dissertation must file for graduation with the Graduate School the semester of the defense. The student must be registered in the semester they apply to graduate. The



deadline varies from year to year; please see the [Academic Calendar](#) for the exact date. Each student is responsible for completing the Doctoral Graduation Application form and following all the instructions outlined therein. Regardless of successful dissertation defense, failure to meet the UT Austin application deadline may render a student ineligible for graduation.

## **Section 5: Additional Requirements**

### **5.1 Minimum GPA**

Students are expected to receive a grade of B or higher in each one of the core courses. If a student receives a B- or lower in any of the four core courses, he or she will have to retake that course. Students must maintain a 3.0 or higher GPA to qualify to serve as a teaching assistant.

### **5.2 The Qualifying Paper**

Each student will submit a written Qualifying Paper (QP) that demonstrates mastery of both theory and research methods appropriate to the chosen research topic. The paper is an integrative exercise that will be closely vetted by a committee of faculty members appointed by the Graduate Advisor. The QP should demonstrate a student's readiness to advance to the dissertation proposal stage and should ideally form the kernel of the dissertation proposal itself.

### **5.3 Preparation and Defense of the Dissertation Proposal**

The dissertation proposal defense marks the transfer of primary supervisory responsibility from the first and second year faculty mentors to the student's Dissertation Committee. A successful dissertation proposal means the LBJ School's GSC finds the student capable of conducting the level of research excellence required of a PhD dissertation. Formal defense of the dissertation proposal is conducted in public and is subject to the same norms as those for the final dissertation defense. The format of the presentation is determined by the student's provisional Doctoral Committee, and it must allow for sufficient time for questions and comments by the committee as well as by the general audience. (These same rules apply to the final oral defense of the dissertation itself.) Students making normal progress through the program are expected to defend the dissertation proposal and advance to candidacy at some point during the fourth, fifth, or sixth semester but no later than the end of the eighth semester of study.

After passing the QP, the prospective PhD candidate is required to formulate a research topic and a work plan to conduct the research leading to the dissertation. The student must first form a provisional Dissertation Committee supervised or co-supervised by a member of the LBJ School's GSC and register this information with the PhD Graduate Advisor and OSAA Graduate Program Coordinator well before scheduling the defense of the dissertation proposal. The Graduate Advisor is responsible for confirming that the student has met all of the milestones required to take the first steps toward doctoral candidacy. The timing of the proposal defense is determined by the student and their provisional Doctoral Committee in consultation with the Graduate Advisor. It is the student's responsibility to ensure that there has been adequate consultation with all committee members concerning the proposed research, and that all are willing to formally examine the proposal and its oral defense. The student must provide the PhD Graduate

Advisor with the specific date, time, and place of the proposal defense at least two weeks prior to the event and ensure that it is also advertised publicly.

While the official evaluation of the dissertation proposal and its defense are the prerogative of the provisional Doctoral Committee, other members of the LBJ Faculty may take part in the process by attending the defense and providing comments to the student and to the provisional Doctoral Committee. The provisional Doctoral Committee makes final determination on the status of the proposal by declaring it as one of the following:

- accepted as is;
- accepted with some modifications required;
- unsatisfactory — major modifications required;
- rejected (failed)

The student has successfully defended the proposal if the provisional Dissertation Committee's decision falls in either of the first two categories described above. If the committee deems a dissertation proposal to be unsatisfactory or rejects it, then the student will be required to develop a new proposal and defend it again, as outlined above. Although there is no formal limit on the number of times a student may present and defend a dissertation proposal, presenting a proposal which the provisional Doctoral Committee rejects or judges to be unsatisfactory may be cause for terminating the student's participation in the doctoral program.

#### **5.4 Application for Candidacy**

Shortly following the successful defense of the dissertation proposal the student should submit the electronic petition for doctoral candidacy. The [Application for Candidacy form](#) should be submitted to the Graduate School for official approval by the Vice Provost and Dean of Graduate Studies.

The chair of the Dissertation Committee, the Graduate Advisor, and the Chair of the GSC are asked to sign the application before it is officially approved by the Vice Provost and Dean of Graduate Studies. The approval formally establishes a student's official Dissertation Committee. Each student is personally responsible for initiating and processing all paperwork for PhD candidacy. Subsequent changes in the composition of the Dissertation Committee require [formal petitions to the Graduate School](#).

#### **5.5 Extension of Candidacy**

Extension of candidacy will be required at the end of the second year following advancement, and annually thereafter. Extension requests will be based on the recommendation of the dissertation supervisor and a vote of the GSC. Extensions beyond six years of candidacy invite serious scrutiny by the GSC and the Graduate School.

## 5.6 Presentation and Defense of the Final Dissertation

See Appendix 2 for full details regarding the requirements for the preparation, scheduling, and defense of doctoral dissertations, associated fees, graduation ceremonies and convocations, etc. These rules and deadlines are set by the Office of Graduate Studies. You are advised to study them carefully.

### Section 6: Academic Policies and Procedures

#### 6.1 Registration

Registration at UT Austin encompasses academic advising, registering for classes online, and paying your tuition bill (or confirming your attendance if financial aid or a third party has paid your bill). UT Austin registration access periods are pre-determined by the Office of the Registrar; students may not register outside of the Registrar's pre-determined access periods. [Your Registration Information Sheet \(RIS\)](#) will note your specific registration access periods, as well as any registration bars. Registration in preferred courses is not guaranteed. We encourage you to plan ahead and consider alternative course options prior to each registration period.

#### 6.2 Registration Procedures

- [Consult your Registration Information Sheet \(RIS\) online.](#)
- Clear your registration bars (Advising Bars come from your Graduate Advisor, other Bars come from the University). [Read more about Bars and how to clear them.](#)
- Consult with your faculty mentors and/or the Graduate Advisor on your planned course schedule.
- Submit relevant registration paperwork (such as conference course forms) prior to registration.

#### 6.3 Register for classes.

- [Use the online Course Waitlist](#) system, if needed, to be waitlisted for a course.
- Fine-tune your schedule during Add/Drop periods. [See Graduate School Key Dates to determine deadlines](#)
- Pay your tuition bill and/or confirm your attendance to class.

#### 6.4 Course Numbers

Courses at UT are given a three-digit number. The first digit in a course number indicates the number of credit hours the student will receive for completing the course. For example:

- **PA 188G**= ONE credit hour course
- **PA 387G**= THREE credit hour course

Exceptions include graduate-level courses that end with the letter A or B. These letters indicate two-part, sequentially based courses to be taken over the course of two semesters. At LBJ, PA 680PA (PRP course,

Part I) and PA 680PB (PRP, Part II) are three credit hours each, but credits are not conferred until the sequence of six hours has been completed.

The second digit in a UT course number indicates whether it is graduate-level or not. Graduate courses are coded with a second digit of eight or nine. For example: PA 397 and PA 383C are graduate courses, but PA 325 is at the undergraduate level.

Only graduate-level courses offered by the University will fulfill LBJ degree requirements. Graduate students may enroll in undergraduate classes for enrichment, but those credits can NOT be applied toward completion of LBJ School degrees, nor will they count towards fellowship enrollment requirements. However, grades in upper-division undergraduate courses (those with a middle digit of 2 or greater (for example: ARA 325) are included in the graduate GPA. Additionally, graduate students enrolled in undergraduate courses are subject to undergraduate deadlines, which differ from deadlines for graduate students.

### **6.5 Course Enrollment Limits and Restrictions**

To ensure the quality of the learning experience, each LBJ School course has an enrollment limit determined by the Associate Dean for Academic Strategies. Additionally, some courses may be restricted to students in particular degree programs based on program needs. Registration is on a first-come, first-served basis until the enrollment limit is reached. Once the official limit is reached, additional registration for the course is at the instructor's discretion, based on the course waitlist (and subject to classroom seating capacity set to meet public safety requirements).

### **6.6 Credit/No Credit (CR/NC) Registration Policy**

PhD core classes must be taken for a letter grade. Outside of the core curriculum, students may take up to nine elective credit hours on a Credit/No Credit (CR/NC) basis. A maximum of three elective credit hours may be taken on the CR/NC basis per semester. Courses taken on a Credit/No Credit basis are not included in the calculation of graduate student GPA.

Students may register for an elective class on a CR/NC basis during the registration period. After the registration system closes, students may change a class to CR/NC status (or vice versa) one time, until the deadline published in the UT academic calendar.

To change the grade status of a course after the registration system closes, obtain a Grade Change Status form from your Graduate Coordinator. You must obtain your Graduate Advisor's signature before submitting the form to the Office of Graduate Studies by the mid-semester CR/NC deadline.

### **6.7 Maximum Credit Hour Enrollment Policy**

The maximum course load allowed for a graduate student in the fall and spring semesters is 15 credit hours. The maximum course load for a graduate student in summer semesters is 12 credit hours. Each summer is divided into two five-week sessions, with some courses meeting the whole summer. The 12-

hour limit is for any combination of summer courses. Most LBJ PhD students take 9 credit hours per long semester—you should consult your Graduate Advisor if you plan on exceeding that number. Enrolling in more than 15 credit hours in any given semester requires a petition letter to the Office of Graduate Studies (OGS) from the Graduate Advisor. You should remember to leave enough time in your schedule for extra-curricular learning: attending talks and lectures, working with research centers, and participating in social and networking activities.

### **6.8 Full-Time Enrollment**

Graduate students must enroll in at least nine credit hours per long semester (three credit hours in the summer) to be considered full-time by The University. See the [UT Austin Graduate Enrollment Policy](#).

### **6.9 Full-Time Enrollment and Financial Aid/Fellowships**

The Office of Financial Aid requires financial aid recipients to enroll in a minimum of five credit hours per long semester to receive financial aid. International students must enroll in a minimum of nine credit hours per long semester to meet student visa requirements, but exceptions may be made for graduate students in their last semester before graduation. The University requires that students who gain employment as Teaching Assistants (TAs) or Graduate Research Assistants (GRAs) be registered for at least nine credit hours. UT and LBJ School fellowships require the student to register for a minimum of nine hours in long semesters (fall and spring) and a minimum of three hours when required to register for the summer semester.

### **6.10 Grades of Incomplete**

If a student receives an incomplete in a course, the student must complete the course requirements by the last class day in his or her next long-session semester of enrollment. If this deadline is not met, the symbol X is converted to the symbol I (permanent incomplete). If the student is not enrolled during a long-session semester for twenty-four months following the end of the semester in which the X is reported, and the instructor does not report a final grade, then the symbol X is converted to the symbol I.

The symbol I cannot be converted to a grade. When the symbol I is recorded, the symbol X also remains on the student's record. A course in which the student receives an incomplete grade (X or I) will not affect the student's GPA, but may not be applied toward a degree.

It is the student's responsibility to resolve incompletes. Do not expect reminders from your graduate advisor, professors, or graduate coordinators. If you request a temporary incomplete (X), make sure you have a clear timeline for completing the work and agreement (in writing) on this with your course professor. Make sure your graduate advisor is also aware of your intentions to take, and resolve, the incomplete.

## 6.11 Enrollment Changes

### Adding or Dropping a Course

Students can add and drop courses on their own online through the fourth-class day (second class day during the summer sessions). After the fourth-class day, but before the 12th class day (after the second but before the fourth-class day during the summer sessions), the student must submit paper forms, with Graduate Advisor approval. After the 12th class day (or after the fourth-class day during the summer sessions) students may not add a course, except for rare and extenuating circumstances which must be approved by the Graduate Dean of the Office of Graduate Studies (OGS). Requests to add a course under these circumstances require a letter of petition from the Graduate Advisor to the Graduate Dean of OGS and a completed Add/Drop form with all required signatures. [Read UT Austin's Add/Drop Policy](#).

### Refunds for Course Drops and Academic Withdrawals

The University will refund partial tuition for classes that are dropped by the 12th class day in a long semester (fourth class day of a summer session), provided that the student maintains enrollment and the drop results in a tuition decrease. Refunds are not given for classes dropped after these dates.

## 6.12 Academic Probation

Two consecutive semesters on academic probation places students in the status of unsatisfactory academic standing and is cause for dismissal from the University of Texas Graduate School. A student will be deemed to meet expectations for satisfactory academic progress by the Graduate School if s/he meets the following three criteria:

- Maintains an average 3.0 GPA across all courses;
- Achieves grades of C or higher in each required ('core') class in the student's respective degree program;
- Has completed or has plans to complete the administrative requirements of the respective degree program (e.g. internship requirement, PhD foreign language requirement).

Please note, however, that the LBJ School PhD GSC maintains a higher standard for satisfactory academic progress. As noted earlier, students are expected to receive a grade of B or higher in each one of the core courses. If a student receives a B- or lower in any of the four core courses, he or she will have to retake that course.

LBJ School fellowship recipients must maintain a 3.0 or higher GPA to receive fellowship awards. More information is available [here](#). Students on probationary status or admitted with conditions are not allowed to work as a Teaching Assistant or Graduate Research Assistant. Students are otherwise eligible for part time University employment.

## 6.13 Student Travel Policy

The LBJ School and [The University of Texas travel policies](#) promote safe travel by students, faculty, and staff who conduct research and/or University business away from the Austin campus. Students must

receive prior authorization for travel to an international destination that is any way related to academic degree programs, courses, research, internships, or professional development activities. All international travel authorization requests must be signed by the LBJ designated authority, which is currently the Associate Dean for Students. More information on international travel policies, required forms, insurance, and procedures is available at <http://world.utexas.edu/abroad/itr>.

#### **6.14 Texas Residency**

Each person who applies for admission to a Texas public college or university is classified as a Texas resident, a non-resident, or a foreign (international) student, which determines whether they pay non-resident or in-state tuition rates. In general, one cannot become a resident solely by going to school in Texas. Detailed information about establishing Texas residency is available [online](#). Questions about establishing Texas residency should be directed to the Graduate and International Admissions Center ([residency@austin.utexas.edu](mailto:residency@austin.utexas.edu); 512-475-7391). If you are the recipient of a fellowship, please notify [lbjfellowships@austin.utexas.edu](mailto:lbjfellowships@austin.utexas.edu) of any change in your residency status.

#### **6.15 Academic Employment at UT Austin**

Academic employment at UT Austin encompasses the following positions: Teaching Assistant (TA), Assistant Instructor (AI), Graduate Research Assistant (GRA), and Graduate Assistant (GA). To qualify for academic employment, candidates must be degree-seeking graduate students enrolled full-time with a minimum GPA of 3.0. Detailed information about academic employment requirements for graduate students is available at:

<https://gradschool.utexas.edu/academic-employment>.

As a professional graduate school with no associated undergraduate program, the LBJ School offers a very limited number of TA positions, with priority given to our PhD students. Available TA/GRA positions are advertised on the LBJ Careers website [here](#).

You might also want to consider academic employment in a department that offers undergraduate coursework in a discipline in which you have expertise. A list of UT Austin Graduate Program Department Contacts is available [here](#). You can also the campus job system visiting <https://utcns.joinhandshake.com/login>.

#### **6.16 Benefits by Reason of Academic Employment**

Campus employment in a qualifying academic title at or above 20 hours per week enables non-resident students to receive a resident tuition entitlement benefit during the semester of employment. A complete list of qualifying titles is available [here](#).

The resident tuition entitlement benefit is not automatically applied to the student's tuition bill. Non-resident students with a qualifying academic appointment must apply for the resident tuition benefit [here](#) no later than the 12th class day, even if they were awarded a fellowship containing a reduction in tuition to in-state rates. Non-resident LBJ School Fellows who received an out-of-state tuition waiver award at

the time of admission should notify the LBJ School Endowment and Fellowship Specialist at [lbjfellowships@austin.utexas.edu](mailto:lbjfellowships@austin.utexas.edu) immediately if you are appointed to a qualifying academic employment position.

The Tuition Reduction Benefit entitles Teaching Assistants to a reduction of in-state tuition. Detailed information about Tuition Reduction Benefit is available [here](#).

Graduate Research Assistants (GRAs) may also receive a full or partial tuition reduction benefit, but it is not guaranteed. Please check with the faculty member in charge of the research project for details.

Graduate students assigned to work in a student academic title for at least 20 hours a week for at least 4.5 months (135 calendar days) are eligible for the university's employee group insurance benefits: <http://www.utexas.edu/hr/student/insurance.html>.

**Detailed information about student employment benefits** can be found on the [UT Austin Human Resources' Student Employment Page](#) online.

## **6.17 Graduation**

Students must be registered during the semester in which they graduate and must apply for graduation by the deadline published in the academic calendar. There are no exceptions to this policy. A student who fails to complete all degree requirements or misses the dissertation submission deadline must register, pay tuition, and apply to graduate the following semester in order to receive the degree. To view UT's graduation application instructions and deadlines, [please see here](#).

## **6.18 Diplomas**

UT diplomas are mailed to the permanent address on file four to six weeks after degrees are certified, provided all financial bars have been cleared. To ensure diploma receipt, students should pay off financial bars and confirm their permanent address at [https://utdirect.utexas.edu/apps/utd/all\\_my\\_addresses/](https://utdirect.utexas.edu/apps/utd/all_my_addresses/). Questions regarding diplomas should be directed to UT's Diploma Services Office at (512) 475-7620 or [diplomas@austin.utexas.edu](mailto:diplomas@austin.utexas.edu).

## **Sections 7: LBJ School Student Resources**

### **7.1 LBJ School Student Fellowships**

There are three types of admissions fellowships awarded:

- Stipends paid directly to the student,
- Tuition paid directly to the University of Texas at Austin on behalf of the student awarded,
- Tuition waivers that waive the out-of-state portion of the tuition billed.

Students should not rely upon stipend fellowships to pay their tuition. Stipends are paid after the 12th class day of each semester, after the eligibility check has been completed. The eligibility check consists of



verifying that the student's GPA minimum is 3.0 or above and the student is enrolled full-time (defined as a minimum of 9 hours in long semesters or a minimum of 3 hours in the summer) in courses that count toward their LBJ School degree.

If you need assistance to pay your tuition prior to receiving your award, please contact the [Financial Aid Office](#). Emergency Cash loans and Tuition loans are available for students. More information about short-term loans can be found at [Financial Aid Cash & Tuition Loans](#).

Once a student has accepted a fellowship, it will be paid according to the fellowship agreement and general regulations. There is no action required by the student to activate the fellowship payments.

Every LBJ School student receiving an admissions fellowship from the LBJ School or University of Texas at Austin is required to report all offers of University employment while enrolled at the LBJ School, even if the employment is to be performed outside of the LBJ School. Certain fellowships do not permit concurrent employment. Please notify [lbjfellows@utexas.edu](mailto:lbjfellows@utexas.edu) prior to accepting employment if you wish to confirm whether fellowship would be affected.

Any students receiving a tuition waiver as part of their fellowship who accept employment as a Teaching Assistant or Graduate Research Assistant/Graduate Assistant for a total of 20 hours per week or more, must activate the UT on-line tuition waiver provided as part of their employment package (if eligible) instead of accepting the tuition waiver provided in their admissions fellowship package. If the tuition waiver for the admissions fellowship has already been applied to the student's tuition bill, the student must notify [lbjfellows@utexas.edu](mailto:lbjfellows@utexas.edu) to remove this waiver and activate the UT employment waiver.

It is important to directly contact [Financial Aid](#) if you have any questions relative to how your fellowship will impact your financial aid amounts and timing of financial aid payments. Please note it is the student's responsibility to self-report all fellowships and awards on the student's UT page. Failure to self-report fellowships may lead to financial aid award adjustments.

## **7.2 Current Student Fellowships**

LBJ School students are encouraged to review the LBJ School website for fellowships and awards made available to assist in funding professional development and public policy related opportunities. The fellowships, along with their criteria, eligibility, and requirements can be found at: <https://lbj.utexas.edu/lbj-school-fellowships>.

## **7.3 LBJ Career Resources**

Career resources are available to PhD student through [LBJ School Office of Career Management](#) and [Texas Career Engagement](#). Services provided include personalized career advising, resume development counseling, job search assistance, mock interviews, alumni networking, mentor pairing, employer information sessions, career fairs, and a set of career and professional development related workshops to

assist you with enhancing your professional skills. Students will also work closely with their faculty mentors and dissertation chair on career planning and job search.

#### **7.4 Jobs and Internships**

All jobs and internships are posted on our online job board – [Handshake](#). An account will be created for you during the first week of classes and you will receive an email which will assist you with establishing your login password. You will have access to all external jobs and internship postings with the ability to view employer profiles and access additional resources by policy area.

Academic positions (e.g. university and college faculty positions and post-doctoral fellowships) are most commonly found through disciplinary professional associations. Please work with the PhD Graduate Advisor and your faculty mentors to develop a search and job application strategy at least one year out from your expected dissertation defense date.

#### **7.5 Career Management Workshops**

You can find a description of available workshops on the LBJ Career Management Canvas page (as part of OSAA's Enrolled Student Canvas site), as well as posted to Handshake. All students are encouraged to attend as many career management workshops as possible. Invites requesting an RSVP will be sent a week prior to the workshop via the LBJ student listserv, will be included in the OSAA Student Newsletter, and will be posted around the LBJ building.

To participate in certain recruiting events, students will be required to complete certain steps—information will be provided in the early Fall semester.

#### **7.6 Career Management Office Hours and Contact Information**

The Career Management Office has appointments available 8:30 am- 5:00 pm. Monday - Friday. Appointments can be made through [Handshake](#). You can also drop in between 8:30 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.

##### **Contact the Career Resources Specialist:**

OSAA Office, SRH 3.104G (512) 471-8325

[lbjcareers@austin.utexas.edu](mailto:lbjcareers@austin.utexas.edu)

#### **7.7 Student Professional Development Office**

The OSAA Student Professional Development **Team** focuses on bringing co-curricular opportunities to LBJ students, in the form of workshops, resources and the Student Professional Development Certificate Program. More details will be shared in the Fall semester. For questions, you can reach the team at: [lbjprofessionaldev@austin.utexas.edu](mailto:lbjprofessionaldev@austin.utexas.edu).

## Section 8: University Resources

### 8.1. Important Online Resources

- The UT Austin Student Homepage provides a direct portal to all online student services and student services office websites. <http://www.utexas.edu/students/>
- The LBJ School's Current Student Homepage at <https://lbj.utexas.edu/students> provides a direct portal to information and forms pertinent to LBJ School students.
- The University Directory provides contact information for individual University students, faculty, and staff and is available at <https://directory.utexas.edu/>.
- The Directory of University Offices contains contact information for all campus offices and is available at <https://www.utexas.edu/offices>.
- LBJ School Faculty Information Pages at <http://lbj.utexas.edu/faculty-lbj-school-public-affairs> provide faculty bios and contact information.

### 8.2. Important Campus Offices

A complete list of University services for graduate students is available on the Office of Graduate Studies' website at <https://gradschool.utexas.edu/services-and-resources>.

Student Accounts Receivable (SAR) is responsible for preparing tuition statements, issuing student account bills, collecting outstanding tuition and/or loan balances, generating 1098-T Tax forms, and addressing students' questions related to their student account activity and [can be found here](#).

- Graduate Tuition Rates: <https://tuition.utexas.edu/rates/graduate>
- Tuition Loan Information: <https://tuition.utexas.edu/loan-information>
- Installment Pay Plan Information: <https://tuition.utexas.edu/pay#installment>
- Emergency Cash Loans: <http://finaid.utexas.edu/financialaid/resources/ut-loans.html>

**The Office of Financial Aid**, <http://finaid.utexas.edu/>, provides information about available financial aid, important dates, processes, and requirements.

**Information Technology Services (ITS)**, <https://it.utexas.edu/students>, assists with questions regarding your UT EID, email, Canvas, campus Wi-Fi, computer labs, and Bevo Bucks.

**UT Email:** <http://utmail.utexas.edu/>

**Bevo Bucks:** <http://bevobucks.utexas.edu/>

**Canvas:** <http://canvas.utexas.edu/>

**International Student Scholar Services (ISSS):** <http://world.utexas.edu/iss/>, provides international students with information on Visa requirements, tax filing, emergency support, insurance, and much more.

**English as a Second Language (ESL) Services:** <http://world.utexas.edu/esl>

**Course Instructor Surveys** (<https://facultyinnovate.utexas.edu/services/CIS>) are administered at the end of each semester and are collected to provide the instructor with feedback, permit statistical analyses concerning instruction, and provide students with information about specific instructors.

**Office of Graduate Studies (OGS):** <https://gradschool.utexas.edu/>. OGS provides access to resources, services, and funding to support the more than 11,500 graduate students enrolled at the University.

- UT Library System: <http://www.lib.utexas.edu/> Students can search the UT Libraries website for books, articles, journals, databases, CDs and DVDs.
- The Scholars Commons is a UT Libraries pilot initiative introducing new spaces and approaches to research and data lifecycle support at UT Austin.
- A Public Affairs field-specific research guide is available at <http://guides.lib.utexas.edu/publicaffairs>, courtesy of Public Affairs librarian PG Moreno.
- Free library classes to aid with research <https://www.lib.utexas.edu/research-help-support/workshops>
- Library items can be placed on hold or renewed online at <https://catalog.lib.utexas.edu/patroninfo~S29/>
- Students may request that materials be transferred from any UT library to the Benson Library located in SRH 1.108 for pickup.
- Legal research can be done at Tarlton Law library: <http://tarlton.law.utexas.edu/>

**University Health Services (UHS):** <https://healthyhorns.utexas.edu/>. UHS provides basic, general, and urgent medical care services to all University students. The Forty Acres Pharmacy (<http://www.fortyacrespharmacy.com/>) fills prescriptions at competitive rates.

**Counseling and Mental Health Center (CMHC):** <http://cmhc.utexas.edu/>. Psychologists, psychiatrists, and social workers provide students with individual and group counseling services, psychiatric consultation and diagnosis, and suicide prevention services.

**Behavior Concerns Advice Line (BCAL):** <http://www.utexas.edu/safety/bcal/>. The BCAL hotline, 512-232-5050 provides an anonymous forum for discussing concerns about another individual's worrisome or potentially threatening behavior. Trained counselors assist callers in exploring available options and strategies, and provide appropriate guidance and resource referrals.

**Emergency Information Web Site:** <http://www.utexas.edu/emergency/>. This site provides campus alerts and closures during emergencies or unfavorable weather situations. Students can also sign up to receive text alerts at <https://utdirect.utexas.edu/apps/csas/text/main/>.

**The Multicultural Engagement Center (MEC)** is a student resource office that educates and empowers students to be leaders and agents of social change. As part of the Division of Diversity and Community Engagement, the MEC supports a culturally diverse campus and helps cultivate a positive campus climate. <http://diversity.utexas.edu/multiculturalengagement/>

**The Gender and Sexuality Center (GSC)** provide opportunities for all members of the UT Austin community to explore, organize, and promote learning around issues of gender and sexuality. The center also facilitates a greater responsiveness to the needs of women and the LGBTQ communities through education, outreach, and advocacy. <http://diversity.utexas.edu/genderandsexuality/>

**The UT Police Department Community Outreach Unit** provides tips on crime prevention and personal safety. <https://police.utexas.edu/prevention/>

**The Office of the Dean of Students** <http://deanofstudents.utexas.edu/> provides a variety of student support services along with opportunities for leadership experience, diverse student work environments, engaging programming, and specialized resources. This office includes eight specialized service areas, including:

- Legal Services for Students <http://deanofstudents.utexas.edu/lss/> provides free legal advice to currently enrolled students. This office provides consultations on legal issues such as landlord/tenant law, criminal charges, traffic tickets, consumer issues, car wrecks, and employment law.
- An online listing of hundreds of registered Student Organizations to help you connect with other students. <https://utexas.campuslabs.com/engage/organizations>

**Student Veteran Services** <http://deanofstudents.utexas.edu/veterans/> helps all students using federal and state veterans education benefits. This office walks current and prospective students through the benefits application and certification process; provides veteran-centered academic support, career services, health care, and wellness resources; and supports the ongoing success of veterans on campus.

**The Office of the Student Ombuds** <https://ombuds.utexas.edu/student> can help, whether it's listening, finding the right University office to assist you, identifying your options, or coaching you to prepare for a difficult conversation.

### **8.3. Long Academic Year Calendars**

See <https://registrar.utexas.edu/calendars>.

## **Section 9: Student Organizations**

Student organizations are a great way to get involved in the LBJ School, the broader UT community, and the city of Austin. Students should work with the OSAA Director to inquire about starting a new student organization (you can also view information [here](#)). Student organization leaders work closely with GPAC leadership and the OSAA Director on issues having to do with onboarding and coordination.

### **9.1 The Alexander Hamilton Society**

The Alexander Hamilton Society is an independent, non-partisan, not-for-profit organization dedicated to promoting constructive debate on basic principles and contemporary issues in foreign, economic, and national security policy. Each semester, AHS hosts many highly respected policy experts to discuss and debate foreign policy and global issues with UT professors.

Website: <https://utexas.collegiatelink.net/organization/alexanderhamiltonsociety>

### **9.2 Alliance for Energy Policy (AEP)**

The Alliance for Energy Policy (AEP) seeks a multidisciplinary approach to meeting our energy needs. Across the UT campus, AEP hosts and sponsors events to help all students plug into the energy revolution. Be it oil and gas exploration, nuclear energy, renewable energy research, energy efficiency, or distributed generation, AEP seeks input from all stakeholders in the energy field.

Website: <https://utexas.collegiatelink.net/organization/allianceforenergypolicy>

### **9.3 The Baines Report**

The Baines Report is an approved LBJ student organization composed of, and governed, by LBJ School students. The Report is dedicated to publishing student op-eds, blogs, and media related to current policy.

Website: <http://www.bainesreport.org/> or [bainesreport@gmail.com](mailto:bainesreport@gmail.com)

### **9.4 Feminist Policy Alliance (FPA)**

The Feminist Policy Alliance is an inclusive community for LBJ School students focusing on policy issues affecting women. FPA brings education and advocacy to the LBJ School, the University, and the Austin community.

Website: <https://www.facebook.com/FeministPolicyAlliance>

### **9.5 Graduate Public Affairs Council (GPAC)**

The Graduate Public Affairs Council (GPAC) is the University-recognized student government body of the LBJ School. GPAC's purpose is to serve the students of the LBJ community. GPAC facilitates student initiatives, fosters discussion and decision-making, and represents and engages in advocacy on behalf of students and their concerns.

Website: <http://www.lbjgpac.org/>

### **9.6 Pride Policy Alliance (PPA)**

Pride Policy Alliance's mission is to raise awareness and build community for LGBTQIA+ students. The organization is dedicated to initiating dialogue, activities, and programs within the LBJ School. Through these efforts, Pride Policy Alliance strives to contribute to the academic and experiential education of future policymakers.

PPA bridges disciplines and works within and across identities and policy issues. “Pride” provides a unique and inclusive reference to the LGBTQ+ community. “Policy” highlights how our organization focuses on raising awareness about policy-related challenges. Finally, “Alliance” emphasizes that the organization is indeed a team of both LGBTQ+ community members and allies from the LBJ School and all around the Forty Acres.

Website: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/pridepolicyalliance/>

### **9.7 Policy Alliance for Communities of Color (PACC)**

The mission of the Policy Alliance for Communities of Color (PACC) is to promote awareness and understanding of policy issues affecting communities of color by initiating dialogue, activities and programs within the LBJ School community. PACC's programming endeavors to reach out to the LBJ student body, the greater UT campus, and the Austin community.

Website: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/lbjpaacc/>

### **9.8 Social Policy Network of Students and Alumni (SPN)**

Reducing poverty and social and health inequities is a big reason many students enter public affairs, and why they specifically come to the LBJ School. The LBJ Social Policy Network (SPN) encourages all students and alumni whose interests and work intersect with the myriad of interconnected social policy issues to be a part of SPN and their sponsoring research center, the Center for Health and Social Policy (CHASP).

Website: <http://chasp.lbj.utexas.edu/spn/>

### **9.9 Veterans in Public Policy**

Veterans in Public Policy assists former service members' transition to civilian life. The group values all types of military service, no matter the occupational specialty or length of commitment. The community bolsters togetherness and belonging by helping each other navigate new professional spheres through counseling, academic assistance, and networking. Via monthly get-togethers and activities, the group encourages friendship, familial togetherness, and social inclusivity—traits common in the military but uncommon elsewhere.

Website: <https://utexas.campuslabs.com/engage/organization/vetsinpolicy>

### **9.10 Texas Space Law & Policy Society (TXSLAPS)**

The Texas Space Law & Policy Society (TXSLAPS) is the University of Texas at Austin's hub for space advocates. We bring together students from across the university to learn more about space law and policy, find internships and job opportunities, discover conferences and other events to attend, and meet other like-minded young professionals.

### **9.11 International City/County Management Association (ICMA)**

The UT ICMA chapter supports students interested in local government. The chapter offers opportunities to network and collaborate with local government leaders through career panels, networking sessions, and cooperation with other local chapters. Members have the option to attend the Texas City Management Association Conference and engage in local community events.

## **Appendix 1:**

### **Key program information and resources**

The Graduate Advisor maintains a folder on box.com called “PhD Student Folder” to which you will be given access. The folder contains resources including key forms, policies, guidelines for Qualifying Paper and a Q&A document that is regularly updated in response to student questions.

## **Appendix 2:**

### **Additional Information about the PhD Dissertation as Provided by the Office of Graduate Studies**

#### **The Dissertation Course**

Students may not register for the dissertation course until they have officially advanced to doctoral candidacy. The dissertation course 399R, 699R, or 999R may be taken only once; the -99W course must be taken at least once. A student may not receive advice and assistance from a member of the faculty in the preparation of the dissertation without being registered for the dissertation course (either -99R or -99W). No grade should be submitted for -99W until the dissertation has been completed. At that time, a final grade should be entered on the grade sheet for -99W. The final grade for the prerequisite -99R course shall be ‘Credit’ (CR) when dissertation progress is deemed satisfactory. The dissertation courses must be taken on a Credit/No Credit basis only.

#### **Dissertation**

A dissertation, which must be an original contribution to scholarship, is required of every candidate for the PhD degree. In the preparation and writing of the dissertation, the student should be aware of the following matters:

Dissertation to be in English: The dissertation will normally be written in English. Permission to write in a language other than English will be granted only if the following conditions are met: (1) it can be shown that the dissertation is likely to be published in that other language, (2) assurance can be given that faculty members competent both in the language and in the field are available and willing to serve on the dissertation committee, and (3) the waiver of the rule is sought at the time the student is admitted to candidacy.

Requests for a waiver of the rule must be submitted on the form, Petition to Write a Thesis, Report, Dissertation or Treatise in a Language Other than English, and bear the Graduate Advisor’s signature. The form for request [can be found here](#).



When permission has been granted to write the dissertation in a language other than English, an abstract and a substantial summary-and-conclusions section in English must be submitted simultaneously. The fact that most of the materials to be consulted by the student during the preparation of the dissertation are in another language is not a sufficient reason for writing in that other language, nor is an insufficient command of English an acceptable justification for an exception.

### **Publication of the Dissertation**

All dissertations must be published. Normally, this is accomplished through electronic means. Information for publishing the dissertation in the accepted electronic format can be found [here](#). Currently, the electronic dissertation publication is handled through UMI.

### **Use of Copyrighted Material**

Doctoral students may also seek copyright protection. Permission must be obtained for incorporation of copyrighted material in the dissertation (or thesis) beyond the “fair use” provision of copyright law. Doctoral candidates are required to provide documentation of taking the university's Copyright Tutorial and passing the test. [Read more here](#).

The tutorial may be taken at any time prior to submission of the dissertation, but students are advised to take it early in candidacy, as it is designed to educate the student on the frequently confusing and changing copyright laws. The tutorial site includes a test that provides a Certification of Completion via email after it has been taken and passed. A copy of this certification must be submitted by the time the dissertation is submitted or the dissertation may not be accepted and the student's graduation may be delayed or denied. Students may submit the certification at any time by printing a copy and delivering or mailing it to Doctoral Degree Evaluator, Office of Graduate Studies, Main 101, The University of Texas at Austin, Austin TX 78712 (campus mail code G0400).

### **Dissertation Format and Submission Instructions**

Each semester, the Office of Graduate Studies (OGS) publishes instructions for Preparation of Doctoral Dissertations and Dissertation Abstracts. Dissertation formatting and submission guidelines are published in the general forms section of the [Graduate School website](#).

The University of Texas Formatting Guidelines for Dissertation and Dissertation Abstracts can be [found here](#). Academic Computing and Instructional Technology Services (ACITS) offers a set of templates in MS Word 5 for the Macintosh and MS Word 6 for the Macintosh and for Windows that attend to the formatting tasks involved in producing a thesis or dissertation.

### **Review of Final Draft of the Dissertation**

A copy of the final draft of the dissertation reviewed for technical and grammatical correctness by the supervisor should be submitted to each member of the dissertation committee not less than four weeks before the date on which the student intends to defend the dissertation.

### **Final Oral — (Defense of the Dissertation)**

A satisfactory final oral examination is required for the approval of a dissertation. A request to hold the final oral examination [must be formally scheduled through the Office of Graduate Studies](#) at least two weeks in advance of the oral examination. Exceptions to the two-week rule are seldom approved because

every member of the committee must have ample opportunity to read the dissertation, and the Office of Graduate Studies requires sufficient time to publicly post the oral exam and send official notification to committee members. Instructions and forms for scheduling the oral exam [can be found here](#). **You will need to send a Request for Oral Examination form through DocuSign [found here](#).** *The completed form must be turned into the Graduate School at least 2 WEEKS PRIOR TO YOUR DEFENSE DATE. Please allow an additional several days for each committee member to sign the form when planning your timeline.*

Each member of the dissertation committee must indicate that the dissertation has been received and must agree to attend the final oral examination (defense of dissertation). The OGS now requires that, regardless of the mode of attendance, only one committee member who is neither supervisor nor co-supervisor may be absent from the oral examination. Such absence must be explained, together with an assurance that the dissertation will be read, and if approved, signed.

The supervisor and at least two other committee members must be members of the Graduate Studies Committee (GSC) in Public Policy (PhD). **At least one committee member must be from outside of the Public Policy program's GSC.**

Where a committee member is unable to attend a defense, an explanation must be given on the back of the Request for Final Oral form and signed by the committee member, the chair, or the Graduate Advisor. The request signifies the acceptance of the doctoral dissertation for the purpose of giving the examination. The committee's decision to examine the student on the dissertation must be unanimous.

Prior to your scheduled defense, you will need to send all committee members a "Report of the Dissertation Committee form", [here](#). *The Report of the Dissertation Committee must be available to your committee members ON THE DAY OF YOUR DEFENSE. You may complete this form in advance to route it to them before your defense date. Once completed, you will receive a link to download the form. This form must be submitted to the Graduate School along with the other Required Printed Pages for your dissertation.*

If the student is not able to find a date where all but one committee member can attend (if more than one committee member cannot attend), the Graduate Dean will review a petition from the GSC chair and the student's supervisor. The petition should explain the extraordinary circumstances that would cause more than one committee member to be absent. The absent committee members should also endorse such a petition.

The final oral examination will cover the dissertation and the general field of the dissertation, and such other parts of the program as the committee may determine. If all of the examiners are satisfied that the student has (1) completed a dissertation that is an independent investigation in the major field and itself constitutes a contribution of knowledge; (2) passed the final oral examination; and (3) submitted an abstract approved by the committee for publication by the University, they indicate approval on the Report of the Dissertation Defense. They also sign the dissertation and by doing so give it their official and scholarly imprimatur.

Every committee holding a final oral will be expected to report, through its chair, within two weeks after the examination. If the examination and the dissertation are found to be satisfactory, two weeks should be long enough for any final editorial changes the committee members may want to see before signing the report.

- **Pass.** The decision of the dissertation committee must be unanimous. When a student has only very minor revisions to make after defending the dissertation, the committee should feel free to sign the report and leave the overseeing of revisions to the supervisor.

**The committee has three alternatives if it does not file a Pass report:**

- **Reconsideration.** This decision indicates that extensive revision is necessary, but that the committee is willing to examine the rewriting without requiring another oral examination. When a committee asks for reconsideration, a letter from the supervisor explaining the situation should be sent to the Graduate School. The dissertation supervisor retains the gold form until the student satisfactorily completes the revision. If a committee member still has doubts after the rewriting, he or she may request another oral examination. The candidate has three months to complete requirements laid down by the committee after a report for reconsideration has been filed.
- **Not Pass.** This report indicates that the committee is not satisfied with the dissertation, but anticipates that it could be made satisfactory with rewriting. When such a decision is made, the committee returns the report unsigned, committee members submit their individual Report on Doctoral Dissertation indicating their dissatisfaction with the dissertation, and another oral is scheduled.
- **Fail.** This report and accompanying individual committee members' reports on the dissertation indicate that the committee has decided that the dissertation is unsatisfactory and the candidate may not rewrite. The dissent of a single member of the committee is usually considered enough to result in failure. In the event that a committee cannot agree upon a single decision, the matter is referred to the Graduate Dean for review. The results of the review are communicated to the student, the Graduate Advisor, the chair of the Graduate Studies Committee, the committee members, and the department chair.

Regardless of which decision is made, a report of the outcome must be made to the Graduate School within two weeks of the defense. The final oral examination should not be perfunctory; it should be treated as a formal occasion in which there is an opportunity for discussion and defense of the work the student has offered. The student has reached the summit of his or her graduate career, and the final oral offers the chance for a stimulating exchange that leaves all the participants richer as a result of the experience. Final oral examinations are open to other members of the faculty, and, with the committee's consent, to non-faculty. The Dean or the Associate Deans occasionally attend.

**Submission of the Dissertation**

The Dissertation will be submitted to the University Dissertation Publication Service, UMI. Instructions for submitting the dissertation online to UMI can be found at the UMI Dissertation Submission Site.

Dissertation submission guidelines are published in the general forms section of the [Graduate School website](#). When uploading the dissertation to UMI, students will be offered various publishing options. When considering these options, keep in mind that all doctoral students are charged an \$8 dissertation processing fee. Students who select the optional ProQuest publication and copyright services will also be charged the associated ProQuest fees: \$25 for traditional publication, and \$55 for registration of copyright.

The dissertation is being published by UMI and by the Texas Digital Libraries. When UT delivers the dissertation to UMI for publication, a copy is also provided to the Texas Digital Libraries. Students should note that restrictions and embargos requested from UMI do not apply to the Texas Digital Libraries. A student may request permission from the Graduate Dean to delay making the dissertation available to the public through the Texas Digital Libraries for up to one year in order to protect patent or other rights. This request must be supported by a written recommendation from the dissertation supervisor and must be submitted and approved prior to your graduation. If no petition is made to the Dean, the dissertation will be searchable on the web and available free from UT.

### **Approval of the Degree**

Upon approval by the dissertation committee of the dissertation and its defense, the GSC must then certify that all assigned work has been completed, including any internship or practicum, all examinations required by the graduate program have been passed, and the student is entitled to the award of the doctoral degree.

### **Commencement and Graduate School Convocations**

In May, three ceremonies honor master's and doctoral graduates. The master's and doctoral convocations are held on the same day. All graduates are individually recognized and hooded by the dean of their academic college. The Graduate School coordinates annual awards programs to honor outstanding individuals and these awards are presented at the Graduate School Convocation each spring. The university also hosts an annual campus-wide convocation ceremony at the South Mall.

The Graduate School holds no graduation ceremony in the summer, though summer graduates are invited to participate in the May convocation following their summer graduation. Information is sent to summer and fall graduates in the middle of the spring semester following their graduation.

Many individual university colleges and departments hold graduation ceremonies for graduate and undergraduate students each semester, but only the Graduate School convocation is designated for students earning graduate degrees. For information on which colleges and departments offer graduation exercises review the commencement schedule.