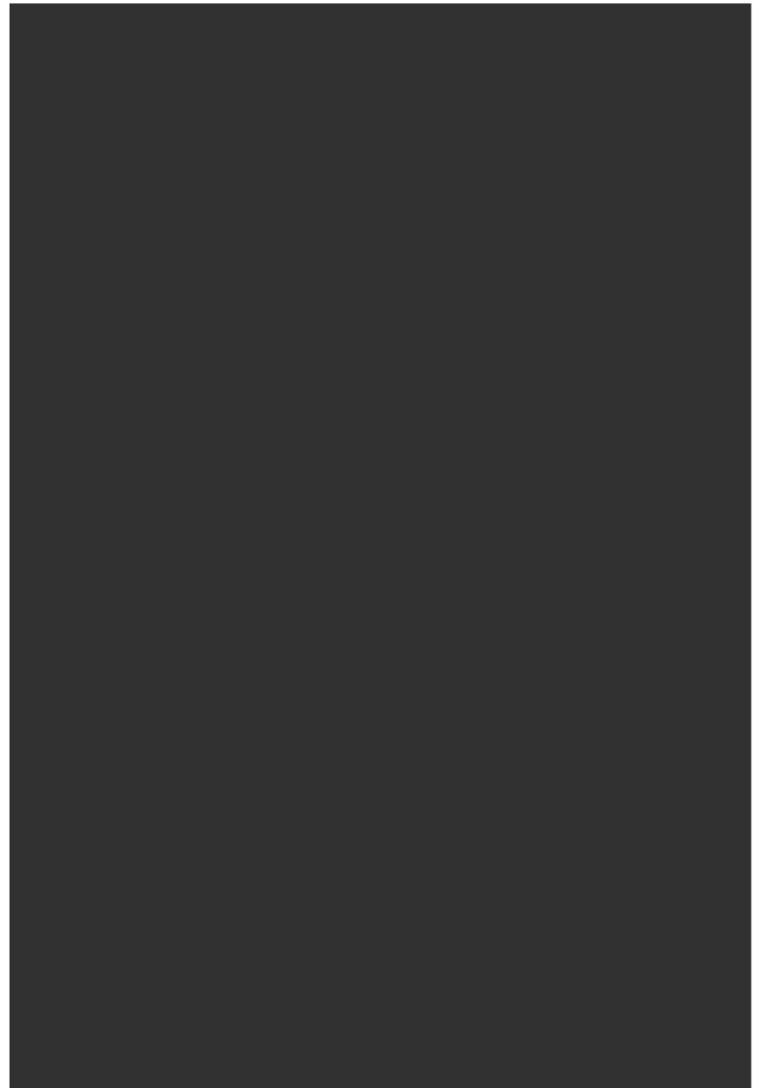




DEPARTMENT OF
AMERICAN STUDIES



**GRADUATE STUDENT
HANDBOOK**



ABOUT THE GRADUATE HANDBOOK	3
INTRODUCTION	3
UNM GRADUATE STUDIES.....	4
GRADUATE AND PROFESSIONAL STUDENT ASSOCIATION (GPSA).....	5
ADMISSIONS	5
NEW MEXICO RESIDENCY DEFINITIONS	5
FINANCIAL AID AND OTHER FUNDING SOURCES.....	6
ADVISEMENT.....	7
ANNUAL PROGRESS REVIEW	7
COURSEWORK	8
INCOMPLETE POLICY	12
COURSEWORK RESIDENCE REQUIREMENTS.....	12
LANGUAGE REQUIREMENT AND ALTERNATIVE RESEARCH TOOL.....	13
ENROLLMENT	14
IMPORTANT UNM GRADUATE STUDIES DEADLINES	14
COMMITTEE COMPOSITION	15
COMPREHENSIVE EXAMINATIONS	16
ADVANCEMENT TO CANDIDACY	20
THESIS AND DISSERTATION.....	22
GRADUATION.....	26
TIME LIMITS	28
GRIEVANCES AND APPEALS	28
LEAVE OF ABSENCE AND READMISSION	29
SUGGESTED SCHEDULES FOR EXPECTED BENCHMARKS FOR MA/PHD DEGREE PROGRESS	30

ABOUT THE GRADUATE HANDBOOK

This Handbook (also available online at <https://americanstudies.unm.edu/graduate/graduate-handbook.html>) and the UNM Catalog (available online <https://catalog.unm.edu/#/home>) contain information essential to your successful graduate career at UNM.

All American Studies graduate students are expected to read and familiarize themselves with the policies and requirements detailed in this Handbook. Being unaware of a rule does not constitute a basis for waiving that rule.

Students must comply with the procedures and meet the requirements stated in the Graduate Handbook for the year in which they began their graduate work in the department. The department reserves the right to correct errors that appear in the print or online versions of the Handbook.

Important Links: [UNM Graduate Studies](#)
 [UNM Catalog](#)
 [Office of the Registrar](#)
 [UNM Graduate Studies Degree Completion Information](#)

INTRODUCTION

For nearly one hundred years, the Department of American Studies has provided graduate students at the University of New Mexico with a unique opportunity for pursuing interdisciplinary studies. First chartered as an interdepartmental post-master's PhD program in 1944, American Studies was reconstituted as a regular department in the College of Arts and Sciences in 1975. A Master of Arts degree was added three years later. The Department currently offers the only PhD in American Studies in the Rocky Mountain region. Since 1979, when an undergraduate major was added to the minor course of study, American Studies graduate students have taught a variety of our introductory courses.

The graduate program in American Studies is designed to familiarize students with a wide range of scholarship as a basis for their pursuit of specific programs of study. Recent American Studies graduates have pursued careers in academia, public policy, secondary education and cultural institutions in the arts and government.

American Studies at UNM emphasizes interdisciplinary, community-engaged, and intersectional approaches to social and scholarly inquiry.

Among the department's primary areas of distinction in research and teaching are:

- Critical Indigenous Studies, Colonialism, Decolonization
- Gender, Sexuality, and Feminist Studies
- Religion and Secularism
- Visual and Cultural Analysis
- Environmental and Social Justice

- Southwest Studies and Critical Regionalism

Students have the opportunity to develop a comparative and interdisciplinary approach to historical, literary, visual, and ethnographic theory and methods.

The department encourages students to develop programs of study that creatively combine resources of multiple colleges and departments.

This Graduate Handbook is designed to provide students with technical information about requirements for completing each stage of the graduate degree process. Graduate students are expected to exercise initiative and responsibility in fashioning their curricula, constituting their faculty committees, and maintaining contact with their faculty advisor as they determine a course of study and a timeline for completion of the degree.

The American Studies Department is relatively small academic unit. Therefore, the faculty usually acts as a committee of the whole to make most policy decisions about admissions, curriculum, and financial assistance.

UNM GRADUATE STUDIES

The first Committee on Graduate Study was formed at UNM in 1916. A year later the first Master's degrees were awarded in Chemistry and Latin. In 1919 the Graduate School was formally constituted, and in 1947 the University's first PhDs were graduated in American Studies and Latin American Studies.

In 1977 the Graduate School was decentralized and the Office of Graduate Studies (named "Graduate Studies") was created. The Faculty Senate Graduate Committee and the Dean of Graduate Studies in conjunction with the college graduate committees are now responsible for coordinating and monitoring graduate student activities throughout the University. The American Studies Department aims to have its policies function in concert with those of Graduate Studies.

Students are responsible for consulting the Graduate Studies guidelines, which may be accessed online from the dropdown menu under "The Graduate Program" at <https://catalog.unm.edu/#/policies>.

Students may fulfill the requirements for graduation stated in the UNM Catalog for the year in which they were enrolled for the first time in a degree-granting graduate program at the University of New Mexico, provided they complete the graduation requirements for the degree sought within the time frame prescribed in that Catalog. Students admitted to American Studies after matriculating at another UNM degree-granting program must graduate using the American Studies policies published in the Catalog in effect at the time of their transfer.

GRADUATE AND PROFESSIONAL STUDENT ASSOCIATION (GPSA)

GPSA is the independent service organization that was established in 1969 to serve all part-time and full-time graduate students (<https://gpsa.unm.edu>). The GPSA is governed by a Council comprised of representatives from all graduate student departments on campus (American Studies has one GPSA representative). In addition, the GPSA Student Research Allocation Committee (SRAC) provides funds for student research projects (thesis and dissertation) and travel to research-associated conferences such as the national American Studies Association conference.

GPSA provides other services and regularly appoints graduate representatives to some eighteen standing university committees and policy-making boards. Currently, GPSA is in the Student Union Building, Suite 1021 at the Plaza Level.

ADMISSIONS

Students applying from outside the Department or University should contact American Studies and the Admissions Office for information and an application. Application information is also available on the Department website at <http://americanstudies.unm.edu/graduate/index.html>.

Students currently enrolled in the American Studies MA program at UNM who wish to pursue a PhD in the department do so under the same application criteria and deadlines as all prospective applicants to the PhD program.

NEW MEXICO RESIDENCY DEFINITIONS

A student who enters and remains in New Mexico principally to obtain an education is presumed to be a non-resident for tuition purposes.

A student is classified as a resident or non-resident for tuition purposes based on information supplied on the application at the time of admission. The residency status is only changed upon re-application for admission or submission of a petition to the Office of the Registrar. Petitions are accepted for the Fall term beginning the first week of July, for the Spring term beginning the first week of December. Your completed petition and required supporting documentation must be submitted to the Mesa Vista Hall North One-Stop, no later than the second Friday of the term. State law establishes residency requirements for tuition purposes. Each person must meet the requirements individually (marriage is not a factor in deciding residency).

To become a legal resident of New Mexico, the student must satisfy four basic requirements:

1. Twelve months consecutive presence
2. Financial independence
3. Written declaration of "Intent" to relinquish residency of any other state
4. Overt acts as defined by the Registrar's Office

Other relevant factors may be considered along with those itemized above. More detailed information on basic requirements as well as guidelines on exceptions and additional regulations can be found at <https://registrar.unm.edu/residency/index.html>.

Second-year students who receive fellowships, assistantships, or other awards do not automatically attain resident status. Awards including tuition and fees cover resident tuition rates only. To ensure in-state tuition rates, students must file a petition establishing New Mexico residency.

Individuals with specific concerns regarding residency should schedule a conference with the Registrar.

FINANCIAL AID AND OTHER FUNDING SOURCES

Department Aid

All students accepted in the PhD program are awarded multiple years of full funding (contingent on remaining in good academic standing for this duration). This funding includes a monthly stipend, tuition remission for graduate coursework up to twelve (12) credit hours each long semester, and health insurance benefits. Funding packages for PhD students are comprised of a combination of half-time teaching assistantships, graduate assistantships, and other potential fellowship opportunities. Financial aid awards are subject to final budget approval. To maintain eligibility, students must be registered for at least nine (9) hours of graduate credit (equivalent to three graduate courses) and maintain a cumulative GPA of at least 3.0 in their graduate work.

Department funding is based on working as an instructor on main campus. If you are planning to conduct research away from campus after completing coursework, please notify the department in writing and know that your funding offer may be contingent on your availability to teach on main campus.

Other Funding Sources

The Department encourages MA students to seek funding from other UNM sources and to pursue fellowship and grant programs outside the University. Graduate Studies offers a limited number of financial aid fellowships and awards. Some may be held concurrently with other forms of aid. Contact: Graduate Studies, Dane Smith 220, (505) 277-2711. At UNM, there are several scholarships for which MA students are eligible to apply, including the Ida Romero Memorial Scholarship of El Centro de la Raza and the Graduate Student Success Scholarship. Consult <http://scholarship.unm.edu/> for additional listings. Fellowships at UNM that American Studies graduate students have been awarded include Center for Southwest Research Fellowships (<http://elibrary.unm.edu/cswr/fellowships.php>) and Center for Regional Studies Fellowships (<https://crsinfo.unm.edu/funding/fellowships/index.html>). American Studies graduate students have worked as tutors and student managers at the Center for Academic Program Support (CAPS) (<http://ctl.unm.edu/employment/>). For assistantships outside of the department see the OAP Assistantship Opportunities Page (<https://oap.unm.edu/graduate-student-assistantships/assistantship-opportunities2/assistantship-opportunities.html>)

Funding available to UNM MA students for research and conference travel include the Tinker Field Research Grant (<https://laili.unm.edu/funding/assets/documents/frg-student-application.pdf>), a variety of funding sources through the Latin American and Iberian Institute (LAI) (<http://laili.unm.edu/funding/student-funding.html>), Graduate and Professional Student Association (GPSA) (<https://gpsa.unm.edu/funding/grants-funding/grant-scholarship.html>), and Graduate Research Project and Travel Grants (<https://grad.unm.edu/funding/research-travel-grants/index.html>). Some funding for travel and/or research is usually available through the Department's American Studies Graduate Student Association.

The University administers National Direct/Perkins Loans and Federal Direct Student Loans, and cooperates in the administration of several other funds, as well as work-study and student employment programs. Short-term emergency loans are also available to currently enrolled full-time graduate students. Contact: Student Financial Aid Office, Mesa Vista North One Stop, (505) 277-8900.

For outside sources of funding for study and research, various listings of grant opportunities are available through the Office of Research, 327 Scholes Hall, (505) 277-6128.

ADVISEMENT

Each semester, during **October** and **April** (before registering for classes), all students should consult with their faculty advisors.

New students are assigned temporary faculty advisors during their first semester of study. Students must either opt to stay with their temporary advisor or select a new advisor after completing their first year. Students must notify the Graduate Director in writing of the faculty member's agreement to oversee their progress and exams. The Graduate Director should be notified in writing of any changes to this selection, and students should also notify the department administrator.

All students should meet with their faculty advisors at least once a semester to discuss their coursework. The faculty advisor will assist the student in planning a program of studies that fosters mastery of fundamental knowledge in their interdisciplinary areas through the full exploitation of the University's resources.

ANNUAL PROGRESS REVIEW

To ensure that all students make consistent and timely progress toward their degrees, the entire faculty conducts an annual review of graduate students. Faculty advisors report on student progress in the program, providing updates on students' status regarding progress toward their degrees, exam committees, and/or completion of degree requirements. Students whose record appears to indicate current or potential issues in progress toward their degree, or other matters concerning their success in the program, are notified in writing.

The student shall be notified in writing, in specific detail, by the Director of Graduate Studies and the Department Chair regarding all current and potential issues that may affect maintaining good academic standing. This written notice shall outline any requirements or actions necessary for the student to address to maintain or achieve good academic standing. Students will have two semesters to address any outlined issues in the written notice. Extensions will be considered in very exceptional documented cases.

After the student has been notified in writing by the Chair or Graduate Director regarding current or potential issues in maintaining satisfactory progress toward their degree the student has two semesters to achieve good academic standing. If, after two semesters, the student does not achieve and maintain good academic standing as defined in the UNM catalog, the department will notify the student and the Dean of Graduate Studies in writing that the student is disenrolled from further work in that program. Disenrolled students are not eligible to continue work in any graduate degree program in the University for one calendar year from the date of disenrollment. Readmission after the disenrollment period requires the approval of the department to which the student has applied for readmission and of the Dean of Graduate Studies. For more information on Academic Standing and Grade Requirements see the UNM Catalog:
(<https://catalog.unm.edu/#/policy/rJc2efIXo?bc=true&bcCurrent=Academic%20Standing%20and%20Grade%20Requirements&bcGroup=The%20Graduate%20Program&bcItemType=policies>)

Note: A student record reflecting two incompletes, which extend beyond one semester, will be considered grounds for automatic disenrollment.

COURSEWORK

All courses must carry graduate credit within the department in which the course is offered. In the case of American Studies, this means courses numbered 500 and above. **Note:** *Not all courses with 500-level course numbers are graduate seminars! It is your responsibility to check and verify the course's status in consultation with the Director of Graduate Studies.*

For 500 level and above courses outside the department, it is advised that students consult the Director of Graduate Studies to verify that the course is a graduate seminar. To do so, students should submit the course syllabus to the Director of Graduate Studies at the start of the semester for verification.

AMST 500 (American Culture Studies Proseminar) is the only specific graduate seminar required of all MA and PhD American Studies graduate students. AMST 500 must be taken during the first semester of their coursework. *Alternatives to this requirement may be provided at the discretion of the department under exceptional circumstances.*

AMST 500, the proseminar, introduces first-year MA and PhD graduate students to the field of American Studies. Over the course of the semester, the first-year cohort of students work to develop a shared frame of reference for the multiple ways in which American Studies scholars utilize, reimagine, and/or challenge the interdisciplinary range of texts that circulate as touchstones for the field. Readings and course discussion provide

students with knowledge of the multiple disciplinary perspectives and thematic fields most relevant to the specific formation of American Studies at UNM.

- **All American Studies graduate students are required to take a minimum of four (4) 500 level and above graduate seminars (12 credit hours) offered by American Studies Department faculty, including the American Studies proseminar (AMST 500), with an “AMST” course number,**
- **All American Studies graduate students are also required to take an additional minimum of four (4) 500 level and above graduate seminars (12 credit hours) with either American Studies Department faculty or Department Affiliate faculty. A regularly updated list is available on the department’s website. (<https://americanstudies.unm.edu/about-us/people/index.html>)**
- **The remaining credit hours needed to satisfy course requirements must be a combination of 500 level and above graduate seminars either within or outside the Department of American Studies, independent study credit (no more than 3 hours of independent study credits for MA students and no more than 6 hours of independent study credits for PhD students) or Thesis (6 hours)/Dissertation credit hours (18 hours).**

Students are encouraged to take these required American Studies graduate seminars from multiple faculty members in the department. *Keep in mind that coursework is an invaluable time during which to develop relationships with faculty who may later serve on your comprehensive exam and/or thesis or dissertation committees.*

Students who are admitted to the PhD program after completing the MA in American Studies at UNM will be exempt from repeating the American Studies proseminar (AMST 500). However, they must complete a total of 8 graduate seminars (24 credit hours) within the department, which can be included in their combined MA and PhD coursework. Students must also meet academic residence requirements and continuous enrollment regulations appropriate to their degree program (see “Residence Requirement” and “Thesis and Dissertation” below).

MA and PhD Degrees Minimum Credit Hour Requirement Summary

MA Plan I (Thesis)

9 courses (27 credit hours) + 6 thesis credit hours (AMST 599)

No more than 3 credit hours of independent study credit (AMST 597)

MA Plan II (Comprehensive Exam)

11 courses (33 credit hours)

No more than 3 credit hours of independent study credit (AMST 597)

PhD (admitted without previously earned MA)

11 courses (33 credit hours to earn MA on route to the PhD)

6 courses (18 credit hours post-MA coursework for a total of 51 credit hours)

+ 18 dissertation credit hours (AMST 699)

No more than 6 credit hours of independent study credit (AMST 697), for a total maximum of 9 credit hours of combined MA & PhD independent study credit

PhD (admitted with previously earned MA)

10 courses (30 credit hours) + 18 dissertation credit hours (AMST 699)

No more than 6 credit hours of independent study credit (AMST 697), for a total maximum of 9 credit hours of combined MA & PhD independent study credit

Master of Arts

Plan I (Thesis)

1. A minimum of 27 hours of coursework.
2. A minimum of 6 additional hours of thesis (AMST 599) credit.
3. At least 18 hours completed in residence at UNM.
4. No more than 3 hours of independent study credit (AMST 597).

Plan II (MA Comprehensive Exam)

1. A minimum of 33 hours of coursework.
2. At least 27 of these credit hours must be completed in residence at UNM.
3. No more than 3 hours of independent study credit.

Plan III (Coursework only)

1. A minimum of 33 hours of coursework.
2. At least 27 of these credits must be completed in residence at UNM.
3. No more than 3 hours of independent studies

No capstone project required. This plan is designed for students who were admitted directly to the PhD program without having previously earned a master's degree. These students will earn the MA in American Studies as they progress toward earning the PhD.

Doctorate

Students admitted directly to the PhD program **without a previously earned Masters (MA):**

1. Must complete the American Studies MA Plan III requirements detailed above.
2. Must have a *minimum* total of 8 graduate seminars (24 credit hours total) offered within the Department in their combined MA and PhD coursework. Four of these graduate seminars *must* be taken with faculty in American Studies and four may be taken with American Studies Affiliate Faculty.
3. A minimum of 18 credit hours post-MA coursework (in other words, a minimum of 51 total credit hours of combined MA and PhD coursework.)
4. Must complete at least 18 additional hours of dissertation credit (AMST 699)
5. Only 6 hours of PhD coursework may be completed through individual study (AMST 697), for a maximum total of 9 hours of individual study in combined MA and PhD coursework.
6. At least 24 of the total 48 PhD credit hours must be completed at UNM.
7. Doctoral candidates must be enrolled in AMST 699 the semester in which they complete their degrees, including summer sessions.

Students admitted to the PhD **with a previously earned Masters (MA):**

1. Must complete a minimum of 30 credit hours post-MA coursework
2. Must complete at least 18 additional hours of dissertation credit (AMST 699)
3. Only 6 credit hours of PhD coursework may be in individual study (AMST 697), for a maximum total of 9 credit hours individual study in combined MA and PhD coursework.
4. Must complete at least 24 of the total 48 PhD credit hours must be completed at UNM.
5. Doctoral candidates must be enrolled in AMST 699 the semester in which they complete their degrees, including summer sessions.

Note: Students who were admitted to the MA in American Studies at UNM and ***completed their MA at UNM before applying to the PhD program*** will be exempt from repeating AMST 500 (because they have already completed the sequence during their MA) and must have a *minimum* total of 8 graduate seminars (24 credit hours total) offered within the Department in their combined MA and PhD coursework. Students must also meet academic residence requirements and continuous enrollment regulations

appropriate to their degree program (see “Residence Requirements” and “Thesis and Dissertation” below).

Minors

The graduate minor in American Studies is available only to students at the Master’s level. To complete the minor:

Plan I (Thesis) MA Students: Earn 9 credit hours of 500-level courses (seminars).

Plan II (Exam) MA Students: Earn 12 credit hours of 500-level courses (seminars).

Under either plan, 1–3 credit hours of Independent Study with a faculty member in American Studies can count toward the minor.

American Studies graduate students wishing to complete a minor in another department may do so in consultation with their advisors and must contact the other department for specific guidelines. American Studies faculty will not serve on committees of studies for minors in other departments. MA Plan I students may take no more than 6 hours of graduate coursework in a single other department; MA Plan II students are limited to 12 hours of graduate coursework in a single department other than American Studies.

INCOMPLETE POLICY

A student with two incompletes that extend beyond one semester will be considered grounds for automatic disenrollment.

COURSEWORK RESIDENCE REQUIREMENTS

The American Studies Department requires that all courses taken after admission to the Department be taken at the University of New Mexico.

The following residency requirements refer to credits taken prior to admission to the Department of American Studies. The graduate school allows MA applicants to transfer credits from a comparable MA program. Transferring credits requires that a student submit formal petition to the department in consultation with the department’s Director of Graduate Studies. Approval of transfer credits is done at the discretion of the American Studies Department.

The following Graduate Studies residence requirements do not apply to coursework taken after admission to the Department:

Master of Arts

Students who have received course credit toward an MA from a program outside of UNM may petition to have that course credit transferred to count toward their MA degree in the UNM American Studies program. The decision to accept courses taken prior to admission is at the

discretion of the Department of American Studies. Transfer credit may not exceed 50% of the total credit hours of coursework that count toward the MA degree at UNM.

Doctorate

For the PhD, the minimum residence requirement is at least eighteen (18) credit hours completed at UNM after the admission into the PhD program.

LANGUAGE REQUIREMENT AND ALTERNATIVE RESEARCH TOOL

Master of Arts

Currently, there is no foreign language requirement for the MA.

Doctorate

Before a student may take the comprehensive exam, they must satisfy the Graduate Studies language or alternate research tool requirement and file the “Certification of Language or Alternate Research Tool Requirement” form (<https://grad.unm.edu/resources/graduate-students/gs-forms/documents/language-skills.pdf>) Students who select the language option should, if possible, choose a language that may be useful in their research.

Language competency may be demonstrated in one of the following ways:

- Four (4) semesters of coursework in the language with a grade of B or above (may be part of undergraduate coursework or other coursework taken elsewhere)
- A graduate-level course in that language with a grade of B or above
- A minor or its equivalent in the language (may be completed elsewhere)
- Passing the ETS examination in the chosen language
- Passing an exam given by the Foreign Languages and Literatures or the Spanish and Portuguese department
- Student speaks the language with near-native ability as certified by UNM
- Student is a foreign student with a good command of English and their native language meets the language requirement

Students wishing to propose an alternative option for fulfilling the Language Requirement may petition to the department to substitute an Alternate Research Tool as described below.

Alternate Research Tool

The Alternate Research Tool option enables students to develop proficiency in research skills relevant to their dissertation. Students who wish to pursue this option must, after consulting with their faculty advisor, submit a proposal (1-2 pages) that explains and justifies the alternate research skill and specifies the coursework that satisfies this requirement. In some cases, coursework completed previously, elsewhere, may be acceptable. This proposal must be

accepted by the department and approved by the student’s advisor, the graduate advisor, and the department chair. Examples include proficiency in a technical or artistic skill.

ENROLLMENT

Frequently, to verify enrollment to determine eligibility for financial aid and loan deferment, the University is required to certify the enrollment status of a student. In such instances a student’s course load is described as full-time, half time, or part-time according to the following:

- A. **Academic Year**
 - 1. Full-time
9 or more credit hours per semester
6 credit hours per semester and an assistantship
 - 2. Half-time
5 – 8 credit hours per semester
 - 3. Less than half-time
4 or fewer credit hours per semester
- B. **Summer Session**
 - 1. Full-time
6 credit hours or more
3 credit hours and an assistantship
 - 2. Half-time
3 – 5 credit hours
 - 3. Less than half-time 1 – 2 credit hours

Note: Students with loans or other external funding are encouraged to verify what constitutes full-time status with their lender, as it may differ from University standards.

IMPORTANT UNM GRADUATE STUDIES DEADLINES

Deadline	Summer	Fall	Spring
Program of Study	March 1st	July 1st	October 1st
Application for Candidacy	Deadline last day of the Spring term.	Deadline last day of the Summer term.	Deadline last day of the Fall term.

Deadline	Summer	Fall	Spring
Degree Requirement Completion*	July 15 by 5:00 p.m. MST	November 15 by 5:00 p.m. MST	April 15 by 5:00 p.m. MST

**Includes submission of thesis/dissertation, Report of Exam, etc by 5:00 p.m. MST.*

Definitions

Program of Study: Refers to the courses a student has taken (or is enrolled to take) that fulfill the American Studies Department coursework requirements for either the MA or PhD degree.

Candidacy: Refers to the stage at which doctoral students have completed all the requirements for their doctorate except for the doctoral dissertation. Students are Advanced to Candidacy (**All But Dissertation/ABD**) by the Dean of Graduate Studies in the term when all the following criteria have been met: The doctoral comprehensive examination has been passed; Graduate Studies has approved the Application for Candidacy; and the Language requirement is satisfied.

Forms, Guidelines, and Checklists

- UNM Graduate Studies **Forms** are available at <https://grad.unm.edu/resources/graduate-students/gs-forms/index.html>
- Guidelines for Completing the **Program of Studies** are available at <https://grad.unm.edu/resources/graduate-students/gs-forms/pos-masters.html>
(*Note that the guidelines provided indicate they are for the MA, but this is required for PhD students as well, even though Graduate Studies does not provide separate guidelines for the PhD.*)

COMMITTEE COMPOSITION

Master of Arts

MA students who elect the non-thesis (Plan II) option must form a comprehensive exam committee, following the guidelines listed under "Comprehensive Examinations" below. Students who select the Thesis option (Plan I) for the MA are required to form a Committee on Studies (see "Thesis and Dissertation – Thesis Committee").

Doctorate

Each doctoral student is required to have a Committee on Studies. The Committee on Studies, which will also serve as the Examination Committee, must be formed in consultation with the

faculty advisor. The committee should consist of three UNM faculty members who hold regular, full-time appointments. At least two of the committee members must be from the American Studies core faculty. Normally, the student's faculty advisor serves as chair of the Committee on Studies.

Committee composition requires final approval by the department chair and the graduate school dean. Students may arrange changes or additions to the committee membership in consultation with the chair of their committee, the graduate advisor, and the department chair. If a committee member is not a UNM faculty member, their vita will need to be secured for approval of committee service by Graduate Studies.

COMPREHENSIVE EXAMINATIONS

The comprehensive exam at both the MA and PhD levels is designed to test depth and breadth of knowledge in American Studies teaching and research fields. In consultation with the faculty exam committee, students are expected to develop a bibliography and write an exam that crosses at least two of the department's fields of study. Once the student has identified the fields of study, they then define the research concentrations that emerge out of their specific set of courses and research projects completed while pursuing the degree. MA students are expected to develop two research concentrations, and PhD students are expected to develop three research concentrations. The exam fields and research concentrations should be designed around academic specializations with which the students have established familiarity.

Each research concentration should be organized around a distinct scholarly literature with authors engaged in a related set of questions and subject of inquiry. The bibliography for each concentration is expected to reflect the major contours and current issues in the scholarly literature related to the area of concentration. In general, the scope of a concentration should be narrow enough to allow the student to master the principal scholarly literature in the topic area and broad enough to define an undergraduate course. Examples include: Environmental Justice, Southwest Studies, Visual Culture, Queer Theory, Diaspora Literatures, and Theories of the Modern State. Keep in mind that the exam question incorporates and addresses the two or three concentrations together. Therefore, it is to your advantage when designing the concentrations to consider ways that each list might in some way speak to or intersect with the other. At the same time, the concentrations should not be too closely aligned, as they are subconcentrations of a single literature (for example: Subaltern Studies, Postcolonial Theory, and United States Imperialism).

The comprehensive exam differs from a research paper, in which students develop and argue a specific thesis based on primary and/or secondary sources. In contrast to a research paper, the objective of the comprehensive exam is to show that you have read and understood the literature on your concentration list to the degree that you can discuss a broad spectrum of that literature in a synthetic and coherent manner.

American Studies teaching and research concentrations are often interdisciplinary; therefore, we ask each student taking a comprehensive exam to prepare a 3–5-page comprehensive exam statement, in which they describe the exam concentrations.

After approving the comprehensive exam statement, the exam committee will work with the student to develop the bibliographies for each concentration. Once the committee has approved the comprehensive exam and bibliographies, the committee chair, in consultation with the committee, will write one exam question. The exam question will be addressed to the exam concentrations.

Comprehensive exams at the PhD level are intended both to prepare students to begin dissertation work and to demonstrate mastery of the breadth and depth of the exam concentrations.

MA Comprehensive Exam

The process of preparing for and writing the MA exam should enable students to synthesize material from their MA coursework and to develop areas of special concentration and expertise. Students who plan to pursue a PhD may define their comprehensive concentrations in anticipation of their future course of study.

Examination Committee

After preliminary advancement to candidacy (following 27 hours and completion of the CGCS) and at least four months before the anticipated date of the comps, master's students should meet with their faculty advisor to determine membership of the Examination Committee. The committee will consist of at least three members with approval for graduate instruction, two of which must hold regular, full-time UNM faculty appointments. Additionally, at least two committee members (one of whom must be the Committee Chair) must be from American Studies.

Exam Schedule

MA students may schedule comprehensive exams for the semester in which they will finish coursework. **At least four (4) months before the anticipated date of the comprehensive exam**, an MA student should meet with their faculty advisor to discuss potential areas of concentration and to plan how the student will work with their exam committee to prepare for the exam. Working with their exam committee, the student will develop a comprehensive exam statement (3-5 pages) that defines the parameters of and provides a rationale for the exam fields. Once the committee has agreed to the fields defined in the comprehensive exam statement, the student will work with the committee to develop a bibliography centered on their exam fields. We strongly urge students to work closely with the individual faculty member whose work is most closely related to each student's defined areas of concentration to develop an appropriate bibliography that encompasses the significant literature on that field or topic.

Three (3) months before the anticipated date of the comps, students should have secured preliminary approval for each of the bibliographic sections from the faculty member with whom they have been working to develop it.

Students will submit to each exam committee member a “Comprehensive Examination Statement and Bibliography” with the following format:

- The comprehensive exam statement (3-5 pages)
- A comprehensive set of fully cited bibliographic entries divided by area/field and arranged alphabetically within each section.

Exam committee members will have two weeks to suggest changes to the bibliography. In consultation with the committee chair, the student will incorporate these changes and produce a final version of the bibliography. All members of the committee must sign this version at least six (6) weeks prior to the examination.

As preparation for the exam, we urge students to meet regularly with committee members to discuss the readings included on the bibliography. Students should initiate a meeting with the committee chair followed by the committee members to discuss frequency and duration of meetings related to preparing for the comprehensive exam. In some cases, an independent study with the committee chair and/or committee member(s) is appropriate to provide structure, and clear expectations about mentorship through the comprehensive exam process.

At least three weeks prior to the exam, students should inform the department administrator of their intention to take the exam, the scheduled date and time, and their exam committee membership. Graduate Studies must receive the “Announcement of Examination” form listing the exam committee members and approved by the department chair at least two weeks prior to the exam. No examination can be given unless this form has been properly completed and filed. The form can be retrieved electronically at <https://grad.unm.edu/resources/graduate-students/gs-forms/announcement-examination.html>.

Between two and three weeks before the scheduled start of the exam, the exam committee, led by the student’s advisor, will develop the exam question and submit it to the department administrator. Both the graduate director and the department chair sign the final copy of the comprehensive exam question. Within 24 hours after receiving the question, the student may contact the exam committee chair for clarification of this question.

MA comps must be completed and submitted to the department office in seven (7) days. They should be typed and double-spaced, with one-inch margins and standard font. The Departmental style sheet is the Chicago Manual of Style, which can be referenced in the Department office. The exam response should be 30-35 pages in length. The student is responsible for distributing copies of the exam response and question to each exam committee member and for providing a copy for the department file.

PhD Comprehensive Exam

The areas of concentration defined for the PhD comprehensive exam should provide the foundation for dissertation research and writing (including subject matter, methodology and/or theory), but should also be thought of as the fields in which the student plans to claim expertise as they seek academic or other professional employment.

In consultation with their Committee on Studies, a student will develop a comprehensive exam statement that defines the parameters and rationale for the exam fields. After each committee member has approved the statement, the student will work closely with the committee members to develop a bibliography covering their exam fields. This bibliography should not consist merely of texts the student has encountered in their coursework. Rather, it should represent a concerted attempt to develop expertise in several (commonly three or four) well-defined fields of knowledge.

Examination Committee

A doctoral candidate's examination committee is composed of the three members of their Committee on Studies. Students should initiate a meeting with the committee chair followed by the committee members to discuss frequency and duration of meetings related to preparing for the comprehensive exam. In some cases, an independent study with the committee chair and/or committee member(s) is appropriate to provide structure, and clear expectations about mentorship through the comprehensive exam process.

Exam Schedule

At least five (5) months before the anticipated date of the comprehensive exam, a PhD student should meet with their faculty advisor to discuss potential areas of concentration and to plan how the student will work with their exam committee to prepare for the exam. We strongly urge students to work closely with the individual faculty member whose work is most closely related to each student's defined areas of concentration to develop the comprehensive exam statement and an appropriate bibliography that encompasses the significant literature on that field or topic.

Four (4) months before the anticipated date of the comps, students should have submitted and secured preliminary approval for the comprehensive exam statement and each of the bibliographic sections from the faculty member with whom they have been working to develop it.

At this point, students will submit to each exam committee member a "Comprehensive Examination Statement and Bibliography" with the following format:

- The comprehensive exam statement (5-7 pages)
- A comprehensive set of fully cited bibliographic entries divided by area/field and arranged alphabetically within each section.

Exam committee members will have two weeks to suggest changes to the bibliography. In consultation with the committee chair, the student will incorporate these changes and produce a final version of the overview and bibliography. All members of the committee must sign this version at least six (6) weeks prior to the examination.

As preparation for the exam, we encourage students to meet regularly with committee members to discuss the readings listed in the bibliography.

At least three weeks prior to the exam, students should inform the department administrator of their intention to take the exam, the scheduled date and time, and their exam committee membership. Graduate Studies must receive the “**Announcement of Examination**” form listing the exam committee members and approved by the department chair at least two weeks prior to the exam. No examination can be given unless this form has been properly completed and filed. The form can be retrieved electronically at <https://grad.unm.edu/resources/graduate-students/gs-forms/announcement-examination.html>. **Note:** If students are turning in their Announcement of Exam form for a subsequent semester, they must be registered for that semester before Graduate Studies will approve the form.

Between two and three weeks prior to the scheduled start of the exam, the exam committee will discuss and agree on a comprehensive examination question, which the committee chair will finalize. Both the graduate director and the department chair sign the final copy of the comprehensive exam question. Within 24 hours of receiving the question, the student may contact the Exam Committee Chair for clarification.

PhD comps must be completed and submitted to the department office in fourteen (14) days. The Departmental style sheet is the Chicago Manual of Style, which can be referenced in the Department office. They should be typed and double-spaced, with one-inch margins. The exam response should be 40-45 pages in length. The student is responsible for distributing copies of the exam response and question to each exam committee member and for providing a copy for the department file.

Comprehensive exams will be graded, and the student notified of the results within two weeks of their completion. After formal notification of results by the department, students should contact their exam committee chair to arrange a review of the readers’ comments. Comps may be judged: Pass, Minor revisions required, or Fail. Minor revisions must be submitted within one week (MA) or two weeks (PhD) of notification. Students who fail their comps may retake them once within six months of the original test date.

They must enroll for at least one semester of independent study with a faculty member in American Studies before retaking their exam. The second attempt at comps is a pass/fail situation; minor revision will not be possible.

IMPORTANT NOTE: Both MA and PhD comps are take-home exams. Students must back up computer files and keep hard copies of their exams-in-progress. Only with such evidence can judicious extensions be made to accommodate mechanical failure.

ADVANCEMENT TO CANDIDACY

Before advancement to candidacy, doctoral students have must have successfully completed all the requirements for their doctorate except for the doctoral dissertation. Students are advised to

make a list of proposed coursework to submit to their advisor and the Graduate Director at the beginning of their last semester of coursework.

- Students must submit an [Application for Candidacy \(AC\)](#) that lists all the courses applicable to their degree. The form should be filed during the term in which the student passes the comprehensive examination and no later than the last day of the term preceding the one in which the student intends to graduate.
- Students are Advanced to Candidacy (All But Dissertation/ABD) by the Dean of Graduate Studies in the term when all the following criteria have been met:
 1. The doctoral comprehensive examination has been passed;
 2. Graduate Studies has approved the Application for Candidacy; and
 3. Language/skill requirement (if appropriate) is satisfied.

Master of Arts

At the MA level, after completion of the two core courses and 27 hours of resident graduate credit, students secure a Program of Studies form from the Office of Graduate Studies website (<https://grad.unm.edu/resources/graduate-students/gs-forms/pos-masters.html>). In consultation with the student's faculty advisor, the candidate lists completed and projected coursework and declares election of either Plan I (thesis), Plan II (non-thesis), or Plan III (coursework only). The form is then signed by the student, their faculty advisor, and the department chair before being sent to OGS for the approval of the Dean of Graduate Studies. OGS requires that the approved Program of Studies form is received in their office at least one semester before the student plans to graduate.

Doctorate

At the PhD level, after successful completion of coursework and the comprehensive examination, students secure an Application for Candidacy from the Office of Graduate Studies website (<https://grad.unm.edu/resources/graduate-students/gs-forms/application-candidacy.html>). In consultation with the student's faculty advisor, the candidate lists completed coursework. The student, their faculty advisor, and the department chair must sign the application before it is sent to OGS for the approval of the Dean of Graduate Studies.

The PhD residence requirements and foreign language requirement (see above “Residence Requirements” and “Language Requirement and Alternative Research Tool”) must be completed and reported before doctoral students may take the comprehensive exam. After successful completion of the comprehensive examination the student will be formally advanced to candidacy.

THESIS AND DISSERTATION

IMPORTANT NOTE: The following regulations supersede the minimum standards set by UNM Graduate Studies, particularly regarding the specific membership of committees.

The MA Thesis

The MA thesis should be modeled on a scholarly journal article and should be **approximately 50 pages** in length and based on original research.

The MA thesis is a semester-long project, equivalent to the work done for the MA comprehensive exam or to six hours of coursework.

Thesis Credit Hours

Students opting for the MA with thesis must complete a minimum of six (6) hours of thesis (599) credit. While working on the thesis, students must continue to register for a minimum of one hour of 599 each fall and spring semester until they submit the thesis, and the Dean of Graduate Studies approves it. Thesis candidates must be enrolled the semester in which they complete degree requirements, including summer sessions. Enrollment in 599 thesis hours may not begin prior to the semester in which the thesis is being written.

Important Dates

To receive a spring semester degree, a student must file their thesis with Graduate Studies by April 15. That means that thesis committee members should have the completed thesis in hand by mid-March, and the thesis defense should be scheduled by April 1. For a fall semester degree, the thesis must be filed with Graduate Studies by November 15, with the draft to the committee by mid-October. A student who wishes to complete their thesis during the spring semester but cannot meet a mid-March deadline may defend during the spring semester after the April Graduate Studies deadline but will receive the degree in the summer semester. Faculty members are generally not available to serve on MA thesis committees during summer months.

MA Thesis Committee

Plan I (thesis) master's students must formally constitute a Thesis Committee before enrolling for thesis (599) credit. Students initiate the formation of their committee by selecting a faculty member to serve as director of the thesis and chair of the committee. Then they agree upon the remainder of the committee and complete a departmental "Appointment of Thesis Committee" form, which must be endorsed by the department chair. (At this time, Graduate Studies has no form for constituting a thesis committee.) MA thesis committees must include at least three faculty members with approval for graduate instruction, two of whom must hold regular, full-time UNM faculty appointments; the chair of the committee must be from within the American Studies Department. If a committee member is not UNM faculty, their vita will need to be secured for approval for graduate committee service by Graduate Studies.

MA Thesis Prospectus

The thesis prospectus should be completed in the semester before the student plans to write the thesis. The prospectus should be 5 pages in length. It must offer a clear statement of topic and an explanation of the major research question or argument that will structure the thesis. The prospectus must also specify the primary sources, texts, or other data on which the thesis will be based, as well as information about the availability of the materials to the student. The prospectus should conclude with a brief statement discussing the significance of the project and a very specific plan (with target dates) for the research and writing stages of the thesis. A one-page bibliography of relevant secondary works and a one-page CV should be attached to the prospectus. If a student plans to do ethnographic research, oral histories, interviews, or surveys, they must receive approval from UNM's IRB before conducting such research.

Approval of Prospectus

After the thesis chair has approved the proposal, it must be submitted (with the "Committee Evaluation Form" cover sheet, available through the department office) for the approval of other members of the committee. The graduate director (if they are not already a member of the committee) will also read the prospectus. Committee members will evaluate the prospectus and return it, with comments, within two weeks. The prospectus is not considered accepted until all committee members approve it. A copy of the approved prospectus should be filed in the student's departmental file.

Thesis Style and Suggested Length

The Departmental style sheet is the Chicago Manual of Style, which can be referenced in the Department office. Suggested length for the MA Thesis is 50 pages. Graduate Studies manuscript guidelines and required front matter forms can be obtained from the Graduate Studies website (<http://grad.unm.edu/degree-completion/index.html>).

Thesis Submission

A complete draft of the thesis should be submitted to the student's committee chair and their faculty committee well in advance of the anticipated defense date. The MA defense should be scheduled no later than the end of October in fall and the end of March in spring. After approval by the full thesis committee, one hardbound copy of the final manuscript is deposited with the department administrator, and an electronic copy is to be submitted to Graduate Studies for approval. For a student to graduate in a given semester, Graduate Studies must receive the thesis, all required forms, and all other degree requirements by November 15, April 15, or July 15, for fall, spring, or summer respectively.

Thesis Defense

The thesis defense is an hour-long discussion of the thesis and its significance and is required for completion of the degree.

Three weeks prior to the defense, students should inform the department administrator of their intention to defend, the scheduled date, time, and location, and the committee composition. As with the comprehensive exams, Graduate Studies must receive the “Announcement of Examination” form listing the thesis committee members and approved by the department chair at least two weeks prior to the exam. No defense can be held unless this form is properly completed and filed. The form can be retrieved electronically at <https://grad.unm.edu/resources/graduate-students/gs-forms/announcement-examination.html>.

The final defense is public and open to all who wish to attend. Candidates should note that the Catalog directs that a complete copy of the thesis must be submitted to each member of the committee at least two weeks before the final defense. The student is also responsible for giving each committee member a copy of the department “Guidelines for Thesis Defense” (available in the department office).

To graduate in a given semester, the student and/or department must submit all required documents to Graduate Studies, by November 15, April 15, or July 15 for fall, spring or summer respectively. It is up to the student to be aware of the current requirements and policies concerning required documentation and formatting guidelines.

The student should meet with a Graduate Studies representative to ensure compliance with the electronic formatting and submission guidelines. All required forms can be found at the Graduate Studies website. A hardbound copy of the thesis is deposited with the department administrator. Check with the manuscript coordinator at Graduate Studies about procedure for binding.

PhD Dissertation Committee

The Dissertation Committee is constituted in the same way as the Thesis Committee. Doctoral students formally constitute a Dissertation Committee after successfully passing the comprehensive exam.

- Students initiate the formation of their committee by selecting a faculty member to serve as director of the dissertation and chair of the committee. The dissertation committee chair and the student together decide upon the remainder of the committee.
- The dissertation committee must include at least **four (4) members approved for graduate instruction**.
- The **committee chair must be a core (tenured or tenure-track) member of the American Studies department**. A co-chair may be added, with department approval, and may be from inside or outside UNM.
- **At least two members (including the chair) must be regular, full-time faculty members in American Studies**.
- One of the members must be “external,” meaning he or she must hold a regular (tenured or tenure-track) position outside the American Studies department. This member may be from another UNM department or from another university. Scholars who do not hold faculty positions in colleges or universities are not usually accepted by Graduate Studies to satisfy this requirement.

- One of the members may be a non-faculty expert in the student's research area. This person need not hold a faculty position but must be approved for graduate committee service by Graduate Studies.
- Up to three of the members may be drawn from the American Studies department. Additional members beyond the required 4 may be appointed in consultation with the committee chair.

If a committee member is not UNM faculty, the student will need to obtain their CV as Graduate Studies must approve non-UNM personnel for graduate committee service.

PhD Dissertation Credit Hours

The program for the doctorate includes a minimum of 18 hours of dissertation (699) credit. While working on the dissertation, students must continue to register for at least three hours of 699 each fall and spring semester until the dean of Graduate Studies approves the dissertation. Doctoral candidates must be enrolled the semester in which they complete degree requirements, including summer sessions. Enrollment in 699 may not begin prior to the semester in which comprehensive exams are taken.

PhD Dissertation Prospectus and Format

After passing comps and constituting a dissertation committee, students begin work on the prospectus:

- **10-page** exposition of topic, methodology, review of sources, and research plan
- **3–5-page** bibliography.

Only proposals of this length will be accepted. An outline for the dissertation proposal is available in the department office.

Within six (6) months of completing their PhD comprehensive exam, and after approval by their dissertation chair and committee (using the "Committee Evaluation Form" cover sheet available in the department office), students submit the dissertation prospectus to each member of the dissertation committee. The student should schedule a prospectus defense with the entire committee at least two weeks after each member has been given the prospectus. During the prospectus defense, the student will be expected to give the rationale for the project and talk in detail about the feasibility of completing the project as planned. Each member of the dissertation committee must approve the prospectus before the student may proceed to the ABD phase of their graduate career. Because of the importance of the prospectus in shaping the dissertation, students should expect to revise the prospectus multiple times before gaining the approval of the entire committee. The prospectus will have to be revised until the dissertation committee gives its unanimous approval. A copy of the approved prospectus should be filed in the student's departmental file.

Once the original prospectus is approved, any major topic changes and/or changes to the chair of a dissertation committee will require that the student meet with their dissertation committee to gain renewed approval of the changes and the direction of the dissertation.

PhD Dissertation Style

The Departmental style sheet is the Chicago Manual of Style, which can be referenced in the Department office. Graduate Studies manuscript guidelines and required front matter forms can be obtained from the Graduate Studies website.

PhD Dissertation Final Defense and Submission

A final oral examination dealing with the dissertation and its relationship to American Studies is required.

Three weeks prior to the defense, students should inform the department administrator of their intention to defend, the scheduled date, time, and location, and the committee composition. As with the comprehensive exams, Graduate Studies must receive the “Announcement of Examination” form listing the exam committee members and approved by the department chair at least two weeks prior to the exam. No defense can be held unless this form is properly completed and filed. The form can be retrieved at <https://grad.unm.edu/resources/graduate-students/gs-forms/announcement-examination.html>.

The final defense is public and open to all who wish to attend. Candidates should note that the Catalog directs that a complete copy of the dissertation must be submitted to each member of the committee at least two weeks before the final defense. The student is also responsible for giving each committee member a copy of the department “Guidelines for Dissertation Defense” (available in the department office).

To graduate in a given semester, the student and/or department must submit all required documents to Graduate Studies, by November 15, April 15, or July 15 for fall, spring or summer respectively. It is up to the student to be aware of the current requirements and policies concerning required documentation and formatting guidelines.

The student should meet with a Graduate Studies representative to ensure compliance with the electronic formatting and submission guidelines. All required forms can be found at the Graduate Studies website. A hardbound copy of the dissertation is deposited with the department administrator. Check with the manuscript coordinator at Graduate Studies about procedure for binding.

GRADUATION

- Students must notify the degree program of intent to graduate the term prior to the term of graduation. Students should confirm additional deadlines with their program.
- An [**Announcement of Examination form**](#) must be submitted two weeks prior to the dissertation defense date. After passing the dissertation defense, doctoral students must

electronically submit their dissertations within ninety (90) days or by the term graduation deadline, whichever comes first.

- Students must satisfy degree requirements (defended and submitted dissertation) by the deadlines* of July 15 for summer graduation, November 15 for Fall graduation, or April 15 for Spring graduation.
- Students must complete a minimum of 18 hours of dissertation/699. Once students begin enrollment in 699 they must enroll in 699 every term (summer term is excluded, except if the student is graduating in the summer) until the manuscript is accepted by Graduate Studies.
- Students must meet all [dissertation requirements](#). Please refer to the [Graduation Checklist for PhD students](#) or the [Graduation Checklist for EDD students](#). The dissertation must be submitted no later than 90 days after passing the dissertation defense, or the term graduation deadline, whichever comes first. Manuscript formatting guidelines are available through the [Preparing Your Manuscript Tutorial](#) and the [Formatting Guidelines page](#).
- Students who miss the term graduation deadline, but complete degree requirements by the last day of that term may choose to follow the [Courtesy Policy](#).

Deadlines

A. Notification of the Intent to Graduate

Both MA and PhD students must inform the Department of their intent to complete all degree requirements by 5:00 p.m. on the last day of the semester immediately preceding the semester in which they intend to graduate.

B. Report of Exam/Thesis/Dissertation

Results of exams and reports of theses and dissertations must be submitted to OGS on the appropriate form by November 15, April 15, or July 15 to complete graduation requirements in Fall, Spring, or Summer sessions respectively.

C. Graduation Ceremony

Degrees are awarded three times during the year. University Commencement is held in both December and May, and the annual Departmental Convocation takes place in May.

Academic Requirements for Graduation Master of Arts

Plan I (Thesis)

Master's candidates under Plan I (thesis) complete their graduate work by fulfilling coursework requirements and submitting an approved thesis to their department and Graduate Studies.

Plan II (Non-thesis)

Master's candidates under Plan II (non-thesis) complete their graduate work by fulfilling coursework requirements and successfully passing the comprehensive examination.

Plan III (Coursework only)

Master's candidates under Plan III (coursework only) complete their graduate work by fulfilling coursework requirements and submitting the required OGS paperwork in a timely fashion.

Doctorate

Doctoral candidates complete their graduate work by fulfilling coursework requirements, successfully passing the comprehensive examination, and submitting an approved dissertation and report of dissertation defense to their department and **Graduate Studies**.

TIME LIMITS

Master of Arts

Currently, **Graduate Studies stipulates** that all work toward a master's degree must be completed within a seven (7) year period, including any transfer credit from another institution. Those students on federal grants and loans should check carefully with the Student Financial Aid office for their regulations on progress toward the degree and credit hour caps.

Doctorate

A doctoral candidate will have five years for the completion of all degree requirements from the date they successfully pass their comprehensive examination. This time limit includes the oral defense and submission of final dissertation to Graduate Studies. Those students on federal grants and loans should check carefully with the Student Financial Aid office for their regulations on progress toward the degree and credit hour caps.

Note: A student must request an extension of this time limit in writing, the semester before the time limit expires. The request must be supported by the department and approved by the Dean of Graduate Studies. Extensions are not automatic; students must demonstrate progress toward completion of degree requirements (refer to "Annual Progress Review" above and "Leave of Absence and Readmission" below).

GRIEVANCES AND APPEALS

The Department of American Studies follows the "Graduate Student Grievance Procedures" outlined in the Faculty Handbook (<http://handbook.unm.edu/section-d/d176.html>). The following departmental procedures are modeled on those set out in the Faculty Handbook. A grievance is defined therein as including, but not limited to, issues related to "allegedly improper or unreasonable treatment" that impacts a student's academic progress. Note that both the Graduate Student Grievance Procedures policy and the Student Conduct and Grievance Procedure policy defined in the Pathfinder also direct students with grievances "based upon alleged discrimination or sexual harassment" to contact the Office of Equal Opportunity at UNM. A student who is considering whether they have an academic complaint and how to pursue it is encouraged by the Handbook "A student with a complaint related to academic matters is encouraged to consult with

Graduate Studies to discuss the concerns, seek to clarify pertinent rules and regulations governing graduate study, and explore constructive ways to resolve the problem directly with the faculty member or administrator involved when appropriate and equitable. This should occur as soon as reasonably possible after the student has become aware of the problem.”

Once a student has determined that they have a potential grievance to raise with a faculty member in the department, the following are the steps to take. At any point in this process, the student is welcome to bring a peer advocate from within the department to meetings with faculty and administrators.

Should a policy grievance arise, the student should schedule a meeting with the Director of Graduate Studies (DGS) and provide a written statement outlining their concerns and the remedies requested. This statement will be kept confidential as far as the law requires, but any person against whom the complaint is directed will be given an opportunity to respond. The DGS will work with the student and the faculty member to help resolve the dispute. If agreement cannot be reached, the student may appeal to the Chair. The Chair will work with the student and the faculty member to attempt to resolve the dispute. At the Chair’s discretion, the case may be taken to the faculty.

If the concern or dispute has to do with the DGS, the student may take the issue directly to the Chair. If the dispute relates to the Chair, the student takes the complaint to the DGS and from there to the Arts and Sciences Dean if it cannot be resolved in the department.

Once the department Chair has reached a conclusion, the Chair and the DGS will hold a meeting with the student to provide a summary determination of the matter and to give the student a second opportunity to have their position heard again.

If the matter cannot be resolved at the department level, the student may bring the issue to the Arts and Sciences Dean. From there the process is determined by the College Dean and Dean of Graduate Studies as described in the “Graduate Student Grievance Procedure” in the Faculty Handbook.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE AND READMISSION

University policy on leaves of absence is covered in the UNM Catalog. There are two possible options for students.

Leave of Absence

A student who is unable to continue their graduate studies due to exceptional circumstances may request, in advance, a leave of absence. The written request, along with a letter of support from the department chair or graduate director, will be sent to the Graduate Dean, who will make the final decision. Leaves of absence are granted on a semester-by-semester basis. Semesters of approved leave of absence are not counted toward the time to complete the degree so long as the student is not enrolled in any UNM course.

Stop-Out

The stop out is a less formal, but more limited, option than the leave of absence. Students may notify the graduate director in writing that they intend to “stop out” for up to two consecutive semesters (summer semester counts). If the student does not enroll for the third semester, they must reapply for admission. The time spent in a “stop out” does count toward the time in which a degree must be completed.

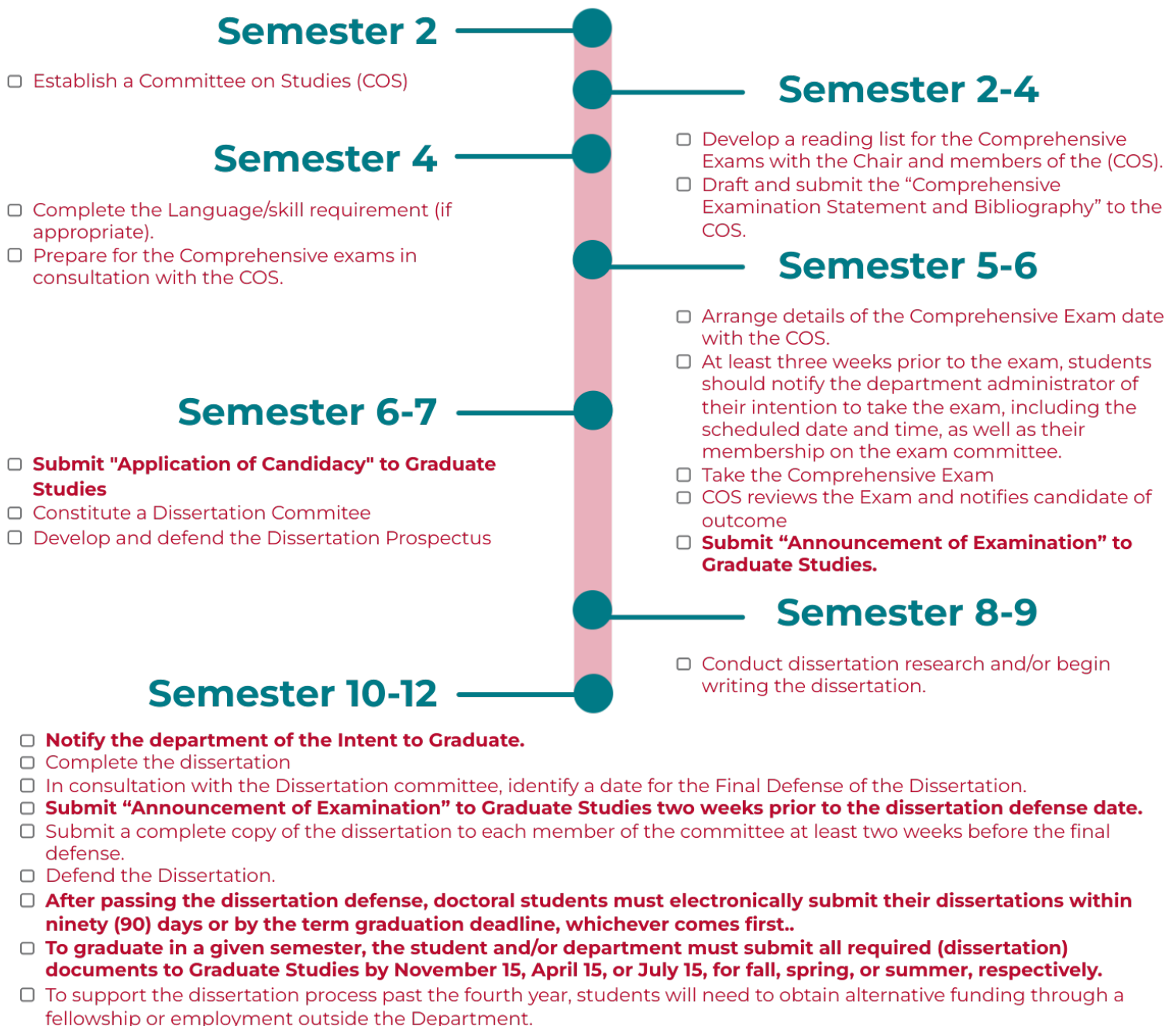
Students are not excused from completing any departmental or university requirements because of leaves of absence or stop-outs.

An absence of three or more semesters, including summer sessions, will result in a student being automatically dropped from the program. A student who is admitted and completes at least one semester of graduate studies in the Department will receive registration materials for three subsequent semesters (including summer sessions). An absence of more than three semesters (including summer sessions) requires that an application form for readmission be filed with the department at least six weeks prior to the beginning of the semester in which the student will be returning.

SUGGESTED SCHEDULES FOR EXPECTED BENCHMARKS FOR MA/PHD DEGREE PROGRESS

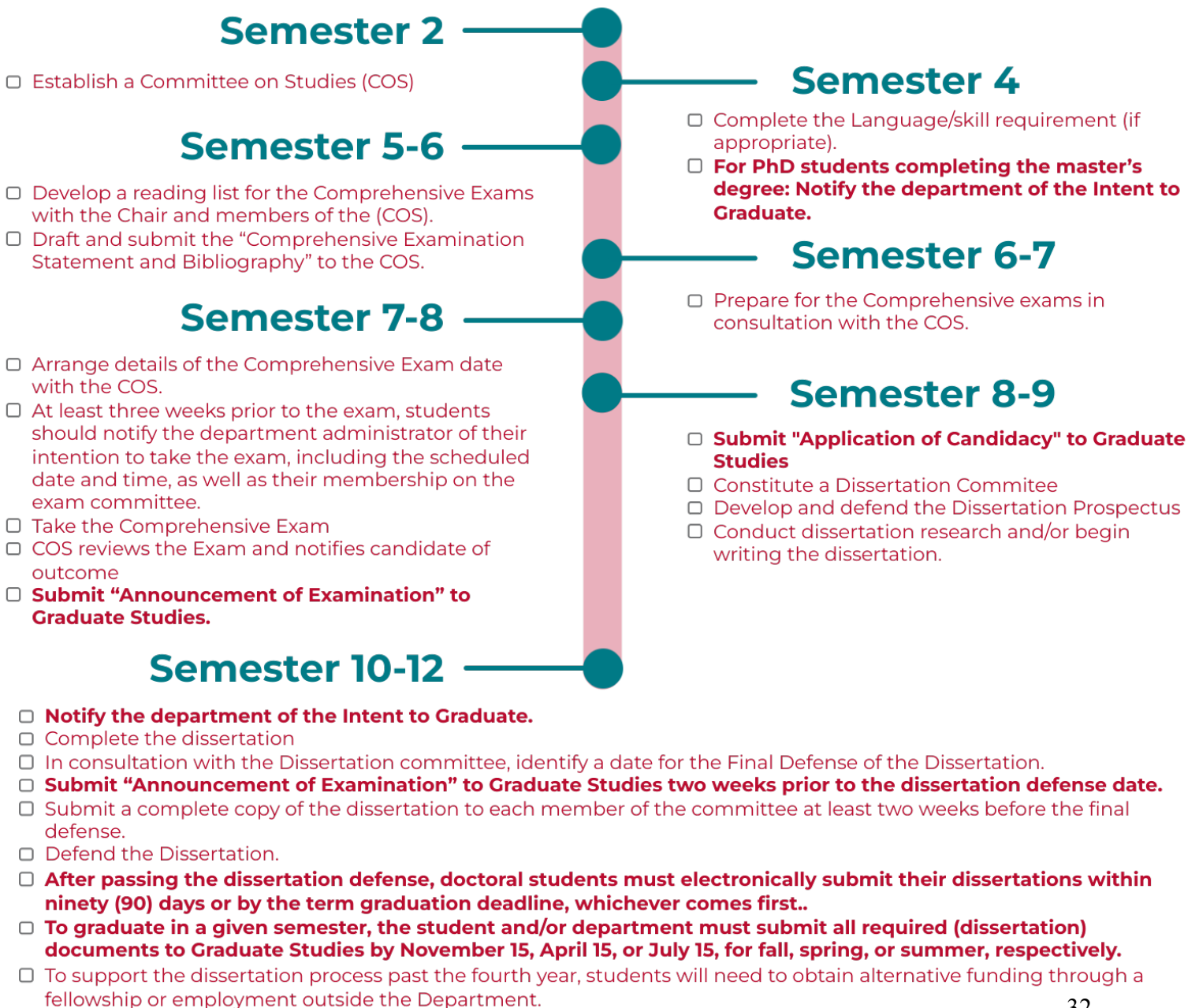
These schedules are only intended to be a guideline with degree benchmarks; each student will complete degree requirements based on their individual needs and circumstances.

Suggested Schedule for Expected Benchmarks for PhD Degree Progress (Entering Program With MA)*



***Bolded Items must be initiated by the student**

Suggested Schedule for Expected Benchmarks for PhD Degree Progress (Entering Program Without MA)



Suggested Schedule for Expected Benchmarks for MA Plan I and Plan II

Semester 1-2

- (MA Plan I)** Select Thesis Committee Chair
- (MA Plan I)** Establish a Thesis Committee
- (MA Plan II)** Establish a Committee on Studies

Semester 3

- (MA Plan I)** Committee approves MA thesis Prospectus
- (MA Plan I)** Register for Thesis Units and begin research/writing the thesis
- (MA Plan II)** Register for Thesis Units and prepare for the Comprehensive exams in consultation with the COS.
- (MA Plan I and Plan II)** Notify the department of the Intent to Graduate by the end of the semester.

Semester 4-5

- (MA Plan I and II)** Register for Thesis Units
- (MA Plan I)** Complete the thesis
- (MA Plan I)** Submit **"Announcement of Examination" to Graduate Studies two weeks prior to the thesis defense date.**
- (MA Plan II)** Submit a complete copy of the thesis to each member of the committee at least two weeks before the final defense.
- (MA Plan I)** Defend the thesis.
- (MA Plan I)** After passing the thesis defense, doctoral students must electronically submit their dissertations within ninety (90) days or by the term graduation deadline, whichever comes first.
- (MA Plan I)** To graduate in a given semester, the student and/or department must submit all required documents (thesis) to Graduate Studies by November 15, April 15, or July 15, respectively, for the fall, spring, and summer semesters.
- (MA Plan II)** Arrange details of the Comprehensive Exam date with the COS.
- (MA Plan II)** At least three weeks prior to the exam, students should inform the department administrator of their intention to take the exam, the scheduled date and time, and their exam committee membership.
- (MA Plan II)** Take the Comprehensive Exam
- (MA Plan II)** COS reviews the Exam and notifies candidate of outcome
- (MA Plan II)** Submit **"Announcement of Examination" to Graduate Studies.**
- (MA Plan I and II)** Graduation

Semester 2

- (MA Plan I)** Begin work on the MA thesis Prospectus
- (MA Plan II)** Develop a reading list for the Comprehensive Exams with the Chair and members of the Committee on Studies (COS).
- (MA Plan II)** Draft and submit the "Comprehensive Examination Statement and Bibliography" to the COS

***Bolded Items must be initiated by the student**