

Mayborn Graduate Student Handbook

Mayborn Graduate Institute of Journalism

Updated Aug. 12, 2026

Preface

If you are considering a career in journalism or any of its many related fields, the Frank W. Mayborn Graduate Institute of Journalism is an excellent choice. The institute offers the only JMC (journalism and mass communication) master's program — Master of Arts in Journalism (M.A.) — nationally accredited by the Accrediting Council on Education in Journalism and Mass Communication (ACEJMC) in the state of Texas, which is also one of the only two within Census Division 7 (West South Central) of Arkansas, Louisiana, Oklahoma and Texas. The institute also launched an interdisciplinary accelerated online program, Master of Science in Digital Communication Analytics (MSDCA), in Fall 2017. All our programs will ensure that you have the skills and knowledge necessary to achieve your individual and professional goals.

The institute offers state-of-the-art technological training and support as well as research and study opportunities, which include news (e.g., print, magazine, photojournalism and multimedia), public relations and advertising (e.g., campaigns, social media, social marketing and persuasion), and digital communication analytics (e.g., predictive analytics, social media metrics, data visualization, NLP and machine learning). Some online classes are available each semester. In addition to skills courses, we have theory-research courses and strong research faculty members to help you write a thesis or prepare you for a Ph.D. program.

One overarching theme present in everything the Mayborn Graduate Institute of Journalism stands for is the importance of storytelling. Storytelling doesn't stop with traditional journalism. It extends to many careers related to journalism, mass communication and online media.

For M.A., which has four core required courses, you will learn the fundamentals of journalism and mass communication, advanced journalistic and PR practices, and the art of storytelling. **For MSDCA**, you will take seven core required and three elective courses that advance your analytics skills further.

Graduates from Mayborn master's programs are successful. For example, Michael J. Mooney (M.J. '11) worked for The Village Voice Media group in Florida and now writes for *GQ*, *Texas Monthly*, *The Atlantic*, and other outlets. He has written a *New York Times* bestselling e-book titled *The Life and Legend of Chris Kyle: American Sniper, Navy SEAL*. Simone Carter (M.A., '22) was a reporter at the *Dallas Observer* and *Newsweek* and is currently a Washington state government reporter at McClatchy Media. Also, Ian Kayanja (M.J., '23) is digital producer at ABC News 4 (WCIV-TV) in Charleston, South Carolina.

Ruchi Shewade (M.A. '20) from India completed her master's thesis and presented her research at academic conferences. She continued to study in the UNT interdisciplinary information science Ph.D. program with journalism concentration and completed it in 2025.

Bobby Kucera (MSDCA, '21) worked full time at Hill+Knowlton Strategies while pursuing his master's degree and was a senior research analyst at FleishmanHillard after graduation. He is currently senior manager of employee communications measurement & insights at AT&T.

The bottom line is that everyone has a story to tell, and *yours* starts here.

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Introduction

The faculty and staff of the Mayborn Graduate Institute of Journalism (“Mayborn Graduate Institute” for short) welcome you to our nationally accredited Master of Arts in Journalism program or our interdisciplinary accelerated online Master of Science in Digital Communication Analytics program. The following information will help you understand how to complete either degree. It is your responsibility to follow all the requirements and procedures involved in attaining your degree. Responsibility for reading the UNT graduate catalog (<http://catalog.unt.edu/>) and knowing the UNT and program requirements rests entirely with you. Select “Graduate Catalog” from a dropdown menu for the academic year you started or will start the program to obtain correct information about the requirements. Note that this document shows URLs for the purposes of both online and print distributions.

Graduate Advising Team

- Dr. Koji Fuse, director of graduate studies and graduate academic advisor (“graduate director” or “graduate advisor” for short): Koji.Fuse@unt.edu; 940-369-8083. The director is responsible for academic advising, approval of class choices, recruitment, and other academic/curricular issues.
- Ms. Nina Melishkevich, administrative coordinator (“graduate coordinator” for short): Nina.Melishkevich@unt.edu; 940-565-4778. The graduate coordinator is responsible for applications, admissions, online registration of some classes, M.A. comprehensive exam, graduation, and other logistic/operational issues.

Graduate Faculty

(<https://class.unt.edu/journalism/people/?department=Mayborn+School+of+Journalism>)

- Thorne Anderson, M.A.
- Christopher Assaf, Ph.D.
- Dorothy Bland, Ph.D.
- Sara Champlin, Ph.D.
- Hoda Emam, M.S.
- Koji Fuse, Ph.D., graduate director/graduate advisor
- Randy Loftis, M.A.
- Brittany McElroy, M.A.
- Marta Mensa, Ph.D.
- James Mueller, Ph.D., director of the Mayborn Graduate Institute of Journalism (“institute director” for short)
- Gwen Nisbett, Ph.D.
- Newly Paul, Ph.D.
- Xiaoqun Zhang, Ph.D.

Mayborn Graduate Institute of Journalism Mission Statement

To prepare students with ethical values and professional skills necessary to practice, teach and conduct research in journalism and mass communication.

Admission to Graduate Program

Applications for admission to any graduate program in journalism begin with the UNT Admissions page (<https://www.unt.edu/admissions/apply-now.html>).

The Mayborn Graduate page (<https://class.unt.edu/journalism/academics/graduate/>) provides basic information about each program. Mayborn employs a rolling admission format, but early application is strongly encouraged.

Graduate Application and Admission Requirements

- **Bachelor's degree:** You must hold a bachelor's degree or its equivalent from a regionally or nationally accredited institution by the time you start your first semester as a master's student.
- **Admission:** Admission to UNT and the Mayborn Graduate Institute of Journalism is determined concurrently. You must complete your online application on GradCAS and receive positive evaluations by a majority of graduate faculty reviewers before the beginning term of study.
- **Mandatory academic advising:** As soon as you're admitted into a Mayborn master's program, you must receive academic advising from the graduate advisor.
- **Prerequisite undergraduate courses (for Master of Arts in Journalism):** Admission to the M.A. program may require you to take certain prerequisite undergraduate courses (JOUR 2310; and/or JOUR 3321 or 3323), particularly if your undergraduate degree is not in journalism or your writing skills are not satisfactory. Graduate faculty reviewers of your application determine if you must take those prerequisites. If you're required to complete any of those prerequisites, you must take and complete them with **at least a grade of B** before or during your first semester of the program. Failure to complete those prerequisites will prevent you from enrolling in graduate classes. Undergraduate prerequisites do **not** count toward your master's degree.

Tips for Success

Successful Mayborn master's students shall:

- Attend a new graduate student orientation.
- Check to see which degree program they are in. **No new students are allowed to pursue any of the past three Mayborn certificates (Public Relations, Narrative Journalism, and Digital Communication Analytics), which were discontinued in March 2026.** Therefore, the Mayborn Graduate Institute only offers the Master of Arts in Journalism (M.A.) program and the Master of Science in Digital Communication Analytics (MSDCA) program.
- Stay in touch with the graduate advisor. Request advising appointments, including the mandatory advising appointment for registration, each semester to ask questions about your degree plan. Many courses, especially the core required courses, can fill quickly. Also, some courses are canceled if they do not meet the minimum enrollment number.
- Enroll themselves during their mandatory advising session. Take care of your account holds before the meeting and have your laptop ready for self-enrollment in real time.
- **Not** register for or drop classes without prior approval from the graduate advisor.
- **Not** engage in any form of academic misconduct, including AI cheating.
- **Not** bother the graduate coordinator with academic/curricular questions.
- Apply for a graduate assistantship if qualified.
- Refer to the Mayborn website (<https://class.unt.edu/journalism/>) and Mayborn Facebook page (<https://www.facebook.com/MaybornUNT>) for important dates and deadlines.
- Look at the UNT graduate catalog (<http://catalog.unt.edu/>) and visit MyUNT (<https://my.unt.edu/>) to find available journalism classes before advising.
- Set up your UNT email account (<https://it.unt.edu/helpdesk/eagleconnect>) and pay attention to announcements sent by email. They contain important information like registration deadlines, internship/career opportunities and upcoming events. Check UNT email regularly or have it forwarded to your personal email account.
- Reply promptly to emails from Mayborn faculty, staff and administrators. In particular, responding to the graduate director/advisor and the graduate coordinator within 24 hours is extremely important because they deal with students' degree and academic progress, as well as other urgent matters.
- Make connections with classmates and keep in touch by forming study groups or online forums for academic and professional collaboration.
- Explore the Graduate Studies website (<https://www.unt.edu/graduate/index.html>) for various events and other support services.
- Go to the Succeed at UNT page (<https://www.unt.edu/success/>) and take advantage of many university perks. They are part of tuition and fees. Use those services, such as money management and counseling.
- Take every opportunity offered in classes and in the program.

Information for International Students

F-1 and J-1 international students must always follow the U.S. immigration laws and rules. For every long semester (i.e., fall and spring), international graduate students must enroll in at least nine (9) credit hours as full-time students, and at least six (6) of those hours must be face-to-face.

For continuing international students who plan to take fall classes, summer is optional. They can take however many credit hours in whatever mode of delivery (either online or face-to-face) during summer or decide to take the entire summer off. However, if they are starting or finishing their program in summer, they are required to be enrolled full-time in face-to-face classes. They must email the International Student and Scholar Services (<https://international.unt.edu/international-students/index.html>) at internationaladvising@unt.edu with the subject line, “Summer 20XX Is My Final Semester.”

The University of North Texas offers a variety of services to international students. Upon arriving on campus, international students must remember to do quite a few things to get settled. Visit the UNT International Affairs website (<https://international.unt.edu/>) to obtain information on how to get a driver’s license, how to apply for a social security card and how to take online classes. Also, visit the Career Center (<https://careercenter.unt.edu/>) to find out what jobs are available.

The beginning of a school term can be overwhelming for students who have just arrived from another country. Having to maintain a full schedule of courses to satisfy visa requirements is also challenging. Therefore, the Mayborn Graduate Institute office can pair you up with returning graduate students to help you through until you reach a level of comfort. We encourage international students to join student clubs and groups and attend university lectures and concerts.

You can find international faculty not only in the Mayborn Graduate Institute but also in other academic units of UNT. Most of them probably have experienced what you have been going through right now. You can seek their advice when appropriate.

Finally, you may come from an academic culture that is vastly different from that of the United States. For example, copying and pasting a published text with minor changes (patchwriting) or an AI-generated text is strictly prohibited in many classes. Read through each syllabus very carefully. Remember that academic misconduct is not tolerated at UNT and will be reported to the **Academic Integrity office** (<https://vpaa.unt.edu/ss/integrity/>).

Academic Standards

The Mayborn Graduate Institute has established an environment of learning and academic honesty for all students who are interested in one of its programs.

All UNT students are responsible for reading through UNT Policy 06.003 titled “Student Academic Integrity” (<https://policy.unt.edu/policy/06-003>) and UNT Policy 07.012 titled “Code of Student Conduct” (<https://policy.unt.edu/policy/07-012>) to understand and adhere to the standards delineated in those policies. Academic misconduct in any form specified in those documents is grounds for dismissal from our programs. Also remember that you can use the graduate tutoring service at the Writing Center (<https://writingcenter.unt.edu/our-services/graduate-tutoring.html>) to improve your writing and avoid academic misconduct. Students will be asked to sign the Mayborn code of conduct upon admission. **As a general principle, you must not use generative AI tools (e.g., ChatGPT, Copilot, Grammarly AI features) to complete your assignments.** However, different instructors handle issues of generative AI tools differently.

Once admitted to the program, Mayborn master’s students must:

- Maintain the minimum cumulative GPA (CGPA) of 2.6 in the first semester and the minimum semester/cumulative GPA of 3.0 in each succeeding semester.
- Complete the coursework within the semester they’re taking it. For a grade of I (incomplete) given under emergency situations, students must complete coursework within the official time limit of one year or a timeframe agreed upon with the instructor to remove an incomplete and replace the grade of I with a new letter grade. To be eligible, students must complete at least 75% of coursework, and they are passing the course (<https://vpaa.unt.edu/advising/dropping/rules.html>). See the “Removal of I (Incomplete)” section under “Academics” of the UNT Graduate Catalog for more information (<https://catalog.unt.edu/content.php?catoid=39&navoid=4547>).
- **Retake all core required courses with a grade of C or lower to replace the past grade with a better grade of A or B. No grade of C or lower will be accepted on any of the core required courses.** Although a single course can be taken up to three times, only one grade replacement is allowed for a course. However, all grades will remain on your transcript. See the “Retaking a Course and Grade Replacement” section under “Academics” of the UNT Graduate Catalog (<https://catalog.unt.edu/content.php?catoid=39&navoid=4547>).
- Retake all failed elective courses (i.e., D or F) or take additional courses for them.

Students whose CGPA falls below the aforementioned minimums will be placed on academic probation for **one semester**. If students placed on academic probation fail to achieve either (a) a semester GPA or (b) a cumulative GPA of 3.0 during the semester of probation, they will be placed on academic suspension and will not be able to register for classes for **one year**. Students on academic probation will not receive a graduate assistantship or scholarship. Reinstatement of an assistantship or scholarship is not guaranteed after a probationary period. Students dismissed from any of our programs are not eligible for readmission. Read the “Academics” page of the UNT Graduate Catalog (<https://catalog.unt.edu/content.php?catoid=39&navoid=4547>).

Program Outline

The Mayborn Graduate Institute of Journalism offers two master's degrees.

Master of Arts in Journalism (M.A.)

- M.A. is a 36-hour master's degree. **A master's thesis is optional in the M.A. program, and the foreign-language requirement will no longer be applicable.**
- Prerequisite undergraduate courses may be required to adequately prepare new students without a professional journalism background and/or satisfactory writing skills for graduate-level journalism courses. They are (a) JOUR 2310 (Introduction to Media Writing) and (b) JOUR 3321 (News Reporting and Writing) or JOUR 3323 (News Writing for Broadcast and Web). **Students must take them before or during their first semester as a master's student and pass them with a grade of A or B. Those prerequisites do not count toward their degree.**
- Students are required to take four core required courses early in their program. **They are strongly encouraged to complete three core required courses in their first semester.** Students **must** complete all the four core required courses and prerequisites with **a grade of A or B** before taking the master's comprehensive exam. Because more than a few comps-takers either fail or drop out every semester, it is best for students to take comps at least one semester before their final semester to have another chance for a timely graduation. For retaking a course, see the "Academic Standards" page of this document.
- DCAS (i.e., MSDCA) courses (8-week format) are **not** available to M.A. students.
- With the approval of the graduate advisor, students may select their remaining coursework to support their career interests, such as the following: business journalism; science, health and environmental journalism; international communication; internet, interactive and virtual digital communication; management and entrepreneurship; mass communication research; multicultural communication; narrative journalism; public relations; and visual communication. However, the Mayborn graduate program does not offer specific courses in sports, broadcast and advertising. Students interested in these areas may instead do research or an internship.

Master of Arts in Journalism	
Hours	36
Undergraduate journalism	Up to six (6) hours of undergraduate prerequisite courses to be determined by graduate faculty reviewers
English language proficiency	Required
Journalism core courses	
Required	5040 Media Studies and Theories 5250 Quantitative Research 5260 Qualitative Research 5310 Media Ethics
Thesis & oral defense	Optional
Foreign language proficiency	Not required
Written comprehensive exam	Required

- Elective courses (24 hours)
 - ✓ JOUR 5100: Case Problems in Public Relations
 - ✓ JOUR 5130: International Advertising and Public Relations Study Abroad
 - ✓ JOUR 5140: Strategic Persuasion and Media Effects
 - ✓ JOUR 5150: International Mass Communication
 - ✓ JOUR 5180: Advanced Public Relations Campaigns
 - ✓ JOUR 5210: Race, Gender and the Media: A Methods Approach
 - ✓ JOUR 5220: Advanced Business Journalism
 - ✓ JOUR 5280: Media Management
 - ✓ JOUR 5290: Science, Health and Environmental Reporting
 - ✓ JOUR 5320: New Technologies of Mass Communication
 - ✓ JOUR 5330: Strategic Social Media
 - ✓ JOUR 5350: Seminar in Journalism and Mass Communication (unavailable unless offered on myUNT)
 - ✓ JOUR 5360: Advanced Seminar on AI in Journalism and Mass Communication
 - ✓ JOUR 5700: Advanced Feature Writing
 - ✓ JOUR 5710: Narrative Journalism
 - ✓ JOUR 5720: Magazine Writing and Publishing
 - ✓ JOUR 5730: Writing, Editing and Publishing for the Literary Market
 - ✓ JOUR 5740: Literary Journalism
 - ✓ JOUR 5750: Advanced Multimedia Storytelling for News
 - ✓ JOUR 5760: International News and Media Study Abroad
 - ✓ JOUR 5800: Professional Internship (after 18 hours)
 - ✓ JOUR 5900: Advanced Problems in Journalism (after 18 hours; unavailable unless an instructor agrees to supervise the student's independent study)
 - ✓ JOUR 5910: Advanced Problems in Journalism (unavailable unless an instructor agrees to supervise the student's independent study)
 - ✓ JOUR 5950: Master's Thesis (needs a thesis adviser who has agreed to supervise the student's thesis)

Master of Science in Digital Communication Analytics (MSDCA)

- The MSDCA curriculum is a 30-hour master's degree. It is an interdisciplinary accelerated online program, which offers many 8-week classes, along with some 16-week classes. The program does not have prerequisite undergraduate courses because it assumes students have no knowledge of or experience in digital communication analytics. It is intended to train students to acquire professional skills and knowledge in analytics "from the ground up" and "step by step."
- It is up to each student what course load to carry each semester. While working full time, some MSDCA students carry a 2-2 course load (i.e., two 8W1 and two 8W2 classes) in their first semester, stay as a full-time student, take one or two summer classes, and successfully complete the degree within 17 months. However, students should consider a realistic course load relative to the demand of their work and choose the pace of their academic progress. In other words, they do not have to graduate within 17 months.
- **Students are required to complete seven core required courses with a grade of A or B.** For retaking a course, see the "Academic Standards" page of this document. Three elective courses are decided in consultation with the graduate advisor.

- MSDCA does **not** have a master's comprehensive exam. Instead, students must complete DCAS 5581 (Capstone Seminar in DCA) within their final nine (9) hours of coursework.
- Required courses (21 hours)
 - ✓ DCAS 5000: Introduction to Digital Communication Analytics (8W1)
 - ✓ DCAS 5251: Quantitative Research Fundamentals in Digital Communication (8W2)
 - ✓ DCAS 5261: Qualitative Research Fundamentals in Digital Communication (8W1)
 - ✓ DCAS 5331: Social Media Analytics (8W2)
 - ✓ DCAS 5341: Cutting-Edge Techniques for the Digital Communication Analyst (8W1)
 - ✓ DCAS 5361: Data Visualization for the Digital Communication Analyst (8W1)
 - ✓ DCAS 5581: Capstone Seminar in Digital Communication Analytics (To be taken during the last 9 hours of coursework and will be tied to a project) (8W2)
- Elective courses (9 hours)
 - ✓ ADTA 5120: Introduction to Data Analytics (8WK)
 - ✓ ADTA 5130: Data Analytics I (Prereq: Undergraduate statistics course, ADTA 5100, or equivalent) (8WK)
 - ✓ ADTA 5230: Data Analytics II (Prereq: ADTA 5130) (8WK)
 - ✓ ADTA 5160: Sport and Entertainment Analytics (8WK)
 - ✓ ADTA 5240: Harvesting, Storing and Retrieving Data (8WK)
 - ✓ ADTA 5250: Large Data Visualization (8WK)
 - ✓ ADTA 5340: Discovery and Learning with Big Data (8WK)
 - ✓ ADTA 5550: Deep Learning with Big Data (8WK)
 - ✓ ADTA 5560: Recurrent Neural Networks for Sequence Data (Prereq: One of the courses: ADTA 5240, ADTA 5250, **ADTA 5340**, or ADTA 5550, or consent of instructor) (8WK)
 - ✓ INFO 5307: Knowledge Management Tools and Technologies (16WK)
 - ✓ INFO 5707: Data Modeling for Information Professionals (16WK)
 - ✓ INFO 5709: Data Visualization and Communication (16WK)
 - ✓ INFO 5717: Networked Data Modeling and Processing (Prereq: INFO 5707) (16WK)
 - ✓ INFO 5735: Usability and User Experience Metrics (16WK)
 - ✓ INFO 5810: Data Analysis and Knowledge Discovery (16WK)
 - ✓ DCAS 5351: Seminar in Digital Communication Analytics (unavailable unless offered on myUNT) (8WK)
 - ✓ DCAS 5801: Professional Internship in Digital Communication Analytics (after 15 hours; 8/10/16WK)
 - ✓ DCAS 5901: Advanced Problems in Digital Communication Analytics (after 15 hours; unavailable unless an instructor agrees to supervise the student's independent study) (8WK)

Timetable

A master's degree at UNT must be completed within **five years** of the first term of graduate enrollment. Visit the "Academics" page of the UNT Graduate Catalog (<https://catalog.unt.edu/content.php?catoid=39&navoid=4547>) for graduate school rules governing age of work and other requirements.

What	When
Meeting with the graduate advisor to plan coursework	Before or at the time of registration
Reviewing a degree audit with the graduate director	Throughout the program
(M.A. students) Verifying degree requirement with the graduate advisor to get qualified for taking Mayborn master's comprehensive examination (comps)	(M.A. students) Before registering for the final semester of coursework. Students must complete all prerequisite undergraduate courses if required, all four core required courses and at least 18 hours before taking comps.
(M.A. students) Passing Mayborn master's comprehensive examination	(M.A. students) Offered three times a year: February, June and October
Filing for graduation online at the myUNT portal	Specified under the Graduation Information page (https://www.unt.edu/graduate/student-support/graduation-information.html)
Completing an optional exit interview with the director	Preferably in person or by phone before graduation

Program Information

Advising

- All students **must** receive mandatory advising from the graduate advisor every regular semester during an official advising period. Students **must** visit myUNT before their advising session to take care of account holds and see which classes will be available for the next semester. Students **must** determine which classes to take in consultation with the graduate advisor. Students must remember that the graduate director will **not** approve a student's degree and graduation without regular mandatory advising.
- Students **must not** enroll themselves in classes or drop classes without the graduate director's advising and approval.
- As UNT has been moving to the graduate audit system called uAchieve, no degree plans will be issued anymore.

Registration

- During a mandatory advising session, students must have a laptop ready and complete class enrollment in real time.
- The exceptions to self-enrollment are undergraduate prerequisites (JOUR 2310, JOUR 3321 and JOUR 3323) and JOUR 5800, JOUR 5900/5910, JOUR 5950, DCAS 5581, DCAS 5801 and DCAS 5901 in which the graduate coordinator enrolls students.
- Once students finish mandatory advising, they must secure financial aid and/or pay on time.

Mayborn Master's Comprehensive Exam ("Comps")

- **Only M.A. students** are required to take the exam to obtain their degree.
- The exam meets the comprehensive examination requirement of the graduate studies. **Only after completing prerequisite undergraduate courses if required, all four core required courses and at least 18 hours of coursework, students will be allowed to apply for the exam.** Email the graduate coordinator to apply.
- It is an essay examination taken online for a period of one week and is offered three times a year. **Students must immediately start working on the exam questions before it becomes too late.**
- **Students must not use generative AI tools in any part of brainstorming, researching, and writing.** Be ethical.
- Students taking the exam will be enrolled in a Canvas course to receive the exam questions and submit their research essays. Students will choose three (3) out of 10 essay questions and solve all of them. Each essay must be between 2,500 and 3,000 words and includes at least five academic articles/books and five reliable sources. **Failing to submit all the three research essays that satisfy basic requirements will automatically result in a failed attempt without a makeup question.**
 - ✓ If students fail one of the three questions while satisfying the basic requirements of comps essays, they can take a makeup question in the same semester. If they pass it, they will satisfy the exam requirement.
 - ✓ If students fail two of the three questions or fail a makeup question, they have failed the comps for the semester. They must wait for the next exam cycle.

- Students have a total of **three attempts** defined as **access to Canvas** (verifiable online), along with a makeup for each attempt, to pass the exam. If they do not pass it in three attempts (whether withdrawal or failure), they will be dismissed from the program.
- No academic misconduct is tolerated. Again, read through UNT Policy 006.03.
- The entire exam process is anonymous to the members of the graduate faculty who grade students' research essays based on pass-or-fail criteria. The graduate coordinator is the only person who knows the identity of the author of each essay. **However, when an academic misconduct issue arises after grading, the graduate faculty evaluator will be informed and proceed to contact the student.** After a makeup exam is done in each exam cycle, the graduate director will sign the pass/fail form for each exam-taker, and the graduate director will submit it to the Graduate Studies office.
- An extension of 24 to 48 hours shall be granted only when a student has a legitimate reason (e.g., serious illness and family emergency) and can submit a third-party documentation (both online and hard copy) to the graduate coordinator. Power outage a day before the deadline, for example, is not a legitimate reason. Use your time wisely.

Purpose

- ✓ Display knowledge of the field and its literature
- ✓ Practice critical and independent thinking skills
- ✓ Demonstrate the ability to synthesize material into cogent research essays

Scope

- The exam covers course- and discipline-related content. Some questions ask students to find a solution to a practical problem, others require them to evaluate an issue position and justify it by appropriate theory, and still others deal with real-world or hypothetical cases for theoretical analysis.

Master's Thesis

- A thesis is optional for the M.A. degree. Students should start thinking about research in their first semester. A master's thesis presents an original investigation. It should be much longer than a term paper or a conference paper and can be as long as 100 pages or more. A thesis must be substantive, not superficial, as the outcome of a student's serious research and academic commitment. A thesis-track candidate must defend a thesis before the candidate's thesis committee and get it approved by the committee for acceptance of the thesis and permission for the candidate to apply for graduation. The defense is open to the public. Download and read through "Guidelines for Proposing, Writing, Defending and Submitting a Master's Thesis at the Mayborn Graduate Institute of Journalism" (<https://class.unt.edu/journalism/academics/graduate/guidelines-proposing-writing-defending-submitting-thesis.pdf>)

Professional Internship Courses

<https://class.unt.edu/journalism/academics/graduate/internships.html>

- Professional Internship (JOUR 5800) / Professional Internship in Digital Communication Analytics (DCAS 5801) courses should be taken only after the completion of (a) all prerequisite undergraduate courses (M.A.) if any, (b) all 4 (M.A.) / at least 5 (MSDCA) core required courses, and (c) at least 18 (M.A.) / 15 (MSDCA) hours of coursework. The internship must involve the intern in work and activities that directly relate to the student's field of study. Students must look for an internship opportunity by themselves, obtain a formal offer letter printed on an organizational letterhead, which their workplace supervisor must send directly to the graduate director, submit the Mayborn internship application form, and receive an approval from the graduate director in advance of registration. The offer letter must include the student's name, the duration of the internship, at least 300 hours of work, and the details of internship tasks. The student's monthly and final reports, as well as the workplace supervisor's midterm and final evaluations of the student's performance, must be submitted in a timely manner to the graduate director.
- Students may take no more than three (3) hours of an internship course. Credit will not be given for work done prior to enrollment.

Advanced Problems Courses

- Advanced Problems in Journalism (JOUR 5900 and JOUR 5910) / Advanced Problems in Digital Communication Analytics (DCAS 5901) courses should be taken only when other graduate courses are not available or when a student wishes to pursue an independent study in a specific topic with a professor. A faculty member chosen by a student supervises the work in an independent study. This independent-study option requires a project proposal written by the student and approved by the supervising faculty and the graduate director in advance of registration.
- Those courses should be taken only after the completion of (a) all prerequisite undergraduate courses (M.A.) if any, (b) all 4 (M.A.) / at least 5 (MSDCA) core required courses, and (c) at least 18 (M.A.) / 15 (MSDCA) hours of coursework. Students may take no more than six (6) hours of advanced problems courses. Registration is permitted only if the course appears on the student's degree plan.

Exit Interviews

- Graduating students may be asked to complete a series of questions regarding their experience during their study at the Mayborn Graduate Institute. Once students pass the comprehensive exam and their graduation is confirmed, they may receive some questions. Students may also make an appointment with the director for an exit interview either in person or via phone. Questions range from how they found their Mayborn program to what their plans are now. This process gives each student an opportunity to discuss the program's good aspects and to offer constructive criticism.

Graduation

- The University of North Texas holds graduation ceremonies in the spring (May) and fall (December) semesters. During their final semester of the completion of all required coursework, students must apply for graduation on their myUNT portal as it is their sole responsibility. For more information, go to the Graduation Information page (<https://www.unt.edu/graduate/student-support/graduation-information.html>).
- A graduation application will be accepted only if a student has a current 3.0 or higher CGPA.
- Do not submit more than one application per degree. If a student needs to make a correction or add information, send a separate email to graduation@unt.edu.
- Visit the Graduate Studies Frequently Asked Questions page (<https://www.unt.edu/graduate/faq.html>) for more information.

Other Academic Opportunities

Mayborn Study Abroad Programs (<https://studyabroad.unt.edu/>)

- The Mayborn School of Journalism offers study-abroad programs in London, Mexico, Japan and Madrid during summer. Undergraduate and graduate students can receive up to six (6) hours of course credit by participating in these programs.
 - ✓ The **Mayborn in Japan** program (6 credit hours) offers an opportunity to study international public relations and cross-cultural reporting techniques while staying in Tokyo and Fukuoka, Japan. Participants will visit about 10 places related to the field of study and interact regularly with Japanese students at a local university.
 - ✓ The **Mayborn in Madrid** program (6 credit hours) offers an opportunity to study international public relations/advertising and journalism with excursions to historic places in Spain.
 - ✓ The **Mayborn in London** program (6 credit hours; on hiatus) offers courses in British news, public relations and advertising. Students will learn the history of these fields of study as well as visit many agencies.
 - ✓ The **Heart of Mexico** program (3 credit hours; on hiatus) embeds students in an aboriginal area of Mexico to report on and create a multimedia piece. Teams of U.S. and Mexican students from our sister university, the *Universidad Autónoma del Estado de México* (UAEM), include writers, still photographers, videographers and translators.

The Mayborn Literary Nonfiction Conference (<https://www.themayborn.com/>)

- The Mayborn Literary Nonfiction Conference is a gathering for journalists, writers, readers, students, educators and the general public to learn together, be inspired and practice their craft at the highest possible level.
- The conference was created to enhance the quality of nonfiction writing and create a community of factual storytellers who maintain an unflinching faith in the narrative craft.
- Every year, talented storytellers from all over the country come to share their stories, life-changing experiences and expertise with aspiring writers who have just developed an interest in becoming a writer or are strengthening their current writing skills.
- The Mayborn Graduate Institute of Journalism held its first conference in 2005. Mitch Land, founding dean of the Mayborn School of Journalism, and George Getschow, former writer-in-residence of the school, created the conference to feature the nation's top nonfiction writers and editors each year.
- The conference is nationally recognized and always recruits some of the country's most well-known storytellers to speak, like Ted Conover, Mark Bowden, Ira Glass and Joyce Carol Oates, to name a few.
- To find out more about the conference, including information about this year's conference, contests and opportunities, and speakers and registration, visit the website above.
- The prize money of \$1,500 is given to the first-prize winner of the Best American Newspaper Narratives contest (<https://www.themayborn.com/bann-contest>) each year. See the website above for deadlines and entry requirements.

Funding Opportunities

You must be a full-time student to be eligible for scholarships, assistantships, and financial aid. Therefore, you must take and complete 9 credit hours in the fall/spring semester. During summer, a full-time student status requires taking and completing 6 credit hours. The exception is your final semester or the semesters in which you have only to take a master's thesis (i.e., 3 credit hours).

Scholarships (<https://class.unt.edu/journalism/academics/scholarship.html>)

- The Mayborn Graduate Institute recognizes that many students need financial assistance to complete their degrees. Below, you will find a partial list of scholarships.

Mayborn Graduate Scholarship

- ✓ Available to M.A. students
- ✓ The Mayborn Graduate Institute of Journalism awards qualified graduate students \$10,000 each for up to one year. These competitive awards are given in the spring to be applied toward tuition in the fall and spring semesters of the following school year. Partial awards are given in some circumstances. Although scholarship recipients can reapply for the second year, they may not receive it.
- ✓ Selection criteria include the strength of an application packet, GPA (3.6 CGPA minimum), academic and volunteer performance, work experience, financial needs, and potential for success.
- ✓ These scholarships were created to fund students entering the news field. However, students who plan to enter public relations, advertising and other communication-related areas may also be considered for the sake of diversity and fresh thinking from a variety of disciplines.
- ✓ To be eligible for the scholarship, a student must (a) apply and be accepted to the Graduate School and the Mayborn Graduate Institute of Journalism and (b) be a full-time student. Updated application information is posted after the new academic year starts.

Roy Busby Endowed Graduate Scholarship

- ✓ Available to M.A. students
- ✓ Established in honor of Roy Busby, who is a Mayborn alumnus, professor emeritus of journalism, and former director of the Mayborn Graduate Institute, this scholarship is open to incoming or current students of the institute and is based on need and ambition. Applicants must have a cumulative GPA of 3.0 and maintain full-time enrollment at UNT.

William D. Richardson Scholarship

- ✓ Available to both MSDCA and M.A. students
- ✓ Established to provide support for Journalism graduate students at UNT, this scholarship is given to those who meet the minimum entrance and continuing academic performance standards of the Mayborn Graduate Institute of Journalism in effect at the time of any award.

Graduate Assistantships

(<https://class.unt.edu/journalism/academics/graduate/assistantships.html>)

- You must be a full-time student. Therefore, you must take and complete 9 credit hours in the fall/spring semester. If you become a graduate assistant in summer, you must take and complete 6 credit hours as a full-time student. The exception is your final semester or the semesters in which you have only to take a master's thesis (3 credit hours).
- A limited number of graduate assistantships (i.e., teaching assistants, research assistants, and graduate services assistants) are awarded to select M.A. and MSDCA students each school year by the Mayborn Graduate Institute of Journalism.
- Students who did not attend UNT prior to their M.A./MSDCA program will **not** be hired in their first semester because they must demonstrate their academic excellence. In rare occasions, we may interview a few of them to evaluate their aptitude as an assistant and hire them.
- Currently, all M.A./MSDCA students who hold 50% FTE (20 hours a week) positions will have the opportunity to elect the Tuition Benefit Program (<https://studentaccounting.unt.edu/tuition-benefit-program/index.html>). This program will pay for approximately six (6) of nine credit hours of enrollment each long semester in anticipation for assistants to fulfill their obligations.
- The term of employment as a graduate assistant is semester to semester. A few specific positions may be available during summer. These salaried positions require an average of 20 hours a week with a faculty or staff member.
- All graduate assistants are expected to demonstrate academic excellence as they are first and foremost students. Therefore, those students or assistants whose cumulative GPA is below 3.5 or who are on academic probation/suspension will not be hired or rehired.
- All interested students must complete the Application for Graduate Assistantship form (<https://class.unt.edu/journalism/academics/graduate/ga-application-form.pdf>) and submit it to the graduate coordinator. Letters of reference and the application should be addressed to the Mayborn graduate institute director.

UNT Student Financial Aid and Scholarships (<https://financialaid.unt.edu/>)

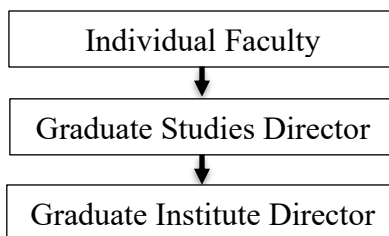
- Annually awards of more than \$450 million in financial aid: About 70% of UNT students receive financial aid and scholarships, and nearly all students who complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) can receive federal or state assistance. Graduate students are eligible for student loans.

Travel Grant Funding

- UNT offers a limited number of competitive scholarships to selected graduate students who are in good academic standing. These travel grants are offered to support the costs of travel to professional meetings that are relevant to their degree.
 - ✓ CLASS Graduate Student Travel Support Grants (<https://class.unt.edu/advising/graduate-student-travel-support-grants.html>)
 - ✓ Research and Innovation Graduate Student Travel Award (<https://research.unt.edu/graduate/student-travel-award.html>)
 - ✓ Mayborn Graduate Institute: will match your travel grant if funds are available.

Chain of Command

When an issue with your peer or instructor arises, follow the Mayborn Graduate Institute's chain of command.



Helpful Website Links

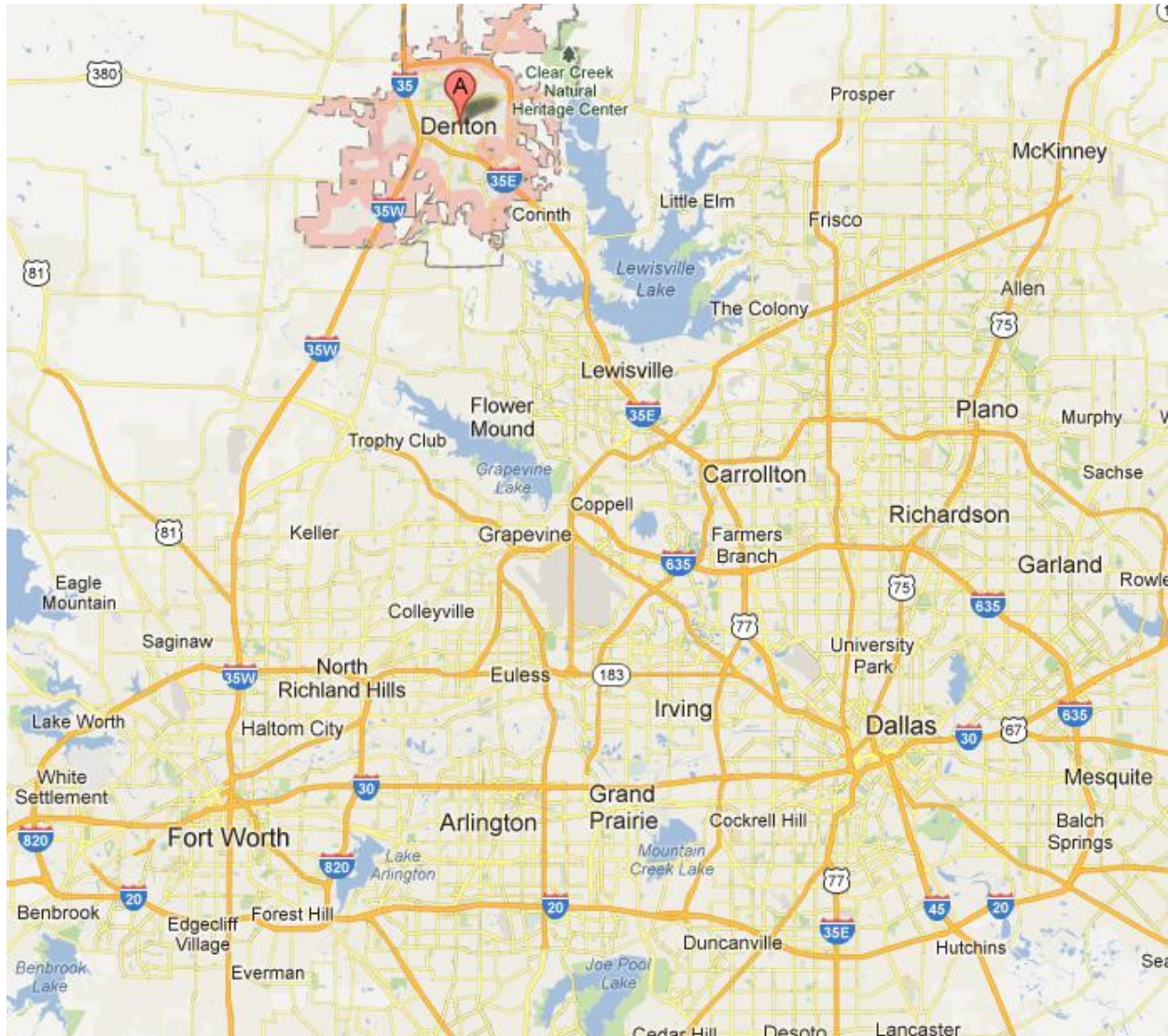
University of North Texas

- Graduate Studies website (<https://www.unt.edu/graduate/>)
 - ✓ Newly admitted students (<https://www.unt.edu/admissions/graduate/next-steps.html>)
 - ✓ Calendar for events (https://calendar.unt.edu/departments/toulouse_graduate_school)
 - ✓ Student support (<https://www.unt.edu/graduate/student-support/>)
- Graduation (<https://www.unt.edu/commencement/>)
- GSTEP for teaching training (<https://digitalstrategy.unt.edu/clear/program-initiatives/gstep.html>)
- Libraries on campus (<https://library.unt.edu/>)
- Writing support (<https://writingcenter.unt.edu/>)
- Money management (<https://www.unt.edu/onestop/money-management.html>)
- Financial aid eligibility (<https://financialaid.unt.edu/graduate-students>)
- Study abroad programs (<https://studyabroad.unt.edu/>)
- Transportation services (<https://transportation.unt.edu/>)
- Dining services (<https://dining.unt.edu/>)
- Division of Student Affairs (<https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/>)
 - ✓ UNT resources (<https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/push/unt-resources/index.html>)
 - ✓ Programs and services (<https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/programs-and-services/index.html>)
 - ✓ Student Veteran Services (<https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/eagle-engagement-center/student-veteran-services/index.html>)
- Physical and mental health
 - ✓ Dean of Students Office (<https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/dean-of-students/>; 940-565-2648; deanofstudents@unt.edu)
 - CARE Team (<https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/dean-of-students/programs-and-services/care-team/>; 940-565-4373; CAREteam@unt.edu). **Don't** ghost after taking an LOA and suddenly email the graduate coordinator just before a new semester starts.
 - ✓ Office of Disability Access (<https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/office-disability-access/>; 940-565-4323; Apply.ODA@unt.edu). Prepare paperwork each semester for each class and submit it to your professor. **Never** discuss any issue related to your disability in class, whether virtual or face-to-face.

Life in Denton

Denton, Texas, is a rich community filled with many interesting places to visit. You will find many reasons for wanting to stay in Denton even after you complete your degree.

Denton, Texas, is located north of Dallas and Fort Worth, as shown below:



Denton is more than a point on Google Maps. It's a point of interest in North Texas. The city offers various events, such as the Denton Arts and Jazz Festival, historic downtown Denton, museums and shops. On the following page is a list of online sources a student can refer to during occasional downtime.

Denton Websites

- Discover Denton Texas (<https://www.discoverdenton.com/>)
- Facebook – Discover Denton (<https://www.facebook.com/DiscoverDenton>)
- Denton Arts & Jazz Festival (<https://dentonjazzfest.com/>)
- Denton Main Street Association (<https://dentonmainstreet.org/>)
- *Denton Record-Chronicle* (<https://dentonrc.com/>)
- College Apartment Guides:
 - ✓ Off-Campus Housing Source (<https://offcampushousing.unt.edu/>)
 - ✓ Apartment Guide (<https://www.apartmentguide.com/apartments/Texas/University-of-North-Texas/>)
 - ✓ Apartment List (<https://www.apartmentlist.com/tx/denton>)
- Denton County Office of History and Culture (<https://www.dentoncounty.gov/289/History-Culture>)
- Ghost Tours of Denton (<https://www.ghostsofdenton.com/>)

Connect With Mayborn

Connect with us online through various social media and ensure that you are up-to-date on all things Mayborn.



<https://www.facebook.com/MaybornUNT/>



<https://x.com/MaybornUNT>



<https://www.instagram.com/unt.mayborn/>



<https://www.linkedin.com/groups/2332362/>



<https://www.facebook.com/groups/untonlinemsdca> (MSDCA Facebook group)