

UNT Linguistics

Handbook for Master's students

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Important contact information:

- *Graduate faculty advisor in Linguistics and Graduate Academic Certificate in TESOL:* Dr. Patricia Cukor-Avila (patricia.cukor-avila@unt.edu) - for LING MA and LING ESL students, Dr. Cukor-Avila should be the first point of contact for determining your degree plan and course sequence
- *Faculty director and advisor for Interdisciplinary MS with Computational Linguistics concentration and Graduate Academic Certificate in Computational Linguistics:* Dr. Taraka Kasichyanula (taraka.kasichyanula@unt.edu) - for students in the INSD-CL MS program, as well as students pursuing the concentration in Computational Linguistics, Dr. Kasichyanula is the person to talk to about degree plans and course sequences
- *Faculty advisor for students in the Information Science PhD with Linguistics Concentration program.* Dr. Shobhana Chelliah (shobhana.chelliah@unt.edu)
- *Chair of Linguistics:* Dr. Sadaf Munshi (sadaf.munshi@unt.edu) - Dr. Munshi is the person to contact about general questions about the department
- *Administrative coordinator for Linguistics:* Trevor Sisk (trevor.sisk@unt.edu) - Trevor can help with all sorts of administrative and logistical issues and questions
- *College of Information graduate advising:* Rachel Hall (rachel.hall@unt.edu) - once you've met with the relevant faculty advisor, see Rachel to file your official degree plan (exception: INSD-CL students should do this with Jasmine Quezada). Rachel can also help with all sorts of administrative questions about graduation requirements, deadlines, paperwork, etc.

- *Toulouse Graduate School Interdisciplinary Studies advising: Jasmine Quezada* (jasmine.quezada@unt.edu) - if you are a student in the INSD-MS with a CL concentration, once you've met with your faculty advisor, see Jasmine to file your official degree plan. She can also help with graduation requirements, deadlines, paperwork, etc.

A. Overview: Requirements for MA degrees in the Linguistics Dept. Or Interdisciplinary MS in Computational Linguistics in Toulouse Graduate school

In order to be granted an MA in Linguistics or and MA in ESL you must:

1. Complete course work with a minimum GPA of 3.0 for:
 - a. 4 core courses (12 credit hours)
 - b. 8 foundation courses decided in consultation with the graduate advisor (24 credit hours)
2. Submit a portfolio which will include either (a) or (b):
 - a. Qualifying paper (publishable quality research paper) or scholarly product
 - b. Thesis

The following pages provide information on:

- [Advising timeline and guidelines](#)
- [The qualifying paper or scholarly product option](#)
- [The MA thesis option](#)
- [Guidelines for submitting an IRB application](#)

B. Advising timeline and guidelines

When you enter the Linguistics department as a graduate student, your first step is to meet with the graduate advisor, Dr. Patricia Cukor-Avila. You will discuss with her your interests, the concentration you want to pursue and the courses you need to take for that concentration.

This first meeting needs to happen before you start your first semester, so that you can decide which courses to take in your first semester. Some entering students will need to take LING 5040 in the Summer prior to the first semester; the Graduate Advisor can help you determine whether you are one of those students. If you are not in Denton yet, it is usually possible to have this meeting virtually.

Based on your interests, the Graduate Advisor will connect you to a member of the Linguistics faculty who will help you to refine your degree plan (that is, your schedule of courses) and also potential research directions you could pursue.

Finally, you will meet with Rachel Hall (College of Information Advising) to file your official degree plan. Ideally, this will happen before the end of your first semester. As you update your degree plan, make sure a copy is filed with the Linguistics Department. Please email this to Trevor.Sisk@unt.edu.

C. Qualifying paper or scholarly product option

1. Expectations

To graduate, you will need to turn in and have formally evaluated by a committee either a qualifying paper or scholarly product should be of publishable quality. It should be prepared as if for submission to a journal for the subdiscipline. The scholarly product should be of publishable quality in a relevant online repository (such as a language archive or GitHub, for example).

From the beginning of your program, you should be thinking about topics you might like to work on for this evaluation. It often works well to do preliminary work in a course term paper and expand on that for your final paper.

The qualifying paper should be written according to the conventions of that subfield, and in a format that is widely used in that subfield. If you are not familiar with the conventions, formats, and stylistic particularities of the subfield you're working in, don't guess - ask the professor with whom you are working on this paper. Identify one or two relevant publication venues within the subfield.

The particulars of this paper are likely to vary from one subfield to another, but at a minimum it should include a literature review and some preliminary data and analysis. For example, a paper in computational linguistics might consist of introduction, background, data, proposed methods, and expected findings.

The scholarly product should meet the subdiscipline standards for curation, collection, analysis, formatting, completeness, and originality. An example of a scholarly products for Language Documentation could be a collection of interlinear glossed texts with an introduction and glossary. For Second Language Acquisition, this could be a collection of annotated original child language data recordings and transcriptions.

2. Suggested schedule

This schedule is put together with a Fall start date. Discuss with your advisor how to modify these dates for a Spring start date.

FALL: First semester

- Explore different ideas and subfields and discuss with peers and professors topics which may be of interest.

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- As you think about possible topics, remember that this is an MA, not a PhD. Talk to professors to understand what kind of project would be a reasonable size for the MA.
- Most professors have lots of ideas about potential research projects! Listen to their suggestions.

SPRING: Second semester

- Decide on the subfield of linguistics. Discuss appropriate topics with any of the Linguistics professors; the topics should fit with the professor's current research interests.
- Determine when and how often you will meet with your supervising professor for the paper.
- Decide on the data you will use for the paper or the scholarly product. Try to use or build on existing data sets.

FALL: Third Semester

- Beginning of the semester: prepare a draft of your paper or begin compiling data for your scholarly product either as part of a class or outside of a class, but in both cases under the supervision of a professor. You should be having regular meetings (minimum: once per month) with this professor.
- End of the semester: finalize the annotations/ analysis and/or experiments for your paper/scholarly product.

SPRING: Fourth semester

- Finish draft, submit to at least two professors for review and comments. Save their comments for your portfolio.
- Submit the paper, abstract, bibliography and drafts in your portfolio one month before the final class day of your 4th semester.

3. Submission

You will submit your paper/product in the form of a portfolio submitted 1 month before the last class date of the 4th semester.

-Paper option: The portfolio should include drafts of the paper with comments from the professors on your committee. The final draft of the paper should also be included.

-Scholarly product option: The portfolio should include links to versions of the product along with comments from your professor on earlier versions. A link to the final draft of the scholarly product should be included.

Based on the comments of the committee, you will revise your paper/product. Based on this the committee will decide if the paper/product is satisfactory. They will sign off and submit a form for your graduation to the Toulouse Graduate School.

F. Guidelines for the MA thesis option

You may choose to write a thesis, but the thesis option should not be chosen lightly. Students wishing to write a thesis must have a specific research question that they wish to explore. We strongly suggest that students work with faculty on existing projects underway in the department.

Sample theses are available via the UNT digital library. Here are some examples from recent students, with links to the documents:

- Alexander Smith, [Burushaski Case Marking, Agreement and Implications: An Analysis of the Hunza Dialect](#)
- Lisa Jeon, [Drawing Boundaries and Revealing Language Attitudes: Mapping Perceptions of Dialects in Korea](#)
- María Teresa Martínez García, [A Corpus-Based Approach to Gerundial and Infinitival Complementation in Spanish ESL Writing](#)
- Jennifer Seale, [An Analysis of the Syntactic and Lexical Features of an Indian English Oral Narrative: A Pear Story Study](#)

The following schedule must be followed. This schedule is put together with a Fall start date for the MA. Discuss with your advisor how to modify these dates for a Spring start date.

FALL: First semester

- Survey courses and discuss with peers and professors' topics which may be of interest.

SPRING: Second semester

- Discuss an appropriate topic with any of the Linguistics professors; the topics should fit with the professor's current research interests.
- Attend a Master's Thesis orientation session. Orientation sessions are offered during approximately the sixth week of every semester by the graduate school.
- Last week or earlier: submit to your professor a 5-page prospectus with your research question and bibliography. File an "Intent to Do a Master's Thesis" form once your professor has approved your prospectus.
- With your thesis advisor (who will serve as the Chair of your thesis committee), determine two additional faculty members interested in and knowledgeable about the topic and willing to assist you. They must also be available for the two consecutive semesters when you will be writing the thesis. These two faculty members may be from another department or from outside of UNT, but they must be approved by the thesis committee chair, and, if not from UNT, by the Toulouse Graduate School in the spring semester of the second year or at least two semesters prior to graduating. The thesis committee chair will then confer with the members of the proposed thesis committee to

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see if they feel that the thesis proposal is viable and compelling enough for you to pursue. A sample proposal can be found on the LING website.

FALL: Third Semester

- 1st week: submit a proposal for the thesis (minimum of 15 pages, double-spaced, plus a bibliography). See sample on the LING website.
- Attend an orientation session at the graduate school for MA thesis candidates.
- IRB: In case the methodology of the proposed thesis requires use of human subjects, approval must be obtained from the Human Subject Review Board. When the thesis proposal is submitted to the chair of the thesis committee, the student must attach a note stating whether or not Human Subject approval will be necessary for the thesis research, and, if so, when the application will be submitted to the Human Subject Review Board. It takes a minimum of 15 days to get IRB approval so the application should be submitted prior to submitting the proposal.
- You must meet periodically with your committee and document those meetings. This documentation will be needed for appeals, extensions and the like. You need to meet regularly with all the members of the committee.

SPRING: Fourth semester

- 1st week turn in full draft: you should have prepared a draft over the fall semester.
- 6th week: your defense can be scheduled if your committee members feel you are ready. You must submit the final draft to your committee members at least two weeks before the defense date to allow all members adequate time to read and make comments on the draft. Students must consult the [Toulouse Graduate Information](#) for all information related to graduation, including [deadlines](#) for submission of the final defended copy of the thesis.
- Submit a completed thesis to the Graduate Studies office in the required format by the relevant deadline.

SUMMER or FALL: Fifth Semester (if necessary)

G. IRB application instructions

When conducting research with human subjects, your research study has to comply with ethical research requirements and has to be approved by the Institutional Review Board.

“The UNT Institutional Review Board, by action of the President, is responsible for ensuring the rights and welfare of all research participants in accordance with regulatory and ethical principles established by the ‘Belmont Report’ and by the regulations of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) found in 45 Code of Federal Regulations, Part 46”.

Faculty and student investigators should complete the following steps:

- 1) Request access to Cayuse (the online submission system for IRB applications) by completing the online request form: <https://research.unt.edu/cayuse-access-access-changerequest>
- 2) Complete the CITI online training course

To register for a Human Subjects Research course through CITI, follow these steps:

1. Go to <https://www.citiprogram.org>
2. Click “Register” (top right hand corner of website)
3. Complete Step 1 - Under “Select Your Organization Affiliation” begin typing University of North Texas and when the list is presented, click “University of North Texas (Denton, TX)”
 - a. Click the checkbox “I AGREE to the Terms of Service and Privacy Policy for accessing CITI Program materials.”
 - b. Click the checkbox “I affirm that I am an affiliate of the University of North Texas (Denton, TX).
 - c. Click “Continue To Create Your CITI Program Username/Password”
4. Complete Step 2 – Personal Information (*Important Note: Use your University issued email address. The Secondary email address can be a personal email account.*)
5. Complete Step 3 – Create your Username and Password
6. Complete Step 4 – Country of Residence
7. Complete Step 5 - Are you interested in the option of receiving Continuing Education Unit (CEU) credit for completed CITI Program courses?
8. Complete Step 6 - Please provide the following information requested by University of North Texas (Denton, TX) *Note: You must provide your EUID.
9. In Step 7, Question 1, you must choose Social & Behavioral Research - Basic/Refresher or Biomedical Research - Basic/Refresher depending on which is applicable to your study.
 - a. Completing UNT RCR Basic course or the UNT RCR Refresher course will NOT satisfy human subjects training requirements.

- b. Answer "No" to the other course offerings unless you have been instructed to register for other courses.
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10. After all questions to Step 7 are completed, click "Complete Registration"
 11. After registration is complete, select "Finalize Registration" on the next page to continue.
 12. The UNT Social & Behavioral Research - Basic/Refresher course and/or Biomedical Research - Basic/Refresher you selected should now appear on your "Main Menu" page. You may need to expand the drop-down box for them to appear. You may enter the course (by clicking the name of the course) and complete individual modules at your convenience, re-entering the course as needed. You will receive a "Completion Certificate" upon successful completion of all required modules.
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- 3) Visit UNT's IRB page for information and frequently asked questions regarding the use of humans in research and different types of application forms:
<https://research.unt.edu/faculty-resources/integrity-compliance/irb>
 - 4) Select the appropriate Template for the Informed Consent Form that fits your research study and fill out all the different sections providing information about your research. You can find the different templates in the following page: <https://research.unt.edu/faculty-resources/integrity-compliance/irb>
 - 5) Log in to Cayuse IRB Online Submission System to fill out your application:
<https://unt.cayuse424.com/rs/irb/>

Your faculty advisor should initiate the online application for you by creating a new study and adding you as a student investigator. After you fill out all sections of the application, ask your faculty advisor to review it and provide you with feedback in case revisions/corrections/changes should be made. Your faculty advisor will submit the application, once all revisions are made.