Retention Requirements

The department expects graduate students to conduct themselves in a respectful manner, exhibiting high professional and ethical standards. Pursuing a master’s degree requires a high degree of dedication to the academic demands of graduate school. Students who fail to maintain a cumulative graduate GPA of at least 3.25 must petition the department’s Director of Graduate Studies to remain in the program. The Graduate Standards Committee will consider petitions and provide a ruling in each case.

Grades of “Incomplete”

According to the *UNT Graduate Catalog* (2005-2006), the grade of “I” (incomplete) is a “no punitive grade given only during the last one-fourth of a semester and only if a student is (1) passing the course; (2) has justifiable reason why the work cannot be completed on schedule; and (3) arranges with the instructor to finish the course at a later date by completing specific requirements that the instructor must list on the grade sheet” (p. 33).

Since the student must complete at least three-fourths of the semester before becoming eligible to request an incomplete, many professors will insist that at least three-fourths of the assignments be completed before considering a request for an incomplete. The “justifiable reason” referenced in the second point above is reserved generally for unforeseeable extended illness, military service, etc., and must be a reason that goes beyond simply being behind and unable to catch up in the course. If the student’s reason for requesting an incomplete is not compelling, s/he should consider dropping the course prior to the deadline set by the university.

According the *UNT Graduate Catalog* (2005-2006), “a student may remove a grade of “I” within one year of receiving the initial grade by completing the stipulated work, obtaining signatures of the instructor and the instructor’s academic dean (on a permit form from the dean’s office), paying a $5 fee at Student Accounting and University Cashiering Services and returning the permit form to the instructor. The instructor then files the permit form in the Registrar’s Office, along with the grade, and the grade point average is adjusted accordingly” (p. 36).

Graduate students must maintain a cumulative graduate GPA of at least 3.25. Students who fail to meet this standard must petition the Director of Graduate Studies to remain in the program. The Director of Graduate Studies will refer petitions to the Graduate Standards Committee for review.

Probation/Suspension
According to the *UNT Graduate Catalog* (2005-2006), “a student who fails to achieve the required cumulative average of 3.0 GPA (B average) on all courses carrying graduate credit in a term/semester will be placed on academic probation for the subsequent term/semester. If the student achieves a 3.0 semester GPA in the subsequent term/semester, but the cumulative GPA is still below 3.0, the student will remain on academic probation. The student will be removed from probation when the 3.0 cumulative GPA is achieved. A student who is on probation cannot graduate.

A student who is placed on academic probation who does not receive either a semester or a cumulative 3.0 GPA during the term/semester of probation will be subject to academic suspension for a period of up to one calendar year before becoming eligible to reenroll for further graduate courses. Graduate work completed elsewhere during a period of graduate suspension at UNT may not be counted for graduate credit at UNT. After the one-year period of suspension, students must reapply for admission to graduate school. . . . Students may then enroll in graduate courses under probation with the same probation conditions as previously described. Students who are then suspended a second time without having returned to good academic standing by achieving a cumulative GPA of 3.0 or better will be dismissed from the university.

The student whose UNT GPA in graduate work falls below 3.0 must make up the deficit, either by repeating courses in which the grades are low, or by completing other UNT courses with grades high enough to bring the UNT GPA up to a 3.0. Low grades made in graduate courses at UNT may not be duplicated at other institutions” (pp. 34-35).

**Transferring Graduate Hours**

A student who wishes to transfer graduate hours from another institution and have those hours apply toward a graduate degree at the University of North Texas, must obtain the approval of the major professor, the director of graduate studies, the department chair, and the graduate dean prior to submitting a degree plan. Traditionally, a student may apply no more than 6 hours completed at another graduate institution toward the master’s degree in Communication Studies at UNT.

The student must supply a transcript demonstrating that the hours were taken for graduate credit and were not taken to satisfy undergraduate requirements. The student also must supply a copy of the catalog description from the institution where the course was taken. If the catalog description provides insufficient information for evaluation or if the course is listed as independent research or independent study, the student must supply a syllabus or a complete description of the problem or project.
All requirements for the master’s degree, including transfer hours, must be completed within six years. As individual courses exceed this time limit, they no longer count toward the degree.

**Financial Support**

The department offers several teaching assistantships that provide a graduate student with valuable experience as a classroom teacher, a debate assistant, or as a performance assistant. The following course work/teaching ratios apply to students seeking a graduate degree in communication studies:

- A TA or TF who teaches at least four hours of communication courses (2 recitation sections) in a long semester must be enrolled in at least nine hours of course work in the department;
- A TA or TF who teaches fewer than four hours of communication courses (fewer than two recitation sections) in a long semester must be enrolled in at least six hours of coursework in the department;
- A TA or TF who teaches a communication course or recitation section in a summer semester must be enrolled in at least one communication course during the summer sessions.

Persons interested in applying for an assistantship or seeking additional information about an assistantship should contact the Director of Graduate Studies. If you want to submit an application, fill out the form located on the department website (“Graduate Student Forms”) and submit it to the Director of Graduate Studies.

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Consideration of applications for fall TA positions begins on March 1st and continues until all slots are filled. Persons selected as teaching assistants earn a stipend and receive in-state tuition and health benefits during semesters when they teach.