

**University of Tennessee, Knoxville**  
**College of Arts & Sciences**

**Department of Theatre**  
**Graduate Student Handbook**  
**2023-2024**

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## **A. Welcome Statement**

Welcome to the Department of Theatre and our graduate programs in Design and Acting! We are happy to have you join us and very proud of our nationally recognized training programs, distinguished faculty, and accomplished staff. During your three years of graduate training, this handbook will be a vital resource for you, addressing key policies and procedures. Please be sure to read it in its entirety.

Please note that this is a living document and may be updated periodically to reflect the latest departmental policies. We will notify you as updates are made, and it is your responsibility to familiarize yourself with the most current version of the MFA Handbook.

## **B. Introduction**

### **Graduate School Introduction**

In order to serve the mission and vision of the Graduate School and preserve the integrity of graduate programs at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville, information related to the process of graduate education in each department is to be provided for all graduate students.

Based on Best Practices offered by the Council of Graduate Schools, it is important that detailed articulation of the information specific to the graduate degrees offered in each department/program be disseminated. This Department of Theatre Graduate Handbook does not deviate from established Graduate School Policies noted in the [2023-24 Graduate Catalog](#) but rather provides information about the specific ways in which those policies are carried out. Please become familiar with the Graduate Catalog. In addition to much useful information there, *you are expected to be familiar and comply with the Graduate Catalog and:*

- Academic Policies and Requirements for Graduate Students, online at: [Academic Policies and Requirements for Graduate Students - University of Tennessee, Knoxville - Acalog ACMS™](#)
- Policies governing student conduct and academic integrity in Hilltopics Student Handbook, online at [Hilltopics Student Handbook](#)

Further information pertaining to graduate students is available at:

- [The Graduate School](#) Website
- [The University of Tennessee Graduate Council Appeal Procedure](#) (revised 2021)

Also, all UTK Students are responsible to be fully acquainted The UTK Student Code of Conduct, online at: [Student Conduct & Community Standards](#)

### **Department of Theatre Introduction**

This handbook outlines the course of study for the MFA degree in Theatre and discusses many of our department's guidelines and special features. Used in conjunction with the policies and procedures of the UTK Graduate School, it provides a comprehensive overview of the Department of Theatre's graduate-level offerings.

Departmental Graduate Administration includes:

- Artistic Director/Department Head: Prof. Kenneth Martin, [kmart125@utk.edu](mailto:kmart125@utk.edu); 865-974-6011
- Associate Dept. Head: Prof. Casey Sams, [jsams1@utk.edu](mailto:jsams1@utk.edu); 865-974-0806
- Director of Graduate Studies: Prof. Kenton Yeager, [kyeager@utk.edu](mailto:kyeager@utk.edu); 865-974-4069
- Graduate Committee:
  - Prof. Kenton Yeager, [kyeager@utk.edu](mailto:kyeager@utk.edu); 865-974-4069
  - Asst. Prof. Kathryn Cunningham (Head of Acting), [kcunni12@utk.edu](mailto:kcunni12@utk.edu); 865-974-7062
  - Asst. Prof. Lauren Roark (Head of Design), [lroark@utk.edu](mailto:lroark@utk.edu); 865-974-6136
- Administrative Specialist: Emily Pope, [epope7@utk.edu](mailto:epope7@utk.edu); 865-974-6011
- Accounting Specialist: Le Anna Jacobson, [ljacob12@utk.edu](mailto:ljacob12@utk.edu); 865-974-7058
- Business Manager: Tara Halstead, [thalstea@utk.edu](mailto:thalstea@utk.edu); 865-974-7060

### **MFA Degree**

Within concentrations in Costume Design, Scenic Design, Lighting Design, Sound and Digital Media Design, and Acting, the Master of Fine Arts degree provides comprehensive training in an environment that fosters creative risk-taking and that equips graduates to compete successfully in the theatre profession of today.

### **LORT Theatre Company**

A unique feature of the MFA program at UTK is the presence of a resident professional theatre. The Clarence Brown Theatre (CBT) is a LORT D theatre produced by the Department of Theatre that is fully integrated with its academic curriculum. Three or four of the department's eight annual subscription productions are produced under the CBT LORT contract, allowing students the opportunity to work alongside seasoned professionals. Founded in 1974, the CBT is one of the older companies in the LORT system and has a distinguished history of hosting artists of national and international stature. MFA actors and designers work in the CBT production season and have opportunities to do mainstage work in a LORT theatre throughout their training.

### **International and Guest Workshop Initiatives**

The MFA in Theatre Design program features a strong component of international exchange. Students and faculty have opportunities to interact with international artists in Knoxville or abroad. These opportunities provide experience of diverse modes of theatrical representation and ways of working that enable designers to see their work within the context of a larger worldview. The department allocates funds on a priority basis for exchange initiatives and/or graduate student travel.

The MFA in Theatre, Acting program engages in exchange with national and international artists in workshops and productions at UTK. Acting area workshop funds are allocated to guest workshops in a rotating variety of areas, including: acting for the camera, voice acting, clown, movement, stage combat, intimacy, auditioning, casting director meet and greets, external auditions, and others. Workshop schedule and guests are dependent on artist availability and funding.

### **Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion**

The Department of Theatre's core values are reflected in our mission and daily practices.

We are dedicated to educating diverse undergraduate and graduate students in rigorous programs that fully integrate their training with the operations of our professional theatre, which serves the cultural life of the region.

We are deeply committed to the values of the College of Arts and Sciences – traditions of a liberal arts education; free, bold, and ethical inquiry; effective civic engagement; an understanding and appreciation of our nation’s natural and cultural heritage; and a deep respect for equity, diversity, inclusion and cultural exchange within our discipline.

The Department also recognizes and values diversity in all forms, including: age, disability, ethnicity, family structure, gender identity, national origin, race, religion, spirituality, sexual orientation, socioeconomic background, veteran status, and speech and accent.

We believe inclusivity and diversity in our workplace should reflect the increasing multicultural and global society in which we live. We seek to foster excellent creative research, scholarship, and professional practice, by creating a welcoming environment, engaging in ethical recruitment practices, and supporting a diverse student body. We hope our students will live lives of awareness and understanding through their creative research, teaching, practicing, and advocating for others in a diverse world. We will attract and sustain faculty who pursue creative expression and research that enriches lives and seeks solutions to society’s problems. We seek to impart empathy and self-knowledge to our students and values of life-long learning and engagement. We seek to provide them with the knowledge and experiential foundations for a rich, fulfilled, engaged life, and career as informed citizens.

We will promote diversity and inclusion because these values reflect a basic human right to justice and equality of opportunity for all, and engender the most effective environment to foster creative citizens and prepare our students for the world.

For information on UTK Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Resources, go to: [UTK Diversity and Engagement](#)

### **C. General Duties and Responsibilities of Faculty, Resident Artists, and all Graduate Students**

**Faculty and Resident Artists are fully committed to the mission statement of the Department of Theatre.**

*“The mission of the Department of Theatre and the Clarence Brown Theatre Company shall be to achieve regional, national, and international distinction by:*

- *Providing quality programs of study at both the graduate and undergraduate levels.*
- *Supporting a resident professional theatre to foster professional standards of production and performance.*
- *Enriching the study and practice of theatre with projects and pursuits which facilitate national and international artistic exchange among teachers, students, and professional artists.*
- *Providing a cultural resource for both the University and the larger East Tennessee community.*

*The Master of Fine Arts in Theatre shall provide an educational and artistic foundation for a life of work and research in theatre.” -As stated in the Faculty Handbook, Sections 2.2.2 and 2.2.3*

### **Teaching**

Faculty members are responsible for teaching effectively by employing useful methods and approaches that facilitate student learning. Faculty members design courses to achieve clearly defined learning objectives with appropriate evaluation tools and teaching methods. Advising undergraduate and graduate students concerning courses, curricula, and professional opportunities beyond the degree is also important. Faculty members may educate students through distance learning. Faculty members may pursue the scholarship of education, so as to improve teaching of faculty members and other educators, such as primary and secondary teachers, or extension agents. Other faculty members through outreach instruct non-traditional audiences in off-campus settings to improve professional expertise and public understanding.

### **Research / Scholarship / Creative Activity**

Faculty members make intellectual and creative contributions through the scholarship of discovery and application, both within and across disciplines. Faculty disseminate their scholarly work through venues respected in their disciplines and beyond academia, secure funding where appropriate for their scholarly endeavors through organizations and disciplinary opportunities, and mentor undergraduate and graduate students in the research experience. Some faculty members pursue the scholarship of discovery by creating new knowledge and skills. Some faculty members pursue the scholarship of application, which typically involves outreach to the community to co-develop successful practices to address problems to benefit individuals and organizations.”

All Theatre Department faculty members engage in creative activity as practicing theatre professionals or in the scholarship of theatre history/criticism/theory.

**Graduate students are expected to be fully acquainted and comply with all requirements of this handbook and of:**

- [The Graduate Catalog](#)
- [Academic Policies and Requirements for Graduate Students](#)
- [The UTK Student Code of Conduct](#)
- [The Hilltopics Student Handbook](#)

## **D. Admission Requirements and Application Procedures**

### **Graduate School Admission Requirements**

All applicants to the MFA program must first complete all procedures and requirements for admission to the Graduate School of The University of Tennessee, Knoxville, as detailed in [The Graduate Catalog](#). The phone number is 865-974- 3251.

A Bachelor's degree is required from a college or university accredited by the appropriate regional accrediting agency. A foreign degree must be equivalent to a U.S. Bachelor's degree and must be accredited by its regional or national accreditation agency.

U.S. Degree holders must have earned a 2.7 out of a possible 4.0 GPA or a minimum of 3.0 during the senior year of undergraduate study. Foreign degree holders must have earned a minimum of 3.0 on a 4.0 scale or another equivalent to a 'B' average. If you have completed previous graduate course work, you must have a grade-point average of 3.0 on a 4-point scale or equivalent.

Appeals to these requirements can be made and are handled on a case-by-case basis. As stated in the Graduate Catalog, Academic Policies and Procedures:

*“An applicant whose undergraduate GPA falls between 2.5 and 2.7 may be admitted on probation, upon recommendation of an academic unit. The probationary status will be removed after completion of 9 or more credit hours of graduate credit with a minimum GPA of 3.0. Failure to maintain a 3.0 while in this status will result in dismissal. An international student may not be admitted on probation.”*

The Dean of the Graduate School must approve all admissions.

The application for admission is the same for both international and domestic students. However, there are deadlines and other important information that relates to international students only at: [Admissions for International Students | The Graduate School](#) and in the UT Graduate Catalog. Please read them carefully, and then proceed to the application procedures.

### **Department of Theatre MFA Program Admission Requirements**

The MFA Program of the Department of Theatre has additional requirements for admission that must be met by prospective graduate students before acceptance.

Interviews with appropriate faculty are required of all applicants. For admission to MFA design programs, applicants must submit samples of their work. Auditions are required of MFA Acting applicants.

A Statement of Purpose is required and should be uploaded directly into the online application for The Graduate School.

No GRE or MAT scores are required for admission.

Up to date admission requirement information may also be found at the [Department of Theatre website](#) under the “prospective students” tab.

## **E. Financial Support**

### **Graduate Teaching Assistantships**

All MFA candidates in the Department of Theatre are awarded Graduate Teaching Assistantships (GTAs) for three years. This is a continuing provision that is not renewable beyond three years. As long as a student maintains good standing (a cumulative GPA of at least 3.0 plus ongoing approval of Department of Theatre faculty and administration), assistantships remain in force. The assistantship remits tuition for Fall, Spring, and Summer semesters. The annual amount of the stipend is outlined in the initial letter of admission. Monthly payment amounts may vary during the summer from that in the academic year, depending upon the sources from which individual funds are allocated. Students may apply for additional fellowships and scholarships through a variety of sources, including the College of Arts and Sciences, The Graduate School, and the Department of Theatre.

Please note that the tuition waiver does not include a waiver of annual fees for programs, activities, transportation, technology, facilities, and other services. The amount of the fees is also described in the initial letter of admission and the University adjusts this amount on an annual basis pending final approval of budgets for the fiscal year.

Graduate Teaching Assistantships also provide graduate student health insurance. However, graduate student health insurance does not cover spouses, dependents, or partners. Such coverage is available at additional cost to the student.

### **Scholarships and Other Forms of Financial Aid**

Both the Department of Theatre and the University have forms of financial aid available other than the tuition waiver and GTA stipend.

Scholarships from the Department are generally awarded to second- and third-year MFA students. Graduate students must apply for scholarships each year, which are awarded by a Department of Theatre committee of faculty.

Fellowships are awards that typically require no service. Most fellowships are awarded based on academic merit and/or professional potential. A list of Fellowships awarded through the Graduate School can be found at: [Graduate Fellowships and Awards](#).

For loans and other forms of aid from the University, students should contact the [UTK Financial Aid Office](#).

## **F. Graduate Teaching Assistant Opportunities**

### **Design GTA Opportunities**

Graduate students in design will design a minimum of one Lab Theatre production and two fully supported CBT productions during the three-year course of study. They will also have multiple opportunities to serve as assistant designer. Additional design assignments may occur when the student's schedule permits and departmental design opportunities are available.

Graduate design students can work in jobs outside of UTK with prior approval of their area advisor/professor(s). Outside work can also be assigned as part of the academic curriculum, however paid outside employment is not permitted.

Work for other UTK departments in the academic year, such as for organizations renting the CBT, or for the School of Music, *when that work exceeds 50% time in the week*, is not permitted without prior approval from area faculty, department administration, and the Dean of the Graduate School.

Graduate students in design have opportunities to teach in the second and third year of training. Teaching is not mandatory for all graduates, although the department has the prerogative to make a mandatory teaching assignment to any graduate at any time in the second and third years of study.

All GTAs teaching any course must meet with their supervising faculty of that particular course, if possible, prior to the first class of the semester to gain mutual understanding of the expectations regarding the GTA's workload for that course. If this meeting cannot take place, the supervising

faculty member will contact the GTA to provide the course syllabus and other materials relevant to the course and expectations of the GTA.

MFA design students each have a studio space in a building dedicated to the use of the MFA design program. This facility includes a teaching and seminar room, a state-of-the-art peripherals lab with a laser engraver/cutter, 3D printer, large format plotter for model building and printing plans, refrigerator, and microwave oven.

### **Industry Conference / Travel Grants**

Up to \$1500 per year per graduate design student is allocated by the Department for professional development during the academic year. These funds are not available at the discretion of the student but are allocated at the discretion of department faculty and administration. In the design area these funds are typically allocated to design conferences and competitions or for the introduction to the profession. These expenses may or may not involve travel.

Additional funds can be requested by application to the College of Arts and Sciences and the Graduate Student Senate. Funding from these sources can only be received once per academic year.

### **Acting GTA Opportunities**

Graduate students in acting may be assigned to perform in, and must be available for, all Department of Theatre/CBT productions. The UTK/CBT Theatre season includes professional productions (LORT), University productions, and studio projects. Casting of graduate actors is conducted by the Department Head/Artistic Director, with input from the Associate Artistic Director, Head of Acting, and production directors. Casting in onstage and understudy roles is “as assigned,” and successful completion of onstage and understudy assignments is necessary to remain in good standing. Auditions are ordinarily required, but some roles/productions will be cast without dedicated auditions. Performance opportunities in at least two substantial roles (featured or leading) are mandated by the National Association of Schools of Theatre, an accrediting organization of the UTK Department of Theatre. It is not unusual (but not guaranteed) for graduate actors to be cast in 6-10 CBT productions or projects during the three-year residency.

Whether paid or unpaid, employment outside of UTK during the academic year is generally not possible for graduate acting students. Rare exceptions may be made on a case-by-case basis by approval of the acting faculty and department administration.

Acting or other work for other UTK departments in the academic year, such as for organizations renting the CBT, or for the School of Music, *when that work exceeds 50% time in the week*, is not permitted without prior approval from area faculty, department administration, and the Dean of the Graduate School. All work for other departments at UTK requires Graduate School approval prior to beginning that work (e.g., voiceover work, UT Opera).

Graduate students in acting have opportunities to teach in the second and third year of training. Teaching is not mandatory for all graduates, although the department has the prerogative to make a mandatory teaching assignment to any graduate at any time during those two years of training.

### **Industry Showcase / Travel Grants**

Up to \$1500 per year per graduate acting student is allocated by the Department for professional development during the academic year. These funds are not available at the discretion of the student



but are allocated at the discretion of department faculty and administration. In the acting area these funds are typically allocated to expenses for the MFA acting third-year showcase or for introduction to the profession expenses, which may or may not involve travel.

Additional funds can be requested by application to the College of Arts and Sciences and the Graduate Student Senate. Funding from these sources can only be received once per academic year.

### **G. Graduate Teaching Assistant Duties**

MFA in Theatre students carry out GTA duties through work in a combination of areas appropriate to their discipline. Assistantship duties are an integral part of academic achievement, professional standards and behavior, project and production work, teaching and assisting, and are evaluated as such. Failure to accomplish GTA duties as assigned by department faculty or administration can affect professional standing, result in denial of assistantship or fellowship renewal, and/or probation and dismissal procedures. See below: “Examinations / Evaluations” (pages 19-20), and “Standards, Problems, and Appeals” (pages 20-25).

#### **Design GTA Duties**

Assistantship is employment with the University of Tennessee, Knoxville. Graduates are paid a stipend, and in return, are required to fulfill duties as assigned. Possible GTA assignments include: Working in CBT production shops, teaching a course, assistant teaching, lab supervision, and research/special projects.

Between all assistantship responsibilities, design graduates are required to complete 225 hours per semester, averaging 15 hours per week for the 15 weeks classes are in session each semester. Hours cannot be carried over from semester to semester. Hours can be completed, with permission from the student’s direct supervisor, prior to the first day of class, during winter break, or after a semester ends. Hours worked over 15 in a given week count towards the student’s overall 225- hour requirement.

#### **Working in a CBT Production Shop**

Graduate students in design will generally be placed in the shop directly related to their area of concentration, as determined by their faculty mentor. On a regular basis, the student’s skills will be assessed, and they will be assigned suitable tasks within the assigned shop. Working in a CBT shop is a job, just like any non-theatre employment. As such, we expect the following:

- The shop supervisor is your boss. Treat them as such.
- Good and timely communication with your shop supervisor is critical. Be sure they are aware of your schedule and any planned absences in advance.
- Show up ready to work when scheduled.
- Stay on the job until scheduled to leave.
- Wear appropriate attire for the job at hand.
- Contact the shop supervisor if your schedule changes in time for them to plan to cover your shift/projects.
- Time missed must be made up.

Shop supervisors will communicate whether they expect hours to be completed on a regular weekly basis or a total accrual by the end of the semester. Each shop is different, and you must adhere to

their policy. As soon as possible after registration, GTA's are expected to arrange with their assigned shop supervisor a schedule that includes the hours they anticipate being in the shop each week. The scene shop, prop shop, and costume shop generally require regularly scheduled weekly hours. The electrics shop, sound shop, and paint shop generally require semester accrual of hours, with specific scheduled project days, i.e. hang and focus. A schedule of work calls will be given in advance with enough time for the student to appropriately arrange to be there. Scheduling conflicts should be discussed with the appropriate supervisor in advance.

**Design Hours vs. GTA/Shop Hours:** In general, hours put into a CBT production as a designer or an assistant designer do not count towards GTA or shop hours. The student must communicate with their respective shop supervisor, any time they are putting in time as an employee/worker in a shop, rather than as a designer. Each shop supervisor will communicate which activities count as shop employee vs. design duty.

If possible, shops request that students arrange their work schedules to be more available during heavy work times in the season (i.e., the two weeks preceding the Friday opening of a show, hang/focus, load-in). Occasionally, students may be asked to work beyond their scheduled times, for strikes, projects, etc. These times are discussed and handled on a case-by-case basis.

### **Teaching and Assistant-Teaching**

Teaching assignments are made by faculty and department administration. Teaching a course typically counts as six GTA hours per week and assistant teaching a course counts as three GTA hours per week, depending on the requirements of the course, as determined prior to being assigned the course. Time spent grading, prepping, or otherwise beyond the hours allocated will not count towards total GTA hours. THEA 245 Introduction to Theatrical Design and Production: Scenery and Costumes and THEA 265 Introduction to Theatrical Design and Production: Lighting, Sound, and Digital Media are among the courses that have been taught by qualified graduate students in design. Many of our technology based academic spaces require supervision from graduate students. When assigned as a lab supervisor, duties will include: Cleaning, maintenance, repair, installation, ordering of supplies, technical support for the labs, and supervision of undergraduate work in the labs.

### **Special Projects**

At the discretion and behest of their area advisor, design graduates may be credited for hours in which they perform research, supervision, or other duties not related to the CBT shops. These projects typically surround the academic wing and can include: setting up and installing academic spaces, recruitment, conference lab setup, and library and/or inventory organization. If you have been assigned research or special projects for GTA hours, your faculty mentor is your direct supervisor.

The department requires all design graduates to have work and school related schedules posted to their [vols.utk.edu](http://vols.utk.edu) calendar with classes set as busy and shop hours set as tentative. The simplest place to add items to this calendar is through [office365.utk.edu](http://office365.utk.edu).

Students are required to keep track of their hours when not directly supervised (research projects/lab supervision) and will be asked to account for time spent.

When regularly scheduled shop hours are missed due to planned academic trips, assistantship hours will be excused. If you work for a shop that doesn't hold regularly scheduled hours, a prorated number of hours will be excused based on the amount of weekly shop hours scheduled at the

beginning of the semester. For example, if you are scheduled for 5 hours per week in the electrics shop, you will be excused for 1 hour per day missed. Be sure you and your Supervisor agree in advance on the number of hours excused. Both your Shop Supervisor and the Production Manager should be made aware of all scheduled travel – whether academic trips or for any other purpose. Trips include: Foreign Study Trip, NYC Trip, SETC, USITT, and scheduled on-campus masterclasses.

When design and production meetings occur during regularly scheduled shop hours, they count as worked hours. Meetings scheduled outside of scheduled work hours will not count as worked hours.

Any assistantship hours missed because of time spent out of town assisting the design faculty or independent designs outside of the department must be made up completely.

Hours not completed due to holidays must be made up, based on following rules established by the University regarding part-time and non-exempt employees (hourly and part-time employees do not get holiday pay).

Incomplete hours at the end of each semester will require a plan for hours to be made up, approved by the shop supervisor, faculty mentor, and Production Manager. If hours are not made up, the student will be placed on probation. Typically, after a semester of probation, the student is either removed from probation or removed from the program.

### **Acting GTA Duties**

In the MFA in Theatre Acting concentration, assistantship duties are discharged through a combination of means.

### **Performing**

Graduates in Acting will fulfill all required rehearsal and performance responsibilities beyond regularly scheduled course hours. This may affect University holidays. As employees of the University, GTAs are often required to remain on campus during holidays. GTA responsibilities can also occasionally affect summer employment. External professional employment in summers is encouraged and may be facilitated when possible, but employment with UT/CBT takes precedence over outside employment. On occasion, graduate students will be assigned to work in a show at UT that conflicts with summer employment.

### **Understudying**

Understudying will be required of graduate actors by the department according to the needs of the theatre. You will be assessed on your performance of understudy assignments according to the CBT understudy policy.

### **Front of House**

Front of House duties such as assisting the house manager or box office staff may be assigned to graduate actors by the department including help with subscription sales, greeting and helping patrons, etc.

### **Community Engagement**

Community engagement activities such as attending and/or performing at CBT promotional, fundraising, and outreach events may be assigned to graduate acting students.

## **Grading**

During the first and second year of training, acting GTAs will be assigned to assist faculty with grading written materials such as papers and exams for Theatre 100: Introduction to Theatre or other courses. Additional assignments of this type in the third year of training may also be required at times.

## **Teaching and Assistant-Teaching**

Although not mandatory, teaching and/or assistant-teaching are possible for interested graduate actors. Teaching assignments are made by faculty and department administration and are ordinarily carried out during the third year of training. On occasion, teaching assignments of qualified graduate students can be made in the second year of training.

For teaching in the third year, graduate actors in their second year of training “shadow” a faculty member who is teaching Theatre 220: Acting I (Beginning Acting) in the undergraduate program. GTAs attend some or all of the classes taught by a faculty member and assist the faculty member for one term. Upon satisfactory completion of shadowing, GTAs can teach a section of Theatre 220 in the fall or spring terms of their third year, under faculty supervision. Upon occasion, GTAs may be asked to substitute or teach other courses, depending upon individual readiness and departmental need.

There are also opportunities to assist faculty in a variety of courses during the third year of training. Assistant-teaching is different from independently teaching a section of Theatre 220. Assisting takes place by request to and with the invitation of faculty members. Assisting does not require formal shadowing but may require some other form(s) of preparation.

All GTAs teaching any course must meet with their supervising faculty of that particular course prior to the first class of the semester to gain mutual understanding of the expectations regarding the GTA’s workload for that course.

## **Special assignments**

GTAs may also be given special assignments, such as assisting with library acquisitions, scheduling, or assisting with travel arrangements for their cohort, etc.

## **H. Registration and Advising**

Registration must be completed online. Registration [procedures and timeline information](#) and information about [graduate orientation](#).

## **Course Credit**

To earn graduate credit, a student must be admitted by the Dean of the Graduate School and enrolled in an appropriate status as a graduate student. The registration must reflect the desire for graduate credit, and the course must have been approved by the Graduate Council. Course work taken in any other status is unacceptable for graduate credit and cannot be changed retroactively to graduate credit. Courses numbered at the 500-level, as well as those 400-level courses approved for graduate credit, must be taught by faculty members who (1) meet the criteria of an assistant professor or above as defined in the *Faculty Handbook* and (2) have been designated by the department head as being appropriate. Graduate Teaching Assistants are ineligible to teach courses approved for graduate

credit, unless they are in a post-professional degree program where the terminal degree is a master's degree and has been approved by the Graduate Council as an exception.

Consistent with the accreditation requirements of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS) that graduate curricula must be substantially different from undergraduate curricula, classes at the 400-level in which both graduate and undergraduate students are enrolled must be structured to reflect this distinction. That is, course requirements for graduate credit will be more rigorous and will exceed expectations for undergraduates. Graduate and undergraduate completion of the same course will not be considered equivalent. Petitions for retroactive changing of undergraduate to graduate credit will not be accepted.

### **Course Load**

The maximum load for a graduate student is 15 hours. 9-12 hours are considered a full load. All Theatre graduates hold one-fourth time assistantships. A one-fourth time graduate assistant normally should take 9-13 hours per semester. Registration for more than 15 hours during any semester is not permissible without prior approval. Refer to the [Graduate Catalog](#) for additional information.

### **Advisor/Major Professor**

Every graduate student in MFA Design must have an advisor from the area of specialty within which they are studying. The Theatre Department assigns an advisor to each graduate student from within the student's area of concentration. This professor advises the student about courses, supervises the student's research, and facilitates communication within the department, to other departments, and with the Dean of the Graduate School. The advisor must approve the student's program each semester. The student is expected to maintain close consultation with their advisor with regards to progress in the program. Other responsibilities of the advisor are explained under individual programs.

In the MFA Acting area, faculty share advising duties, with most advising handled by the Head of Acting.

## **I. Degree Requirements**

### **The Master of Fine Arts in Theatre**

At least 60 semester hours, 40 of which must be at the 500 level or above, are required for the Master of Fine Arts in Theatre, which is normally to be completed in three consecutive years of full-time residence. Theatre 501: Introduction to Graduate Research is required. Three additional advisor-approved credit hours at the graduate level are required in theatre history, literature, or dramaturgy. Students in the MFA degree program are evaluated each semester by faculty on overall performance, portfolio submission (in Design), onstage and understudy roles (in Acting), and standards of behavior. See the below sections on Examinations / Evaluations (K), and on Standards, Problems, and Appeals (L).

Theatre 599: Project in Lieu of Thesis (PILOT) is required for the degree and an oral defense of the Project in Lieu of Thesis must be completed satisfactorily in the third year of study before the degree is conferred. The graduate student and their area advisor together select an advisor for the PILOT. Theatre MFA students are not required to take comprehensive examinations as part of the degree requirements.

In addition to the core requirements listed above, each area of concentration has specific requirements:

### **Costume Design Concentration**

Required courses are THEA 503 in the first year of residence, 1 credit hour of THEA 491, 1 credit hour of THEA 492, 3 credit hours of THEA 543, and at least 12 credit hours of THEA 580.

### **Lighting Design Concentration**

Required courses are THEA 503 in the first year of residence, 1 credit hour of THEA 491, 1 credit hour of THEA 492, 3 credit hours of THEA 563, and at least 12 credit hours of THEA 580.

### **Scene Design Concentration**

Required courses are THEA 503 in the first year of residence, 1 credit hour of THEA 491, 1 credit hour of THEA 492, 3 credit hours of THEA 553, and at least 12 credit hours of THEA 580.

### **Sound and Digital Media Concentration**

Required courses are THEA 503 in the first year of residence, 1 credit hour of THEA 491, 1 credit hour of THEA 492, 3 credit hours of THEA 475, 3 credit hours of 473, and at least 12 credit hours of THEA 580.

### **Acting Concentration**

A minimum of 12 hours each (3 per semester for 4 semesters) of: Theatre 520: Graduate Studies in Acting, Theatre 523: Graduate Studies in Movement, Theatre 525: Graduate Studies in Voice and Speech

## **J. Sample Course Curricula**

### **Costume Design (subject to change):**

Semester 1:	THEA 501[3]	Introduction to Graduate Research in Theatre
	THEA 503[3]	Elements of Design for the Theatre
	THEA 540[3]	Master Class in Costume Design
	THEA 580[3]	Graduate Design Seminar
Semester 2:	THEA 510[3]	Theatre History (or approved dramatic literature course)
	THEA 540[3]	Master Class in Costume Design
	THEA 547[3]	Painting and Dyeing
	THEA 492[1]	Off-Campus Study
	THEA 580[3]	Graduate Design Seminar
Semester 3:	THEA 446[3]	Patterning
	THEA 540[3]	Master Class in Costume Design
	THEA 580[3]	Graduate Design Seminar
	THEA 584[3]	Photography for the Theatre
	THEA 587[3]	Computer Aided Rendering for Theatre
Semester 4:	THEA 542[3]	Social History of Costume
	THEA 540[3]	Master Class in Costume Design

	THEA 545[3]	Millinery for the Stage
	THEA 588[3]	Digital Portfolio
	THEA 491[1]	Foreign Study
Semester 5:	THEA 540[3]	Master Class in Costume Design
	THEA 549[3]	Special Projects in Costume Technology
	THEA 599 [1-6]	Project in Lieu of Thesis
	Elective	
Semester 6:	THEA 540[3]	Master Class in Costume Design
	THEA 599 [1-6]	Project in Lieu of Thesis
	Elective	
	Elective	

Suggested Electives: Art History, Dramatic Literature, Scene Design, Lighting Design, Directing, Drawing, Painting, Theatre 549-Projects in Costume Technology

**Lighting Design (subject to change):**

Semester 1:	THEA 580[3]	Graduate Design Seminar
	THEA 501[3]	Introduction to Graduate Research in Theatre
	THEA 503[3]	Elements of Design
	THEA 464[3]	Computer Aided Drafting for the Theatre
	THEA 593[1]	Independent Study: Opening the Creative Mind
Semester 2:	THEA 580[3]	Graduate Design Seminar
	THEA 510[3]	Theatre History (or approved dramatic literature course)
	THEA 563[3]	Projects in Lighting Design
	THEA 475 [3]	Projection and Media Design
	THEA 492[1]	Off-Campus Study
	THEA 593[1]	Independent Study: Opening the Creative Mind
Semester 3:	THEA 580[3]	Graduate Design Seminar
	THEA 584[3]	Photography for the Theatre
	THEA 587[3]	Computer Aided Rendering for Theatre
	THEA 563[3]	Projects in Lighting Design
	THEA 593[1]	Independent Study: Opening the Creative Mind
Semester 4:	THEA 550[3]	Special Topics in Design and Technology: Dance Lighting
	THEA 588[3]	Digital Portfolio
	THEA 563[3]	Projects in Lighting Design
	THEA 593 [1-3]	Independent Study
	THEA 491[1]	Foreign Study
	THEA 593[1]	Independent Study: Opening the Creative Mind
Semester 5:	THEA 599 [3]	Project in Lieu of Thesis
	THEA 563[3]	Projects in Lighting Design
	THEA 473[3]	Advanced Sound Design

Elective [3]

Semester 6: THEA 599 [6] Project in Lieu of Thesis  
THEA 563[3] Projects in Lighting Design  
THE 593[1-3] Independent Study  
Elective [3]

Suggested Electives: Art History, Dramatic Literature, Costume Design, Scene Design, Architectural Illumination, Small Group Dynamics, Conflict Resolution, Music theory

**Scenic Design (subject to change):**

Semester 1: THEA 580[3] Graduate Design Seminar  
THEA 501[3] Introduction to Graduate Research in Theatre  
THEA 503[3] Elements of Design  
THEA 464[3] Computer Aided Drafting for the Theatre

Semester 2: THEA 580[3] Graduate Design Seminar  
THEA 510[3] Theatre History (or approved dramatic literature course)  
THEA 551[3] Model Making  
THEA 554[3] Advanced Drafting for Theatre  
THEA 492[1] Off-Campus Study

Semester 3: THEA 580[3] Graduate Design Seminar  
THEA 584[3] Photography for the Theatre  
THEA 587[3] Computer Aided Rendering for Theatre  
THEA 550[3] Special Topics in Design and Technology: Stage Elevations and Properties

Semester 4: THEA 588[3] Digital Portfolio  
THEA 475[3] Projection and Media Design  
THEA 550[3] Special Topics in Design and Technology: Hand Drafting  
THEA 580[3] Design Seminar  
THEA 491[1] Foreign Study

Semester 5: THEA 599 [1-6] Project in Lieu of Thesis  
THEA 550[3] Special Topics in Design and Technology: Scenic Art  
THEA 557[3] Period Styles  
Elective

Semester 6: THEA 599 [1-6] Project in Lieu of Thesis Independent  
THEA 593[3] Study  
Elective  
Elective



Suggested Electives: Art History, Dramatic Literature, Costume Design, Lighting Design, Sound Design, Directing, Drawing, Painting, Theatre 540: Special Topics in Scenery Technology

**Sound and Digital Media (subject to change):**

Semester 1:	THEA 580[3] THEA 501[3] THEA 503[3] THEA 464[3]	Design Seminar Intro to Graduate Studies Elements of Design for the Theatre CAD for Theatre
Semester 2:	THEA 580[3] THEA 510[3] THEA 473[3] THEA 475[3] THEA 492[1]	Design Seminar History Advanced Sound Design Projection and Media Design Off Campus Study
Semester 3:	THEA 580[3] THEA 584[3] THEA 587[3] THEA 450[3]	Design Seminar Photography for the Theatre Computer Aided Rendering for the Theatre Special Projects in Sound and Digital Media
Semester 4:	THEA 588[3] THEA 593[3] THEA 491[1] Elective [3]	Digital Portfolio Independent study in Digital Rendering or Composition Foreign Study
Semester 5:	THEA 599[6] THEA 593[3] Elective [3]	Project in Lieu of Thesis Independent Study
Semester 6:	THEA 599[3] THEA 593[3] Elective [3]	Project in Lieu of Thesis Independent Study

Suggested Electives:

History of Art, History of Opera, Music Theory/ Technology, Music Composition, Music History, Dramatic Literature and Criticism, Renaissance Drama, Modern Drama, Contemporary Drama, Shakespeare, Drama of the Restoration and 18th Century, Photography, Costume Design, Lighting Design, Sound Design, Media Design, Advanced Theatre Technology.

**Acting (subject to change):**

Semester 1:	THEA 501 [3] THEA 520 [3] THEA 523 [3] THEA 525 [3] THEA 515 [1] THEA 493 [1]	Introduction to Graduate Research in Theatre Graduate Studies in Acting Graduate Studies in Movement Graduate Studies in Voice Alexander Technique Singing
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Semester 2:	THEA or other Dept.[3] THEA 520 [3] THEA 523 [3] THEA 525 [3] THEA 515 [1] THEA 493 [1]	Theatre History, Literature, or Theory Graduate Studies in Acting Graduate Studies in Movement Graduate Studies in Voice Alexander Technique Singing
Semester 3:	THEA 520 [3] THEA 523 [3] THEA 525 [3] THEA 524 [3] THEA 515 [1] THEA 493 [1]	Graduate Studies in Acting Graduate Studies in Movement Graduate Studies in Voice Graduate Studies in Heightened Text Alexander Technique Singing
Semester 4:	THEA 520 [3] THEA 523 [3] THEA 525 [3] THEA 524 [3] THEA 515 [1] THEA 493 [1]	Graduate Studies in Acting Graduate Studies in Movement Graduate Studies in Voice Graduate Studies in Acting Shakespeare Alexander Technique Singing
Semester 5:	THEA 520 [3] THEA 420 [3] THEA 523 [3] THEA 515 [1] THEA 599 [3] THEA 493 [1]	Graduate Studies in Acting Special Studies Period Dance Alexander Technique Project in Lieu of Thesis Singing
Semester 6:	THEA 520 [3] THEA 523 [3] THEA 515 [1] THEA 599 [3] THEA 493 [1]	Graduate Studies in Acting Stage Combat Alexander Technique Project in Lieu of Thesis Singing

### **K. Examinations / Evaluations**

Graduate education in Theatre requires continuous evaluation of the student. This evaluation includes:

- cumulative grade-point average
- oral and written semester evaluations by faculty at the end of each semester
- successful completion of a Project in Lieu of Thesis (PILOT) in the third year of training

The academic records of all graduate students in the Department of Theatre are reviewed at the end of each semester, including summer term if students are in active residence during the summer.

Graduate students must maintain a cumulative grade point average of at least 3.0 on all graduate courses taken for a letter grade of A-F. Grades of S/NC, P/NP, and I, which have no numerical equivalent, are excluded from this computation.

Every graduate student will receive written evaluations at the end of each semester. Design students will receive one written evaluation from their major advisor. Acting students will receive individual evaluations from each of the faculty members who have taught them during that semester as well as relevant CBT staff. These written evaluations will be discussed in a face-to-face meeting between graduate students and the appropriate faculty. Written evaluations should conclude with signature lines for the faculty who wrote the evaluation and for the student, indicating the date when this meeting occurred. The student's signature does not indicate agreement with each point of feedback. Instead, the student signature appears over a statement similar to this: "My signature indicates I have read this evaluation, I have been given an opportunity to ask questions, and I understand the feedback I have received." A copy of this signed evaluation will be given to the student and a copy will be placed in department files.

In addition, a written "summary" evaluation will be written at the end of each semester, following the end of semester face-to-face discussion between the faculty and student. A copy of this summary evaluation will be given to the student and a copy will be kept in department files.

This summary statement will inform the student of their overall standing in the MFA program.

***There are three types of standing at the end of every term of enrollment:***

- *good standing*
- *academic, behavioral, or professional deficiency probation*
- *academic, behavioral, or professional deficiency dismissal*

For more information on probation and dismissal, see the section on Standards, Problems, and Appeals immediately below.

The criteria for these evaluations vary according to the areas of study within the concentrations of Acting and Design. However, general criteria include achievement, effort, professional conduct, project and production work, teaching and assisting, and shop duties. GTA work duties in shops and on productions are an integral part of academic achievement in the MFA program and failure to carry out these duties can affect academic standing, affect casting and design assignments, denial of assistantship or fellowship renewal, and/or probation and dismissal procedures. Recommendations going forward should also be provided to the student each semester.

The date of these evaluations is set each semester by the area faculty according to the University and Department calendars. Students should check with their area professor or the Director of Graduate Studies in the Department to learn the date of the evaluations.

These semester evaluations will effectively provide an annual progress/portfolio evaluation. The faculty in the area of concentration (Acting or Design) then determine whether the student is in good standing or should be placed upon academic probation.

Continuation in a program is determined by consideration of all these elements by the faculty and the Department Head.

For policies and procedures governing probation, dismissal, and appeals, see the section on Standards, Problems, and Appeals immediately below.

## **L. Standards, Problems, and Appeals**

### **Academic, Behavioral, and Professional Standards**

Department of Theatre and Clarence Brown Theatre faculty and staff are dedicated to a dual mission of providing first rate theatre education within the environment of a professional theatre. MFA students are expected to maintain high standards of academic, behavioral, and professional standing throughout their training, and to provide leadership by example to undergraduates. Academic, behavioral, and professional standards are clearly communicated in the Graduate School, the College of Arts and Sciences, the Department, and the CBT through online resources, handbooks, production guidelines, and verbal reiteration. Graduate students are responsible to know the standards and common practices of UTK, the Graduate School, the Department and the CBT. As repeated numerous times in this handbook, *Graduate students are expected to be familiar and comply with all requirements of this handbook, and of:*

- [The Graduate Catalog](#)
- [Academic Policies and Requirements for Graduate Students](#).
- [The UTK Student Code of Conduct](#)
- [The Hilltopics Student Handbook](#)

In the Department of Theatre, disciplinary actions including removal from CBT or other production assignments, and probation and/or dismissal from the MFA program can be invoked at any time, based upon the recommendation of faculty or department administration. However, Theatre Department faculty and administration will make every effort to inform a student of probationary actions or a move to dismissal in a timely and respectful professional manner. If such a case occurs, faculty will identify and inform the student of the issue as early as reasonably possible and give the student an opportunity to address that problem, unless the issue in question is deemed egregious enough to justify University-level investigation resulting in a negative outcome. In such a case, a student may be subject to immediate dismissal.

Such disciplinary actions can be invoked based upon any one or more of the following criteria:

- Academic failure
- Behavioral misconduct
- Professional deficiency

### **Academic Failure**

#### **Academic Probation**

Upon completion of 9 credit hours of graduate course work, a graduate student will be placed on academic probation when his/her *cumulative GPA* falls below 3.0. A student will be allowed to continue graduate study in subsequent semesters if each semester's cumulative grade point average is 3.0 or greater. Upon achieving a cumulative GPA of 3.0, the student will be removed from probationary status.

Students are also subject to academic review by their graduate faculty at any time.

Probation can be triggered as a result of the evaluations described on pages 20-21 above, or as soon as a problem comes to the attention of the faculty. Detailed information will be provided to the student, verbally and in writing, about unacceptable performance; stating the terms of probation; and

with a reasonable period of time specified for the student to remediate before a recommendation to dismiss is made to the Graduate School.

However, there are conditions under which a prompt recommendation for dismissal can be made without opportunity for remediation. These are described below and in the following policy statements:

- [Academic Policies and Requirements for Graduate Students](#)
- Policies governing student conduct and academic integrity in [Hilltopics Student Handbook](#).

### **Academic Dismissal**

If a student is on academic probation, the degree or non-degree status will be terminated by the Dean of the Graduate School if the student's semester GPA falls below 3.0 in a subsequent semester. When the particular circumstances are deemed to justify continuation, and upon recommendation of the appropriate academic unit and approval of the Dean of the Graduate School, a student on probation whose semester GPA is below 3.0 may be allowed to continue on a semester-by-semester basis.

Dismissal of a graduate student by a department or program is accomplished by written notice to the student, with a copy to the Graduate School. In those cases where the department's requirements for continuation are more stringent than university requirements for graduate programs, the Dean of the Graduate School will evaluate the student's record to determine whether the student is eligible to apply for a change of status and register in another area of study. Registration for courses in a department from which a student has been dismissed will not be permitted, except by written authorization from that department.

### **Academic Honesty**

Academic integrity is a responsibility of all members of the academic community. An honor statement is included on the application for admission and readmission. The applicant's signature acknowledges that adherence is confirmed. The honor statement declares that:

*“An essential feature of The University of Tennessee, Knoxville is a commitment to maintaining an atmosphere of intellectual integrity and academic honesty. As a student of The University, I pledge that I will neither knowingly give nor receive any inappropriate assistance in academic work, thus affirming my own personal commitment to honor and integrity.”*

*Webster's Tenth New Collegiate Dictionary [1998]* defines plagiarism as “stealing or passing off ideas or words of another as one's own”; “the use of a created production without crediting the source.” Any material taken from another source must be documented, and in no case should one present another person's work as one's own. Students involved in collaborative research to avoid questions of plagiarism should exercise extreme caution. If in doubt, students should check with their major professor and the Graduate School about the project. Plagiarism will be investigated when suspected and prosecuted if established.

### **Behavioral Misconduct**

## [UTK Student Code of Conduct](#)

Graduate students in the Department of Theatre and the Clarence Brown Theatre are expected to be familiar and comply with all requirements of the UTK Student Code of Conduct.

Conduct that is inconsistent with the Code can invoke disciplinary action and result in probation or dismissal at any time. Due to the collaborative nature of theatre, conduct that interferes with or detracts from the ability of others to make progress towards their degree, or from the professional function of the Department of Theatre or the Clarence Brown Theatre, can also invoke disciplinary action and probation or dismissal any time.

### **Behavioral Probation**

Misconduct will be addressed by department administration and faculty on a case-by-case basis. Conduct that is inconsistent with the UTK Student Code of Conduct can invoke probation at any time. As with academic probation, if behavioral probation is invoked, detailed information will be provided to the student, verbally and in writing, about unacceptable behavior; stating the terms of probation; and with a reasonable period of time specified for the student to remediate before a recommendation to dismiss is made to the Graduate School. However, there are conditions under which a prompt recommendation for dismissal can be made without opportunity for remediation. These are described in the following policy statements:

- [Academic Policies and Requirements for Graduate Students](#) and
- Policies governing student conduct and academic integrity in [Hilltopics Student Handbook](#).

### **Behavioral Dismissal**

Misconduct can invoke dismissal at any time. Conduct that interferes with or detracts from the ability of others to make satisfactory progress towards their degree, or from the professional function of the Department of Theatre or the Clarence Brown Theatre, can also invoke dismissal any time.

Dismissal by a department or program is accomplished by written notice to the student, with a copy to the Graduate School.

### **Professional Deficiency**

Two major elements of the MFA in Theatre program are participation in Clarence Brown Theatre projects and productions and Graduate Teaching Assistantship (GTA) duties. Participation in the theatrical event through work on projects and productions is required by the Department and by the National Association of Schools of Theatre, an accrediting body of the Department of Theatre. Such participation is an integral part of a student's standing in the MFA program, and is regularly evaluated by faculty, CBT staff, and administrative leadership. Just so, Graduate Teaching Assistantship duties are also an integral part of a student's standing and are regularly evaluated.

However, neither project and production participation nor GTA duties fall within the purview of a particular class or are graded within a particular class. A student may be performing sufficiently in classes, but still be deficient in translating their training into the professional arena of the theatre or into professional teaching or assistant teaching.

***That is, it is possible for an MFA student to be in good academic and behavioral standing, but deficient in meeting professional standards within the CBT and/or in their GTA duties.***

In such an instance, a student can be found to be professionally deficient. At a minimum, MFA actors must achieve standards of work sufficient to be consistently cast in CBT productions, and MFA designers must achieve standards of work sufficient to be reliably assigned to CBT productions. Also, all MFA students must carry out their teaching duties according to departmental standards.

### **Professional Deficiency Probation**

Professional deficiency will be addressed by administration and faculty on a case-by-case basis. As with academic and behavioral probation, if professional deficiency is invoked, detailed information will be provided to the student, verbally and in writing, about the deficiency; stating the terms of probation; and with a reasonable period of time specified for the student to remediate before a recommendation to dismiss is made to the Graduate School.

### **Professional Deficiency Dismissal**

MFA students found to be deficient in meeting Department of Theatre professional standards of work within the CBT or in their GTA duties, can be dismissed from the MFA program at any time.

Dismissal by a department or program is accomplished by written notice to the student, with a copy to the Graduate School.

### **Alcohol Restrictions**

No university student, *regardless of age*, may be served or partake of alcoholic beverages at any Clarence Brown Theatre, Department of Theatre, or University sponsored event. This includes CBT Opening Night receptions and all other events both on campus and off campus.

No student may possess, consume, or be under the influence of alcohol, drugs, or other intoxicating substances while working on CBT/UTK premises or in the classroom. Violators of this policy may be subject to disciplinary procedures, including dismissal from the program.

### **Appeals Procedure**

The student handbook, [Hilltopics](#), contains statements concerning UTK standards of conduct and disciplinary regulations and procedures. Normally, grievances should be handled at the department level through the student's advisor or the program or department head. Students wishing to appeal a grade or address a grievance or incident should:

1. Meet with the instructor of the course, members of the student's committee, and/or, if desired, with the Department Head.
2. If these meetings are unsatisfactory, and the student wishes to file a formal appeal, *they must do so no later than 30 days after the incident that occasions the appeal*. The student should make a written request to appeal the grade/incident through the Department's Standards and Appeals Committee. The Committee will meet with the student and all faculty involved in the action being appealed. After hearing all sides of the issue, the committee will make a judgment and recommendation for action to the Department Head. The Department Head will consider the final recommendation of the committee binding and will take the necessary measures to comply with that recommendation. The student will be notified in writing of the department decision and further avenues of appeal that are open to them.

3. If the department procedure does not lead to resolution of the complaint, the next level is an appeal at the College level. *This appeal must be filed within 30 days of a final decision at the department level.*
4. Beyond the College level, graduate students may further appeal to the Dean of the Graduate School, the Graduate Council, and the Chancellor. The by-laws of the University [Article V, section 7] provide that any individual may ultimately appeal to the Board of Trustees through the President. A hard copy of the Appeals Procedures is available in the Office of Graduate Admissions and Records. [The Graduate Council Appeal Procedure](#), (revised 2016) can also be viewed electronically on the Graduate School website. Note that this policy applies only after grievances have been duly processed, without resolution, through appropriate appeals procedures at the department and college levels.

## Appendices

### M. Graduation Requirements

In addition to completing all of the requirements listed for the degree, students must comply with the requirements of the Graduate School and the University before they will be granted a degree. Mostly this consists of paperwork, but **it must be submitted properly and on time or the University will not allow you to graduate.** The following is a list of Graduate School and University requirements for graduation and the approximate dates of each. You must check with the Graduate School for the **exact dates** of each **deadline** for the specific year in which you intend to graduate. All of these requirements occur in your third year of residence.

#### **Masters Non-Thesis program**

It is vital that you make these deadlines, or you may not graduate on time. You are strongly encouraged to move all of these deadlines ahead a week or two so that if anything comes up at the last minute, you will still be on track.

#### **Prepare Your Committee**

Your committee will act as mentors and evaluators, ensuring that you have successfully achieved your degree, whether it be a Master's degree, Specialist Degree in Education, or Doctoral Degree.

#### **Master's/Specialist in Education**

You are encouraged to meet with your major professor to find out who is on your committee, so that you may work with them throughout the rest of the process for graduation. You will also need to know your committee members so that you can complete your admission to candidacy, the next step for students in a Master's or Specialist in Education program.

#### **Admission to Candidacy**

The Admission to Candidacy is a contract between you and the University of Tennessee, Knoxville. Under this contract, you and UTK agree that the courses you have taken and the grades you have received have fulfilled the course requirements for your program.

This is for your protection, in the event that the course requirements change after you have been admitted to candidacy. Once you, your committee, and the Dean of the Graduate School have signed this form, any changes to course requirements that happen later will not apply to you. Use the form from the website as this needs to be a signable digital document.



This form needs to be digitally signed by you, everyone on your committee, and the Director of Graduate Studies (DSG). Once the DGS receives all of the forms from all of the graduating third years, they will submit the forms to the graduate school once they have reviewed them.

**The forms are due to the DGS fully signed 3 weeks before the end of classes *the semester before you graduate* - that is normally semester 5.**

### **Graduation Deadlines for Non-Thesis Master's Program**

New dates will be on the graduate school website for your graduation year. These are approximate to give you a sense of the timeline.

**January 13:** DGS submits the Admission to Candidacy form to the Graduate School.

**January 13:** Submit your Graduation Application online at MyUTK. A non-refundable graduation fee (\$30 for Master's and \$45 for EdS) will be charged upon submission and must be paid at MyUTK.

**April 1:** Order your cap, gown, and hood from the UT Bookstore

**April 28:** Submit Report of Final Examination (Pass/Fail) form by 5:00 p.m. to the Graduate School.

**AGAIN, ALL OF THE ABOVE REQUIREMENTS MUST BE COMPLETED PROPERLY AND ON TIME, OR YOU WILL NOT BE ALLOWED TO GRADUATE.**

Please note that all of the dates given above are approximate. You can only find out the **exact date** of these **requirements** by checking with the Graduate School during the fall term of your third year of residence. They are all published in a calendar that the Graduate School issues yearly [here](#).

### **N. Important & Emergency Resources at UTK**

#### **UTK Police:**

- Life-Threatening Emergency: 911
- Campus Police Emergency: 865-974-3111
- Campus Police Non-emergency / Security Escort: 865-974-3114

#### **UTK Alert Notification:**

- All students should sign up for UT Alert for phone and email notifications and updates.

**Distressed Student Protocol:** 865-974-4357 (HELP)

**Distressed Employee Hotline (Faculty and Staff):** 865-946-2273 (CARE)

#### **The LiveSafe App:**

- This app simplifies communication within the University and has many safety features (such as walking virtually with someone when alone).

**T-Link:** (Late Night Shuttle): 865-974-4080

**Student Health Services:** 865-974-3135

**Student Health Insurance**

[Counseling Center](#)  
[Student Disability Services](#)

[Title IX Office](#): 865-974-9600

[Office of Equity and Diversity \(OED\)](#): 865-974-2498

[Division of Diversity Resources](#)

**Facilities Services Emergencies**: 865-946-7777

**UT Central Alarm (24/7)**: 865-974-0808 (fire alarm)

**Environmental Health and Safety**: 865-974-5084

**CorVel (employee on-job injury)**: 866-245-8588, Option #1

**O. Quick Links: UTK Websites**

[Center for International Education](#)

[International GTA Testing Program](#)

[College of Arts & Sciences](#)

[Legal Clinic](#)

[Department of Theatre](#)

[Library Website for Graduate Students](#)

[Fellowships](#)

[Multicultural Student Life/Black Cultural Center](#)

[Graduate Catalog](#)

[Office of Information Technology \(OIT\)](#)

[Graduate School](#)

[One Stop Student Services](#)

[Graduate Student Appeals Procedure](#)

[Parking](#)

[Graduate Student Senate](#)

[Registrar](#)

[Housing](#)

[Student Conduct and Community Standards](#)

[International House](#)

[Teaching and Learning Innovation](#)