



University of Nevada, Reno

Criminal Justice Graduate Program

Student Handbook

Department of Criminal Justice

College of Liberal Arts

Revised December 2018

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Table of Contents	1
INTRODUCTION	2
1.PROGRAM DESCRIPTION	2
Student Learning Outcomes and Objectives	3
Tracks Offered	3
2.DEGREE REQUIREMENTS	4
Credits.....	5
Required Courses	5
Electives	6
Internships	6
Thesis	7
Non-Thesis	7
3.TRANSFER CREDITS	8
4.TIMELINE FOR DEGREE COMPLETION	8
5.ADVISOR AND COMMITTEE SELECTION GUIDELINES	10
Advisor	11
Committee	11
6.COMPREHENSIVE EXAM GUIDELINES	12
7.THESIS REQUIREMENTS	121
8.GRADUATE ASSISTANTSHIPS	14
Teaching and Graduate Assistantships	14
9.HEALTH INSURANCE	14
10.LEAVE OF ABSENCE	15
11.GRADUATE STUDENT ASSOCIATION	15
12.FORMS	16

INTRODUCTION

This handbook will provide graduate students of the University of Nevada, Reno (UNR) with information on the structure of the M.A. program in criminal justice. It is provided as a guide to assist students in completing their program as efficiently and meaningfully as possible. This guide is meant also to ensure that all general UNR graduate school regulations are followed. This student handbook does replicate some information available in the most current General Catalog of the University of Nevada Reno, which sets forth the official Board of Regents' Policies and University Regulations on admission procedures, completion of degree requirements, filing for graduation, and other pertinent information. Specific program requirements and structural guidelines for the criminal justice program are laid out in this student handbook.

Students are responsible for meeting all requirements set forth by the graduate school regulations and department, as well as making sure that appropriate conduct and procedures are followed at all times while in the program. This handbook is meant to be used as the first resource consulted to answer any questions, but faculty and staff are also available to assist.

1. PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

The Master of Arts degree program in criminal justice provides students with skills necessary to examine and analyze the major areas of the field, focusing on the nature of crime, law and social control, as well as the process of planning change in a system as complex as the criminal justice system.

The program emphasizes the understanding of the ways in which theory, research and social policy interact, and the utilization of critical thinking skills to better understand this information. Students will be expected to acquire knowledge of the theories and research methods necessary for analysis of issues relevant to the field. Within this general framework, students will have an opportunity to pursue special interests in criminal justice that are consistent with the philosophy of the program.

Applicants to the Master of Arts program must hold a baccalaureate degree from an accredited four-year college or university, with a major or minor in criminal justice or a closely related discipline (acceptable fields outside criminal justice to be determined on a case-by-case basis by the Graduate Admissions Committee of the Department of Criminal Justice; additional coursework in criminological theory might be required of students from outside the field of criminal justice).

Program Director: Matthew Leone, Ph.D.

Contact Information:

Email: mleone@unr.edu

Phone: (775) 784-4681

Office: Ansari Business Building 606

Mail Stop: 0214

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES AND OBJECTIVES

Students who receive a Master of Arts in Criminal Justice complete a degree preparing them for careers in criminal justice, administration or research; doctoral programs; or teaching at the undergraduate level. Students learn about criminal justice from both academic and professional perspectives. The program tackles issues related to crime and justice by emphasizing theory, research, ethics, and policy analysis. The Master of Arts curriculum draws on the social and behavioral sciences and legal approaches to crime and social control. Students learn how to address critical issues in criminal justice and administration by developing analytical, problem-solving, and leadership skills.

Program Objectives:

1. To educate students about their responsibilities as scholars and practitioners of criminal justice, and as citizens in a pluralistic society;
2. To maintain an academic environment where all graduate students are encouraged to develop themselves personally and intellectually and where graduate students feel free to engage in teaching, research and community service in the spirit of academic and personal freedom;
3. To build a graduate student cohort that is an example of cooperation, teamwork and dedication to University and community needs;
4. To expose students to current research and theories and to teach students the skills needed to understand and evaluate the quality of research and its methodologies;
5. To teach students how to critically analyze problems related to crime and criminal justice by emphasizing theory, research, ethics, problem-solving and policy analysis.

Student Learning Outcomes:

1. Students will learn about criminal justice from both academic and professional perspectives in order to prepare for careers as scholars and/or practitioners. Students will learn how to address critical issues in criminal justice and administration by developing analytical, problem-solving and leadership skills.
2. Students will learn how to analyze and apply research and statistics to a variety of justice issues and settings.
3. Students will learn how criminal justice interacts with other fields of study including, but not limited to, addiction, mental health, community well-being and family.
4. Students will demonstrate understanding of theory and ability in professional writing by successfully completing their theses or comprehensive exams.
5. Students will progress and graduate in a "reasonable" time frame.

TRACKS OFFERED

Students interested in doing a thesis must demonstrate graduate-level skills in writing, statistics, and research methods. If students do not have these skills, or do not wish to do a thesis, they will complete the non-thesis track.

Non-Thesis Track

Most students in the Master of Arts program take the "non-thesis" track, which means they do not have to complete a thesis at the end of their coursework. Instead, they take additional elective coursework and a two-credit "comprehensive exam" course to help them prepare for a comprehensive exam. As a general rule, students who are approved to complete a thesis are top students those who want to go on to a doctoral program or want a career that requires extensive experience in statistics, research methodology and report writing. Non-thesis students still take statistics and research methods classes; however, they are not required to complete a thesis. The focus of the non-thesis track is to train students in various aspects of the criminal justice and related fields to provide extensive knowledge useful in the student's future career.

Thesis Track

As a general rule, the thesis is very closely related to the research interests of the student's thesis advisor. Thus, prospective students should consult professors before applying to the program about the professor's research, and whether the professor agrees to supervise and advise the student.

Students must demonstrate to the professor that they have graduate-level skills in research methods, statistics, and writing. Although students work closely on a project related to the advisor's interests, students are responsible for developing a thesis with a unique, publishable research idea that contributes to the criminal justice literature.

Note: This handbook lists graduate program academic policies and procedures. It includes information on graduate school policies, degree requirements, timeline for degree completion, committee selection guidelines and comprehensive exam/thesis requirements. Every effort has been made to make this handbook accurate as of the date of publication; however, this handbook does not constitute a contractual commitment. Graduate programs may not offer all of the courses as described, and policies are subject to yearly review and changes with program director and Graduate Council approval.

2. DEGREE REQUIREMENTS

GRADUATE SCHOOL ACADEMIC REQUIREMENTS

All graduate students must maintain a cumulative graduate GPA of 3.0. If their GPA drops below 3.0 they are either placed on probation or dismissed. Undergraduate courses will not count towards graduate GPA.

Probation: students whose cumulative graduate GPA is .1 to .6 points below that needed for a 3.0 GPA are placed on a one semester probation. If they fail to raise their cumulative GPA to 3.0 by the end of one semester, they are dismissed from their graduate program. Thesis, dissertation, S/U graded credits, and transfer credits have **no** impact on a student's GPA.

Dismissal: students whose cumulative graduate GPA is .7 or more grade points below that needed for a 3.0 GPA are dismissed. Dismissed students are no longer in a graduate program but may take graduate-level courses as a Grad Special. Students wishing to complete their degree

must obtain approval to take graduate-level courses, raise their graduate GPA to at least 3.0 and then re-apply to a graduate program. Any courses taken to raise their GPA will be included in the graduate special/ transfer credit limitation (9 credits for master's degrees).

CREDITS

For both the thesis and non-thesis tracks, 33 credits are required. For thesis students, this includes six credits of CRJ 797 (Thesis). Non-thesis students also must complete two credits of CRJ 795 (Comprehensive Exam) in addition to the 33 credits. Students complete both required and elective courses. At least one three-credit elective class must be an in-person class (i.e., not independent study) with a CRJ or SRJS prefix. For more detailed information on courses, please review the course catalog.

REQUIRED COURSES

- **Research Methods**
Generally, this will be SRJS 725, which is a research methods course designed specifically for students in the School of Social Research and Justice Studies (e.g., criminal justice, sociology, communications). However, advisors may allow substitution of research methods based on the student's interests, abilities and career goals.
- **Statistics**
A statistics class to be selected by the student and his or her advisor, based on the student's interests, abilities and career goals.
- **CRJ 740: Crime and Criminal Justice**
Students arrive at the Criminal Justice graduate program from a variety of majors and institutions. Because of this reality, the Department of Criminal Justice designed a course that can serve the dual purposes of enhancing the understanding and knowledge of those already acquainted with criminal justice as an academic discipline, while familiarizing those outside the field with the structure, operations and nuances of the justice system. As one of the six core classes in the program, CRJ 740 students are exposed to a combination of classic and current readings, they discuss several of the most provocative and troubling aspects of the system, and they complete writing assignments designed to show a deeper understanding of the problems faced by the justice system.
- **CRJ 750: Planned Change in Criminal Justice**
Historically, change in criminal justice agencies was generally slow and incremental. Continuous change now is a constant rather than an exception, however, and the pace, magnitude and frequency of change also have increased. If such change is unplanned, programs will often fail and result in negative consequences in the workplace.

Remember that major change occurring in one component of the justice system can have severe repercussions on other components if not anticipated and planned for. This course – which is highly interactive, writing-intensive and case-study oriented -explores how change can be effectively planned and managed in criminal justice agencies.

- **CRJ 785: Criminal Justice Policy Analysis**

Through class discussions, weekly summary papers and a comprehensive analysis paper, students will acquire a rich understanding of the state of, empirical research on, and ideological and political sources of American crime control policy.

- **CRJ 788: Ethics, Law, and Justice Policy**

The formulation of policy is an inherently moral activity that requires ethical introspection in order to "do" justice. Because what is legal is not necessarily ethical and because justice is a much abused word, those who make, influence or implement policy must be capable of examining their information, processes and decisions from a variety of epistemological traditions. Classical, modern and post-modern ethics grounded examination of positivistic, historical and critical theory perspectives on policy formation, and some strengths and weaknesses of each as foundations for law and policy will be discussed. A major thread of this course is that law is policy not practice and will be approached both through a critical pedagogy methodology and the learning and application by students of several qualitative techniques, including Blackian analysis and Hohfeld/Marsh analysis. Another major thread throughout the course will be developing ethical insights into unintended consequences of justice policy and practice with particular reference to race/ethnicity, gender and sexuality.

ELECTIVES

There are six required courses, and the rest of the credits are taken as electives or thesis. Student's electives are required to be approved by the student's advisor. The student's advisor will help pick classes that are relevant and appropriate for the student's readiness. All students must take at least one 3 credit 600 or 700 level CRJ or SRJS elective in-person.

INTERNSHIPS

Internships are available throughout the course of the program. CRJ 791 and SRJS 792 are both internship courses and the student's advisor or the program director can advise on which internship class is the appropriate one to enroll in. Typically, agencies want students to take some classes before doing an internship so the student is prepared to contribute to the agency. The advisor will be responsible for enrolling the student, providing a syllabus, monitoring progress, and grading. The student's advisor or other professors might have information about

particular internships, but students can also seek out agencies or organizations that will take internships.

THESIS

It is essential that students follow the timeline to ensure timely graduation. Students are also provided with information that describes what a thesis looks like (e.g., a data-driven, methodologically sound piece of research that contributes to the CRJ field), and gives more detail on the process and timeline.

First, a faculty member must agree to advise a student and serve as the thesis committee chair. Thesis advisement requires a significant amount of work by the advisor/chair faculty member, and so s/he might not have time. Because the thesis is generally an extension of the advisor's work, the advisor/chair and student will develop general ideas about topics and methodologies. The student will develop a research proposal and often must complete multiple drafts to produce a proposal that is methodologically sound and polished. Once the chair approves the proposal, the student will send the proposal to the committee. It is essential that the committee is allowed to provide their expertise to the proposal as early as possible

The student will then complete the thesis research with advising from the chair faculty member. The student may be required to revise the thesis numerous times until the chair deems it is complete. The complete thesis needs to be sent to the committee at least two weeks prior to the scheduled oral defense. The defense by the student includes a brief oral presentation about the thesis to demonstrate that s/he can orally discuss what s/he did and what the findings mean. The committee will ask questions of the student and challenge the student to defend the thesis research.

After the defense, the committee discusses recommendations and changes that may need to be made to the thesis before it is considered a 'pass'. Once the required changes are complete, the advisor awards the thesis credit. Finally, the chair and the student will typically publish the findings and/or present them at a conference.

NON-THESIS

Students who choose not to do a thesis take a comprehensive exam design to test their competency in criminal justice. The non-thesis track involves a 2 credit "comprehensive exam" course after they have completed and passed (with a grade of at least a C) all the required courses. The comprehensive exam course does not count towards the program's 33 credits, but is required for non-thesis students. Students will work on skills including: professional writing, citation, organization, time management, and studying. Students will also develop a "study guide" which will be the only outside material allowed in the room during the comps exam. The exam consists of three questions. One question relates to research methods and statistics and is answered by every student. The remaining three questions come from the core CRJ courses and each student answers 2 of the 3. The exam is typed and requires 3-6 pages per question. It is graded by the faculty of those core classes. Each question is graded as Satisfactory/Unsatisfactory. To pass, all three questions need to be graded as Satisfactory. Students who do not pass must retake the comprehensive exam the next semester. The student must be continuously enrolled in at least 3 credits during this semester. If the exam is not retaken the following semester, the student will have to reregister and pay for the comprehensive exam

course and retake the course. Students who fail the retake of the exam will be dismissed from the program and the university.

3. TRANSFER CREDITS

These are credits transferred from another institution. Credits completed at UNR in another program or as a graduate special do not need to be transferred. Transfer credit can be requested on the [Graduate Credit Transfer Evaluation Request form](#)¹ available on Graduate School website, and must be signed by the student, major advisor, and graduate director. Transfer credits applied to a master's program must comply with the time limitation on master's work (6 years). Thus, if a student took a course five years prior to admission, they would have to complete the degree within one year for the course to apply to the degree. Credits from a completed master's degree will be exempt from the 8-year time limitation for those students pursuing a doctoral degree.

Transfer credits are limited by the graduate school and by the topics/rigor of those classes. There is a maximum of 9 credits of transfer courses *plus* courses taken as a graduate special *plus* courses taken toward another UNR graduate degree. The program director can also provide information regarding transfer classes. The director and the student's advisor determine whether to approve courses.

4. TIMELINE FOR DEGREE COMPLETION

Below is a suggested timeline for non-thesis students. Adjustments are made according to student progress. All required courses should be completed before the last semester, so the student can take the comps exam (which covers the required courses) the last semester. If the student does not take the required courses the first time they are offered, it will likely delay graduation.

FIRST SEMESTER:

- Identify advisor within the first several weeks of class.
- Identify area of interest.
- Take 3 courses, focusing on required courses.
- Student and advisor complete graduation "checklist" to ensure requirements will be met.

SECOND SEMESTER :

¹ <http://www.unr.edu/Documents/graduate-school/GraduateCreditTransferEvaluationRequest.pdf>

- Take 3 courses. Make sure that the required courses are taken early, so they are completed before the last semester when the student takes the comprehensive exam.
- Identify committee members.
- Student and advisor complete graduation “checklist” to ensure requirements will be met.
- Complete the “Declaration of Advisor form” and submit to the graduate school.

THIRD SEMESTER:

- Take 3 courses, including any remaining required courses.
- (after completion of 12 credits): Program of study must be submitted to the graduate school.
- Student and advisor update the “checklist” to ensure all graduation requirements are being met.

FOURTH SEMESTER:

- All required classes should be complete before this semester (so that the student can take the comprehensive exam which covers these classes).
- Take 2-3 courses and take the 2 credits of “comps exam class”
- graduation application due
- April 1-15 (or Nov 1-15 if in Fall): take comps exam on day set by director
- Notice of completion due; file thesis with grad school.

Below is a suggested timeline for thesis students. Adjust according to student progress. Advisor may adjust the timeline to suit the student’s particular project/goals. ***there will be a more detailed thesis timeline available to the student

FIRST SEMESTER:

- Identify advisor during the first couple weeks of class.
- Identify committee members who can help develop the thesis.
- Identify general thesis topic and methods.
- Take 3 courses, typically research methods and 2 required courses. (Advisor might recommend the student take statistics this semester).

SECOND SEMESTER :

- Take 3 courses. (Advisor might recommend the student take statistics this semester).
- Submit draft of proposal to advisor. Faculty generally provide feedback within 2-6 weeks.
- Complete thesis proposal and get approval from committee.
- Complete IRB application (if needed; necessary for human participant research)

- Begin collecting data or find data (if secondary data).
- Student and advisor complete “checklist” to ensure requirements will be met.
- Complete the “Declaration of Advisor form” and submit to the graduate school.

THIRD SEMESTER:

- Take 3 courses, including 3 “thesis credits”.
- Mid-semester: Finish obtaining/collecting data.
- Nov-Dec Students should submit multiple drafts of thesis to advisor, who will determine when it’s ready to go to committee. Faculty generally provide feedback within 2-6 weeks.
- (after completion of 12 credits): Program of study must be submitted to graduate school.
- Student and advisor update the “checklist” to ensure all graduation requirements are being met.

FOURTH SEMESTER:

- Take 2-3 courses including 3 “thesis credits”.
- Jan-February: Students should submit multiple drafts of thesis to advisor, who will determine when it’s ready to go to committee. Faculty generally provide feedback within 2-6 weeks.
- Finalize thesis and get advisor “approval” to send it to committee.
- graduation application due
- Mid-March: Send thesis to the rest of the committee at least 2 weeks before thesis defense.
- March 30: Have thesis defense no later than this date to allow for changes.
- April 15: Changes to thesis due to committee/advisor.
- April 30: Advisor approve thesis; student formats thesis according to grad school rules.
- Notice of completion due; file thesis with graduate school after formatting it to their specifications.

Master’s degrees: All course work must be completed within six years preceding the awarding of the degree.

Doctoral degrees: All course work must be completed within eight years preceding the awarding of the degree. Credits transferred into doctoral degree from a completed master’s degree are exempt from this eight-year limit.

All required forms are provided at the end of this document.

5. ADVISOR AND COMMITTEE SELECTION GUIDELINES

Master’s Programs: All master’s programs (with the exception of the Master’s of Business Administration and the Master’s of Accountancy programs) require at least three

advisory committee members. All must be graduate faculty members. At least one (the graduate school representative or “outside” member) must be from a department or program different from the department or program from which the student is graduating.

Doctoral Programs: Consist of a minimum of five graduate faculty members; the chair, at least two faculty members from the student’s major department/program, at least one faculty member from a department in a field related to the student’s major, and at least one Graduate School representative.

In case of **interdisciplinary graduate programs**, the Graduate School Representative cannot have a primary appointment in the same department (or other appropriate major unit) as the student's committee chair.

Formal approval of all student advisory committees is made by the Graduate Dean

ADVISOR

Students should work with an advisor that has scholarly interests close to their own. The faculty page has information about all professors and their research interests. The advisor will advise the student’s course selection and decide if the student has the skills to do a thesis, or if the non-thesis track is a more suitable option. Students are responsible for making sure they get all required courses done and follow all the graduation rules and due dates, but the advisor can help with questions along the way.

COMMITTEE

The student’s advisor can help choose a committee. Committees are made up of an advisor (who serves as the chair), another CRJ department member, and a faculty member with graduate faculty status from an outside department. Every student is required to have a committee. Ideally, members are professors who are tangentially interested in related topics similar to the student’s interests. This is especially important if the student is doing a thesis. The committee signs the Program of Study and the Notice of Completion forms.

The duty of the committee is to guide the student through the thesis (and to a lesser extent, the non-thesis) process to ensure they have a broad and thorough understanding of criminal justice. The main duty of the graduate school representative (the outside member) is to make sure that the committee follows graduate school rules and is fair, etc. The duty of the other (non-chair) committee member is to ensure that the department rules are followed and to provide CRJ-related expertise.

In the case of a thesis, the committee members will be allowed to give feedback about the thesis prior to the student collecting or analyzing data (i.e., in the proposal stage). It is advisable for the student to get written confirmation from all committee members, approving the proposal prior to doing the thesis.

In the case of a non-thesis student, the committee members are provided with information to ensure that the comprehensive exam is fair and is answered completely by the student. The director will provide the members with a copy of the comprehensive exam prior to the exam time. The committee members are not expected to contribute to the exam, as it is written by the professors who taught the courses which the exam covers, and because the representative (outside member) is not typically an expert in criminal justice. The director will also provide the committee members with a copy of the student’s response. However, the committee is not expected to read or grade the exam. Any feedback the committee provides to the exam

committee is taken into consideration but is not binding on the exam committee's decision about whether the student has passed or failed the exam. Students are advised to explain to the committee member (especially the representative, since s/he is not familiar with CRJ policy/practice) of his/her role in the process prior to them signing the program of study. This ensures that the committee members understand what is expected of them.

6. COMPREHENSIVE EXAM GUIDELINES

Non-thesis track students are required to take a comps exam to demonstrate competency in the core areas of criminal justice. The exam is a test of the breadth and depth of the student's understanding of basic research methodology, statistics, and the core CRJ courses taken during graduate studies.

The "non-thesis" track involves a 2 credit "comprehensive exam" course in which students develop their own study guide for each of the 6 core classes. This course does not count toward the total required for graduation but is required. Students will work on skills including: professional writing, citation, organization, time management, and studying.

The comprehensive exam consists of three questions. One question pertains to research methods and statistics, and every student will respond to this question. In addition, three questions which pertain to the core CRJ courses (CRJ 740, 750, 785, 788) will be on the exam, and each student will choose 2 of the 3 to answer. The comprehensive exam is typed and requires approximately 3-6 pages per question. Faculty in those core areas will grade the comps exam. The student must "pass" the entire exam in order to graduate. Each question is graded as Satisfactory/Unsatisfactory. If the student does not pass, s/he must retake the comps class again the next semester. During the semester that the student is studying to retake the exam, s/he must be continuously enrolled in the university for at least 3 credits. If the student does not retake the comps exam the next (fall or spring) semester, the student will have to again register and pay for the comps exam class credits and retake the course; registering for the comps exam fulfills the "continuous enrollment" requirement. If the student fails the retake of the exam, s/he will be dismissed from the program and the university. More details on the comprehensive exam will be provided to students prior to taking the exam.

7. THESIS REQUIREMENTS

As a general rule, the thesis is very closely related to the research interests of the thesis advisor. Thus, prospective students should consult professors prior to applying to the program about what research the professor is currently conducting, and whether the professor is interested in supervising the student.

The student must demonstrate to the professor that s/he has graduate-level skills in research methods, statistics, and writing. Although the student works closely on a project related to the advisor's interests, the student is responsible for coming up with a unique, publishable research idea that contributes to the Criminal Justice literature. The student will develop a theory-based research proposal, including testable hypotheses, appropriate sample, and general methodology. The student is responsible for collecting or finding data that will test the hypotheses that derive from the theory and/or past research. A committee of three members must all approve the thesis proposal prior to data collection and analysis. Students collecting original data must do ethics training and apply for permission to conduct the study with the IRB. Next,

students will analyze the data using appropriate statistics. Finally, students are responsible for assessing the implications and conclusions of the study based on the statistical analyses. The student must learn to write in the writing style and use the citation style of the APA manual. The student must write the entire thesis and also defend the thesis to his or her committee in a 2-hour oral defense. The committee determines whether the student has “passed” or “failed” the thesis based on both the written and oral components of the thesis. After the defense, students must make any changes any of the committee members want, format the thesis to meet the graduate student requirements, and file the thesis for publication with the graduate school. Most students will continue to work with faculty to publish the thesis in a professional journal.

Although the length of a thesis is variable, it is common for a thesis to be approximately 50-80 pages including Tables, Figures, Stimuli/Survey Materials, and other Appendices. Although the number of sources is variable, it is common students to read 50-70 articles, chapters, and books which are the foundation for the thesis.

As with any professional paper, many revisions are necessary. A thesis generally takes about 6-14 months of intense work to complete, including many rounds of revisions and editing both before and after the oral thesis defense.

The student must pass both the oral defense and the written portion of the thesis. If the student fails either portion, s/he has only one chance to re-do the oral and/or written components. If the student cannot re-do the failed portions by the end of the semester, the student will have to re-enroll for 3 more credits of thesis (and pay for these credits).

If the student fails the second attempt at either the written or oral portions of the thesis, s/he will be dismissed from the program and university.

GRADUATE SCHOOL FORMS AND RESOURCES RELATED TO THESIS:

- [Master’s Thesis Filing Guidelines](#)²

Once all requirements have been met, students need to submit a Final Review Approval and Notice of Completion form in order to graduate.

- Final Review Approval – Obtain sign-off from advisory committee chair
 - [Master’s Final Review Approval](#)³
- Notice of completion – completed form should be submitted after all requirements have been met.
 - [Master’s Notice of completion](#)⁴

² <http://www.unr.edu/grad/forms/thesis-filing-guidelines>

³ <http://www.unr.edu/Documents/graduate-school/thesis-final-review-approval-form.pdf>

⁴ <https://www.unr.edu/Documents/graduate-school/notice-of-completion-master-degree-updated.pdf>

8. GRADUATE ASSISTANTSHIPS

All graduate students holding an assistantship (teaching GTA or GRA) are considered Nevada residents for tuition purposes. Non-resident tuition is only waived for the duration of the assistantship. To be eligible for an assistantship, students must be admitted to a degree-granting program and be in good academic standing. The student must have an overall GPA of at least 3.0 and must be continuously enrolled in at least 6 graduate level credits (600-700) throughout the duration of the assistantship.

State-funded assistantships (GTA/GRA) may be held for a maximum of: three (3) years for master's degree students and five (5) years for doctoral degree students.

Please refer to the most updated information on graduate assistantships from the Graduate School: [General information](#)⁵ and the [Graduate Assistantship handbook](#)⁶.

TEACHING AND GRADUATE ASSISTANTS

Teaching assistant positions are jobs for full time students. Students holding a TA position are required to be enrolled in at least six credits per semester. TA positions are typically 10 hours a week, starting August 1 through May 31, including breaks from school. Teaching assistants will assist professors with many tasks including grading, entering grades, tutoring students, literature reviews, and even teaching a day of class.

Graduate assistantships vary by the semester. UNR advertises some Graduate Assistantships at [UNR Search Website](#)⁷. Students can check the job ads frequently to see if any positions open up that they are qualified for. Teaching and graduate assistants can work a maximum of 20 hours per week in an assistantship position. Outside jobs can not be held while working a 20 hour a week assistantship. If the student has a 10 hour a week assistantship, they can only work 10 hours a week total at another job(s). Assistant positions pay a monthly stipend along with waiving out of state tuition, part of fees, and part of health insurance.

9. HEALTH INSURANCE

All domestic degree seeking graduate students, who are enrolled in six or more credits (regardless of the course level) in a semester, will be automatically enrolled and billed for the University sponsored health insurance for each term they are eligible (fall & spring/summer). If a student has other comparable coverage and would like to waive out of the student health insurance, it is the student's responsibility to complete the [University online waiver form](#)⁸ prior to the deadline. If approved, a health insurance waiver is good for the current academic year only. A new waiver must be submitted each academic year. All international graduate students

⁵ <http://www.unr.edu/grad/funding/graduate-assistantships>

⁶ http://www.unr.edu/Documents/administration-finance/hr/hr-graduate/GA_handbook.pdf

⁷ <https://www.unrsearch.com/>

⁸ <https://studentinsurance.usi.com/UNR/unr-grad>

are required to carry student health insurance, and the cost will be automatically added to your student account. Any international graduate students with insurance questions must contact the [Office of International Students and Scholars \(OISS\)](#)⁹ directly.

[Information on Graduate health insurance](#)¹⁰.

10. LEAVE OF ABSENCE

Continuous Enrollment: To maintain “good standing” all graduate students are required to enroll in a minimum of three (3) graduate credits each fall and spring semester until they graduate. International students may be required to enroll in nine graduate credits each fall and spring semester depending on the requirements of their visa. All students holding assistantships (whether teaching or research assistantships) are required to enroll in a minimum of six (6) graduate credits each semester they hold the assistantship.

Leave of Absence: Students in good standing may request a leave of absence by completing a [Leave of Absence form](#)¹¹ during which time they are not required to maintain continuous registration. Usually, a leave of absence is approved for one or two semesters. The leave of absence request may be extended by the student filing an additional leave of absence form. Students applying for a leave of absence should not have any “incomplete” grades which could be changed to “F” and have a detrimental impact on their cumulative GPA. Requests for leave of absences must be received by the Graduate School no later than the last day of enrollment for the semester the leave is to begin.

Reinstatement: When a student has been absent for one semester or more without an approved leave of absence, he or she may request reinstatement via the [Reinstatement form](#)¹². This form allows the program the option to recommend the student be re-admitted to their graduate program based on their previous admission OR require the student to re-apply for admission which would require students to submit a new application for admission and pay the application fee. The Notice of Reinstatement to Graduate Standing must be received by the Graduate School no later than the last day of enrollment for the semester the reinstatement is to begin.

11. GRADUATE STUDENT ASSOCIATION

The [Graduate Student Association \(GSA\)](#)¹³ represents all graduate students and promotes the welfare and interests of the graduate students at the University of Nevada, Reno. The GSA works closely with appropriate university administrative offices, including the Graduate School and Student Services and reports to the President of the University. The GSA government

⁹ <https://www.unr.edu/oiss>

¹⁰ <http://www.unr.edu/grad/health-insurance>

¹¹ http://www.unr.edu/Documents/graduate-school/leaveofabsencer_9.23.pdf

¹² <https://www.unr.edu/Documents/graduate-school/Notice-of-Reinstatement-Graduate-Standing.pdf>

¹³ <https://www.unr.edu/gsa/>

functions through the Council of Representatives, Executive Council and established committees.

12. FORMS

- [Declaration of Advisor/Major Advisor/Committee Chair form](#)¹⁴
 - For master's students, the completed form must be submitted to Graduate School by the end of the student's second semester
- [Program of Study form](#)¹⁵
 - For master's students, the completed form must be submitted to Graduate School by the end of the student's third semester
- [Graduation Application](#) deadlines¹⁶
 - Must be submitted to the graduate school several weeks in advance. Check website for exact dates
- Notice of completion – completed form should be submitted after all requirements have been met.
 - [Master's form](#)¹⁷
- [Exit Survey](#)¹⁸

All forms can also be found at: [Forms Website](#)¹⁹

14 <https://www.unr.edu/Documents/graduate-school/Declaration-of-Advisor.pdf>

15 <http://www.unr.edu/Documents/graduate-school/program-of-study.pdf>

16 <https://www.unr.edu/grad/graduation-and-deadlines>

17 <https://www.unr.edu/Documents/graduate-school/notice-of-completion-master-degree-updated.pdf>

18 <https://www.unr.edu/grad/forms-and-deadlines/exit-survey>

19 <https://www.unr.edu/grad/forms-and-deadlines>