

TEXAS ADVERTISING & PUBLIC RELATIONS

GRADUATE BROCHURE

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The Graduate Program

Whether your objective is to become a professor at a university or a member of the professional advertising community, graduate study in the Stan Richards School of Advertising & Public Relations is designed to meet your goals. Combining field-specific expertise with methodological and theoretical rigor, our program prepares leaders academia and industry as can be seen from some of the places our alumni work.

Graduate work in advertising may lead to the Master of Arts (M.A.) or the Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.). The candidate for a graduate degree completes specialized coursework in advertising as well as advanced-level coursework in one or more relevant subject areas. For the M.A. program an internship is encouraged. The proportion of each type of study may vary according to the academic background and interests of the individual student.

Students from a wide variety of undergraduate and graduate backgrounds, and from all over the world, come to the Stan Richards School for graduate education in advertising and strategic communications.

Averaging 60 M.A. and 30 Ph.D. students annually enrolled, the school has one of the largest and most diverse student populations of any university, enriching our program's academia and industry as can be seen from some of the places our alumni work.



About Texas Advertising

Advertising has been taught at The University of Texas at Austin over 100 years and more than 60 years at the graduate level, creating an immeasurable impact.

The current M.A. program was established in 1976 and the Ph.D. shortly thereafter to meet the increasing needs of the industry. Throughout the years, Texas Advertising has been consistently considered one of the [top advertising programs](#) in the world.

In the United States, over 100 institutions of higher education offer an organized program of study in advertising. Most programs are part of a journalism, marketing, or other department. But the School of Advertising and Public Relations at The University of Texas at Austin stands apart from the others. As a comprehensive school of advertising and public relations, we offer a variety of advertising-related degree plans, highly-regarded faculty researchers and an award-winning Texas Creative program. In fact, The University of Texas at Austin is the only program that grants a Ph.D. in advertising.

UT's Master's in Advertising program has recently been named [number one](#) in the nation. This is not the first time that the Advertising program has been at the top of its competitors. The University of Texas Master's in Advertising program has been in the top three advertising programs for the past 20 years. There is no doubt that there is a big, bright future in store for the program's students.

The University of Texas at Austin (UT) bachelor's Advertising & Public Relations program has been ranked the #1 program in the nation by [Campus Explorer](#). Gary Wilcox, Professor and MA Advisor, noted that, "We have some of the best faculty, students and staff to be found anywhere! With the opening of our new state-of-the-art [LAB](#) and partnerships with companies such as Brandwatch, Dell, Amazon, and others, we hope to lead in advertising and public relations education for years to come."

Faculty

Another indicator of quality is the breadth of knowledge and experience possessed by a school's faculty. With over 30 faculty members, the Stan Richards School of Advertising & Public Relations has one of the largest advertising faculties in the world. This wide range of expertise helps students excel in a multitude of areas of study.

The University of Texas at Austin's high ranking attracts faculty that is dedicated to creating original research at the University's standard of excellence. Faculty members are on the cutting edge of knowledge in their area of specialty, providing students with the most up-to-date information, critical approaches and scholarly methods.

A recent study of the history of three major advertising journals in the U.S. ranked our faculty first in research output. In another, which looked at more journals over a shorter period, our faculty ranked third in research output. With a global impact on academic and communication professionals, our program is one of the best-recognized graduate programs in the nation.

Graduate students in the Stan Richards School of Advertising & Public Relations are able to publish research in top academic journals. With a program designed to facilitate collaboration among faculty and students, the students are producing twice as many articles as their peers, according to a study in *Journalism & Mass Communication Educator*.

Alumni



Grads also have gone to the "client side," working for brands and other organizations that use integrated brand promotion. Many have chosen to work in the media industries more broadly, taking positions at well-recognized digital brands, digital services, social networks, and social media companies across the nation and around the world. Still others have gone into advertising and marketing positions, working in commercial production, sales promotion, public relations, event planning, and direct marketing. In addition, graduates can be found teaching in advertising programs at colleges and universities all around the world.

Degree Options



Thesis

With this option, students are required to complete 36 total hours, 27 of which must be at the graduate level. Two academic semesters (6 hours of course credit) are required to complete the thesis. The topic of the thesis is chosen by the student but must be approved by the student's faculty supervisor and reader. This option generally is chosen by students who intend to seek further study at the doctoral level.

Non-Thesis

This option requires students to complete 36 total hours, 27 of which must be at the graduate level. This option is generally preferred by those intending to work in the advertising business or other areas of strategic communication.

M.A. Advertising

The flexibility of the M.A. program allows students to create a graduate degree focused on their interests through advertising and related coursework.

The program includes required work in the major area (advertising), and selected concentrations. The concentrations include Texas Creative, Texas Immersive and Texas Strategy. Most students spend four long semesters in the program. Courses taken during the summer semester or additional concentrations may shorten or lengthen time spent as a MA student.

The program does NOT require a specific concentration choice but can be adapted to a student's interest.

Diversity of Study

In the M.A. Advertising program, students can choose from several concentrations that bridge the gap between academia and industry, allowing for greater depth of study. Current concentrations include Texas Strategy, Texas Creative and Texas Immersive.

Texas Strategy

The Texas Strategy transforms students into strategic analysts and data storytellers who are equipped with the sound analytical reasoning needed to succeed in today's data-focused advertising industry. Students will create, implement, and measure the success of data-informed digital advertising strategies in the social media, search, and display spaces using a variety of analytics and software tools. This curriculum requires students to work collaboratively to generate creative analytical solutions by uncovering notable consumer and campaign insights from B2B and B2C datasets. Students will learn to effectively communicate and visualize insights so that opportunities for campaign optimizations can be easily understood by key internal and external audiences.

Texas Immersive

Texas Immersive is an interdisciplinary specialization focused on four key areas: Audience – Story – Technology – Innovation. Developing these competencies will foster deep emotional connections, create lasting impact and prepare our students to take on real-world challenges. Overall, students will learn to become Experience Designers... those who understand how to target and build stronger relationships with audiences; tell stories and drive meaningful interactions in a connected environment; and create strong franchises using audience-centric activation models.

Texas Creative

Celebrating its 40th anniversary in 2019, this program is designed to develop students with the characteristics that define success as art directors and copywriters. The Texas Creative curriculum stresses big-idea branding, conceptual thinking, collaboration and creative development through a series of selective courses and seminars: Beginning, Intermediate and Advanced Portfolio Development, Capstone Portfolio, Copywriting, Art Direction and many other frequent offerings. They are the future copywriters, creative strategists, art directors, and a billion other titles, but at their core they are creatives and here we train some of the world's best.



Ph.D. Advertising

The Stan Richards School is the only program in the world to offer a Ph.D. in Advertising. The Ph.D. program focuses on interdisciplinary coursework from multiple fields of study to allow students to focus on a unique thesis of varying interest. For example, students interested in the psychological impact of advertising would combine courses in both the advertising and psychology departments. This allows students to focus their program of study, meet their own particular goals, and become a true expert while gaining expertise in specific research areas.

The time to complete the Ph.D. program will depend on the student and their course and dissertation committees. Relevant courses taken during the a Master's program may count towards the Ph.D. coursework depending on the students chosen course of study. If the applicant received a Masters in an unrelated field, the Ph.D. program may take longer to complete. Most students take four years to complete the Ph.D. program.

For additional information, [download a copy of our Ph.D. Handbook](#) (Acrobat PDF format); Applicants interested in the Ph.D. program should contact the graduate adviser.

Theory x Practice

The Stan Richards School of Advertising & Public Relations is committed to research as part of a Tier 1 public research institution. We also focus heavily on current industry realities and mold our students into the next professional leaders in that world. The combination of these two focuses yields our philosophy.

Admission Requirements

To be eligible for graduate study at The University of Texas at Austin, you should satisfy the following requirements:

1. A bachelor's degree from an accredited institution or proof of equivalent training at a foreign institution.
2. At least 3.0 grade-point average in all undergraduate upper-division work (junior & senior).
3. OPTIONAL A satisfactory score on the Graduate Record Examinations General Test (GRE) is not required. We DO NOT accept the GMAT.
4. Written and oral English skills must be sufficient, at the outset of the program, for participation and contribution in classes and all written work. Non-native English speaking applicants must submit either a TOEFL or an IELTS exam score.

Admission materials are important for identifying applicants who possess an appropriate level of English. The statement of purpose, for example, indicates not only the applicant's goals and training, among other things, but also the applicant's written communication ability.

The Stan Richards School of Advertising & Public Relations requirements are usually higher than these minimums, and test scores are not the sole consideration in determining who will be admitted. A variety of factors other than test scores, such as professional experience, the statement of purpose, and letters of recommendation, are considered for each applicant. Each application is reviewed on a case-by-case basis.

Program Prerequisites: All students must complete a basic marketing course and a basic statistics course prior to their first semester in the program.

Application Procedure

Deadlines
M.A. - December 1st
Ph.D. - January 15th

ONLINE APPLICATION

A completed and submitted Electronic Online Admissions application. This application should be submitted as soon as possible even if other data and documents are to follow.

LETTERS OF REFERENCE

Three letters of reference from academic or professional sources. Reference contact information will be submitted online as part of your online application. Please gather email addresses of your references before completing your application. Once you submit your complete application, an online recommendation form will be sent to each recommender to fill out. You may confirm receipt of your letters, send reminders to your references, or add a new reference via the recommendation module on the online status check.

A STATEMENT OR ESSAY

A statement of purpose or short essay (no more than 2-3 pages double spaced) defining and discussing goals in pursuing graduate work in advertising, intended research areas, and previous training, education and preparation.

OPTIONAL GRE SCORE

An optional report from Educational Testing Service of the required GRE. An official report from Educational Testing Service of the required TOEFL or IELTS Examination for non-native English speakers.

OFFICIAL TRANSCRIPTS

Transcripts of undergraduate and graduate work at all schools previously attended. All transcripts must be uploaded electronically following Graduate School directions.

AN OFFICIAL RESUME

A resume in PDF format describing work background or professional experience, if any. Your resume can be uploaded to your admissions record shortly after you submit your application. You will receive an acknowledgment email from the Graduate and International Admissions Center (GIAC) once your documents can be uploaded.

In summary, to apply for entry into either the M.A. or the Ph.D. program, you must submit the following to the Graduate and International Admissions Center (GIAC):

- Online Application
- Three Letters of Reference
- Statement of Purpose
- Research Objectives (PhD only)
- Official GRE Score
- Official Transcripts
- An Official Resume

When applying to the M.A. or Ph.D. program, do not send portfolio materials. Please keep your application limited to the documents and materials described above. Additional materials will not be considered.

Tuition & Aid

Cost

The University of Texas at Austin is highly regarded as a major research university. Many of its colleges and departments rank among the best in the nation. In spite of this, it is one of the least expensive universities in the country. Even among state-supported schools, which typically cost far less than private schools, it compares quite favorably. The University of Texas looks even better when compared to the cost of most private universities. Whether you qualify as a resident or a nonresident student, the costs remain among the lowest in the nation.

Find more information on [tuition and fees](#).

Funding

There are a variety of funding sources available at The University of Texas at Austin in the form of fellowships, scholarships, and graduate assistantships. The fellowships are awarded competitively on the basis of prior academic merit, as represented in academic records, letters of recommendation, and GRE scores, with financial need considered in some cases.

The Stan Richards School of Advertising & Public Relations and Moody College of Communication offer fellowships and assistantships to attract new top-quality applicants as well as to support continuing students. Ph.D. students are given priority and are offered support for at least their first three years of study. Private foundations and agencies are an important source of fellowship support and we urge you to investigate these sources carefully.

Unlike many other graduate programs where students are required to take five classes a semester, three classes are considered a full-time load at UT Austin which allows almost all students the opportunity to pursue both employment and internship positions while enrolled.



Frequently Asked Questions

1

What is the average semester load?

Class requirements vary across semesters and professors. Graduate courses may meet once a week for 3 hour periods. Nine hours per semester or 3 classes is considered a full time load for graduate students, however, you may decide to take as many classes as you want depending on how quickly you would like to finish the program. Graduate level classes require a substantial amount of reading, writing, and group assignments. Even though the course work is heavy you are expected to maintain excellence.

2

Can I take classes in other departments while in the program?

Absolutely. Master's students are able to take courses outside the Advertising School. The Ph.D. degree offered by this School is designed to be interdisciplinary in order for students to take a number of courses in subject areas that fit into that student's Program of Work. Each Ph.D. student is different since each designs a Program of Work consistent with their own personal goals and interests.

3

What is the value of a graduate degree over an undergraduate?

It depends on what you think is important. Some people believe that the value of a graduate degree should be measured by its worth in getting you a job. In that respect, the graduate degree may have little value over an undergraduate degree from this school, since most of our undergraduate students are able to find jobs in the field. On the other hand, if your undergraduate training is in another field, it probably makes more sense to get a Master's degree than to get a second undergraduate degree.

4

What is the average class size?

Overall, your grad classes will generally consist of twenty to thirty students, but this will vary across semester and course. The largest are the core classes you will take with around 35 students.

5

Do I have to apply to Texas Creative, Texas Immersive, and Texas Strategy?

An application is required for the Texas Creative concentration. Please refer to the website for specific information about the application process and timelines.

6

What topics can I study for my thesis?

The topic you eventually choose for your thesis is generally up to you based on your interests. Because of our large and diverse faculty, it usually is possible to find a professor who will work with you on almost any advertising or marketing communication issue.

7

What kind of financial aid is available?

The Stan Richards School of Advertising & Public Relations has very little involvement with financial aid issues. Some teaching assistantships (TAs) are available; however, this is a job rather than financial aid. Ph.D. students receive a higher priority than Master's students when we hire TAs.



[Austin, Texas](#), is one of the best places to live and is the 11th largest city in the United States. Living in Austin, graduate students at The University of Texas are able to enjoy a vibrant cultural scene, some of the best breakfast tacos around and the well-known live music scene. Austin's laid-back vibe means you may find yourself strolling the shores of Lady Bird Lake, learning to two-step at

the iconic Broken Spoke and rubbing shoulders with tech giants working for Dell, IBM and Apple, all in equal measure. From the ACL music festival to Barton Springs Pool to South by Southwest, all year around Austin provides plenty of options and opportunities to enhance your graduate study.

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