

Department of Theatre and Dance
MFA Dramatic Writing

Staying on Track



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THIRD YEAR SEQUENCE

Fall

THEA 557: Writer's Stage*

THEA 558: Graduate Screenwriting* or ELECTIVE

ELECTIVE

Spring

THEA 699: Dissertation*

THEA 559: Topics in Dramatic Writing* or ELECTIVE

NOTE: COURSES MUST BE TAKEN IN THE SEQUENCE ABOVE. NO EXCEPTIONS WILL BE MADE.

*Courses that must be taken a total of two (2) times for credit and degree fulfillment

YEAR ONE

Complete Required Courses.

Work with your advisor to begin the process of forming your Comprehensive Exam Committee for year two.

The role of the examination committee is to approve the exam questions, conduct the exam, evaluate the student response and report the results. Each committee must consist of a minimum of three members approved by Graduate Studies. Although this committee generally remains intact as part of your Dissertation Committee, some members may change with permission from your advisor. Check with the Graduate Coordinator to make sure your committee members are approved. If not, your Graduate Coordinator will work with you to get them approved.

1. Two members must be Category 1 OR one member can be Category 1 and one member may be Category 3 if his/her appointment is within the student's major
2. The chair of the exam committee must be Category 1, 5 or 3, if his/her appointment is within the student's major
3. The third member can be any Category (1-6)
4. A co-chair can be from any Category (1-6) as long as the other co-chair is a Category 1 or 3 if his/her appointment is within the student's major
5. No more than one voting member can be in Category 4. Departments can impose a more restrictive structure for exam committees.
6. There are six categories, each with a specific set of criteria and role on a committee as follows:

Committee Category Definitions

- Category One:** UNM tenured or tenure-track faculty or UNM-National Laboratory Professors. Role: chair or a member of any master's or doctoral committee in any discipline, regardless of the Faculty member's FTE status.
- Category Two:** Tenured or tenure-track faculty at other institutions. Role: external member on dissertation committee. CV required.
- Category Three:** Individuals (not tenured/tenure track) whose primary employer is UNM and who hold the titles of **research** professor, **research** associate professor, **research** assistant professor; **clinician educators** with the rank of professor, associate professor assistant professor or faculty hired onto the flex track or "V" category in the
- Category Four:** Others who are considered experts in the field. Role: voting member of the committee. CV required.
- Category Five:** Emeriti/Emeritae faculty may continue to chair existing committees for up to one calendar year from the date of their retirement if the graduate unit approves. They may not be appointed chair of any new committees once retired. Role: Chair, co-chair, or voting member of the committee
- Category Six:** After the first year of retirement, Emeriti/Emeritae faculty may continue to serve on committees if the graduate unit approves. Role: Co-Chair or voting member of the committee

Planning Your Dissertation

A dissertation isn't just something you write towards the end of your time in graduate school. Rather, the dissertation research and writing process should be something you engage in throughout your arc of coursework. Consult with your dissertation advisor and other committee members early and often to keep you on track. You may also want to take advantage of the on-campus workshops and the other resources offered to you.

YEAR TWO

Comprehensive Exam Process

Work with your advisor to come up with a time and place for your Comprehensive Exam. You must have a cumulative grade point average of at least 3.0 and you must be registered for the following semester at the time of the examination. At least two weeks prior to the date of the examination, the major graduate unit must request approval from the Dean of Graduate Studies to hold the exam. You will complete the [Announcement of Examination Form](#). Go to the following web page to access this online form:

<https://login.unm.edu/cas/login>

Applications for Candidacy for MFA Degrees

The Application for Candidacy for the Doctoral or MFA Degree form (form found here <http://grad.unm.edu/resources/gs-forms/documents/ac-doctoral.pdf>) formally summarizes the program of studies you will be fulfilling for your degree. Your completed form should be forwarded to Graduate Studies during the semester in which you have both passed your comprehensive examination. Finally, the [Appointment of Dissertation Committee form](#) must be completed as the final step of being Advanced to Candidacy or ABD (All But Dissertation).

Prior to completing an Application for Candidacy, you should consult with your Committee Chair. All relevant spaces on the form must be filled in; if there is missing information it will be returned for completion. You must sign the Application for Candidacy; your Major faculty advisor (Greg Moss) and graduate unit chair (Department Chair) must sign as well, indicating that they have reviewed and approved your proposed degree plan. The Graduate Coordinator will take the signed form to Graduate Studies.

Upon approval by the Dean of Graduate Studies, one copy of your Application for Candidacy will be placed in your file in Graduate Studies, and another copy returned to your graduate unit. You should contact your graduate unit to verify this approval. If a discrepancy is detected, Graduate Studies will return the Application for Candidacy with written notice of the problem, and the graduate unit will inform you that a correction is required. You should then consult with your advisor, who must initial all changes before the form is returned to Graduate Studies for reconsideration.

Requests for minor revisions to the Application for Candidacy (e.g., a change in course work or the particular Catalog being applied) should be submitted to Graduate Studies in the form of a memo to amend the Application for Candidacy that is signed both by your advisor and graduate unit chair. If extensive changes are made, however, you should complete a new Application for Candidacy. If you are requesting an exception to a University requirement, you must submit a petition to the Dean of Graduate Studies.

Filing Out the Application for Candidacy Form

- 1. Personal Information:** Provide your correct UNM ID number. List your name as it appears on your UNM academic record. If you have used any alternate names while enrolled at UNM, list them as well. On the line for your local address, also include a telephone number at which you can be reached.
- 2. Degree(s) Currently Held:** List degrees currently held; this must be accurate and complete (no abbreviations). If anything is omitted (e.g., previous degree, major, institution, or year) your Application for Candidacy will be returned to you.
- 3. UNM Degree Sought:** Specify the UNM degree sought, as well as your graduate unit or department as it is appears in the current University Catalog. Your "major" should also be specified as it appears in the current University Catalog. At the end of the line, indicate the Banner major code for your major. Consult your unit if you do not know that code.

4. **Minor:** If you are pursuing a minor, indicate it here. Transcribed minors are only available from graduate programs that have approved minors on file at Graduate Studies. If you are declaring a transcribed minor, you must complete a Transcribed Minor form and have it approved by your major and minor departments and Graduate Studies. The transcribed minor form should accompany the Application for Candidacy for final approval by Graduate Studies.
6. **Graduation Date:** List the term and year in which you expect to complete all degree requirements. This can be changed later without penalty.
7. **Catalog Year:** Indicate the catalog year under which you plan to graduate. This will be used to determine whether you meet degree requirements, including those specific to your program. Your selection may be changed only in writing.

Do not list courses in any section if they are not needed to fulfill requirements, particularly courses that are not for graduate credit, as such credits cannot then be applied to any other degree. You must list all courses you will apply toward your degree, including those in which you plan to enroll in the future. If it becomes necessary to make changes to your program, submit a memo to that effect, signed by your advisor. Please list by term the courses in each section.

8. **MFA Program Credits:** List all major credit hours you will apply toward your MFA degree. The name of the instructor and the grade you earned must be listed for each UNM course you have already taken. Put a check mark to the left of each course that has been or will be used to fulfill a specific core requirement. If a substitution for a core requirement is included in your program of study, indicate that substitution. If a waiver of a program requirement has been allowed, include a memo to that effect, signed by your advisor. (Be sure to list courses you are currently enrolled in and ones you have yet to take)
9. **Minor or Supporting Credits:** List any courses other than graduate level major courses taken after admission to a UNM graduate program. You might not have courses to list in this section.
10. **Transfer Courses or Non-Degree Credits:** List graduate level course work you wish to apply to your degree that was completed at an institution other than UNM or at UNM in non-degree status. The relevance of the content of these courses will be determined by your department advisor. If you do list transfer courses, note the institution at which they were taken, and include a copy of the official transcript. You may only transfer courses or apply non-degree credits for which you have earned a grade of "B" or better. You may not transfer extension credits.
11. **Approvals (Unit #1-Primary):** Sign your Application for Candidacy and print your advisor's name on the indicated line. Your advisor and faculty graduate director or graduate unit chair must sign to indicate your graduate unit's approval. After the Dean of Graduate Studies signs the form, a copy will be returned to your department or graduate unit.

12. Approvals (Unit #2-Primary): If you are enrolled in a dual/certificate program, follow the instructions for #14 in this section.

YEAR THREE

MFA Dissertation Committees: The role of the dissertation committee is to supervise the MFA candidate's dissertation activity. The Dean of Graduate Studies must approve each member for committee service. The committee must consist of a minimum of **four** members; 2 of the 4 must have Category 1 approval. One of the members must be from outside the Department. See Category explanations on page 3.

Note: It is likely or possible that this committee is the same as the one used for the Comprehensive Exam, however only three members are required for the comps and now four are required.

1. Chair must have approval as a Category 1, 5 or 3 if his/her appointment is within the student's major
2. The second member must have approval as Category 1 or 3 if his/her appointment is within the student's major
3. The third member (external/outside) must have approval as Category 2 if selected from the faculty of an institution other than UNM, or Category 1 if a UNM faculty member outside the student's discipline
4. The fourth member can have approval as Category 1-6
5. Co-Chair (optional) must have approval as a Category 1-6

No more than one voting member may be in Category 4. Departments can impose a more restrictive structure for exam committees

Defend Your Dissertation

The MFA final oral examination, or dissertation defense, is the last formal step before the dissertation manuscript is submitted and the degree awarded. The focus of the final examination is the dissertation and its relationship to the candidate's field of study.

At least two weeks before the final examination is held, and no later than **November 1 for Fall graduation, April 1 for Spring, or July 1 for Summer**, the major graduate unit must notify Graduate Studies of its scheduled date by submitting the Announcement of Examination form.

The same online form that you used for your Comprehensive Exam is also used for the Defense:

<https://login.unm.edu/cas/login>

Please note: The dissertation must be submitted no later than 90 days after passing the dissertation defense, or the term graduation deadline, whichever comes first.

At the conclusion of the examination, the dissertation committee members confer and make one of the following recommendations, which must be agreed upon by at least three of them:

1. The dissertation be approved without change;
2. The dissertation be approved subject only to minor editorial corrections or
3. . The dissertation be rewritten or revised before approval.

If the committee chooses either the first or second recommendation, they may decide that no further meetings are needed. In the second instance the director of the dissertation is responsible for seeing that all necessary corrections are made before the dissertation is submitted to Graduate Studies. If the third recommendation is made, the full committee may elect to meet again to determine that their concerns have been addressed.

Formatting & Submitting your Dissertation

The MFA candidate is responsible for preparing a dissertation in the proper format that is of high quality and free of grammatical and typing errors. Guidelines on dissertation format found at this web address:

<http://grad.unm.edu/degree-completion/thesis-dissertations/guidelines.html>

Students are urged to carefully review and print current guidelines before defending their dissertations; they may also wish to attend the Dissertation Formatting Workshop offered through Graduate Studies, or consult with the Graduate Studies manuscript reviewer. Details for the workshop can be found at the following web address:

<http://grad.unm.edu/resources/workshops.html>

Format & Submit Dissertation

The Doctoral students must electronically submit his/her dissertation within ninety (90) days of passing his/her final examination for the dissertation. If the manuscript is not submitted within that time, the student must schedule and complete a second final examination for the dissertation. In all cases the results of the dissertation defense must be submitted to Graduate Studies no later than two weeks after the announced date of the dissertation defense.

Electronic Submission of the Thesis/Dissertation

The University of New Mexico encourages open access to all theses and dissertations produced for graduate degrees. Theses and dissertations (ETDs) submissions are uploaded to the LoboVault repository, <https://repository.unm.edu/> a digital archive, where they are accessible for search and download through web search engines such as Google. The University of New Mexico has implemented an embargo restriction policy <https://grad.unm.edu/resources/gs-forms/etd-embargo.html> that enables students, with approval from their advisers and Graduate Studies, to delay public-wide access to their work in LoboVault. Before defending your thesis or

dissertation, please consult with your committee chair and review the embargo restriction policy to determine whether or not you should release your work to open access or petition for an appropriate embargo option.

Thesis/Dissertation Resources

Please check the Thesis/Dissertation webpage and use the links below for more information on thesis/dissertation policies and procedures.

- Dissertation Guidelines
<http://grad.unm.edu/degree-completion/thesis-dissertations/guidelines.html>
- Thesis and Dissertation Manuscript Workshops
<http://grad.unm.edu/resources/workshops.html>
- Manuscript Tutorial
<https://grad.unm.edu/degree-completion/manuscript-prep.html>
- UNM Digital Repository
<http://digitalrepository.unm.edu/>
- Manuscript Templates
<https://grad.unm.edu/degree-completion/thesis-dissertations/manuscript-templates.html>
- Open Access
<https://grad.unm.edu/degree-completion/thesis-dissertations/open-access.html>
- ProQuest-UMI repository
<https://grad.unm.edu/degree-completion/thesis-dissertations/proquest-repository.html>
- Submitting Your Electronic Thesis or Dissertation
<https://grad.unm.edu/degree-completion/thesis-dissertations/submit-thesisdissert.html>

Summary of Important Deadlines

Deadline	Summer	Fall	Spring
Program of Study	March 1st	July 1st	October 1st
Application for Candidacy	Deadline last day of the Spring term.	Deadline last day of the Summer term.	Deadline last day of the Fall term.
Degree Requirement Completion*	July 15	November 15	April 15

Note: Program of Study is for Master's Students only
*Includes submission of thesis/dissertation, Report of Exam, etc.