Master of Arts - Theatre Program Handbook

Welcome

Welcome to the University of Nevada Las Vegas Department of Theatre and the Nevada Conservatory Theatre. As a graduate student you will work with other students, both graduate and undergraduate, a committed faculty and respected professionals. Classes and studios go hand-in-hand with production to train you for a professional career in theatre and the other entertainment arts. You may never work harder than you do in Graduate College as you teach and are taught, rehearse and produce, collaborate and participate, and then go home to do homework. This requires that you be self-motivated and ready to work. More so than your undergraduate education, a graduate education is what you make of it. Develop relationships with faculty and your peers. One day we will all be colleagues.

Mission Statement(s)

The mission of the MA in Theatre at UNLV is to provide students with a strong foundation in global theatre history, scholarly research methods, and critical thinking skills.

The Department of Theatre in the College of Fine Arts offers a diversified curriculum, taught by experienced faculty that allows students to immerse themselves in all aspects of theater, while taking advantage of the entertainment richness of Las Vegas. Whether it's in the classroom, on the stage, or behind the camera, the department of theatre fosters creative development and growth that prepares students for the world's stage.

Purpose

The purpose of this handbook is to provide program specific information that is not found in the UNLV Graduate Catalog. Students are responsible for understanding and following the policies and procedures delineated in this document and the UNLV Graduate Catalog, as well as the NSHE Code, UNLV Bylaws, and the UNLV Student Conduct Code. Questions about policies should be directed to the Graduate College: valarie.burke@unlv.edu or kendall.hartley@unlv.edu.

Department Graduate Faculty

A current listing of the graduate faculty can be found in the UNLV Graduate Catalog. Faculty must hold either associate or full graduate faculty status to be involved in graduate education at UNLV. For up to date information regarding graduate faculty status in your department, visit the Graduate Faculty status web page.

Most faculty and staff are accessible by telephone, voice mail or e-mail.

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<th>Name</th>
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<tr>
<td>Bynum, Nate</td>
<td>Graduate Coordinator</td>
<td>FDH 432</td>
<td>54248</td>
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<td><a href="mailto:joe.bynum@unlv.edu">joe.bynum@unlv.edu</a></td>
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<td>Frayer, Brackley</td>
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<td>FDH 408</td>
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<td></td>
<td><a href="mailto:brackley.frayer@unlv.edu">brackley.frayer@unlv.edu</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Gilyard, Clarence</td>
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<td>FDH 406</td>
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<td>Technical Director</td>
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<td>51177</td>
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<td></td>
<td><a href="mailto:scott.hansen@unlv.edu">scott.hansen@unlv.edu</a></td>
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<td>Hertfelder, Katrina</td>
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<td></td>
<td><a href="mailto:katrina.hertfelder@unlv.edu">katrina.hertfelder@unlv.edu</a></td>
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<td></td>
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<td>Hubbard, Phil</td>
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<td>FDH 401</td>
<td>53869</td>
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<td><a href="mailto:philip.hubbard@unlv.edu">philip.hubbard@unlv.edu</a></td>
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<td><a href="mailto:michael.lugering@unlv.edu">michael.lugering@unlv.edu</a></td>
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**Program Information**

Master of Arts - Theatre

**Contact Information**

http://www.unlv.edu/theatre

Department Chair

Brackley Frayer, Office Locations: FDH 409, HFA 228, Email: brackley.frayer@unlv.edu

Graduate Coordinator

Nate Bynum, Office Location: FDH 402, Email: joe.bynum@unlv.edu

Department Main Office

Office Location: FDH 410, Phone: 702-895-3666, Fax: 702-895-0833

**Program Requirements**

Program requirements regarding admission, coursework and culminating experience are found in the graduate catalog.
The Road to an MFA

Your Faculty Advisor will help you determine an appropriate curriculum. At several steps along the way, forms are required by the Graduate College. When any form is submitted to the Graduate College, ask the receptionist in the College for a date stamped copy. Please make a copy of any form for the Department office as well.

The first of these steps is choosing an Advisory Committee. This should be done after completing 12 credits (one semester full-time). Your committee may make recommendations on curriculum and will follow your progress toward graduation. In your final semester, you will assemble this committee to discuss and/or defend your culminating experience. Your committee consists of your Faculty Advisor, two Theatre faculty members of your choice, and one graduate faculty member of your choice from outside the department. If you are not familiar with faculty in other departments, speak to your Faculty Advisor for suggestions.

After establishing a graduate advisory committee, if there is need to change the composition of the committee, the student should complete and submit a Change in Advisory Committee form to the Graduate College immediately.

By the end of your second semester, you submit to the Graduate College your Proposed Masters & Specialist Degree Program. This is a two-part form. Part 1 asks for your Degree Option. Discuss this with your Faculty Advisor. It is most likely a Professional or Scholarly Paper, a Creative Project or a Final Exam.

Part 2 should be completed with the assistance of your faculty advisor. Here you list classes that you have or will take in each semester. Keep in mind that the classes listed in the Graduate Catalog are preceded by the phrase: “A recommended course of study might include:”. This allows flexibility in course selection. However, all graduate students are required to take THTR 702 Graduate Seminar for several semesters. Should your projected classes change, you must complete and submit a Change in Proposed Degree Program.
The road to an MFA in Theatre concludes with a “culminating experience”. In the Performance area this consists of a final exam and an Industry Showcase. In Design, Technical Direction and Stage Management the Culminating Experience is a creative project and/or a professional paper. This project or paper is frequently related to a production assignment on an NCT show. Once this is determined in discussion with the Faculty Advisor, you must submit a Prospectus Approval form to the Graduate College. This form is accompanied by a brief description (1-3 pages) of the project, the circumstances, processes and materials that will be used. A formal style in the third person is preferred. Use active voice verbs and a writer's voice that demonstrates confidence that the project has merit.

As you work on your project or paper, consult regularly with your advisor to make sure you are on the right track. Set deadlines with your advisor including a date to submit a first draft to your advisor, a date to submit a final draft to your advisor, a date to submit the completed project to your committee and a date for the Oral Defense. Keep in mind that your committee needs to receive your paper at least two weeks before the Oral Defense. Once a date and location for the Defense have been set, it must be publicized within the department as the Defense is open to anyone who wishes to attend. If your area has a required reading list, part of your oral may consist of questions from that list.

In all areas, the final form that must be submitted to the Graduate College is the Culminating Experience Results. This form must be submitted no later than two weeks before the last day of classes. Do not forget to apply for graduation in MyUNLV – this may be done anytime in your final year.

Most forms submitted to the Graduate College require signatures of the advisor, committee members, our Graduate Coordinator, Nate Bynum (FDH 432), and by the Dean of the College of Fine Arts, Dr. Jeffrey Koep (CDC Bldg 12).

All forms shown in this handbook may be found at the Graduate College website with the exception of Part 2 of the Proposed Degree Program. It may be downloaded at www.unlv.edu/theatre/programs/graduate

Advisory Committee Guidelines

In consultation with his/her advisor, a student will organize a thesis committee of at least three departmental members. In addition, a fourth member from outside the department, known as the Graduate College Representative, must be appointed. An additional committee member may be added at the student and department's discretion.

Degree Program Benchmarks

Comprehensive Exams: This take-home, written examination will be held in week ten of spring semester during the student’s first year of the program. The exam will be drawn from a reading list of 15-20 titles chosen by the student from the master MA reading list. An oral examination of the exam and the student’s thesis prospectus will occur in week 14 of spring semester. Students who fail to pass the exam will be placed on academic probation. A student will also be placed on academic probation if a minimum 3.00 grade point average is not maintained in all work taken as part of the graduate degree program.
Thesis: Students will spend their second year writing a 50-75 page scholarly thesis on a topic of their choosing. The M.A. thesis should be an original contribution of knowledge about a suitable dramatic or theatrical subject. An oral defense of the thesis will be held in week 9 or 10 of spring semester.

Program Timeline

- Year One
  - Fall
    - Prepare reading list for exam
  - Spring
    - Thesis proposal due by the end of week 10.
    - First year exam given in week 12.
    - Oral defense of exam and thesis proposal.

- Year Two
  - Fall
    - Begin work on thesis
  - Spring
    - Complete thesis by mid-semester (week 8).
    - Thesis defense held during week 9 or 10.

Professional Code of Ethics/Discipline Guidelines

UNLV Graduate College policy regarding academic integrity can be found in the graduate catalog.

Annual Review Procedures

Each spring term, graduate students are required to complete the Graduate Student Annual Review survey. This survey will be sent by the Graduate College to the student’s Rebelmail account. The review covers the prior calendar year and assesses student progress while setting goals for the year ahead. The student's classroom performance and first year exam is the basis for the review during the first year of the program and successful completion of remaining credits and the thesis is the basis for review in the second year.

Additional Program Information

The Nevada Conservatory Theatre

The Nevada Conservatory Theatre is the producing arm of the Department of Theatre. Its mission statement is:

To create a vital and dynamic theatre that enriches and challenges the artistic and cultural life of the city of Las Vegas and the desert Southwest, while simultaneously training students to shape and direct the theatre of the 21st century. To accomplish this goal, we employ professionals to work side by side with students. Many of our faculty also have substantial professional resumes and participate in production. We have a Board of Advisors drawn from members of the community who enthusiastically support us with both financial and service contributions. Their efforts are guided by our Artistic Director and Executive Director/Chair. The Friends of the Nevada Conservatory Theatre are volunteers that help with ushering and marketing. We have created a loyal subscription audience who enjoy watching your growth through your time here. If you encounter board members, friends or patrons in the theatre or the grocery store, thank them for their help and support.

Production
The Department of Theatre will produce eight productions during the 2013-14 academic year. (See back cover for titles and dates.) Five of these are in the Judy Bayley Theatre and are the Main Season of the Nevada Conservatory Theatre. They are fully mounted with large budgets and full staffing. These productions typically rehearse 4-5 weeks.

The three plays in the Black Box Theatre are known as the Alternative Season. All are moderately mounted with limited budgets and crew. Typical rehearsal is 4-5 weeks.

The Paul Harris Theatre is used by student organizations for several productions each season. Requests to produce in the Paul Harris must be presented to the department faculty in the semester prior to the proposed show.

MFA Performance students are required to audition for all productions. MFA actors are scheduled first for each audition. It is necessary to sign-up in the Theatre Department office is to reserve an audition slot. Posted audition announcements will contain guidelines on material to prepare.

MFA’s in Design, Stage Management and Technical Direction will be assigned to productions by their faculty advisors.

Rehearsals are 6-10 pm Monday through Friday and 11-4 pm on Saturday. It is important that these times are respected. Shop hours are determined by shop supervisors, faculty and designers. The weeks prior to an opening typically become hectic in all areas. The last two weeks of a production generally follow this pattern:

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<th>Sat</th>
<th>Sun</th>
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<td>Performance(s)</td>
<td>Matinee (&amp; STRIKE)</td>
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<td>Sun</td>
<td>Tech with actors (10 out of 12 hrs)</td>
<td>Mon (OFF)</td>
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<td>Mon</td>
<td>Dress rehearsal (6-11pm)</td>
<td>Tues (OFF/Brush-up)</td>
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<td>Tues</td>
<td>Dress rehearsal (6-11pm)</td>
<td>Wed (Brush-up/performance)</td>
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<td>Wed</td>
<td>Dress rehearsal (6-11pm)</td>
<td>Thur &amp; Fri (Performance)</td>
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<td>Thur</td>
<td>Opening</td>
<td>Sat (Performance(s))</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fri</td>
<td>Performance</td>
<td>Sun (Matinee &amp; STRIKE)</td>
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These calls apply for actors as well as running crews. A detailed production calendar will be distributed via e-mail by the Production Manager.

**Production Etiquette**

1. **COMMUNICATION** is the most important key to a successful production: the director must be able to communicate ideas to the actors and the support staff; the actors must be able to communicate their character to the audience; and at each level of the creative and technical team, communication up and down is vital. Main conduits of this communication include the production manager and stage manager but they should not be the sole disseminators of information. Talk to each other, write it down, spread it around. Never forget, at the bottom line, “the play’s the thing” and it is the most basic communication.

2. Check e-mail regularly for rehearsal and meeting information. Be on time and ready to work.

3. Within a rehearsal call, regular breaks will be observed: 5 min. for every 55 min. or 10 min. for every 80 min. No call can exceed 5 consecutive hours without a meal break of at least an hour. This call may be extended to 5½ hours for crews during tech rehearsals.

4. UNLV allows no smoking in any building. Eating and drinking in spaces are allowed only as specified.
5. Costume fittings are often difficult to schedule due to the number of people involved. It is imperative that all participants arrive on time. Actors should bring wardrobe items requested of them and wear undergarments. Fittings cannot interfere with classes (either attending or teaching).

6. Those attending rehearsal should not take a stop in the action as a cue to talk. Quite often, a note for anyone is a note for everyone.

7. Those whose attendance at rehearsal is necessary should not leave without letting the stage manager know. Notes invariably come when there is no one to receive them.

8. Notes should be discussed as necessary, prioritized and acted upon ASAP. Whenever possible, notes from one evening should be fixed by the following evening.

9. Try not to walk between the director and the action.

10. Do not play with props. Alert the prop or running crew if something is damaged.

11. Wear the costume as intended. Remove all personal jewelry, wallets, etc. In the Judy Bayley, lockers may be requested through the stage manager to store valuables during rehearsals and performances. Please do not bring food or drink into the dressing rooms. There is no smoking, eating or drinking (other than water) in costume.

12. Hang up all costumes upon removal. Put laundry in the basket. Inform wardrobe crew of any problems or repairs needed.

13. Use make-up as recommended by the director or the costume designer. Please provide basic makeup: the costume shop will provide any specialty items needed. Complete toilette before arriving at the theatre.

14. All rehearsals are open to all students and faculty. A director may declare a rehearsal closed. When observing, exercise common courtesy and adhere to any applicable rules above.

15. A few nevers:
   never work alone in a theatre or shop
   never “go to black” without announcing
   never rehearse a black-out unless glow tape and running lights are in place
   never chew gum on headset
   never block actor or audience pathways
   never assume anything.

**Ticket Policies**

Graduate students are required to attend all productions sponsored by the Department of Theatre. Each MFA is entitled to one free ticket for each production. Tickets are available at the Performing Arts Center Box Office with a valid student ID. The department has a long-standing tradition of attending the opening night performance in a collective celebration of our “home team” efforts.

MFA’s involved in a production are each entitled to one additional complimentary ticket. Comps may be picked up a week before opening.

**Graduate Assistants & Financial Aid**

MFA’s must complete the Free Application for Financial Aid (FAFSA) by February 1, 2014 in order to be considered for allocation of any funds. Applications are available on-line at www.fafsa.ed.gov.

Application for renewal of a Graduate Assistant (GA) must be completed online every year by March 1st.

Graduate Assistants in the Department of Theatre are designated as Graduate Teaching Assistants (GTA) or as Graduate Research Assistants (GRA) GTA’s have a faculty supervisor who provides a
standardized syllabus for the class(es) being taught. The Theatre office will provide a desk copy of the
text(s) ordered for the class. Teaching undergraduates is challenging, hence all GTA’s are required to
attend a Teaching Workshop prior to teaching. Any issues with students should be brought to the
faculty advisor for assistance with resolution.

Graduate Research Assistants in shops or offices all have supervisors who will make sure that
appropriate work and safety standards are explained. GRA’s in the shops will frequently supervise
undergraduates. Any issues with students should be brought to the faculty advisor for assistance with
resolution.

If you are not given an assistantship in the Department of Theatre, check with your advisor or
through the Graduate College for other opportunities on campus. Many units, such as the Division
of Student Affairs, hire graduate assistants from across the disciplines.

Since Graduate Assistantships include a tuition remission and a stipend, additional outside
employment is forbidden unless approved by the faculty supervisor, the chair and the Graduate
College. The form to request permission may be found on the UNLV Graduate College website.

Health, Welfare and Services

1. The Department will make reasonable effort to adapt the physical activities required to the special
needs of the student. However, all students are expected to participate to the full extent of their
capabilities.

2. Please notify the necessary faculty and/or supervisor of any illness or injury requiring absence from
classes, rehearsal and/or production assignments. Tardiness is unprofessional and unacceptable.

3. University policy regarding drugs reflects current state and federal legislation. Illegal drugs, as well
as alcohol, are dangerous and destructive to the work within the Department. A student
demonstratively incapacitated for work or performance in class, rehearsal or production due to
alcohol, drugs or other non-medical reasons may be asked to leave and may be referred to the Office
of Student Conduct.

4. INJURIES should be reported to the faculty and/or supervisor at the time of occurrence. An
accident report must be completed and returned to the Department office. If immediate medical
attention is necessary, call “911” from a campus phone or 895-3668 from a cell phone to reach Public
Safety.

5. MEDICAL INSURANCE is required for full-time students and graduate assistants. The "health
fee" charged to your account each semester ensures access to the on campus Wellness Center, not
insurance. A list of services provided by the Wellness Center can be found at
http://studentlife.unlv.edu/shc/services.html.

6. CALLBOARDS are located outside department offices in FDH, in HFA and the JBT. However,
E-MAIL is now the principal means for communicating rehearsal schedules, rehearsal reports,
meetings etc. Please maintain a working e-mail address and check it regularly.

7. REBELMAIL is the University e-mail system. Activate it immediately so that information from
the Department, the Graduate College and the University reaches you. It is easy to forward
REBELMAIL to your personal e-mail account. Go to: http://rebelmail.unlv.edu/forward.html to
find out how.

8. THEATRE LISTSERV provides useful information and reminders to members. To join send an
e-mail to UNLV_theatre@unlv.edu. In the subject line, type: Subscribe.

9. MAILBOXES for graduate students are in the Grad Office (FDH 443). MAIL for faculty and staff
may be left in mailboxes in the Xerox room (FDH 445). The Theatre Department is campus mail
stop 5036. Items for undergraduates may be left with the department administrative assistants.

10. 5036 is the campus mail stop for the Theatre Department. Mail and packages to the Department
should be mailed to:
11. COPY CODES for the Xerox machine are available from the administrative assistants. Please limit xeroxing to class and production related activities. Take the time to double-side copies whenever practical.

12. KEYS are ordered online. Your faculty advisor will determine which keys are necessary and communicate that to administrative assistants who are authorized to order keys. All grad students need 6192 for entry to the Grad Office (FDH 443) and 6189 for entry to the Xerox room (FDH 445). Entry to most buildings requires a MARLOC card. Your card should be programmed to allow entry to FDH so that you can access the grad office after hours, HFA & the JBT. Access to other rooms and buildings for teaching purposes can be added as needed.

13. CD’s of digital photographs taken during the final dress of most shows are available for $5 each from the department.

14. REHEARSAL SPACE for class projects is available through the production manager. Spaces that may be used include HFA 124, 206, the Black Box and the Paul Harris Theatres, depending on prior commitments. Spaces may be signed out between 7 and 10pm, Monday through Friday. When using spaces, leave them in as good (if not better) condition than you found them.

SAFETY is of primary importance in all that we do. Be alert, exercise caution and use sound judgment.

Discipline Resources
https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/747/01/

University Resources
Academic Success Center
The goal of the Academic Success Center is to help students do well academically and complete their studies on time. They offer or will refer you to such programs and resources as tutoring, advising, skills testing, career exploration and more. They guide students every step of the way to the many
established resources created to ensure they complete their educational goals. Learn more about the programs and services the center currently offers.

**Alumni Association**

With an alumni base 90,000 strong, the UNLV Alumni Association offers a variety of services and opportunities in support of alumni and their families. UNLV alumni are encouraged to support the values of higher learning through advocacy, involvement, and giving.

**Commencement Office**

Located in the UNLV Registrar’s Office, the commencement office is the last step in the graduation process. Please check with the commencement office for information on the commencement ceremony and your diploma; for all other information about graduate student degree completion and graduation, including thesis/dissertation requirements and doctoral hooding, please contact the Graduate College.

**Office of Diversity Initiatives**

The vision of the Office of Diversity Initiatives is to advocate, promote, and support the advancement of equity, inclusiveness, and empowerment of a continuously changing collegiate and global community. The mission of the Office of Diversity Initiatives is to provide leadership and support for UNLV’s diversity mission: to nurture equity, diversity, and inclusiveness that promotes respect, support, and empowerment. This Office also handles UNLV Title IX questions, inquiries, and reporting.

**Disability Resource Center (DRC)**

The DRC is committed to supporting students with disabilities at UNLV through the appropriate use of advocacy, accommodations, and supportive services to ensure access to campus courses, services, and activities. The DRC is the university-designated office that determines and facilitates reasonable accommodations in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. Graduate students with disabilities must disclose to the DRC in order to receive appropriate accommodations.

**Office of International Student and Scholars**

International Students and Scholars (ISS) ensures compliance with both SEVIS (Student and Exchange Visitor Information System) and federal law, so that the university can continue to be authorized by the U.S. federal government to enroll international students; host and hire international scholars; assist and advise employment eligibility and authorization relating to international students and scholars, and visa, travel, and immigration issues; provide critical and specialized services to the international students and scholars of the UNLV community; and facilitate their transition to the campus and the U.S.

**Jean Nidetch Women's Center**

The Jean Nidetch Women’s Center is committed to creating a supportive and inclusive environment for all genders through programming, services, and advocacy for the UNLV community. The Women's Center has informational resources, brochures, and flyers for a variety of on and off campus organizations to help empower and protect yourself, and learn about your options. They also provide free tampons, pads, and condoms.

**UNLV Libraries**

UNLV Libraries has always been more than books; they are about encouraging students and creating quality programs that elevate growth and learning. Please visit their website for important information about the services they offer to graduate students.

**Graduate & Professional Student Association (GPSA)**

The Graduate & Professional Student Association serves all currently enrolled University of Nevada, Las Vegas graduate and professional students. The GPSA maintains the Graduate Student Commons located in the Lied Library room 2141. The facility a working office equipped with a copier, fax, flatbed scanners, color laser printer, office supplies, and computers with printers and a small kitchen area. The GPSA is the graduate student governance body at UNLV; the GPSA Council consists of
one graduate student representative from each graduate department, and they meet monthly. The GPSA also provides volunteer opportunities, sponsors social events, and supports graduate student research through the graduate research and travel grants program.

Office of Student Conduct
The Office of Student Conduct is a student-centered, service-oriented office located within the Division of Student Affairs. The Office of Student Conduct collaborates with the UNLV community to provide an inclusive system through enforcement of the UNLV Student Code of Conduct by:

- Promoting awareness of student rights and responsibilities;
- Establishing accountability for student choices;
- Creating opportunities for involvement in the process; and
- Striving to uphold the values and ethics that advance the common good.

Office of Veteran Services
The UNLV Office of Veteran Services is staffed with veterans and GI Bill-experienced staff to assist more than 1,000 veterans, dependents, active duty service members, National Guard members, and reservists. Their mission is to develop a welcoming, veteran-friendly campus environment that fosters academic and personal success.

The Financial Aid & Scholarships Office
The Financial Aid & Scholarships Office supports higher-education access and persistence by providing financial aid to eligible students. The office partners with student organizations, the UNLV Foundation, the Graduate College, and other external constituents to provide financial aid learning opportunities and scholarship support for graduate students.

Writing Center
This is a free service to UNLV students to help you with any writing project, from papers to creative writing, to resumes, and we can work with you at any stage of the writing process. The center can help you brainstorm, make an outline, work on your drafts, or just be a soundboard for your ideas. The center staff can assist you in person, or via the Online Writing Lab (OWL) page.

University Policies and Procedures
Graduate students are responsible for knowing and acting in accordance with UNLV Policies and Procedures. To view the most commonly referenced campus policies and procedures, you can refer to the following websites:

- Academic Integrity
- Activation for Military Service
- Change of Address
- FERPA/Privacy Rights
- Health Insurance - Mandatory
- Jeanne Clery Campus Safety and Security Report
- Proof of Immunization
- Policies and Procedures on the Protection of Research Subjects
- Rebelmail Policy
- Student Conduct Code
- Student Computer Use Policy
- Title IX

To ensure compliance with Graduate College policies and procedures, please review the relevant sections of the Graduate Catalog:
• Academic Calendar
• Academic Policies
• Admission and Registration Information
• Degree Progression Policies & Procedures

In addition, the Graduate College website contains additional information regarding policies and procedures.

*Nothing in this handbook supersedes any NSHE, UNLV, or Graduate College policy.*

**Handbook Information**

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