



The University of Texas at Austin  
Department of Economics

**2025-2026**  
**M.A. Economics (Option III)**  
**Student Handbook**

**Major code: 31530**

**10-month track**

**18-month track**

**24-month track**

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*This Student Handbook contains the requirements, policies, procedures, and deadlines of the Department of Economics and The University of Texas at Austin (UT) Graduate School. This information supplements the policies included in the [Graduate Catalog](#) and posted on the Graduate School's [website](#). Information contained within this Handbook is current as of the date on the cover page. If any changes are made, they will be added to the online version and the information will be distributed through the ma\_econ\_grad listserv. The Handbook is available at: <https://ma.eco.utexas.edu/studenthandbook>.*

## Overview

The Master of Arts in Economics Option III degree program is designed for students pursuing a terminal master's degree in economics. The mission of the program is to provide rigorous analytical and quantitative training that will prepare students for admission to high-quality PhD programs and/or for meaningful careers in the private, government, and non-profit sectors.

As an Option III program, the M.A. in Economics is a self-funded program. That is, courses and programmatic activities are not formula-funded, i.e. not supported through state money. This places some restrictions on M.A. program participants, as noted throughout this Handbook. For additional details on the nature of Option III programs, please see the Graduate School's [Policy Guide for Option III Degree Programs](#).

## Program Contacts

### **Program Director and Graduate Adviser**

Dr. Stephanie Houghton  
[shoughton@utexas.edu](mailto:shoughton@utexas.edu)

### **Department Chair**

Dr. Thomas Wiseman  
[wiseman@austin.utexas.edu](mailto:wiseman@austin.utexas.edu)

### **Assistant Director and Program Coordinator**

Kristen Hotopp  
[khotopp@austin.utexas.edu](mailto:khotopp@austin.utexas.edu)

Other useful contacts with positions outside the Economics Department are:

### **Liberal Arts Career Services**

Tatem Oldham  
[t.oldham@austin.utexas.edu](mailto:t.oldham@austin.utexas.edu)

### **Graduate School Office of Career and Life Design**

Colleen Gleeson  
[Colleen.Gleeson@austin.utexas.edu](mailto:Colleen.Gleeson@austin.utexas.edu)

### **International Office (ISSS/Texas Global)**

[hotline@austin.utexas.edu](mailto:hotline@austin.utexas.edu)

### **Office of Scholarships and Financial Aid (OFA)**

[onestop@utexas.edu](mailto:onestop@utexas.edu)

## Curriculum and Requirements for the M.A. Degree

The M.A. Economics degree is offered on a **coursework-only** basis; i.e., it is not offered with a thesis option or a report option. The curriculum was developed to ensure a broad foundation in mathematical analysis, microeconomic, macroeconomic, and econometric theory. Throughout the program, students will develop expertise in applying economic reasoning and econometric tools to problems in industry and government policymaking. At the same time, the program offers the flexibility to tailor one's coursework to specific fields of interest and methods of analysis.

### Academic and Professional Objectives

Per the University's Office of Strategic Academic Initiatives, the M.A. Economics program has established the following broad learning objectives. Upon completion of the program:

- Students should be able to formulate and solve the relevant mathematical problems used in economic modeling.
- Students should be able to solve fundamental problems in microeconomic and macroeconomic theory.
- Students should be able to interpret the results from statistical output and critically evaluate research.
- Students should be able to conduct empirical analysis using real world economic data.

With these skills, we expect that graduates will be able to successfully pursue admission to high-quality doctoral programs in Economics and related disciplines (e.g., Public Policy, Finance, Accounting, Sociology, Demography, Law, and other interdisciplinary programs). Alternatively, graduates will be well-qualified for jobs in the private, government, and non-profit sectors that require greater expertise in economic, analytical, and statistical tools than provided by an undergraduate degree.

### Coursework Requirements

Students may complete the M.A. Economics degree in 10 months, 18 months, or 24 months. All three tracks have identical program requirements; the only difference is the time to degree. The program requires completion of 30 semester hours of coursework. This "Program of Work" consists of:

- 9 semester hours of core graduate-level coursework
  - ECO 394K Microeconomics (*offered in fall only*)
  - ECO 394L Macroeconomics (*offered in fall only*)
  - ECO 394M Econometrics (*offered in fall only*)
- 21 semester hours of elective graduate-level coursework, selected from
  - ECO 394C Mathematics for Economists\* (*offered in summer only*)

- ECO 394D Probability and Statistics\* (*offered in summer only*)
- ECO 395K Topics and Applications in Microeconomics
  - Includes courses such as Game Theory, Labor Economics, and Industrial Organization.
- ECO 395L Topics and Applications in Macroeconomics
  - Includes courses such as Economic Growth and Financial Crises and Macro and the Labor Market
- ECO 395M Topics and Applications in Quantitative Methods
  - Includes courses such as Real Analysis, Data Mining and Statistical Learning, Time Series Econometrics, and Causal Inference
- ECO 198K/297K Specialized Topics in Microeconomics
- ECO 198L/297L Specialized Topics in Macroeconomics
- ECO 198M/297M Specialized Topics in Quantitative Methods
- ECO 180D/380D Internship\*
- ECO 380 Research Course\*

\* These courses discussed in greater detail in subsequent sections of this Handbook.

- OR equivalent of substitute coursework approved by the Graduate Adviser. These substitutes are very rarely approved, but would apply in the case that, for example, a student takes a Ph.D.-level version of one of the core courses or has an approved room-share course from an outside department that is not cross-listed under an ECO course number.

Students are expected to take all courses in-residence and through an in-person, face-to-face format. In rare circumstances (such as the COVID-19 pandemic), some classes may be offered in a hybrid format, allowing students to attend classes online. Online or hybrid coursework may also be available, on a case-by-case basis, to students who face immigration delays in arriving to the US or who are engaged in internships outside the Austin area. For more details on these options, students should speak with the Graduate Adviser. A limited subset of courses may be made available online to individuals who have submitted a written petition and received approval from the Graduate Adviser two weeks prior to the start of the semester.

## Grading

Students must earn a grade of at least C+ in each of the three core courses: ECO 394K, 394L, and 394M. Students must earn a grade of at least C in elective courses in order for those courses to count towards the Program of Work (i.e. the 30 credit hours that count towards the M.A. degree). All courses counting towards the Program of Work must be taken on a letter grade basis. Additional courses taken on a credit/no credit (C/NC) basis do not count towards the Program of Work, nor do they count towards the student's cumulative grade point average.

Candidates for the master's degree must have a cumulative grade point average of at least 3.00 in courses included on the Program of Work. Additionally, all graduate students must have a cumulative graduate grade point average of at least 3.00 over *all* courses taken, should students decide to take more than 30 credit hours. If a student retakes a course, only the

higher grade will be included in the program of work, but both grades will remain on the student's transcript and both grades will be included in the overall cumulative grade point average.

Per University policy, any graduate student whose cumulative grade point average falls below 3.00 at the end of any semester will be placed on *scholastic warning status*<sup>1</sup>, and must bring his or her cumulative GPA to at least 3.00 during the next semester, or be subject to dismissal from the program. Therefore, students should view a grade of *B-* in any one course as an indication of unsatisfactory performance and should plan to meet with the Graduate Adviser to discuss a plan for improvement.

If a student receives a grade of incomplete (X) in a course, the student must complete the course requirements by the last class day in his or her next long-session semester of enrollment. If this deadline is not met, the symbol X is converted to the symbol I (permanent incomplete), noted on the student's transcript. A course in which the student receives an incomplete grade will not affect the student's GPA and will not be applied toward the degree.

#### ECO 394C Mathematics for Economists and ECO 394D Probability and Statistics

Every student is expected to complete ECO 394C Mathematics for Economists and ECO 394D Probability and Statistics during their first summer semester in the program. Under very rare circumstances, students have been allowed to take these courses later in their program (or not at all). Students must demonstrate an understanding of all material covered in these two courses as a prerequisite for the core courses, however. ECO 394K Microeconomics and ECO 394L Macroeconomics require knowledge of the material in ECO 394C. ECO 394M Econometrics requires knowledge of the material in both ECO 394C and ECO 394D. Students must therefore obtain Graduate Adviser approval to waive enrollment in either of these two courses.

#### ECO 180D/380D Internships

An internship is not required for the M. A. degree. However, a student may receive course credit for an internship, and that credit may count towards the 21 elective credit hours. A maximum of 3 hours of internship elective credit may be applied towards completion of the M.A. Economics degree.

Students must obtain consent from the Graduate Adviser to register for either ECO 180D or ECO 380D. Only internships that entail practical working involvement with an appropriate business, government, research agency, or similar institution can be considered for approval. The internship may be paid or unpaid. Upon completion of an approved Employer Agreement Form, the student will be registered for either ECO 180D or 380D, depending on the number of hours of employment. For each semester hour of credit earned, the student must work a minimum of the equivalent of one lecture hour a week for one semester. For example, fall and

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<sup>1</sup> See the relevant section of the Catalog at <https://catalog.utexas.edu/general-information/academic-policies-and-procedures/scholastic-probation-and-dismissal/>.

spring semester ECO 380D internships must consist of a minimum of 10 hours of work weekly for a minimum of 12 weeks; most students work an average of 15 hours weekly in fall and spring semesters. Summer ECO 380D internships must consist of a minimum of 14 hours of work weekly for a minimum of 9 weeks; most students work an average of 20-40 hours weekly in the summer.

The internship course may be completed on a letter grade basis or a credit/no credit basis. However, the course will only count toward degree requirements if it is completed on a letter grade basis. Students should register for the course during the same semester that the internship work occurs. An exception is made for summer internships, for which the student may register and receive credit in either the summer semester or the following fall semester.

Note that for an international student to receive temporary employment authorization as required for paid, off-campus jobs, the student *must* apply for Curricular Practical Training (CPT) and register for an internship course, or if not taking the internship course, must apply for pre-completion Optional Practical Training (OPT). Please see Texas Global's ISSS office for details about these programs and eligibility requirements.

### ECO 380 Research Course

Occasionally, students may arrange to work under a professor for an extended period of time, equivalent to the hours required for a three-credit hour lecture course. This may involve assisting with that professor's research or undertaking an individual research project under a professor's supervision. In these cases, a student may enroll in ECO 380 Research Course. These arrangements are subject to approval by the supervising professor and the Graduate Adviser. A maximum of three hours of Research Course credit may be applied towards completion of the M.A. Economics degree, provided that the credit is taken on a letter grade basis.

### Courses Outside the M.A. Curriculum

As students in an Option III program, M.A. Economics students are not able to register for courses outside the established M.A. curriculum. However, it is sometimes possible to have a "meets with" arrangement in which a course outside the approved M.A. curriculum can be cross-listed/room-shared. In order to be eligible for such an arrangement, the course must be:

- an advanced undergraduate-level course in the Economics Department, with differentiated requirements for graduate-level students
- a Ph.D.-level course in the Economics Department, or
- a graduate-level course in an outside department

The specific course must be approved for cross-listing by the instructor, the M.A. Economics Graduate Adviser, the Chair of the Economics Graduate Studies Committee, the Economics Department Chair, and where applicable, the chair of the outside department. Option III students may not displace Option I students, meaning that Option I students receive registration priority, and Option III students will only be allowed to register when there are otherwise open seats. In the case of undergraduate Economics courses, undergraduate Option I

students receive registration priority until the 6<sup>th</sup> class day of a long semester; Option III students may attend but may not register prior to the 6<sup>th</sup> class day.

Furthermore, the maximum<sup>2</sup> number of Option III students allowed in an Option I course through an established room-share arrangement is limited to (i) 20% of Option I enrollment in a course of more than 10 students (capped at a maximum of 10 Option III students), or (ii) two Option III students in an Option I course with enrollment of 10 or fewer students. These caps are enforced by the Graduate Adviser and in cases where demand from MA Econ students exceeds the number of available seats, the Graduate Adviser will determine the priority ranking.

No more than 20% of an M.A. Economics student's Program of Work may be made up of "meets with" or "cross-listed" courses, i.e., no more than 6 of 30 credit hours (typically 2 courses). This limit applies regardless of whether the course is given an ECO course number when cross-listed and regardless of whether the originating course's department is Economics. Each such course must be approved by the Graduate Adviser. Subject to Graduate Adviser approval, students may also take an additional third cross-listed course, not counting towards the degree, but no more than three such courses will be approved for registration.

If a student would like to register for a course that is not part of the M.A. Economics curriculum or is not already cross-listed, the student must receive permission through a petition to the Graduate Adviser. The petition should include:

- administrative details including the course number, course name, unique number, and instructor's name
- a statement of how the learning objectives of the course will further the student's career goals
- a copy of the syllabus for the requested course

The Graduate Adviser will then provide further instructions for the appropriate approval process, which may vary depending on the originating department/program. Approval is not guaranteed, and requests must be made by the deadline given that semester. See the relevant pages in Canvas for details and deadlines.

### Transfer of Credit

The M.A. Economics program does not accept transfer credits from other institutions.

### Dual Degree

Students are prohibited from enrolling in other degree or certificate programs while enrolled in the M.A. Economics Program. If a student wishes to pursue a second graduate degree, enrollment must be done consecutively.

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<sup>2</sup> These maximums are based on University guidelines for all Option III programs. However, a course's home department or college may establish lower maximums or may decide not to permit such cross-listing arrangements at all.



## STEM Designation

This degree program is classified under CIP Code 45.0603: Econometrics and Quantitative Economics, and therefore qualifies for the STEM-OPT extension. Students in this program may apply for a 24-month STEM extension of F-1 Optional Practical Training (OPT). Please see Texas Global's ISSS office for details on this program and the eligibility requirements.

## Program Length and Typical Path

Students enroll in one of three program tracks: the 10-month track, the 18-month track, or the 24-month track (the major code for all three tracks is 31530).

**Table 1: Typical Curriculum and Timeline**

Semester	10-month	18-month	24-month
Summer 1	Math for Economists Probability & Statistics Optional: Real Analysis	Math for Economists Probability & Statistics	Math for Economists Probability & Statistics
Fall 1	Microeconomics Econometrics Macroeconomics 1 elective	Microeconomics Econometrics Macroeconomics OR 1 elective	Microeconomics Econometrics Macroeconomics OR 1 elective
Spring 1	3-4 electives	2-3 electives <i>Optional: Internship</i>	1-3 electives <i>Optional: Internship</i>
Summer 2		<i>Optional: Real Analysis</i>	<i>Optional: Real Analysis</i>
Fall 2		Macroeconomics (if not yet taken) 2-3 electives <i>Optional: Internship</i>	Macroeconomics (if not yet taken) 1-3 electives <i>Optional: Internship</i>
Spring 2			1-3 electives <i>Optional: Internship</i>

In the 10-month track, students begin coursework in July and complete their degree in May of the following year. In the 18-month track, students begin coursework in July and complete their degree in either August or December of the following year. In the 24-month track, students begin coursework in July and continue through two academic years before finishing in May. See Table 1 below for a typical path to degree for each track.

Admission during the fall or spring semester is only permitted under very limited circumstances. On rare occasions, students who are unable to begin their coursework in July may be able to

enroll starting in the fall semester, provided that they have demonstrated sufficient math background (comparable to ECO 394C and ECO 394D) to take ECO 394K Microeconomics and ECO 394M Econometrics during their first semester. Spring semester admission is only offered on a part-time basis, under special arrangements with partnership institutions. Any of these arrangements for admission outside the usual summer semester cycle require approval from the Graduate Adviser and Admissions Committee.

### Switching Tracks

If a student decides to switch tracks, the student should notify the Program Coordinator and Graduate Adviser by email as soon as the decision is made, and no later than the first class day of the last semester of enrollment. This email notification is very important, as switching tracks affects curriculum advising and the student's graduation application deadline.

## Academic Policies and Procedures

### Registration

Per university policy, students in the M.A. Economics program are not permitted to register themselves for classes; course registration is instead facilitated by the Program Coordinator. It is therefore very important that students attend advising meetings and check email in advance of the registration window (mid-August for Fall semester registration, mid-October for Spring semester registration, early April for registration in the Summer and subsequent Fall semesters). Students are responsible for submitting registration preferences online and clearing any registration bars by the given deadlines. Students will only be permitted to register for courses offered by the M.A. Economics program or for courses for which approved<sup>3</sup> cross-listed sections have been made available to M.A. Economics students.

### Minimum and Maximum Course Load

In accordance with Graduate School policy, a student is considered full-time if he or she is enrolled in 9 semester hours during a long semester or 3 hours during a summer session. The Department of Economics allows students to enroll either full-time or part-time in the M.A. program. However, international students studying under a J-1 or F-1 student visa must be enrolled full-time (exceptions are only made in the summer and in the final semester of study). Students accepting certain financial loans or corporate/government sponsorship may also be required to enroll on a full-time basis.

The maximum course load for a graduate student is 15 credit hours in long semester, or 12 credit hours over a summer session. Students who wish to exceed the maximum course load must submit a petition letter to their graduate adviser, though such a request will only be granted in very rare circumstances. The typical course load recommendation is 9-12 hours in a

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<sup>3</sup> See the section on "Courses Outside the M.A. Curriculum" for details on the approval process. Students are not eligible to register directly for any courses outside the department without completing this process.

long semester, so that students also have time in their schedules for extra-curricular learning: attending seminars, exploring research ideas, and participating in social and networking activities.

It is the student's responsibility to be aware of any additional course load minimum or maximum required by an agency to which they have an obligation.

### Auditing a Course

A student who audits a course attends class but is not officially registered for the class and does not earn any course credit. An audited course does not appear on a student's transcript, nor do the hours count toward a student's course load (i.e. for determining full-time student status.) If you are interested in auditing a course, you will need to obtain the instructor's permission and complete a [Class Auditor Permit pdf](#). Within the Economics department, permission to audit a course will only be given after the first class day and only in cases where the class enrollment is below the closing limit. Auditors are not entitled to hand in homework, sit for exams, take part in discussions, or receive evaluations of their work. Some instructors in other departments may be willing to provide feedback, but it is the policy of the Economics Department that instructors should not offer to grade an auditor's work.

### Adding/Dropping a Course

Students can add a course through the 6<sup>th</sup> class day of a long semester (2<sup>nd</sup> class day during summer sessions) by contacting the Program Coordinator. After this point, the student must receive registration approval from the Graduate Adviser. After the 12<sup>th</sup> class day (4<sup>th</sup> class day during the summer) registration deadline, the Graduate Dean must approve a Graduate Add/Drop form. This form must be accompanied by a letter of petition – documenting rare and extenuating circumstances as well as signatures from the Graduate Adviser and course instructor.

Students may drop courses through the last class day of any semester. If the student emails a drop request to the Program Coordinator by 4pm of the 12<sup>th</sup> class day (4<sup>th</sup> class day during summer sessions), then the course will not appear on the student's transcript and the student will not be billed for the course. After the 12<sup>th</sup> class day (4<sup>th</sup> class day during summer sessions), a student must complete an Add/Drop form obtained from the Program Coordinator.

- Classes dropped between the 13<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> day (5<sup>th</sup> through 10<sup>th</sup> day of a summer term) require the approval of the Graduate Adviser and the Graduate Dean. The course will appear on the student's transcript with a grade of "Q"; it will not be included in the student's GPA. Students will still be billed for this course; refunds are not available after the 12<sup>th</sup> class day.
- Classes dropped between the 20<sup>th</sup> day (10<sup>th</sup> day of a summer session) and the last day of the semester require the instructor's signature in addition to approval of the Graduate Adviser and Graduate Dean. The instructor will determine whether the student shall receive a Q or an F on his/her transcript for the course. Courses assigned a Q will not be

included in the student's GPA. Students will still be billed for this course; refunds are not available after the 12<sup>th</sup> class day.

For more information, please see <https://gradschool.utexas.edu/academics/policies/adding-and-dropping-courses>.

### Withdrawing from All Courses

In order to drop *all* courses in a semester, the student must file a Withdrawal and Refund Request form with the Dean of the Graduate School. This form may be obtained from the Graduate School in Main 101. The student is expected to re-enroll the following long semester, or must file for a leave of absence, in order to remain in the M.A. program. Students may be eligible for a partial tuition refund, according to the Tuition Adjustment Schedule posted at <https://catalog.utexas.edu/general-information/registration-tuition-and-fees/tuition-and-fees/tuition-adjustments/>. Note that there are no tuition refunds granted after the 20<sup>th</sup> class day of a fall or spring semester (6<sup>th</sup> class day during summer sessions). For more information, please see <https://gradschool.utexas.edu/academics/policies/withdrawals>.

### Leaves of Absence

While in most cases participation in the program is continuous, students sometimes find it necessary to take a temporary leave of absence. Students must submit an [Authorization for Leave of Absence](#) form to the Graduate Adviser for approval. Upon obtaining the Graduate Adviser's signature approval, the student must submit the form to the Graduate School prior to the first class day of the semester in which the leave is requested.

A student who is approved for a formal Leave of Absence must apply for readmission prior to the semester in which the student plans to re-enroll. As long as the student re-enrolls immediately after the official Leave expires, the student is guaranteed readmission to the program and the readmission application fee is waived. Students who take a formal or informal Leave of more than two semesters must apply to the program anew, and readmission is not guaranteed.

### Admission to the Ph.D. Program

M.A. students who are interested in pursuing a Ph.D. in Economics at UT Austin must apply and be considered along with the rest of the applicant pool. The Ph.D. application process is extremely competitive, and all admissions and funding decisions are made by the Ph.D. Admissions Committee. Participation in the master's program does provide our faculty with valuable information in the context of letters of recommendation, but successful completion of the M.A. program does not guarantee admission to the Ph.D. program.

### Accommodations for Students with Disabilities

The University of Texas at Austin has a written policy that states that students with disabilities will be provided appropriate academic accommodations. The purpose of academic accommodations is to ensure equal access to and the opportunity to benefit from all

educational programs at UT Austin for all students. It is the responsibility of the student to identify himself/herself to the Services for Students with Disabilities (SSD) Office and to provide documentation of their disability. Strict documentation guidelines exist for different types of disabilities. Information on documentation guidelines for disabilities can be found on the SSD website (<https://community.utexas.edu/disability/>) or via phone at (512) 471-6259. Once a student has registered with SSD, that office will communicate with individual faculty regarding appropriate accommodations.

## Grievances

Graduate students at The University of Texas at Austin have the right to seek redress of any grievance related to academic or nonacademic matters. Every effort should be made to resolve grievances informally between the student and the faculty member involved or with the assistance of the Graduate Adviser or Department Chair. If the grievance cannot be resolved informally, students have recourse to formal grievance procedures through the Graduate School. [Grade appeals](#) for Economics Department courses are addressed through the College of Liberal Arts. For more information, please see <https://gradschool.utexas.edu/academics/policies/grievances>.

If you have concerns that you feel were inadequately addressed within the department, students may also contact the [Office of the Student Ombuds](#) at [utombuds@austin.utexas.edu](mailto:utombuds@austin.utexas.edu). The ombudsman can assist with a range of issues by offering neutral advice, providing mediation, and conducting an impartial investigation of concerns.

## Advising

### Academic Advising and Evaluation of Progress

All students will meet with the Graduate Adviser upon entering the program to discuss their academic and professional goals. The Graduate Adviser will assist with course selection during open registration periods and can provide advice about switching tracks to shorten/lengthen the time to degree. Students should continue to consult with the Graduate Adviser as necessary throughout the program. Graduate Adviser approval is not necessary for registration each semester, but she does (electronically) approve the Program of Work and Application for Graduation. Graduate Adviser approval is also required to register for courses offered outside of the M.A. curriculum (see above).

In accordance with Graduate School Policy, all students in the 18m and 24m tracks will receive a written annual progress report from the Graduate Adviser following their first Spring semester. This progress report will indicate the number of core courses and credit hours remaining for degree completion, along with any other requirements the student must meet to remain in good academic standing in the M.A. Program.

### Ph.D. Placement Advising

M.A. students who plan to apply for Ph.D. programs or other further graduate study should be in regular contact with the Graduate Adviser. Starting in the summer, she will provide advice regarding course selection (including Real Analysis) and how to best improve one's application profile while enrolled in the master's program. In mid-October or early November, the Graduate Adviser will meet with other core faculty members to evaluate a student's placement prospects and identify programs that might be a good match in terms of competitiveness and field interest. Please make sure that the faculty are aware of your interests and plans prior to that meeting so that we can best help you through the process.

Please keep in touch with the Graduate Adviser throughout the application process. Even after your applications have been submitted, she can provide valuable advice about interviewing, responding to offers of admissions, and navigating waitlists. Information about the offers you have received (and declined) can also help other members of your cohort, so please stay in close communication throughout the process.

### Career Advising

Students planning to enter the workforce after graduation are encouraged to make use of [the Office of Career and Life Design](#), the [Liberal Arts Career Services](#) (LACS) office, and the career management system/job board, [Handshake](#). In addition to hosting several workshops within the department, LACS provides one-on-one career coaching, interview preparation, feedback on resumes/cover letters, and networking advice. Economics faculty, the Graduate Adviser, Program Coordinator, and program alumni can also be excellent resources during the job search. Students who are proactive in networking and attending information sessions and career fairs have the best outcomes, so we urge you to make the most of these opportunities. The department is here to support your efforts to find the perfect career and make the most of the skills you develop in the M.A. program.

### Facilities and Resources

The Department of Economics is housed in the Bernard and Audre Rapoport Building ([BRB](#)), and most M.A. Economics courses will be held in this building. To access the building after hours and on weekends, students must use their UT student ID card, which will be activated for this purpose after registration.

The 2nd floor graduate lounge in BRB 2.134 provides workspaces, student lockers, a small fridge, and a drip coffee maker (we'll supply coffee cups; users are responsible for supplying coffee and any condiments or filters needed). Please be considerate of others and keep the lounge neat and clean. If you would like to use a locker, please see the Program Coordinator to pick up a key. Students will be billed \$20 in the event that they lose their key, and we need to order a replacement. Locker keys must be returned prior to graduation.

M.A. Economics students are also allowed access to the kitchen area and M.A. microwave in the 4<sup>th</sup> floor Ph.D. lounge. However, due to space constraints, the seating area outside the kitchen area is reserved for Ph.D. students; M.A. students should bring food back down to the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor graduate lounge instead.

In addition to use of the lounge and building common areas, students may request to reserve a room in BRB for a special event or study session by submitting an online request at <https://liberalarts.utexas.edu/economics/resources/room-reservations/> Note that rooms 2.158 is reserved for Ph.D. students holding TA sessions.

### Computing Resources

M.A. students will need access to computing resources, especially statistical software, while enrolled in the program. Most students use personal laptops, but computer labs are also available throughout campus. The closest locations are at RLP 1.110, RLP 3.104, the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor of JGB, PCL 2.200, and FAC 101B. A complete list of campus computer labs is available [here](#). Additionally, students may print, copy, and/or scan at any campus [UT Print location](#).

Each M.A. student will receive access to STATA upon enrolling in ECO 394M Econometrics (their first fall semester). Students on the 18m and 24m tracks have the option to renew their licenses for a second year. Other commonly used software, including R Studio and LaTeX, are open source and available to download free of charge.

Complete information about computing and IT resources for students at The University of Texas is available at: <https://it.utexas.edu/students>. ~~on Canvas for~~ Additional information about cloud computing storage space through [UTBox](#), UTPrint printing services on campus, Two-Factor Authentication using Duo, and accessing campus resources from off-campus using the VPN is available on the MA Economics Canvas site. ~~Other can be found at.~~

### Economics Graduate students Assembled (EGAD)

EGAD is a student organization devoted to improving the educational experience of Economics graduate students (both M.A. and Ph.D. students). It serves as a resource to promote interactions among students and between students and faculty and hosts a number of social activities, including happy hours and the annual Halloween Party. The organization also acts as a sounding board for graduate student concerns and interacts with the University's Graduate Student Assembly (GSA).

At the beginning of the fall semester, M.A. students will elect an EGAD representative to attend meetings along with representatives from the Ph.D. cohorts. An election will also be held to select two graduate students to serve as GSA representatives for the department, one or both of whom may be M.A. students.

## Financial Information

### Enrollment Deposit

Applicants who are admitted to the M.A. Economics (Option III) program must submit a nonrefundable pre-enrollment tuition fee [deposit] to secure enrollment in the program. The deadline for this \$2000 deposit will be indicated on the applicant's admission letter, and once paid, the amount will be credited to the total amount of tuition due for the program.

### Tuition Billing and Payment Info

M.A. Economics program fees ("tuition") are billed every semester. See the "Tuition Billing Timeline and Payment Deadlines" page in Canvas for full details. The payment deadlines for 2025-2026 align with the [Academic Calendar](#) and [Graduate School website](#):

- Summer: due by 5pm on July 17, 2025
- Fall: due by 5pm on August 28, 2025
- Spring: due by 5pm on January 15, 2026

Each semester, the program fee ("tuition") will be posted to the What I Owe page at [https://utdirect.utexas.edu/acct/rec/wio/wio\\_home.WBX](https://utdirect.utexas.edu/acct/rec/wio/wio_home.WBX). Students are also responsible for paying University fees (including international student fees, any health insurance premiums, property deposits, etc.) at <https://utdirect.utexas.edu/apps/studentfinancials/mytuitionbill/>.

Students paying out of pocket may pay tuition and fee bills online using any of the following:

- Visa, American Express, MasterCard, or Discover
- E-Check (a U.S. bank account is required to pay by E-Check)
- Electronic Funds Transfer (a U.S. bank account is required to transfer funds electronically)

Students on federal financial aid should visit the tuition page at <https://utdirect.utexas.edu/apps/studentfinancials/mytuitionbill/> and select either the "Pay with Available Aid" or the "Confirm Your Attendance" button (one of these two options will appear in the center of the page, depending on the semester) prior to the payment deadline. For questions, please contact the [Office of Scholarships and Financial Aid's Texas One Stop office](#): [onestop@utexas.edu](mailto:onestop@utexas.edu).

Installment plans may be approved on an individual basis in cases when student notifies the Program Coordinator of need *two weeks before the payment deadline*. The student will pay the \$50 late fee to cover the cost of administering the installment plan. Standard installment plans consist of three deadlines, based on the following installment due dates:

- 50% due by 5pm on the semester payment deadline (4<sup>th</sup> class day in fall or spring semester)
- Two remaining payments of 25%



If full tuition amount is not paid by the 3<sup>rd</sup>/final installment date, the late payment fee increases to \$200. The student will not be permitted to register for future classes until full payment is made.

### International Student Fees

All international students at the University of Texas at Austin are required to pay the \$125 [ISSS Support Services fee](https://global.utexas.edu/iss/about/fees) every semester. Additionally, F-1 and J-1 international students are required to be covered by health insurance when enrolled at the University; students will be billed automatically unless an [insurance waiver](https://global.utexas.edu/iss/advising-services/insurance/waivers) is submitted in a timely manner. ISSS also provides [health insurance](https://global.utexas.edu/iss/advising-services/insurance) to students who do not have coverage. The M.A. Program does not cover these charges.

The International Office also handles third-party billing arrangements for sponsored international students, as well as international wire transfers with sufficient notice (four weeks prior to the payment deadline). For details, contact the International Office.

### Late Fees

After 5pm on the 4<sup>th</sup> class day of a fall or spring semester (2<sup>nd</sup> class day of a summer semester), students who have not paid their program tuition fee will be billed a \$50 late fee. After 5pm on the 12<sup>th</sup> class day of a fall or spring semester (6<sup>th</sup> class day of a summer semester), the late fee increases to \$200. Late payment fees do not apply to students who have an established 3<sup>rd</sup> party billing arrangement with UT Austin's Student Accounts Receivable office, the \*Office of Financial Aid, or the International Office.

\*Please note that students on financial aid are responsible for timely payment of any remaining tuition bill after financial aid awards are released. Students who are unresponsive to program staff outreach regarding past-due amounts and/or who do not make payment by the 12<sup>th</sup> class day of fall or spring are subject to late tuition payment fees.

Separately, the Office of the Registrar will cancel a student's registration if their university fee bill is not paid, or attendance is not confirmed (in the case of a zero bill), by the payment deadline. This will require the student to pay these fees before being reinstated through a late registration process, for which there is also a late registration fee. See the General Information Catalog for details: <https://catalog.utexas.edu/general-information/registration-tuition-and-fees/tuition-and-fees/additional-fees>

#### Option III Limitations on Student Employment and Financial Aid

The M.A. Economics program is governed by the [guidelines for Option III programs \(https://utexas.app.box.com/s/w2autodrvwhdp5uyiezkzddvlgfnva\)](https://utexas.app.box.com/s/w2autodrvwhdp5uyiezkzddvlgfnva) established by the Office of Graduate Studies. From these guidelines:

*Students registered in these degree programs are not eligible for university financial aid, except federal guaranteed loans and some private sector loans. They may not be offered TA, AI, GRA, AA, or A(G) appointments or departmental fellowships. They will receive no other student "benefits" unless specific arrangements have been made and the appropriate costs (fees) have been paid. Students in Option III programs are not eligible for Hinson-Hazlewood Act Exemptions (for Texas ex-servicemen and their children) but may be eligible for GI Bill benefits.*

Specifically, this means that M.A. Economics students are not eligible for positions classified as "academic employment," including teaching assistant (TA) or graduate research assistant (GRA) appointments, or departmental fellowships. If a student wishes to serve as a research assistant to a professor, this must be done on an unpaid basis or in connection with the ECO 380 Research Course (depending upon the hours required).

Students are eligible for "non-academic employment," which includes positions in the library and other places on campus. These positions can sometimes include "student technician," "student associate" or other data entry positions for research institutions on campus like the Salem Center for Policy, Texas Venture Labs, or the Dell Medical Center. Check the [Non-Academic employment](#) page to find links to the jobs database, [HireUTexas](#), and other resources.

Though not considered departmentally sponsored employment, tutoring is also an option. Our undergraduate advisers keep a list of Econ graduate students who are willing to tutor undergraduates. They will send out a call for tutors at the beginning of each semester, and M.A. students can sign up then if interested. Tutors set their own pay rates - negotiated between the undergrad student and the graduate student tutor - and it is not considered academic employment by UT's Human Resources department.

Some students also hold off-campus jobs, subject to citizenship status and visa work eligibility.

International student visa rules prohibit international students from working in a paid position off-campus during the first year enrolled. After completing one academic year (two long semesters) in the U.S., international students may be eligible for Curricular Practical Training (CPT) to complete an internship in conjunction with the ECO 380D Internship course.

Pursuing a graduate degree while otherwise employed can be very challenging since graduate study requires a significant commitment of time and energy. A graduate student should carefully consider their work/study balance when selecting hours of enrollment and hours of employment. We strongly advise against working during the first summer session, since each week can involve more than 15 hours of class time, and additional hours outside of class for studying.

## Student Responsibilities

M.A. Economics students are responsible for knowing and satisfying program degree requirements, meeting administrative and academic deadlines, seeking academic advice when needed, and enrolling in appropriate courses to ensure progress toward degree completion. The faculty and staff of the M.A. Economics Program are eager to advise and help, but students are responsible for their own education and personal development.

Students must know and abide by the academic and disciplinary policies given in the Graduate Catalog (<http://registrar.utexas.edu/catalogs/graduate>) and in the General Information Catalog (<http://registrar.utexas.edu/catalogs/general-information>), including rules governing the standard of work required to continue at UT, warning status and scholastic dismissal, and enforced withdrawal.

## Communication

Email is the official form of communication at UT Austin. Students are required to provide the Economics Department and The University of Texas with current and accurate contact information at all times, including email address, local and permanent physical addresses, and telephone number. If your contact information changes during your enrollment, please update your [UT Direct profile](#). You must also notify the Program Coordinator of the change so that we can update the program's internal records, including the **ma\_econ\_grad** current student listserv. This listserv is used for official correspondence from the M.A. Econ program; it is not something from which you can opt out.

Students are responsible for reading all school-related email correspondence and responding, if asked, in a timely way. Please reply promptly to any email requests sent by the Program Coordinator, Graduate Adviser, Academic Placement Director, or other faculty and staff affiliated with the program. In addition to requesting information that may be relevant for your own degree plan, our faculty and staff may also request information that is required by the University for annual reporting purposes. We will try to keep these requests to a minimum.

## Academic Integrity

Each student in the M.A. Economics program is expected to abide by The University of Texas Honor Code:

*“I pledge, as a member of the University of Texas community, to do my work honestly, respectfully, and through the intentional pursuit of learning and scholarship.*

- *I pledge to be honest about what I create and to acknowledge what I use that belongs to others.*
- *I pledge to value the process of learning in addition to the outcome, while celebrating and learning from mistakes.*
- *This code encompasses all of the academic and scholarly endeavors of the university community.”*

At a minimum, this means students should complete any assignments, exams, or other scholastic endeavors with the utmost honesty, which requires:

- Acknowledgement of the contributions of other sources
- Completion of assignments independently unless expressly authorized to seek or obtain assistance completing them
- Following instructions for assignments and exams
- Avoiding engaging in any form of academic dishonesty on behalf of yourself or another student

Since academic dishonesty harms the individual, other students, and the integrity of the University, policies on such dishonesty will be strictly enforced. Students who violate University rules on academic dishonesty are subject to disciplinary penalties, including the possibility of failure in a course and/or dismissal from the University. For international students, this may result in immediate revocation of their visa. For further information, please review Chapter 11 of the university’s Institutional Rules(<https://catalog.utexas.edu/general-information/appendices/appendix-c/student-conduct-and-academic-integrity/>) and visit the Student Conduct and Academic Integrity website: <http://deanofstudents.utexas.edu/conduct>.

## Code of Conduct

The University’s expectations for student conduct are grounded in the University Code of Conduct:

*“The core values of The University of Texas at Austin are learning, discovery, freedom, leadership, individual opportunity, and responsibility. Each member of the University is expected to uphold these values through integrity, honesty, trust, fairness, and respect toward peers and community.”*

University students are also expected to abide by all city, state, and federal laws and statutes and all regulations of the University and The University of Texas System. However, as a

community of scholars, the University expects from its students a higher standard of conduct than that required simply to avoid discipline. The principles of the Student Honor Code together with the University Code of Conduct should govern and direct student conduct to promote a safe environment that is conducive to academic success and to ensure that each University student graduates ready to contribute to society as an ethical citizen.

As economists, we further encourage students to familiarize themselves with the Code of Professional Conduct adopted by the American Economic Association, available online at <https://www.aeaweb.org/about-aea/code-of-conduct>.

### Title IX

Beginning January 1, 2020, Texas Senate Bill 212 requires all employees of Texas universities, including faculty, to report any information to the Title IX Office regarding sexual harassment, sexual assault, dating violence and stalking that is disclosed to them. Texas law requires that all employees who witness or receive any information of this type (including, but not limited to, written forms, applications, one-on-one conversations, and class assignments) must be reported. If you would like to speak with someone who can provide support or remedies without making an official report to the university, please email [advocate@austin.utexas.edu](mailto:advocate@austin.utexas.edu).

For more information about reporting options and resources, please visit <http://www.titleix.utexas.edu/>, contact the Title IX Office via email at [titleix@austin.utexas.edu](mailto:titleix@austin.utexas.edu), or call 512-471-0419. Although graduate teaching assistants are not subject to Texas Senate Bill 212, they are still mandatory reporters under Federal Title IX laws and are required to report a wide range of behaviors.