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# FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

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**Question: Can I continue to work while pursuing a graduate degree.**

**Answer:** Yes. Graduate classes are held in the evening so students who are working, particularly those currently teaching in local high schools, can attend classes while employed.

**Question: Do I need an English Degree to qualify for the MA in English program?**

**Answer:** Some of our tracks require an English Degree or a minimum number of English classes. Students without undergraduate classes in English who are interested in these tracks may be required to take additional undergraduate classes in English before being accepted into the program. Some tracks accept students with other undergraduate degrees, such as communication or philosophy. You should see the graduate adviser about how these requirements affect you personally.

**Question: Which is better, the thesis or non-thesis option?**

**Answer:** The choice of whether to write a thesis or take the comprehensive exam is a very personal one. Students should make this decision in consultation with the graduate adviser.

**Question: Can I use this degree as a steppingstone to a PhD in English or in Spanish?**

**Answer:** Our programs are designed for students who are interested in teaching ELA or Spanish Literature at the secondary school level and for students who are interested in going on to a PhD program. We have tracks designed specifically for students who are interested in getting a PhD.

**Question: Do I need a Master's Degree to teach at a local high school?**

**Answer:** You can teach at a local high school with a bachelor's degree after passing the appropriate TExES exam. An MA is required for students who wish to teach concurrent enrollment. Many high schools encourage, and reward, teachers who complete their Master's degree.

**Question: How will a Master's Degree help me in my current teaching career?**

**Answer:** Many students with a Master's Degree seek administrative positions in their high schools, as lead teachers or curriculum developers.

**Question: How long will the program take?**

**Answer:** Though the MA in English and the MA in Spanish are designed as two year programs, that timeline assumes students are attending school full time. Students who are currently working as high school teachers usually take between three and four years, depending on whether they take summer classes or not.

**Question: What financial aid is available?**

**Answer:** Graduate students qualify for the same financial aid undergraduates do. In addition, TA (Teaching Assistant) positions are available for graduate students who have completed 18 hours of graduate work. Students should check with the graduate adviser for specific requirements.

**Question: Do I need to take the GRE?**

**Answer:** The GRE is required for admission into a Master's Degree Program at the University of Texas Rio Grande Valley.