

M.A. in English

Student Handbook

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Department of English, Speech, and Foreign Languages

Texas Woman's University

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This handbook is developed from the following sources:

1. Draft of ESFL Graduate Student Handbook (1995),
2. Recommendations for revision from Graduate Council (1997),
3. Graduate Policy Handbook (2000, online),
4. TWU Guide for Theses and Dissertations (1998 and 2000 online),
5. TWU Graduate Advisors' Handbook (2000, online),
6. TWU Graduate Catalog (2000),
7. ESFL Ph.D. in Rhetoric program description (1998).

Graduate School Forms

<http://www4.twu.edu/o-grad/forms.htm>

Grad Council Policy Manual

<http://www4.twu.edu/o-grad/gcpol/>

Graduate Student Advisors Manual

<http://www4.twu.edu/o-grad/amanual/default.html>

Guide to the Preparation and Processing of Dissertations, Theses, and Professional Papers

<http://www4.twu.edu/o-grad/dmanual/default.html>

Department of English, Speech, and Foreign Languages

I. Statement of Student Responsibilities

It is the responsibility of each graduate student enrolled in the Department of English, Speech, and Foreign Languages to be familiar with information in this Graduate Student Handbook, the Graduate Catalog, and Graduate School guidelines (on website or published) such as the Guide for Preparation of Thesis, Dissertation and Professional Papers, which is available online and in the university bookstore.

Graduate Teaching Assistants are responsible for being familiar with the ESFL Handbook for Graduate Teaching Assistants and the TWU Handbook for Teaching Assistants.

For questions related to ESFL graduate student guidelines, see the department chair or graduate studies coordinator.

For questions related to TWU graduate student guidelines, visit the Graduate School Website (<http://www4.twu.edu/o-grad/>) or contact the office of the Dean of the Graduate School.

II. General Requirements: The Master of Arts in English

Candidates for the Master of Arts degree in English may work toward the comprehensive perspective of the generalist or may select a concentration in literature, linguistics, rhetoric, or English as a Second Language (ESL). The student's M.A. program and research project are developed on an individual basis by the candidate and her or his faculty advisory committee.

Degree Plan Options

- Thesis option: 30-hour program (24 hours for course work and six hours for thesis)
- Professional paper option: 36-hour program (33 hours for course work, three hours for professional paper)
- Course work only option: 36-hour program (36 hours for course work)

Major Emphasis: 18 - 33 hours

Minor (optional): 6 - 9 hours (part of the total hours required)

Final Examinations:

For thesis option, a two-hour oral examination which covers course work and thesis.

For non-thesis options, a three-hour written examination over course work.

Special Requirements:

- Competency in one foreign language as research tool.

This can be completed with the completion of 6 hours at the second-year level with grade of B or higher. Course work more than 5 years old can be accepted with completion of a written request from committee and department chair.

- English 5083 (Bibliography and Research Methods)

Residence: No specific residence requirement exists for the master's degree although it is recommended that the student devote as much time to full-time study as possible.

Time Limits: Normally, credit hours older than six years cannot apply toward the degree. No absolute time period exists within which a master's degree must be completed

III. Admission Requirements and Policies

TWU General Requirements

Bachelor's degree from a recognized college, regarded as standard by a regional or general accrediting agency, or an equivalent degree from a foreign university or college.

1. Official Transcript showing a B/ 3.0 average on all upper-division and graduate work taken previously. Exceptions: Applications reflecting less than a B average will be considered upon special recommendation of a departmental graduate faculty to the Dean of the Graduate School.
2. For unconditional admission, sufficient and satisfactory undergraduate preparation in the major field. Additional preparation may be required by provisional admission.
3. U.S. citizenship or appropriate immigration forms. Application deadlines for all international students or nonimmigrant visas are April 1 for the fall semester, August 1 for the spring semester, and January 1 for any summer session.
4. An official report of acceptable scores on the Graduate Record Examination (GRE). For the master's degree, a minimum combined score of 850 on Verbal and Quantitative sections of the GRE is required and a score of 600 on the TOEFL for international students.
5. Timely filing of appropriate application forms from the Director of Admissions and Registration, the Dean of Graduate Studies, or the Department of English, Speech, and Foreign Languages. The completed application, GRE score report and official transcript from each college attended should be returned to the Graduate School 30 days before obtaining registration for the session to which admission is sought.
6. Departmental recommendation for admission to degree study, stated as either unconditional or provisional.

Admission Status

The student will receive from the Graduate School a statement specifying either UNCONDITIONAL or PROVISIONAL admission to a master's program. Upon notification of admission, the applicant should confer with the chair of the Department of English, Speech, and Foreign Languages, preferably by interview, but, if necessary, by correspondence, in order to become acquainted with specific departmental regulations.

- **Unconditional Admission**

To be admitted unconditionally to any master's program, the applicant must satisfy the following requirements:

1. Grade point average of 3.00 on the last 60 undergraduate hours; and
2. Minimum score of 850 on the combined Verbal and Quantitative portions of the Graduate Record Examination.
3. Sufficient and satisfactory undergraduate preparation in the major field.

- **Provisional Admission**

Applicants not qualifying for full admission may be granted provisional admission status based on one of the following:

1. An overall grade point average of 2.75 on a 4.00 scale, or 3.00 on the last 60 undergraduate hours, and a minimum score of 750 on the combined Verbal and Quantitative portions of the Graduate Record Examination; or
2. A minimum score of 850 on the combined Verbal and Quantitative portions of the Graduate Record Examination.

Provisional status based on deficient GPA must be removed by the completion of four graduate courses (12 credit hours) including 9 credit hours in the student's major area, with a minimum grade point average of 3.00 and no more than one "C" in these courses. Failure to remove provisional admission status after completing twelve graduate hours will result in suspension from further graduate study in a degree program for six years.

With departmental approval, an applicant's academic record may be supplemented by additional evidence such as work experience suggesting the ability to succeed in advanced course work.

Requirements for advancement from provisional to unconditional admission status is clearly stated on the departmental recommendation, with a time recommended for completion of the requirements. As soon as a student has satisfied the requirements, the advisor notifies the Graduate office and request a "Change of Status" for the student.

- **Denial of Admission**

Application to graduate study may be denied if the grade point average of the applicant is too low, if the student lacks aptitude for a particular program, or if the applicant fails in any other way to meet the minimal requirements established by the Graduate Council.

- **Change of Admission Status**

Change of Status is stamped on a copy of the admission letter. Copies are sent to the student and the department. When a student has met all requirements specified for a provisional admission, the advisor sends a memo to the Dean of the Graduate School requesting that the student be advanced to Unconditional Admission. A student may not be admitted to candidacy for a degree prior to Unconditional Admission.

Note: As soon as prerequisites are met, the student must notify the advisor or the Chair of the Department.

- **Transfer Credits**

Only six hours may be transferred. Credits from another university cannot transfer if they are older than five years. This restriction may be waived. Courses taken at other universities under the rubric of the Federation of North Texas Universities are not considered transfer credits.

IV. Advising Procedures and Research Committees

How Advisory Committees Are Named

When a student is accepted into the graduate program, the student is assigned a temporary advisor for assistance with registration until the student selects a permanent advisor. During the first semester the student will select an advisor who will assist in developing a degree plan. Subsequent changes in the degree plan must be approved by the advisory committee and filed with the Graduate Office.

Faculty with full graduate faculty status may chair a student's advisory committee. Only faculty members whose major faculty appointment (half time or more) is in the Department of English, Speech, and Foreign Languages qualify to serve as chairs of advisory committees. The M.A. advisory committee consists of not fewer than two members of the graduate faculty. The majority of the committee must be faculty in the department. When a student presents a minor, a faculty member from the minor department serves on the advisory committee. See the attached Faculty Roster for graduate faculty status and areas of expertise.

Associate Graduate Faculty serve on advisory and research committees, but do not chair advisory committees or direct professional papers, theses, or dissertations except with the recommendation of the Department Chair and the approval of the Dean of the College and Dean of the Graduate School. For the current list of faculty with full graduate faculty status, see the attached *Faculty Roster*.

When the advisor and student agree on the composition of the advisory committee, the student formally asks each faculty member to serve. After all members have agreed to serve, the student completes the form (*Request for Appointment of Graduate Committee*), obtains the signatures from the members of the committee, and submits the form to the Chair of the Department, Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences, and the Dean of Graduate Studies.

Responsibilities of Advisory Committee

The advisory committee guides and evaluates the student's program and progress. The advisory committee chair coordinates the formation of an advisory committee, supervises the preparation of the degree plan, and chairs a meeting for its approval.

Master's Research Committee

The masters research committee consists of not fewer than two voting members of the graduate faculty, at least one of whom represents the major discipline. If the student has a minor, one member of the committee should normally be a faculty member from the minor area. The student will contact faculty for their agreement to serve on the committee. Each faculty member should be asked to sign the form (*Request for Appointment of Graduate Committees*) before it is given to the Chair of the Department.

Committee members who will serve during the summer must be appointed before spring graduation.

The responsibilities of the research committee are:

- 1) to guide the student during the preparation of the paper or thesis;
- 2) to ensure that the student maintains an acceptable standard of scholarship; and
- 3) to prepare, administer, and evaluate the final examination.

Role of Research Committee Chair

The chair of the M.A. student's research committee has primary responsibility for supervising the student's completion of the thesis or professional paper. The student's work may be read by committee members by chapter or in its entirety when it is completed. In either case, the student should allow for a minimum of two weeks for members to read the thesis/paper. Generally the thesis or professional paper should be read by the committee members after it has been accepted by the committee chair. Students should consult deadlines set by the Graduate School for graduation and thesis submission when planning the completion of thesis/paper and final examinations.

Changes in Committee Appointment

If necessary, changes in committee membership can be made. A request for a change may be initiated by the student, committee member, or chair of the committee and should be submitted to the head(s) of the component(s) and to the Dean of the Graduate School. Out of academic courtesy, the committee chair should inform all parties concerned before an official change is made. Requests for changes should be made in writing with the form (*Request for Appointment of Graduate Committee*) with "Change of Committee" typed on the form.

V. Program of Study

Course Load

Maximum load: In no case is a graduate student permitted to carry more than twelve hours in any one long semester or more than seven hours in one summer term unless permission is granted by the Chair of the Department and the Dean of the Graduate School. Applications for course overload can be obtained from the Graduate School. Grades in courses offered for the master's degree and doctoral degree must be B or above. The student is expected to maintain at least a B average.

VI. Degree Plans

• For All Graduate Degree Plans

1. Only Graduate School degree plan forms are acceptable (see website or Graduate Office).
2. Original approval signatures by the advisor, any committee members, and component heads are required.
3. Exact course numbers and titles must be listed.

4. Transfer hours must have been earned for graduate credit at an accredited institution, and an official copy of the transcript reflecting the work must be filed in the Registrar's office.
5. No credit toward a graduate degree may be earned through correspondence (This does not include courses taken through distance education)
6. No credit toward a graduate degree may be earned through extension work for another institution.

- **For Master's Degree Plans**

1. No work with grade of less than C may be applied toward the degree.
2. Transfer credit is limited to the following: up to 6 semester hours in a program of 30-38 credit hours; a minimum of 30 semester hours must be listed for a program that requires a thesis, 36 hours for non-thesis options.
3. Courses more than 6 years old at time of graduation cannot count toward the degree unless granted a waiver as requested in writing and approved by department and Dean of Graduate School.
4. A minor field requires a minimum of 6 hours coursework in that field, at least half of which must be completed at TWU.
5. A minor may be earned only in a field in which TWU offers a graduate degree.

Filing Degree Plans

Advisory Committee Meeting

The student should schedule a meeting of the advisory committee for the purpose of formalizing the degree program. At least two committee members must be present to approve the master's degree plan. After the committee has met and approved the student's degree program, the committee chair should complete and submit the official Graduate School form (*Master's Degree Plan*) to the Department Chair for approval. The Chair will forward the approved program to the Dean of the Graduate School through the Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences.

Updating a Degree Plan

It is not unusual for a degree plan to include electives or special topics. When this is the case, it is the student's responsibility to update the degree plan. The degree plan can be modified by submitting a form (*Change in Degree Program*) to the advisor for approval. If the modifications being requested are substantial, the advisor will discuss the request with all committee members before approving the change. The advisor forwards the approved change to the Department Chair, Dean of the College, and Dean of the Graduate School.

VII. Research: Preparation of Professional Paper, Thesis

Prospectus

Submitted with TWU Prospectus form

Maximum length: 10 double- spaced pages, including bibliography

Contents

The prospectus must be approved before the student begins the research procedure. The prospectus includes the tentative title, purpose, and rationale for the study, as well as a statement of the investigation, proposed procedure, an introduction, a statement of purpose (problem, questions, hypothesis), a selected review of the literature, and a description of the student's research method and procedure.

Human Subject Review

If human subjects are involved, the appropriate permission and approval statements must also be filed with the prospectus.

Approval Process: Committee Meeting

After the research committee chair approves of the prospectus, and at least ten days before meeting with the research committee, the student gives each member a copy of the prospectus. The research committee meets to discuss and approve a prospectus. To indicate approval, each committee member signs the *Prospectus form* which the committee chair forwards to the Department Chair. The prospectus for a thesis is forwarded to the Dean of the College and the Dean of the Graduate School. However, the prospectus for a professional paper is filed in the Department office and need not be filed with the Graduate Office.

Thesis and Professional Paper

More details concerning the preparation of the professional paper, thesis, or dissertation may be found in the Graduate School publication [Guide to the Preparation and Processing of Dissertation, Theses, and Professional Papers](#), which can be purchased in the TWU Bookstore and found online at the Graduate School website. The Department requires that these research projects be prepared following the style of the [MLA Handbook](#) (APA for linguistics). Students are encouraged to consult completed theses or professional papers to familiarize themselves with the general characteristics of a completed study.

Expectations for Theses and Professional Papers

1. The research topic or problem is clearly stated and well conceptualized.
2. The work is well organized and follows a logical exploration of the topic.
3. The argument of the work does not include contradictions and presents depth of understanding of the research topic.
4. Research is comprehensive and current as evident in bibliography and endnotes which demonstrate a broad range (past to present) of scholarship related to the topic. The subject is placed in the context of current criticism, mentioning significant articles, books related to the study at hand.

5. The originality of the work is stated and supported.
6. The student demonstrates significant analytical skills as evident by original analysis and presents supporting evidence for conclusions.
7. Writing is error-free, clear and readable in syntax, mature in style.
8. Work is written for readers who are educated, knowledgeable (of literary criticism or rhetorical criticism, linguistic criticism), but who may be general readers of particular works or theories under discussion. This may require use of definitions of key terms and background of specific theories.

Professional Paper

In theory a professional paper is a study which could be submitted to a journal for publication or offered for presentation at an organizational meeting. The professional paper may be prepared in conjunction with a research class or seminar or with certain on- or off-campus activities approved by the committee, such as the Federation Symposium.

Statistical Consultation Services

Graduate students who want to use the computer and research consultant services of the Department of Mathematics, Computer Science, and Physics in the preparation of a professional paper must enroll in CSCI 5921 (Statistical Analysis with Computers).

Guidelines for Publication Agreement Between Faculty and Students

The student is considered an independent researcher and the sole author of the thesis and any publications coming from it. Exceptions should be documented by a written agreement signed by student and faculty member.

Enrollment for Advising on the Professional Paper or Thesis

To secure credit for work done on the professional paper, students electing the non-thesis option enroll in English 5973 (Professional Paper) for no more than three hours credit in one semester while writing the professional paper, re-enrolling until the writing is completed. The student must register for English 5973 (Professional paper) or ENG 5983 or 5993 (Thesis) each term during which she or he is receiving aid or criticism through conferences or correspondence with faculty members.

Grades for Professional Paper or Thesis

The grade of PR is assigned to indicate progress on a professional paper or thesis. A student writing a thesis for six hours' credit is given CR (Credit) for the first enrollment and PR (Progress) for all subsequent enrollments until the last enrollment. At that time CR is given again. A student writing a professional paper for three hours' credit is assigned the grade of PR for all enrollments except the last one and is assigned the grade of CR for the final enrollment.

VIII. Graduation and Submitting Research

Application for graduation is normally completed at the beginning of the semester of graduation or earlier. The university deadline for filing a thesis or professional paper is approximately one month prior to graduation; see Graduate Office for all official deadlines.

Therefore, no later than the beginning of the semester in which a student wishes to graduate, the student should obtain a packet of information from the Graduate School office. This packet includes deadlines for submitting a thesis or professional paper and for completing other paperwork required for graduation.

Submitting a Thesis and Abstract

Three copies of the approved thesis, together with one copy of the abstract, must be delivered to the Graduate School no later than the filing date specified by the Graduate School. Bound at the expense of the student, two copies are placed in the University Library and the third in the files of the Department.

Theses are microfilmed by University Microfilms. The student completes the microfilm form (see UMI booklet, Publishing Your Thesis) and pays for this microfilming at the time of filing the thesis in the Graduate School. Optional copyrighting is available for an additional fee. Details and forms for abstracts, microfilming, copyrighting, and fees are available in the Graduate Office.

Submitting a Professional Paper

Two copies of the approved professional paper, together with one copy of the abstract, must be delivered to the Department Chair no later than the filing date specified by the Graduate School. Professional papers are not submitted to the Graduate School, but remain in the Department. For binding guidelines, see Graduate Coordinator.

Final Examinations

- Non-thesis option: the final examination is a three-hour written examination the major and minor (if applicable) fields.
- Thesis option: the final examination is a two-hour oral examination covering the thesis as well as course work.

Following the successful completion of examinations, the research committee signs and the committee chair submits the form, *Certification of Final Examination*.

Graduation Policies

Graduate students must be enrolled in the University during the semester in which they graduate unless all requirements of the Graduate School are met prior to the first day of registration of the ensuing semester. If a student fails to meet the deadline for graduation established by the Graduate School in a given semester but completes all requirements by the close of that semester, the Dean of the Graduate School will write a letter to that effect to the student's employer. The letter is tantamount to the awarding of the degree.

Summer Graduation

1. Availability of faculty in summer should not be presumed.
2. The first three chapters must be completed and approved prior to the final week of classes of the spring semester.

3. If a member of the research committee is to be replaced because the faculty member will not be available during the summer, the request for change must be signed by the research committee chair and be approved by the Chair of the prior to the final week of classes of the spring semester.

IX. Scholarships, Grants, and Graduate, Assistantships

Scholarships

The department offers a number of scholarships for graduate students. Applications are usually due in early March and awards announced in April. Some scholarships require an essay for a writing sample. See the department office for applications and the Financial Aid office for other scholarships.

Assistantships

Graduate teaching assistantships, graduate assistantships, and scholarships are available to qualified applicants on a competitive basis. Assistantships provide a stipend as well as valuable experience in classroom teaching and/or writing laboratory instruction. Graduate teaching assistants in English are usually assigned primary responsibility for teaching a course for credit and/or assigning final grades.

Responsibilities, which are outlined in full in the department's Handbook for Teaching Assistants, include

1. Teaching two classes, usually composition;
2. Tutoring twenty hours per week in the writing laboratory; or
3. Teaching one class and tutoring ten hours in the writing laboratory.

Requirements for Graduate Assistantships

1. Admission to graduate school
2. Good academic standing at TWU
3. Completion of eighteen semester hours of graduate credit in English. Students who have not earned at least eighteen semester hours of graduate credit in English are eligible to tutor in the writing laboratory as graduate assistants.
4. Proficiency in English as described in the Graduate Catalog and as mandated by the Higher Education Coordination Board.
4. Registration in graduate school according to Texas academic regulations on residency. If the assistant is employed at least one-half time (.50) in an assistant position, the student registers at the same rate as a Texas resident without regard to the length of time the assistant has resided in Texas.
5. Registration for 9 graduate hours, or the appropriated number of hours according to the Graduate Catalog. Registration for the minimum course load of six semester hours is available for graduate assistants lacking only their final project.
7. Preferably, teaching experience in the specialty area.

Assistantship Limitations

1. A student is not permitted to hold an assistantship at TWU concurrently with a position at any other college or university or with a student assistantship at TWU.
2. A student who is employed full-time in any position cannot be appointed as a full-time graduate assistant.
3. Graduate assistants may hold other jobs as long as the above-mentioned conditions are not violated. However, students should strive to create circumstances that will allow for sufficient time and focus to do well in and complete the M.A. program.

Application Process for Assistantships

Review of Applications

Applications for assistantship are available in the office of the chair of the Department of English, Speech, and Foreign Languages. The completed application and supporting documents, including official transcripts, verification of graduate status, and letters of reference, must be filed with the chair of the department, and reviewed by the Graduate Studies Committee and the Director of the Freshman English Program. In addition, assistantships require a personal interview. Applications are reviewed and accepted through April 1. Decisions regarding appointment of assistantships are usually made by April 15. Summer assistantships in teaching and writing laboratory instruction are available on a limited basis.

Renewal of Assistantships

Assistantships are not automatically renewed. Applicants are required to reapply for their positions each year. Reappointment to an assistantship is contingent upon prior performance, departmental teaching needs, and available funds. For good cause, a person could have reappointment denied. Reapplications are reviewed through the same process as first applications.

Maximum Terms of Assistantships

- Master's level maximum number of years is three.
- Doctoral level maximum number of years is four.
- Combined master's degree and doctoral degrees: maximum number of years is six.
- Exceptions to these limitations as recommended by the Department Chair must have the approval of the Dean of the Graduate School. More information regarding assistantships is available in the [Graduate Teaching and Research Assistantship Manual](#), which can be obtained from the Graduate Office and online at <http://www4.twu.edu/o-grad/>.

Remuneration

Stipends for Graduate Teaching Assistants are set by the university at two levels:

Level 1 (Masters level) and Level 2 (Doctoral level). Stipends are subject to change annually and include health benefits. Students should request current stipend information from the department office.

Appendices

- A. Master's Degree Checklist
- B. Forms to Submit to Graduate School
 - 1. Application for Admission to Graduate Study
 - 2. Application for Graduate Assistantship
 - 3. Request for Appointment of Graduate Committee
 - 4. Master's Degree Plan Form
 - 5. Change in Degree Plan Form
 - 6. Prospectus Submission Form
 - 7. Human Subjects Review Committee Statement to Accompany Prospectus for Thesis
 - 8. Certification of Final Examination
 - 9. Permission for Thesis Publication in Microfilm
 - 10. Request for Reduced Tuition (Code 3)
- C. Graduation Forms (see packet from Graduate Office)
 - 1. Application for Graduation
 - 2. Data for Commencement Program Form
 - 3. *Microfilm/Copyright Booklet
 - 5. Thesis/Dissertation Mailing Rates Form [Fee sheet]
 - 6. Request for Reduced Tuition (Code 3)
 - 7. Change of Address
 - 8. Career and Employment Services
- D. Forms Submitted to component (chronological order)
 - ESFL Request for Graduate Committee (same as C.3)
- E. Special Requirement forms (if any)
- F. Title Page Format for Thesis/Dissertation
- G. Course Overload Form
- H. Cross Registration Form
- I. Graduate Course Rotation
- J. Faculty Roster

Appendix A: MASTER'S DEGREE CHECKLIST

Department of English, Speech, and Foreign Languages

Name:

SS#: _____

Address:

Admission to Graduate School

GRE Scores: Verbal: _____ Quantitative: _____ Date: _____

Unconditional _____ Provisional _____ Deficiencies: 1) _____ Date Cleared: _____

2) _____ Date Cleared: _____

Major: _____ Minor: _____

DATE

1. File advisory committee request form (second semester) _____
2. File degree plan with Graduate Office _____
3. Complete course work _____
4. File research committee request form _____
5. Complete research tool _____
6. Secure approval of Human Research Review Committee (if applicable) _____
7. Submit approved prospectus to Department Chair, Graduate Office _____
8. Beginning of final semester: file Reduced Tuition Form (Code 3) _____
9. Beginning of final semester: apply for graduation _____
10. Complete thesis or professional paper _____
11. File Certification of Final Examination in Graduate Office _____
12. Submit abstract and thesis copies or professional paper title page to Graduate Office _____
13. Submit all required forms for graduation to Graduate Office _____
According to Graduation Checklist in packet

Appendix F: Title Page Format for Thesis, Dissertation

TITLE OF PAPER

A [THESIS or PROFESSIONAL PAPER]

SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS
FOR THE DEGREE OF [MASTER OF ARTS]

IN THE GRADUATE SCHOOL OF THE

TEXAS WOMAN'S UNIVERSITY
[NAME OF COLLEGE OR SCHOOL]

BY

[NAME OF STUDENT, DEGREE(s) HELD]

MONTH YEAR
DENTON, TEXAS