



Graduate Student Handbook

Department of Comparative Literature &
Foreign Languages
UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, RIVERSIDE

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Graduate Student Handbook

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Introduction

The Graduate Program of the Department of Comparative Literature and Foreign Languages at the University of California, Riverside, offers a dynamic approach to the study of literature and other expressive forms across spaces, places and times. The Department encourages comparative work across literatures, cultures, genres and disciplines as it provides students with a strong background in both literary history and theory.

Unique among graduate programs in Comparative Literature, UC Riverside's program offers doctoral training in a wide range of areas and provides comparative perspectives that balance ancient and modern as well as African, Asian, European and Middle Eastern languages and literatures. Students will receive training in several literary areas from the many faculty working across these periods and areas. The languages and literatures of faculty specialization currently include Arabic, Chinese, Classical Greek, Filipino, French, German, Igbo, Indonesian, Italian, Japanese, Korean, Latin, Malay, Russian, and Vietnamese.

Students seeking a rich critical, historical and theoretical training in the expressive practices of these languages and beyond will find a diversity of interests and sub-specializations among its faculty, including aesthetic theory, cinema studies, critical theory, cultural translation, feminist theory, gender studies, ritual and performance studies, poetics, science and technology studies, sports studies and translation theory, among others. This program also has strong interdisciplinary ties with other departments enabling students to bring other perspectives to their work. Whatever the area of faculty expertise, the Graduate Program welcomes new, innovative and diversifying approaches to the study of Comparative Literature.

Affiliated Programs

In addition to its doctoral program in Comparative Literature, the Department also participates in UC Riverside's M.A. granting interdisciplinary program Southeast Asia: Text, Ritual and Performance (SEATriP). Students seeking specialized training in Southeast Asian studies are advised to consider parallel enrollment with SEATriP. See [Links](#) section for reference to this program.

The Department also participates in the UC Tri-Campus Graduate Program in Classics with UC Irvine and UC San Diego, which offers M.A. and Ph.D. degrees. Students seeking specialized training in Classics are advised to enroll in the Tri-Campus Program. See [Links](#) section for reference to this program.

Graduate Handbook

This Departmental Graduate Handbook is intended as a guide to graduate student activity and is not a comprehensive or authoritative document. It was written in collaboration with graduate students and is subject to revision as disciplinary and institutional needs change. It supplements policies and procedures described in the University General Catalogue and the Graduate Division Handbook (see [Links](#) section for these documents). Students are advised to turn first to the Graduate Student Affairs Officer (GSAO) and then to the Graduate Advisor for guidance on issues not addressed by the Handbook or with questions about these policies.

Departmental Administration

While this handbook contains many of the guidelines for graduate student activity, students will find it necessary to be in frequent contact with a number of members of the departmental administration. Here are some of the members of the department that are of particular relevance to graduate student studies:

Administrative Assistant: The Administrative Assistant is the person whom the student should contact regarding matters of non-academic administration, such as requisitioning supplies, photocopying issues, room reservations, etc.

Comparative Literature Program Director: The Program Director of Comparative Literature oversees the graduate curriculum, including the planning and scheduling of graduate seminars.

Department Chair: The Department Chair oversees the Department, appoints the members of all departmental administrative committees and assigns teaching assistantships to graduate students.

Graduate Advisor: The Graduate Advisor administers the Department's graduate program and serves as liaison with the Graduate Division and other academic departments. The Graduate Advisor is not responsible for providing individual advising for each graduate student except for procedural matters. Academic advising is handled by your faculty mentor and/or advisor. The Graduate Advisor is responsible for reviewing the cumulative program and progress of each graduate student at least once a year. The Graduate Advisor must also sign most of the official forms and petitions required during the course of graduate training. Students should turn to the Graduate Advisor when facing procedural problems pertaining to his or her chosen course of study, when wishing to take a course outside of the Department, or when preparing to set up an M.A. or Ph.D. committee.

Graduate Student Affairs Officer (GSAO): The GSAO provides staff support to the Graduate Advisor and is the person to whom the graduate student should turn for routine administrative matters, including course enrollments. Most forms will be submitted to the GSAO.

Graduate Committee: The Graduate Committee is appointed by the Department Chair and generally consists of the Graduate Advisor, the Graduate Recruitment Advisor, the Comparative Literature Program Director, the Department Chair and other members of the faculty. The Graduate Committee oversees graduate admissions and the graduate curriculum.

Graduate Recruitment Advisor: The Graduate Recruitment Advisor is responsible for recruiting new graduate students for the Department. Current students may wish to be part of the recruitment process and may be at times asked for support for events for prospective students.

Financial Affairs Officer (FAO): The Financial Affairs Officer is responsible for most of the financial matters in the Department and should be contacted (usually with the

permission of the Department Chair) if the student is to secure funding for academic matters, such as travel grants.

Undergraduate Program Directors: The Department oversees a number of undergraduate programs. As teaching assistantships are assigned in consultation with the program directors, graduate students are advised to become acquainted with the directors of the programs for which they are interested in TAing.

Departmental Administration and Staff

Please see the charts at <http://compliforlang.ucr.edu/people/administration.html>. They are updated annually in September.

For department staff, please see <http://compliforlang.ucr.edu/people/staff.html>.

Mentoring and Advising

Graduate Students may need more guidance than can be provided by written resources and the Graduate Advisor. The Mentoring and Advising program is intended to supply this additional guidance, so that students will have individual advising throughout the graduate program.

Faculty Mentor (First-Year Mentor)

At the beginning of their second quarter, new students will be informally paired with an academic mentor. They will be invited to submit the names of three faculty members with whom they would feel comfortable discussing their academic interests and concerns. Students bear the primary responsibility for their success in graduate school and must ensure that all requirements have been fulfilled. However, their individual faculty mentor will be an important source of guidance and advice on graduate program matters. The primary responsibility of the faculty mentor is to guide the student's professional development until the student has selected a faculty *advisor*, also known as the committee chair. Generally, there will also be faculty members other than the student's faculty mentor who share some of the student's research interests or who have skills and experience to share. Students are encouraged to seek out such faculty and to consult with their faculty mentor about faculty who could be of special benefit to their academic and professional development.

Faculty Advisor (Committee Chair)

The Faculty Advisor must be a ladder faculty member in the Department (Assistant Professor, Associate Professor, or Professor) or a Cooperating Faculty member in another department. Cooperating Faculty are listed on the Department's website. As part of their preparation for the M.A. Examination and/or the Ph.D. Qualifying Examination and dissertation defense, students should ask a faculty member with whom they would like to work closely to chair their committee. Students form their committee in consultation with their faculty advisor. The names of the chair and the committee should then be communicated to the Graduate Advisor through the GSAO for approval. See [Committee Selection](#) section for more information about committees.

Changing Mentors and Advisors

The initial matching of students with mentors is only provisional. Students should feel free to request a change of mentor or chair. Such changes occur routinely for a variety of reasons. Changing mentors or advisors is not difficult, but it is important for the sake of clear communication to follow proper protocol. First, the proposed new mentor or advisor should have sufficient interest in the student's research and professional interests, and must also agree to become the student's mentor or advisor. The student should then notify the departmental Graduate Advisor and GSAO in writing, copying both the new and the former advisors.

Graduate Program Timeline

The normative time to completion for the Ph.D. is six years for students entering with a B.A. and five years for students entering with an M.A. in literature or a related field. These years may be roughly divided into a series of successive stages:

Students Entering with a B.A.

- 1) Years 1 and 2: Coursework and M.A. requirements. By the end of Year 2, the student should be able to submit a form requesting advancement to M.A. status to the GSAO. The student must demonstrate the completion of all coursework requirements, the passing of the Portfolio or Thesis Defense and the fulfillment of the Language Requirement.
- 2) Year 3: Coursework and advancement to Ph.D. candidacy. The student should form his or her exam committee early in the third year and pass the Ph.D. Qualifying Examination by the end of Year 3. The student should have also prepared the groundwork for beginning the dissertation the following year.
- 3) Years 4 and 5: Final research and dissertation writing. Early in Year 4, the student should submit a dissertation prospectus and begin applying for fellowships and research grants. The student should spend these years researching and writing the dissertation under the guidance of his or her dissertation committee.
- 4) Year 6: Completion of Ph.D. The student should complete the dissertation and public oral dissertation defense by the end of Year 6.

Students entering with an M.A.

- 1) Years 1 and 2: Coursework and advancement to candidacy. The student should form his or her exam committee early in the second year and pass the Ph.D. Qualifying Examination by the end of Year 2. The student should also have completed the coursework at this point.
- 2) Years 3 and 4: Final research and dissertation writing. Early in Year 4, the student should submit a dissertation prospectus and begin applying for fellowships and research grants. The student should spend these years researching and writing the dissertation under the guidance of his or her dissertation committee.
- 3) Year 5: Completion of Ph.D. The student should complete the dissertation and public oral dissertation defense by the end of Year 5.

Tracks and Specializations

Each student must select one track and three specialties within that track. These represent the areas of interest for the student and will influence the student's course requirements as well as the content of his or her examinations, thesis or portfolio, and dissertation. There are two available tracks, representing different comparative emphases: the *Interliterary Track* and the *Interdisciplinary Track*.

Students must obtain comprehensive knowledge of their first linguistic area (the major specialty), in its language, literary history, and critical scholarship. In their two other specializations, students focus on a genre, a period, critical school or theoretical approach, always in combination with their main literature.

Interliterary Track

Students in the Interliterary Track must work in three linguistic areas. The linguistic areas available in the Department are: Arabic, Chinese, English (either British or American), Filipino, French, German, Classical Greek, Igbo, Indonesian, Italian, Japanese, Korean, Latin, Malay, Portuguese, Russian, Spanish and Vietnamese. Additional linguistic areas may be available through faculty in other departments. However, it is strongly advised that students select a faculty member within the Department of Comparative Literature and Foreign Languages as their advisor.

Interdisciplinary Track

Students in the Interdisciplinary Track must work in two linguistic areas (listed above) in addition to another disciplinary area. Interdisciplinary fields involve subject matter or methodologies not usually contained in literary studies. These are typically, but not necessarily, represented by other departments, such as History, Philosophy, or Media and Cultural Studies. Disciplines offering other literary and linguistic content, such as Hispanic Studies or English, are not considered interdisciplinary. The student should consult the Graduate Advisor about what disciplines may qualify for the interdisciplinary track.

Course Requirements

Students are admitted only into the Ph.D. program. Entering students who do not already hold an M.A. in Comparative Literature, literature or a comparable field from another institution must complete their M.A. *en route* to the Ph.D. International students are only admitted with an M.A. in hand.

Students entering the Ph.D. program with an M.A. in Comparative Literature, literature or a comparable field must still complete the same course requirements, but may apply up to 8 graduate-level units from other institutions to these requirements (per Graduate Division regulations).

All students must complete a minimum of 56 units of course work.

Course requirements are divided into *core* requirements and *breadth* requirements. In order to satisfy these requirements for the M.A. degree, the courses used to meet these requirements must also satisfy *distribution* requirements, which ensure that students take a balanced curriculum.

Students should consult with their Faculty Mentor/Advisor or the Graduate Advisor periodically to ensure that they are taking courses that will allow these requirements to be met in normative time. The Graduate Advisor will be responsible for making procedural determinations, such as whether certain courses count towards meeting these requirements, enabling students to do

directed studies or take upper-division undergraduate courses for credit, applying graduate-level units from other institutions to these requirements, and so forth.

Core Requirements for Inter-Literary and Inter-Disciplinary Tracks

The purpose of the core courses is to give students a firm grounding in approaches to Comparative Literature and to provide students a common pedagogical experience.

- 1) Two courses in world or canonical literature (CPLT 210). CPLT 210 may be taken multiple times for credit with different instructors and course content.
- 2) Two courses in methods and theory: CPLT 214 *and* CPLT 215A.
- 3) One course in pedagogy or graduate studies from CPLT 212, CPLT 222, or CPLT 301.

Breadth Requirements for Inter-Literary and Inter-Disciplinary Tracks

The purpose of the breadth requirements is to provide graduate students with the opportunity to individualize their courses of study in preparation for their anticipated dissertation research projects.

- 1) Two graduate courses in each of three literatures as defined by linguistic areas; or two courses in each of two literatures and two in an interdisciplinary area, depending on the student's track.
- 2) Three elective courses in Comparative Literature

Distribution Requirements for all Tracks

The purpose of the distribution requirement is to ensure a balanced and comprehensive study of Comparative Literature across cultural areas and historical periods as they fulfill their core and breadth requirements. To satisfy the distribution requirement, students must take one course in each of the following four areas: European, Asian or Middle Eastern, ancient or medieval, and modern.

The distribution requirement can be satisfied by courses taken to fulfill the core and breadth requirements. In other words, the distribution requirement *does not* constitute additional coursework; it merely ensures a minimum distribution of core and breadth courses across the two historical periods and two cultural areas.

Enrollment

Each quarter the schedule of the courses for the following quarter will be published online at <http://classes.ucr.edu/>. During the enrollment period, students may register for courses through their GROWL account or through the GSAO (see [Links](#) section for these references). Students can easily enroll in graduate seminars in the Department, which will provide graduate level units that can be applied to the course requirements.

In addition to enrolling in the typical graduate seminars in the Department, there are other ways in which students can receive credit. Students have options that will enable them to fulfill course requirements outside of taking Departmental graduate seminars as well as options that will provide additional units to help students maintain full-time status. These options often require specific forms and the permission of the Graduate Advisor.

Students should enroll in the Department's graduate seminars on a regular basis but may also fulfill some course requirements through the following options.

Options for Fulfilling Course Requirements

There are several ways students can fulfill their course requirements in addition to the usual Departmental graduate seminars. These include:

Graduate Seminars in Other Departments

Students may apply graduate-level courses to their requirements with the permission of the Graduate Advisor. The student may have to supply a syllabus or course description to ensure that the course will meet the relevant requirement. To register in these courses, the student might also have to contact the GSAO or may have to request permission from the other department, depending on that department's particular policy. The English Department, for example, will typically send out an application form for their graduate seminars.

Upper-Division Undergraduate Courses

At times, students may find it necessary to take an upper-division undergraduate course (numbered 100 to 199) to fulfill their requirements, especially in the case of "national" literatures. In such cases, students are required to enroll concurrently in:

CPLT 293 E-Z (2 units): For concurrent enrollment in an upper-division "national" literature.

CPLT 292 (2 units): For concurrent enrollment in any other upper-division course.

Graduate students are not permitted to enroll in a lower-division course (numbered 1 to 99) unless it is a language course. However, lower-division language courses cannot be used toward degree requirements. When in doubt, consult the Graduate Advisor or the GSAO.

Independent Study Courses

With the permission of a faculty member, students may take directed studies courses (CPLT 290) to fulfill course requirements or for their personal academic interests. Students should fill out an

application form with the signatures of both the participating faculty member and the Graduate Advisor. The student will also have to provide a synopsis of the course content as well as some justification for why the course should be done independently. These are intended to be supplementary courses; the students should first focus on taking actual graduate seminars.

ICE (Intercampus Exchange)

Students may take courses at another UC campus, either to satisfy requirements or for personal educational goals. ICE forms are available from the Graduate Division; there is a deadline for applying each quarter. Departmental requirements do not change merely because a course is taken elsewhere. Students should remain aware of differences in deadlines on different UC campuses. If there is a difference, students are advised to meet the earliest one.

Options for Additional Units

Students must enroll in 12 graduate-level units per quarter to be considered full-time. If students are unable to meet these through their courses, there are special courses that the student can enroll in for units. These units will not count towards course requirements or the 56 required units. These include:

Research and Teaching Units

The Department offers several courses that do not fulfill any course requirements but provide units for students who are working on individual research or teaching.

CPLT 291. Individual Studies in Coordinated Areas (1-6 units): A directed program of study designed to advise and assist candidates who are preparing for examinations.

CPLT 299. Research for Thesis or Dissertation (1-12): A directed program of study designed to advise and assist candidates who are working on their M.A. thesis or portfolio or their dissertation.

CPLT 302. Teaching Practicum (1-4): This course is required of graduate students employed as teaching assistants in the department and entails departmental supervision of teaching practices and content.

Colloquium

The Department sponsors a colloquium with guest speakers to lecture on relevant issues in Comparative Literature. Attendance is strongly recommended for students in their first and second years and one unit will be granted for participation.

Committee Selection

There are a number of points in the student's graduate studies that will require the student to work closely with a committee of 3-to-5 members. These points are 1) the M.A. Examination, 2) the Ph.D. Qualifying Examination and 3) the Dissertation and Final Oral Examination. The student should choose the committee carefully in consultation with his or her Faculty Advisor,

who will usually serve as the chair of these committees. Committees will usually be comprised of members from the student's previous committees. However, the process of requesting and formulating a committee still needs to be done for each committee.

Committee Selection

The basic procedure for selecting the members of any of the graduate student's committees is as follows:

1. Students should decide the prospective members of the committee in consultation with their faculty advisor, keeping in mind their areas of specialization and specific projects.
2. Students should ensure that the prospective members are willing to serve on their committees. The members of the committee are normally faculty with whom the student has previously worked in courses or previous committees.
3. Once the committee is formed, the student should provide the following in writing to the GSAO, using the departmental form:
 - a. The student's name and the date of the submission of required materials (Thesis/Portfolio, Reading Lists, Dissertation).
 - b. The names of the committee nominees, identifying the Chair (and the External Member for the Ph.D. Qualifying Exam Committee), including department affiliation and title.
 - c. The department/institution of any nominees not in the Comparative Literature Department.
 - d. A brief explanation/justification/CV as necessary (this is described in the following section).
 - e. The dates, whether tentative or firm, of the examination.

Requirements for Committee Members

There are certain requirements pertaining to the selection of all committees. Exceptions must be justified by addressing a memo to the departmental Graduate Advisor. Reasons include needing particular expertise not available in the department, perhaps including national or international recognition of that expertise. The requirements and the necessary information for exceptions are as follows:

Chair

The Chair must be a UCR Comparative Literature Department Assistant, Associate, or full Professor or Cooperating Faculty from another department. Cooperating Faculty are listed on the Department's website. For all others, the student must nominate the selected faculty member along with a co-chair from the Department of the preceding faculty titles, justify, and obtain a CV from the nominated external chair.

External Member (only applies to Ph.D. Qualifying Exam)

The External Member must be an Assistant, Associate, or full Professor at UCR and not hold any appointment (regular, joint, adjunct, or cooperating title) in the Department.

Other Members

The other members of the committee must be members of one of the following groups. It is important to note that certain nominations require additional justification.

1. UCR Assistant, Associate, or full Professor: State departmental affiliation.
2. UCR Lecturer or Visiting title: State title, departmental affiliation, and submit a letter of justification and CV.
3. Professor in UC System, but not Riverside Campus: State title, departmental affiliation, campus affiliation, and submit a letter of justification required. It is recommended that students only select ladder faculty from other campuses.
4. Not Affiliated with any UC but has Ph.D.: Submit CV and letter of justification.
5. To nominate members who do not fall under the preceding four categories, consult the GSAO or Graduate Advisor.

M.A. Degree Requirements

Before the M.A. degree can be conferred, the student must meet several other requirements in addition to their course requirements. As a demonstration of his or her progress, the student must prepare and defend either a portfolio or thesis, which will be guided and evaluated by a committee of three members including the faculty advisor. The student must also demonstrate satisfactory proficiency in at least one of his or her language areas. Students entering with an M.A. in Literature or a related field are not required to prepare a thesis/portfolio.

M.A. Committee

The student will select the M.A. Committee by choosing three faculty members who cover the student's three areas of specialization. The committee is led by the student's Faculty Advisor/Chair. The student will work with this committee to complete the portfolio or thesis and will set up an examination date with the GSAO that meets the schedules of all the committee members. This committee both evaluates and advises the student as the M.A. requirements should help the student ease into the Ph.D. program. See section in the Handbook entitled [Committee Selection](#) for additional guidelines.

Portfolio or Thesis

The student must complete one of the following two options in conjunction with their M.A. Committee:

1) Portfolio

The student must submit a portfolio of three essays, each representing one of their three literary or interdisciplinary areas, and write a 750-to-1000-word commentary explaining the aims and achievements of the essays in relation to one another.

A formal portfolio assumes that these three essays have been revised from previous forms, such as seminar papers or other written analytical materials, and should be submitted in thoroughly edited and polished professional MLA format.

The student must provide hardcopies of the introductory statement and three essays in a bound folder or binder to each of their M.A. committee members at least two weeks prior to the student's scheduled M.A. Examination date.

2) Thesis

The student must write a comprehensive analytical research paper (approximately 40-to-50 pages) that incorporates each of the student's three areas of specialization.

This paper may develop topics of previous papers with expanded research and theoretical directions, or explore an entirely new topic area. The thesis should be submitted in thoroughly edited and polished professional MLA format.

Students must provide bound hardcopies of the thesis to each of their M.A. committee members at least two weeks prior to the student's scheduled M.A. examination date.

Language Requirement

Students in the Department of Comparative Literature and Foreign Languages must demonstrate adequate linguistic skill to be able to work in their various national literatures. In order to satisfy the language requirements in the student's areas of specialization, students should work one-on-one with a language mentor chosen from among the faculty to determine, on an individualized basis, both the requirements and the examination format.

Timelines

Students entering with a B.A. must satisfy one language requirement by the time of the M.A. defense. If a second language requirement pertains (i.e. if the student is pursuing the inter-literary track), that requirement must be satisfied by the time of the qualifying exams. Students entering with an M.A. must satisfy all language requirements by the time of the qualifying exams.

Language requirements must be satisfied before the student advances to candidacy for the Ph.D.

Choosing a Language Mentor

Upon arriving in the department the student should work with the Graduate Advisor to identify a language mentor for each of languages in which s/he needs to demonstrate proficiency. Typically this is a professor with whom the student imagines working on their M.A. or Ph.D. qualifying exam committee. It is this professor who determines what level of language proficiency the student needs to reach by the time of the M.A. defense, the qualifying exams, or advancement to candidacy. If possible, the mentor should be a senate faculty member from the department or cooperating faculty. The graduate advisor should ensure that the match is finalized by the time of the orientation meeting.

Language mentors should confer with other faculty in their respective programs about minimum levels of proficiency. A guideline of minimum levels submitted by each Program Director is on file with the Graduate Advisor.

Determining Requirements

Upon arrival at UCR, students should take a language placement exam to determine if they have advanced beyond a level of instruction offered on campus. If not, they should consult with the language mentor about what coursework should be taken. Nevertheless, in order to set the proficiency goal, the student and mentor should consider the following questions:

- Can the student read literature in the original to the professor's satisfaction?
- Is s/he able to read secondary sources in the target language?
- Can s/he converse with colleagues, or deliver an academic paper in that language?
- How many texts on the qualifying exam list will be read in the original?
- Does the student plan to teach the language either at UCR or in a future academic post?

The student does not necessarily need to answer the first three questions in the affirmative. However, the student and professor should work together to ensure that the language exam milestone pushes the student to reach the highest possible level of achievement during the period leading up to exams.

Language Proficiency Exam Formats

The language mentor may be satisfied of the student's language proficiency in a number of ways. The student may take coursework with the professor and read texts in the original, and/or discuss them in the original. The student may prepare an exam list using original texts. The professor may administer a translation exam focusing on the sorts of texts in which the student specializes. The format or combination of formats is determined by the language mentor, who is responsible for helping the student chart his or her course to proficiency, and determining when proficiency has been achieved.

Certification Email

Currently, our *General Catalog* CPLT M.A./Ph.D. guidelines and Graduate Division's Candidacy Degree Check Forms specify only two ways to fulfill the language requirement: first, through formal graduate coursework in the foreign language, literature or translation; second, through a successful foreign language translation examination.

One week prior to the M.A. defense or submission of Ph.D. application-to-candidacy paperwork, the language mentor should send an email to the Graduate Advisor, the copying GSAO, stating whether the student used one method (coursework) or the other (translation exam), or both, as the method by which the requirement was fulfilled. Additional commentary is useful for the student's file but is not necessary. Mentors to students with native or near-native fluency should also write an email confirming that the student's proficiency was verified either in coursework or an exam. This email will be forwarded to the Graduate Division. It is a requirement for advancement to candidacy.

M.A. Oral Exam Format

After completing either the portfolio or the thesis, the student will defend the submission in an oral examination. The M.A. Examination date should be determined at least one month prior to the scheduled date, and students should consult with their committee members at least one quarter

in advance to ensure each member's availability. The M.A. exam is normally taken by the sixth quarter.

The M.A. exam consists of a discussion of the portfolio/thesis and the student's future progress toward the Ph.D. For the examination itself, there is no standard format; different faculty M.A. Advisors will run the examinations in their own preferred manner. However, candidates can and should expect to articulate clearly their past and future coursework and interests, as well as their preliminary plans for the Ph.D. qualifying examination reading lists and possible Ph.D. exam committee members. In practice, the M.A. examination resembles an extended advising session, with particularly close attention to the portfolio or thesis paper.

Candidates should not be alarmed if they are asked to step out of the examination room at various points during the exam. These moments allow the committee members time to discuss and confer the student's responses and possible advancement to the Ph.D. program.

After evaluation of the student's entire graduate record and performance on both written and oral portions of the M.A. Examination, the committee determines the candidate's suitability for continuing in the Ph.D. program and informs the student of the decision.

Ph.D. Qualifying Examination

After the completion of the M.A. requirements, students must pass a Ph.D. Qualifying Examination before they can advance to candidacy. Once this is completed, the student is considered a full-time doctoral student. This status, called ABD ("All But Dissertation"), confers several benefits on the student including: the ability to take 12 dissertation units to maintain full-time status, an elimination of tuition, the possibility of applying to teach certain undergraduate courses and so forth.

Prior to the examination, students, in consultation with designated members of their committee, formulate four Reading Lists around their chosen areas of interest. Each of the four lists should reflect the student's chosen fields of study and research; they must collectively satisfy the literary, disciplinary and theoretical requirements of their selected track. These lists provide a basis for the written and oral qualifying examinations. Each of the four parts of the written examination is either a three-hour exam conducted in the department library. The written examinations are followed by a two to three-hour oral examination taken within one week of the written exams.

Ph.D. Qualifying Exam Committee

The Ph.D. Qualifying Exam Committee is to be nominated for approval by the Graduate Dean before the student can schedule the exam. This should be done early in the second year for students entering with an M.A. and shortly after the completion of the M.A. exam for students entering with a B.A. Deciding who will be on the committee is a matter of consultation among the student, the faculty advisor, and the individuals the student wishes to nominate. In no case

should the committee be nominated less than six weeks before the student expects to take the Ph.D. Qualifying Examination. See section in handbook entitled [Committee Selection](#) for additional guidelines.

Once the GSAO has prepared the form, Department faculty are given a week to voice any objections before the form is sent to the Graduate Division. It may take a month for the Graduate Division to process it. The Committee consists of at least five faculty members: the Committee Chair, the External Member, and three others. At least three members of the committee must be from the Comparative Literature Department or drawn from its cooperating members; exceptions require a memo of justification. Examiners may be drawn from other departments in consultation with the student's faculty advisor and graduate advisor. While not usual, the committee may have more than five people. There are specific qualifications for committee members:

The Chair

The faculty member who has served as the student's faculty advisor will become the Committee Chair. She or he must be a member of the UC Riverside Academic Senate (that is, a Professor, Associate Professor, or Assistant Professor) and will normally be a member of the Comparative Literature Department or a Cooperating Faculty member from another department. In rare cases, when the logical chair of the committee is in another department and is not a Cooperating Faculty member, an eligible Department member is nominated to serve as co-chair.

The External Member

This committee member must be a UCR Professor, Associate Professor, or Assistant Professor (i.e., a member of the UC Riverside Division of the Academic Senate) and must not have any formal affiliation (e.g., regular, joint, adjunct, or cooperating title) with the Comparative Literature Department. The function of the External Member acts as a proctor or impartial observer. The External Member need not know anything about the student's project and need not submit questions for the Ph.D. Qualifying Examination, although he or she should be provided with a copy of the questions and answers. It is possible but not always feasible to have a committee member from another UC campus occupy this position.

Reading Lists

Students should compile an initial draft of their four lists prior to the selection of the committee and circulate it to their committee members for revision and suggestions. This draft will help guide the selection process, as faculty will be more able to determine how well they can supervise particular areas of interest when presented with a clear proposal. A more or less formal set of qualifying examination reading lists should be set well in advance of the exam date, so that the student can maintain normative progress. The lists can still change up until the scheduling of the exams, but it is best to have them fairly finalized for clear organization and student direction.

Each reading list should be introduced with a title and a 250-to-500-word précis highlighting the student's analytical focus, followed by an alphabetized bibliography of texts in MLA format. The GSAO may have some past student reading lists available as examples; current ABD students should also consider leaving copies of their lists with the GSAO to help future students.

Reading List Topics

The reading list topics should combine historical breadth, national coverage and a variety of genres with specialization leading toward the dissertation. As a whole, the lists should reflect the ability to work in at least three languages or interdisciplinary areas, depending on the student's selected track.

Students are advised to list their examination fields on their CVs, as potential employers will use them to determine their areas of expertise. Informative titles for each are advised; for interliterary lists, examples include: "Modern Chinese Narratives," "Francophone Literature," "Modern Japanese Literature" or "The Nomadic in French Literature, Medieval to Contemporary." For interdisciplinary lists: "Digital Humanities," "Cinema Studies" or "Philosophy of Mind." For theory lists: "Postcolonial Theory," "Feminist Theory" or "Post-Structuralist Theory." In consultation with the professor proctoring each examination, students may want to specify lists using subtitles (themes, historical periods, geographical areas, etc.). Regardless, it is strategic to craft the main title of the list so that it corresponds to a recognizable academic field.

Reading List Content

Each list should include a combination of primary and secondary sources, articles and books. Reasonable expected length is 25-to-50 texts per list, according to the length and density of selected texts. Students should consider these lists as resources for future course syllabi showcasing teaching capabilities when on the job market. Students should ensure that each theme contributes in some way toward their goals for the dissertation project.

Exam Format

The exams consist of a written and oral section, and will be prepared by the student's Ph.D. Qualifying Exam Committee. The written qualifying examination consists of four parts, related to the four reading lists, and should include all the student's three areas of specialization (from either the Interliterary or Interdisciplinary track) with a comparative perspective and critical theory.

Submission of Questions

Committee members submit their questions to the committee chair (Faculty Advisor) at least one week prior to the date of the written exam. The questions must relate to the topics outlined in the précis and the texts contained in the reading lists. For each list, the student will be given several questions and will choose a specified number to respond to. For example a student may be asked to answer any two out of four questions. The chair will be responsible for ensuring that questions meet the proper requirements and will submit the revised questions to the GSAO.

Written Exam

Between four and six weeks prior to the exam, the student should schedule a meeting with the Graduate Advisor to discuss strategies and sign the examination pledge.

The four individual exams must be taken within a 2-week period, or 10 business days. For each list, the student takes a timed 3-hour exam in the department library using the library computer. A half-hour break during the 3-hour period (for a total 3.5 hour exam) is optional. The use of notes, the internet, flash drives, phones, etc. is prohibited. Personal articles must be stored in the office of the GSAO, who administers the exam.

The student may not discuss his/her responses during the course of the exam and is subject to typical standards of academic conduct. The student will type responses to the selected questions and submit them to the GSAO upon completion both in print and electronically. The student will be judged on the quality of the response produced in the allotted time. Students may use phrases and quotations in original languages, but the exam responses should be in English so that all examiners at the orals can discuss them.

Oral Exam

The professors must be given at least three days following the written examinations to read the responses before the oral exam. The student will be questioned about his or her responses and their relation to the lists. By Graduate Division regulations, there must be five committee members physically present at the oral exam including three from the Comparative Literature department or cooperating faculty and one external member. The student should be prepared to discuss his or her responses to the written exam as well as answer questions as to how the responses relate to each other and might eventually be synthesized into a further project. Upon the completion of the exam, the committee will confer amongst themselves to determine if the student has made satisfactory progress. If so, the student will advance to candidacy in the Ph.D. program.

Dissertation and Final Oral Examination

After passing the qualifying examination, the Ph.D. candidate forms a dissertation committee of three or more faculty members, articulates a dissertation topic in consultation with them, and submits a prospectus for the dissertation to the committee. The student will then take the next several years to research and write the dissertation. When the dissertation is deemed ready for submission, the student will schedule a date for the Final Oral Examination with his or her committee. The exam date should be determined at least one month prior to the scheduled date.

Dissertation Committee

After Qualifying Exams, the next two steps are choosing the Dissertation Committee and presenting the prospectus. The graduate division requires that the names of at least the chair, but preferably all members of the dissertation committee, be submitted on the form submitted directly after quals (“Report of Qualifying Examination for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy and Nomination of Dissertation Committee”). After that, students must honor the following deadlines:

For students passing Qualifying Examinations at the end of Spring Quarter or at the end of summer:

- Submit any remaining Dissertation Committee members to Graduate Division by the end of Fall Quarter.
- Submit prospectus to committee members two weeks prior to the presentation.

- Present prospectus by Week 5 of Winter Quarter.

For students passing Qualifying Examinations at the end of Fall Quarter:

- Submit any remaining Dissertation Committee members to Graduate Division by the end of Winter Quarter.
- Submit prospectus to committee members two weeks prior to the presentation.
- Present prospectus by Week 5 of Spring Quarter.

For students passing Qualifying Examinations at the end of Winter Quarter:

- Submit any remaining Dissertation Committee members to Graduate Division by the end of Spring Quarter.
- Submit prospectus to committee members two weeks prior to the presentation.
- Present prospectus by Week 5 of Fall Quarter.

The Dissertation Committee is made of at least three faculty members, often selected from the members of the student's qualifying exam committee. Students are responsible for selecting the members of this committee and ensuring that these members are willing to participate. See section in the Handbook entitled [Committee Selection](#) for additional guidelines.

Note that the prospectus and presentation are requirements set by the Department, not the Graduate Division. Students do not submit the prospectus or any prospectus paperwork to the Graduate Division. They should however submit two copies of their final prospectus to GSAO for inclusion both in their personal file and in a public file, which other students may consult for examples. When reporting to Graduate Division about a student's progress, the Graduate Advisor will consult directly with the chair of the dissertation committee about the prospectus and its presentation. There is no need to submit a copy of the prospectus to the Graduate Advisor.

Prospectus

The length of the prospectus is determined in consultation with dissertation committee chair. A prospectus might be 10-to-15 pages long (double-spaced), with a 10-page bibliography. It might also be 25 pages long, with a 5-page bibliography. The document must use MLA style and include the following:

- Prospective title of the dissertation.
- An introduction outlining what questions the dissertation will ask and the specific academic fields (i.e. job-ad fields such as "Modern German Literature," "Classical Chinese Literature," "Postcolonial Literature," etc.) to which the dissertation is addressed.
- A separate section for each chapter, outlining what primary and secondary texts will be analyzed, and how they may answer the dissertation's central questions.
- A tentative schedule for completion within normative time.

Students should keep in mind that the prospectus does not need to prove a thesis, only propose one. It is a provisional document that marks a point of transition, not a polished work of scholarship that need only be expanded to become a dissertation.

It is advised that students receive committee feedback on their prospectus as early in the presentation quarter as possible. Many revisions will take place in the two-week window between submission and presentation. However, students can avoid this tight timeline by working closely with their advisors prior to the first submission deadline.

Although the student's dissertation project may change in the course of research, it is important to establish a solid foundation in the prospectus so that the student will be prepared to complete the dissertation in normative time.

Prospectus Presentation

The one-hour prospectus presentation is scheduled by the GSAO using an online availability survey (such as Doodle). Unless on sabbatical, all faculty on the committee are expected to attend. The chair should be present; for a maximum of one other Skype or teleconferencing is allowed in cases of international travel, etc. The presentation functions as an extended advising session and is meant to be collegial and supportive. It may be either open or closed, at the discretion of the committee chair in consultation with the student. If it is open, other graduate students are encouraged to attend. The GSAO will send an email publicizing the event.

Committee members will arrive at the defense having carefully read the final prospectus. The student will be asked questions and given advice on research, writing, revising, conferences, grant applications, the job market, etc. The process is meant to encourage a completed prospectus, not a perfect prospectus, and to launch the student into a productive writing process. Any suggested changes should be incorporated into a final draft of the prospectus within two weeks of the presentation.

Dissertation

The dissertation is a comprehensive research project that integrates elements from all three of the student's areas of specialization into a unified project. The dissertation must demonstrate an active engagement with the student's fields and should provide an original perspective with respect to existing academic discourse. The dissertation is usually considered in terms of a starting point for the student's first book-length publication. A typical dissertation will be 175-250 pages long and must be written in polished MLA format. The student will submit bound copies of the dissertation to the Dissertation Committee at least two weeks prior to the oral examination.

Dissertation Advisors and committee members will vary concerning how often they will want to see written work from students, so students should discuss a writing/submission schedule with their Dissertation committee and maintain normative progress. Some faculty like to have chapter-by-chapter submissions, while others may want an entire first draft within so many months following the prospectus. It is the students' responsibility to keep their advisors abreast of progress, and the advisor's responsibility to report to the Graduate Advisor each advisee's progress every Spring Quarter.

Examination Format

After the student has worked the dissertation into an acceptable final draft according to the Dissertation Committee, he or she will undergo an oral examination, or “defense,” on the dissertation before filing the completed dissertation to the Office of Graduate Studies. This defense is normally conducted within a 1-to-2 hour meeting on campus, in which the candidate formally presents her or his dissertation orally, followed by questions and discussion with the committee. The committee will then discuss among themselves to decide on the conferral of the doctorate. Upon successful completion of all these requirements, the dissertation committee members will sign the signature page of the candidate’s dissertation manuscript to be submitted to the library. With the completion of this step, the student will have fulfilled all the requirements for the granting of the Ph.D.

Appeals Procedures

The Graduate Council has established formal appeals procedures to afford UCR graduate students an opportunity to resolve complaints involving academic or administrative decisions that interfere with the graduate student’s academic progress. These include adverse outcomes on qualifying exams, dismissal from graduate standing, placement on probationary status, denial of readmission to the same program (if the student was previously in good standing), disputes over joint authorship of research in accordance with joint authorship policies of campus departments or units, revocation of campus fellowships, and other administrative or academic decisions that terminate or otherwise impede progress toward academic or professional degree goals. The “Departmental Appeal Procedures” apply to all departments. Once those have been exhausted the “University Appeal Procedures” should be followed. To access these documents, see the “Appeals” section at <http://graduate.ucr.edu/academic_affairs.html>.

Teaching Assistant Positions

Teaching experience is an essential component of graduate training. Teaching Assistants (TAs) work with faculty members in undergraduate classes. Duties include preparing and grading examinations and homework assignments, reading papers, holding office hours, and conducting discussion sections. The Department has a range of teaching assistantships available, including language courses (e.g. Chinese, French, etc.), undergraduate Comparative Literature courses, and courses in Classics and Linguistics as well as in English Composition. However, students are eligible to teach self-designed content courses after advancement to candidacy.

TADP Training

The Teaching Assistant Development Program (TADP) of the Graduate Division manages the formal training required during the student’s first quarter as a teaching assistant. After the formal training, the TADP staff is available for additional assistance upon request. Also, the TADP sponsors frequent workshops in relevant teaching skills.

Departmental Fellowships

Students are often given Departmental fellowships that provide a stipend so the student can focus on his or her academic work without the additional obligation of TAing. Although each student’s fellowship package is different, first-year students are usually not assigned TA duties in the first

quarter of the program; students supported by a fellowship are usually not assigned TA duties until the fellowship ends. However, sometimes the Department may need to appoint a first-quarter or fellowship student to a TA-ship because of a shortage of TAs in general or in a specific area. This is worked out in a mutually agreeable fashion. Fellowships usually permit supplementation up to 25 percent. A one quarter TA appointment in a year has always been permitted because it can be justified as less than 25 percent supplementation for the year.

TA Preferences

The procedure for stating one's preference for a teaching assignment is the following:

1. At the beginning of the Spring Quarter, students will be asked to submit their top three preferences for a teaching assistantship.
2. The GSAO will then pass on the student's preferences to the Department Chair, the Director of Comparative Literature, and the various Program Directors.
3. Student's teaching assignment for the following year will then be announced as early as possible, usually by mid-summer for the following academic year.

Employment outside the Department

Students may wish to seek employment opportunities outside the department to replace a TAship. Supplementing a TAship is also possible but not always feasible prior to the student's advancement to candidacy.

TAships in Other Departments

Students are welcome to seek a teaching assistantship in another department if one is available. Departments that have hired our graduate students as TAs in the past include English, Gender and Sexuality Studies, Art History, Media and Cultural Studies among many others. Procedures for applying for external TAships vary by department.

Grants and Fellowships

There are many types of grants and fellowships available to graduate students, especially once the dissertation prospectus has been prepared. Students are encouraged to apply for these sources of funding. However, the student should note that special permission from the Graduate Division is required to pursue a teaching assistantship while on a Departmental fellowship or other funding source that requires a time-commitment. The purpose of these fellowships is to create more time for the student's research, so the student should ensure that grants or fellowships do not interfere with normative progress.

Other Employment Opportunities

Students may find it necessary to supplement their income with other employment positions but should request permission to do so during the academic year. Students are not encouraged to seek other employment until advancement to candidacy. Should the student wish to replace the TAship with another employment opportunity or simply not TA in a given quarter, he or she should contact the Department Chair well in advance for permission.

Evaluation

There are a number of ways the student will be evaluated throughout his or her stay in the program in addition to the completion of requirements for the M.A. Degree, Ph.D. Qualifying Exams and Dissertation. The student should keep records of all these methods of evaluation, both for the student's own self-improvement and for use in applications.

Grading

The Graduate Division requires that students maintain a 3.0 grade point average to maintain "satisfactory progress." In courses taken on an "S/NC" basis (Satisfactory/No Credit), an "S" is required. An "S" requires work equivalent to a grade of "B." Most graduate courses, except for the 290 series, cannot be taken on an S/NC basis. Students should consult the Graduate Division Handbook before petitioning for this grading option.

Teaching Assistant Evaluations

The Teaching Assistant Development Program (TADP) conducts TA evaluations online for all courses. The TADP tabulates the TA's ratings according to a campus-wide set of measures and also compiles individual student comments. Copies are distributed to the TA, the TA's faculty mentor/advisor, and the Graduate Advisor. Students should retain copies. They will be needed when applying for teaching positions.

Course instructors provide information about TA performance to the Comparative Literature Program Director, the Department Chair, and the Graduate Advisor. When necessary, the Department Chair notifies students and their faculty advisors/mentors of issues needing their attention.

Annual Evaluation

As required by the Graduate Division, the department faculty formally evaluates each student's progress each year. The steps involved are as follows:

1. The Graduate Advisor asks each faculty member to describe the strengths, accomplishments, and areas needing attention of the graduate students with whom they have worked as instructors, committee members, mentors, or advisors.
2. The graduate students are asked by the GSAO to submit an annual form, listing courses taken, exams and other milestones passed, language proficiency progress, conference papers, publications, honors and awards. Students are also asked to confirm faculty on their current committees.
3. The Graduate Advisor prepares a letter for each student using input from both faculty and the student.
4. The evaluation letters and a list of courses taken and grades received are distributed to the graduate students, the graduate student's mentor/advisor and the Graduate Division. A copy of the letter is then placed in the student's file.

Student Progress

In the June Evaluations and each exam period (M.A., Ph.D. Qualifying, and Ph.D.), the student's progress will be evaluated and a determination will be made about his or her future in the program. The components of a student's progress in the program include 1) satisfactory progress in research, 2) satisfactory completion of core and breadth courses, 3) passing the qualifying examination in a timely fashion, and 4) active participation in the intellectual life of the department, such as attending colloquia, brown-bag lunches, and the like. Based on an evaluation of the work in all of these aspects of the program, one of the following determinations will be made:

1. Satisfactory progress has been made and the student may continue in the Ph.D. program. Students should note that satisfactory progress is also a condition of continued financial support whether as a Teaching Assistant, Graduate Student Researcher, or as a Fellow.
2. Satisfactory progress has not been made. The student may continue in the program, but financial support cannot be offered, usually until the deficiency is corrected.
3. Satisfactory progress has not been made. The student may complete work in the Department for the M.A. degree only, if desired.
4. Satisfactory progress has not been made. The student may not continue work in the department.

Links

This handbook is a guide to graduate studies in Comparative Literature, but there are many other important resources that might prove useful for graduate students, including the following:

Academic Information

Comparative Literature Homepage: <http://www.complitforlang.ucr.edu/index.html>

Current Academic Calendar: <http://www.classes.ucr.edu/enrollment/calendar.htm>

General Catalog: <http://catalog.ucr.edu/>

Graduate Division Handbook: <http://www.graddiv.ucr.edu/GSHndbk.pdf>

Schedule of Classes: <http://classes.ucr.edu/>

Affiliated Programs

SEATrip: <http://www.seatrip.ucr.edu/>

Tri-Campus Program in Classics: <http://www.humanities.uci.edu/classics/Tricampus/>

Reference Materials

The UCR Library system offers a wide range of web services that can be accessed for free through the library website on-campus. These include the MLA International Bibliography, JSTOR Search Engine, and the Oxford English Dictionary. Books can be requested through a number of interlibrary loan networks including Melvyl (UC libraries), Link+ (California libraries), and WorldCat (international libraries).

UCR Libraries Website: <https://library.ucr.edu/>

Student Services

GROWL: <https://ucribm.ucr.edu/Paws/PAWS.html>

GSA Travel Grants: <http://www.gsa.ucr.edu/travelgrant/index.html>

iLearn: <http://www.ilearn.ucr.edu/webapps/login/>

Webmail: <https://webmail.ucr.edu/>