

Department of Comparative Literature
Program Requirements, Policies, and Procedures
(ratified 30 September 2004; most recent revision: July 2, 2026)

The requirements, policies, and procedures articulated in this document are specific to the Department of Comparative Literature. For all other matters, as well as for all relevant forms, go to the [Graduate School's website](#).

Basic Requirements for the Ph.D.

- 1) 10 "intensive" (A) seminars (7 must be taught by COL core faculty, see page 4); COL 580 (Introduction to Theory) is a required intensive seminar, which must be taken during the Fall semester of the first year.
- 2) Orals Examination (upon completion, student can apply for MA)
- 3) Dissertation Writing Seminar (1 credit hour)
- 4) Dissertation (approximately 150-300 pages)
- 5) Dissertation Defense
- 6) Minimum of 72 credit hours (36 of which must be from

UB) Basic Requirements for the Terminal M.A.

- 1) 9 "intensive" (A) seminars (27 credit hours) (7 seminars must be taught by COL core faculty, see page 4)
- 2) 3 credits Master's Project Guidance (COL 598)
- 3) Master's Project (approximately 35-75 pages)
- 4) Minimum of 30 credit hours (minimum 24 must be from UB)

Maintaining "Good Standing" in the Department

It is necessary for students to maintain "good standing" in the Department. "Good standing" is defined as completing required coursework without taking incompletes as well as fulfilling all other departmental requirements within the specified time-frames. Such requirements include maintaining continuous registration and timely completion of all administrative paperwork. Failure to do so jeopardizes the student's funding, but more importantly, it makes it difficult for the student to complete his/her degree and pursue a career in academia.

Full-Time Status

Maintaining full-time status is important for the following reasons:

- 1) International students must be full-time to satisfy visa requirements;
- 2) US students must be full-time to defer payment of college loans;
- 3) All students must be full-time to be eligible for tuition scholarships.

The rules for full-time status are the following:

- 12 credits per semester if **unfunded** by a Teaching Assistantship
- 9 credits per semester if **funded** by a Teaching Assistantship
- 1-9 credits per semester after the Ph.D. ATC has been accepted and depending on the projected date of completion of the dissertation and the total number of credits.

Being full-time with fewer than 9 credit hours (or 12 for international students) requires the student to fill out the “Certification of Full-Time Status” form, which is available at the [Graduate School's website](#) search under “forms”). Consult with the Director of Graduate Studies about such certification.

Important: As of Fall 2016, the College of Arts and Sciences will no longer pay for more than 9 credit hours per semester without a waiver being filed by the Department.

Time-Table for Completion of Degree (Full Time, Ph.D.)
Supported Students (9 credit hours/semester)

First Year:

6 Intensive Seminars at 3 credits each (including COL 580)

ENG 599 Supervised Teaching (3 credit)

Total: 21 credit hours

Second Year:

4 Intensive Seminars (12 credits)

2 Supervised Readings (COL 650) (6 credits)

ENG 588 Supervised Teaching (2 credits)

Total: 20 credit hours

Third Year:

1 Supervised Readings (COL 650) (3 credits)

5 Extensive Seminars (15 credits)

Total: 18 credit hours

Oral exam by December 31

Dissertation proposal defense by the following March 31

Fourth Year:

Dissertation Writing Workshop (COL 690) (1 credit)

Thesis Guidance (COL 700) (variable credits; max 12 credits)

Total: 13 credit hours

Fifth Year and beyond:

Thesis Guidance (COL 700) (variable credits to reach 72 credits by the end of the 5th year)

Unsupported Students (12 credit hours per semester)

First Year:

5 Intensive Seminars (including mandatory COL 580) (15 credit hours)

3 Extensive Seminars (9 credit hours)

Total: 24 credit hours

Second Year:

5 Intensive Seminars (15 credits)

2 Supervised Readings (strongly suggested, 6 credits)

1 Extensive Seminar (3 credits)

Total: 24 credit hours

Third Year:

1 Supervised Reading (3 credits – strongly suggested)

3 Extensive Seminars (9 credits)

Total: 12 credits (need paperwork for Certification of Full Time Status)

Orals exam by December 31

Dissertation proposal by the following March 31

Fourth Year:

COL 690 Dissertation Workshop (1 credit)

Variable credits of COL 700 Thesis Guidance to reach 72 credits

Time-Table for Completion of Degree (Full-Time, M.A., self-funded First Year

First Year

First Semester

3 “Intensive” seminars

1 “Extensive” seminar

12 credit hours

Second semester

3 “Intensive” seminars

1 “Extensive” seminar

12 credit hours (24 total)

Second Year

First Semester

3 “Intensive” seminars

1 COL 598 Master’s Project Guidance (3 credits)

12 credit hours (36 total, minimum required: 30)

The M.A. can be finished in two to three semesters. The total number of credit hours for the M.A. in Comparative Literature is 30. The schedule outlined above is a reasonable

way to fulfill the requirements of the program, but the program can also be completed in two semesters, which would require the student to enroll in 15 credit hours per semester. It can also be completed in four semesters, in which case during the fourth semester the student would enroll only in COL 598. Discuss with the DGS and the Graduate Secretary about filling out the Certificate of Full-Time Status, which enables the student to enroll in only 1 credit hour but still to maintain full-time status.

Course Work

The Graduate School requires a minimum of 72 credit hours for the Ph.D. Students in Comparative Literature fulfill this credit-hour requirement through a combination of Intensive Seminars, Extensive Seminars, Independent Study, Supervised Readings courses, and Thesis Guidance. Although the Department of Comparative Literature has no required courses for graduate degrees, it does have quantitative requirements. Ph.D. students must complete a minimum of 10 Intensive Seminars (30 hours); Masters students must complete 9 Intensive Seminars (27 hours). Our expectation is that students will organize their course work in such a way as to develop areas of interest and expertise, which will be deepened through their preparation for the orals examination. The Department requires students to complete a minimum of 5-6 intensive seminars per year during the first two years of study.

Intensive Seminars

Intensive Seminars (A) are those seminars for which the student fulfills all requirements including the writing of a research paper (typically 15-30 pages in length) at the semester's conclusion. Ph.D. students must complete a minimum of 10 such seminars. Masters students must complete 9. No fewer than 7 Intensive Seminars must be taken with Comparative Literature Faculty. For the purposes of determining which courses are considered "Comparative Literature" seminars, only those taught by members of the core faculty count toward the total of 5 required seminars. Currently, the Core Faculty consists of Professors Gasché, Havis, Irlam, Johnson, Nikolopoulou, Paquette, Pitts, E. Ziarek, and K. Ziarek. The other 5 intensive seminars may be taken with faculty from any other department or school, including, but not restricted to Anthropology, Architecture, Art History, Classics, English, History, Linguistics, Media Studies, Philosophy, Romance Languages and Literatures, Sociology, and the Law School. The relevance of these courses for the particular course of study must be demonstrable to the Director of Graduate Studies.

Extensive Seminars

Extensive Seminars (B) are seminars in which the student completes all requirements for the seminar (readings, presentations, etc.) except the final paper or project. The extensive or B option is typically only available for courses originating in Comparative Literature and English. In many cases the professor may require a brief (3-5 pages) elaboration of a possible research paper. Requirements for extensive credit are established by the individual professors and are **not** subject to review or modification by the Director of Graduate Studies.

Master's Project Guidance (COL 598)

Students enroll in this course with their Master's Project Advisor. During the semester in which the student is enrolled in COL 598, he/she writes his or her Master's Project, typically a revised and extended seminar paper of 30-50 pages. Enrollment in COL 598 requires permission of the instructor; registration goes through the graduate secretary. Although we encourage students to write their Master's Project with COL faculty, they are not required to do so.

A second option to complete the MA degree is to take the comprehensive exam. The MA comprehensive exam has a similar format to the PhD qualifying examination, but the reading list is significantly shorter and the theoretical framework appropriately limited. For this oral examination, students may choose three predesignated areas of study: 1.

Period; 2. Genre/Author; 3. Theoretical approach. The lists of works to be covered for each area must contain a minimum of fifteen books (compared to a minimum of twenty for the PhD oral exam). The areas of study and the three-person committee are chosen with the approval of the director of graduate studies, and the reading lists require the approval of both the individual committee members and the director of graduate studies.

Independent Study (COL 600)

Independent Study courses are typically reading courses of specific interest and importance to the student that afford him/her the opportunity to do in-depth study of a particular author, period, genre, or philosophical/theoretical problem. In principle students DO NOT enroll in Independent Study courses in preparation for the Orals Examination.

- Enrollment only with permission of the instructor and only through the Graduate Secretary.
- Independent Study form must be completed by both student and instructor; this form accompanies the Application to Candidacy for the M.A. and the Ph.D. The form is available from the Graduate Secretary or from the Director of Graduate Studies.
- Do not count toward the 10 intensive seminar requirement.
- **Students may enroll in no more than 2 Independent Study Courses during their graduate careers.**

Supervised Reading (COL 650)

In preparation for the oral exams, students enroll in Supervised Reading (COL 650). Typically, enrollment in this course is limited to nine (9) total hours; three hours with each of the student's exam committee members. Like Independent Study courses (COL 600), Supervised Reading courses afford the student the opportunity to do in-depth study of a particular author, period, genre, or philosophical/theoretical problem. Unlike Independent Study courses, however, Supervised Reading courses correspond to the student's exam lists. **Students may enroll in no more than 3 Supervised Reading courses during their graduate careers.** Enrollment in COL 650 requires permission of the instructor; registration goes through the Graduate

Secretary.

Dissertation Writing Seminar

The Dissertation Writing Seminar, offered in the fall semester and taught by the Director of Graduate Studies, is a one-credit hour, **mandatory** seminar, for all Ph.D. students. Students enroll in the DWS in the fall semester immediately following the completion of the Ph.D. Examinations. Requirements for the seminar include (but are not limited to) the following: 1) production of a substantial and complete draft of a chapter of the dissertation, which will be presented to the seminar participants for comments;

2) presentation of a shorter version of the chapter (40-50 minutes, approximately 20 pages) during the session in which the longer chapter will be discussed; 3) reading and discussion of other seminar participants' work. The Dissertation Writing Seminar will also serve to enhance the Department's professionalization activities by helping to prepare students for the job market, for conference presentations and publication in appropriate journals. Dissertation directors and other faculty members may be invited to attend the oral presentations of the students' work. We anticipate a relatively small class (Comparative Literature students in the fall semester following completion of the Oral Examinations plus any other COL students currently writing dissertations with permission of DGS), typically no more than 4-6 students. Therefore, the meeting schedule will be established by the Director of Graduate Studies. The seminar will be graded based on the successful completion of all requirements.

Thesis Guidance (COL 700)

Only students working on the doctoral dissertation enroll in Thesis Guidance.

Students must enroll in Thesis Guidance through the semester in which they finish the dissertation. Credit is variable(1-16hours), but after the 4th year and upon completion and acceptance of the "Certification of Full-Time Status," the student typically enrolls in only 1 credit hour per semester. Requires permission of the instructor; registration goes through the Graduate Secretary. Although we encourage students to select dissertation committee members from among COL faculty, they are *not* required to do so.

IMPORTANT! Ten Intensive Seminars must be completed by the end of the 4th Semester (end of second year of full-time study). Failure to complete the 10 required Intensive Seminars by the end of the 4th semester means the student is no longer in good standing and will result in the loss of funding for the 3rd year.

INCOMPLETE POLICY: The Department of Comparative Literature strongly discourages students from taking incompletes. Incompletes are given at the Instructor's discretion. In the event that a student takes an Incomplete, the Department strictly adheres to the Graduate School's policy on Incompletes. For this policy, consult the [Graduate School website](#). In anticipation of receiving an Incomplete, students are required to fill out and submit to the relevant faculty

member the Incomplete Form, which is available from the Graduate Secretary or on the Graduate School website.

TRANSFER CREDITS: Although the Department of Comparative Literature awards the Masters Degree, it was designed as a Ph.D. program; therefore, in principle, the Department does not accept transfer credits toward the Ph.D. from other universities. However, on occasion and at the discretion of the faculty, exceptions are made.

Consult with the Director of Graduate Studies. The Graduate School reserves the right to reject the Department's acceptance of transfer credits on the basis of time limitations and the maximum number of allowable transfer credits (36). Under no circumstances does the Graduate School require the Department to accept transfer credits toward the M.A. or Ph.D. In order for the Department to consider transferring credits, an official graduate transcript must be delivered directly to the Director of Graduate Studies from the previous graduate institution's Registrar.

Advising: The Department of Comparative Literature does not assign formal advisors to graduate students. It has long been our practice to allow students the freedom to choose their own advisors and to develop their own programs of study. In most cases, students develop relationships with the faculty with whom they share intellectual interests. However, in the interest of promoting steady progress toward the degree and professional development, all students are required to meet with the Director of Graduate Studies during their first semester of study. At this time, students will indicate which faculty member will serve as their academic advisor. If the student has no preference, the Director of Graduate Studies will serve in that capacity. Additionally, the Director of Graduate Studies meets annually with each class of students to discuss their progress and what remains for them to do in the coming year. These meetings, which are smaller in format and tailored specifically to each year's particular concerns, also provide a forum for discussing professional issues. The faculty meets in the spring semester to evaluate the performance of graduate students. The evaluation includes a discussion of the student's performance in class, their participation in the intellectual life of the Department, and their teaching. The Director of Graduate Studies serves as the administrative advisor for all graduate students.

Application(s) to Candidacy (ATC)

Applications to Candidacy for the MA and the PhD must be approved by the Graduate School *prior* to the submission of the M forms for the Orals Examination and the Dissertation Defense, respectively. Before completion of the Orals Examination, students should fill out the Application to Candidacy (available on the [Graduate School's website](#) under "forms") for the Masters Degree. The graduate secretary and the DGS will help complete this correctly. Then, after the MA has been conferred, *but no later than 9 months prior to finishing the dissertation*, the student will fill out and submit the Application to Candidacy for the PhD. It is the same form, but it must be filled out differently, projecting the student's completion date and enrollment (72 credit hour minimum) until the dissertation is completed; it must also include the title of the dissertation and the signatures of each member of the dissertation committee. Again, the DGS and the graduate secretary will walk the student through the necessary steps. All

Independent Study courses must be documented via the Independent Study form. **Important!** The Application to Candidacy must be submitted to the Director of Graduate Studies, who then forwards it to the Dean's Office and to the Graduate School for the appropriate signatures. Under no circumstances should the student deliver the ATC to the Graduate School.

Ph.D. Qualifying Examination (the Orals Exam)

The Ph.D. Qualifying Examination is a 2-hour oral examination over 3 distinct lists developed in consultation with 3 UB faculty members. Each list should consist of the equivalent of approximately 20 book-length works. The distribution of lists (periods, authors, genres, problems) should be worked out in consultation with the student's principal advisor and the Director of Graduate Studies. The lists should be developed in such a way that they point the student toward his/her dissertation as well as helping him/her to situate him/herself in relation to a particular field, such as American, English, French, or Spanish literature, and Literary Theory. No more than two of the fields should be devoted to theory or philosophy. The three lists, signed by the examiners, must be submitted to the Director of Graduate Studies by October 1st of the 3rd year of full-time study (the 5th semester). The Department encourages students to finalize the lists prior to the end of the fourth semester and use the following summer to read for the exams. Upon approving the lists the DGS places them in the student's permanent file. **The lists must be submitted on the "Ph.D. Qualifying Exams List" form, which is available from the Graduate Secretary or the Director of Graduate Studies**

Every student must designate one of the three examiners as the chair of the examination committee. The chair, perhaps in consultation with the student, determines how the examination will be conducted: in what order the examiners will ask questions, whether there will be one or more rounds of questions, etc. After the examination is completed, the student will be excused from the room and the examiners will deliberate. During the deliberation period, to ensure that each examiner has the opportunity to evaluate the student's performance over the list for which he/she was responsible, the chair of the committee determines the order of response among the examiners. Initially, faculty members should restrict evaluative comments to their particular list, but once each faculty member has given his/her assessment, there should be the opportunity for an exchange among them.

Deliberations need not take a great deal of time and in most cases they will not exceed more than 10-15 minutes. Once deliberations are concluded, the student will be called back into the room and informed of the result. Time should be taken to provide constructive criticism of the student's performance. This is a critical part of the exam and often vitally important for the student's preparation both for the dissertation and the job market.

Note: There are several possible outcomes of the examinations: 1) pass; 2) pass but do not qualify for Ph.D., in which case, in consultation with the DGS and

possibly the Chair, a terminal Master's Degree will be recommended; 3) pass two of the three lists, in which case the student will have to "re-take" the failed list with the corresponding faculty member

within one month of the original examination; 4) failure of two or more lists. In this last case, the examination committee, in consultation with the DGS and, when deemed necessary, with the Chair and the faculty as a whole, will determine whether or not the student will be allowed to re-take the exams.

Ph.D. Qualifying Examinations must be taken during or before 3rd year of full-time study and no later than **March 31st** of the 6th semester. Failure to complete the Ph.D. Qualifying Examinations by this date may result in the loss of funding. Ideally, the Examination is during the 5th semester of study, which affords the student some 18 months to write the dissertation. At the time of the Examination, students should have their committee members sign the **Ph.D. Qualifying Examination Form**, which is available from the Graduate Secretary.

IMPORTANT: Students are responsible for scheduling the Examination in consultation with their committee members. In principle, students are examined over all three lists at the same time. Only under special circumstances, and with the Director of Graduate Studies' approval, are students allowed to be examined at different times.

Whenever a student is examined over a single list, a proctor must be present. The Director of Graduate Studies appoints the proctor.

Dissertation Prospectus

The Department of Comparative Literature requires PhD students to submit a Dissertation Prospectus to his/her dissertation committee within two months of the completion of the Orals Examination and no later than **May 1st** (or the end of the sixth semester of study). Students admitted in and after Fall 2024 will be required to select their dissertation director from within the COL core faculty. The Ph.D. candidate then meets with his/her dissertation committee in order to discuss the prospectus and alert the student to potential difficulties either for completing the proposed project or for its marketability. The Dissertation Prospectus serves the following purposes. First, it has the benefit of helping the student make the transition from the exams to the dissertation by forcing him/her to focus critically on the dissertation project. Second, the prospectus serves as a first draft for research grant proposals. Third, the prospectus is often the first formal step toward conceptualizing the dissertation in terms relevant to the job market. Finally, the Graduate School requires a prospectus in application for Dissertation Fellowships, for which the Department strongly encourages students to apply. A prospectus includes the following:

- 1) Tentative title;
- 2) Explanation of main argument;
- 3) Outline of current research in the field—in English *and* in relevant other languages;
- 4) Explanation of the originality of the dissertation's contribution to the field;
- 5) Description of each of the prospective chapters, including the texts to be analyzed, the methodology, the questions to be asked of these specific texts;

- 6) Provisional schedule of completion (must coincide with projected completion date on ATC);
- 7) Consideration of research you may need to do away from Buffalo and potential sources for funding this research;
- 8) Bibliography that is broader than what is laid out in (3);
- 9) between 5-10 pages in length.

Dissertation Defense

The dissertation defense consists of the student and his/her dissertation committee. It takes anywhere from 30 minutes to 2 hours. How the defense proceeds varies according to the committee. Often the student makes a statement about the scope of the dissertation and the committee asks questions about the conclusions or about specific interpretations. It is in most cases an opportunity to begin to think about the dissertation as a possible book and to begin to consider ways to revise it in that direction.

Typically, the dissertation defense format is closed to the committee members and the candidate; however, a public defense is an option provided there was a prior consultation between the candidate and the committee members.

After the defense, while all committee members are present, the M-form is signed. The DGS or the graduate secretary will have prepared the M-form in anticipation of the defense. Once the M-form and the final version of the dissertation are delivered to the Graduate School, barring any further complication, the student will be awarded the P.h.D.

Teaching

Students awarded Teaching Assistantships can teach in several different capacities, most often, however, they teach for the English Department; work for the Undergraduate College (working in the Writing Center, for UB Curriculum, etc.); serve as TAs for courses taught by COL faculty; and on occasion offer their own course.

In order to teach for the English Department, students must enroll in and successfully complete the ENG 105 practicum, which is comprised of two courses spread over two semesters: 1) ENG 599 to be taken in the second semester (Spring) of the first year, in anticipation of teaching ENG 105; 2) ENG 588 to be taken in the first semester (Fall) of the second year, running concurrently with the teaching of ENG 105. Students interested in teaching in the CL2 program (advanced courses on writing in the disciplines) should enroll in ENG 589 in the second semester (Spring) of their second year. Students must also attend the English Composition Orientation in the week prior to the start of classes for the fall semester. Nearly all Teaching Assistants from Comparative Literature are required at some point in their careers to teach English Composition. In addition to being a requirement, these pedagogical courses are an excellent credential for the job market.

In order to teach for Romance Languages and Literatures, students must attend RLL's teaching orientation during the week prior to the start of the fall semester. The

Language coordinator in RLL will determine the student's

proficiency and will recommend a teaching assignment.

Typically, Comparative Literature students serve as Teaching Assistants for the Comparative Literature faculty member teaching large “pathways” courses. In addition to making up quizzes, helping to make up the exams and paper topics, Students teach up to 3 recitation sections (50 minutes each) per week and occasionally deliver lectures to the full class.

Although the Director of Graduate Studies, in consultation with the faculty, makes teaching assignments, all students must understand that their immediate supervisor while they are teaching is the designated person from the department for which they are teaching. In English it is the Director of Composition; in RLL it is the Language Coordinator. For students serving as TAs for “pathways” courses, their direct supervisor is the professor teaching the course. Students awarded the opportunity to teach literature courses in Comparative Literature are directly responsible to the Director of Graduate Studies *and* to the Director of Undergraduate Studies.

Failure to perform duties according to the specifications of the University, the College, and the specific department under whose auspices the student teaches will result in the loss of funding.

Teaching Evaluations

Teaching Evaluations are an important part of a student’s professional dossier. It is the student’s responsibility to retain these evaluations once they are available through the UB Course Evaluation system. Teaching Evaluations are used to prepare the student’s dossier for the Excellence in Teaching Awards and for the job market.

Graduate Assistantships

Comparative Literature typically provides the grader for Prof. Roger Woodard’s course on Myth and Religion. Prof. Woodard determines the responsibilities, which typically include grading exams, giving an occasional lecture, and holding office hours.

Comparative Literature also provides a Graduate Assistant for the Eugenio Donato Professor of Comparative Literature, Rodolphe Gasché. The Graduate Assistant’s primary responsibility is to facilitate the work of Prof. Gasché, which usually includes editing manuscripts, doing photocopying, and preparing the posters and announcements for the invited lectures. Whenever possible this position is offered to advanced students to release them from teaching during the last year of funding while they are writing the dissertation.

Excellence in Teaching Awards

The Graduate School determines the winners of the annual “Excellence in Teaching Awards” every spring. Students who have taught may nominate themselves for this award. Students then prepare a dossier that includes teaching evaluations, a statement of teaching philosophy, curriculum vitae, a transcript, a letter from the student’s

principal advisor and a letter from the Director of Graduate Studies.

Although nominations for this award are not due until February, nevertheless, because it is

necessary for the DGS to observe the student teaching, any student considering nominating him/herself must inform the DGS no later than **November 1st**.

Dissertation Awards

Students who have completed all requirements except the dissertation are eligible to apply for the College of Arts and Sciences' Dissertation Fellowship, which is currently a lumpsum payment of \$4000. Guidelines for the application process are published annually. The usual deadline for application is early April, but it varies from year to year.

Leaves of Absence

Students are generally granted no more than two leaves of absence during their graduate careers. However, each leave can be for no more than one year and although the 2 leaves can be consecutive, they must be applied for separately. The form for requesting a leave of absence is available on the [Graduate School's website](#) under "forms." Applying for a Leave of Absence is easy to do; moreover, it saves the student money. However, the student must apply for the Leave before departing or otherwise failing to enroll. **Remember:** Once enrolled in the graduate program students must be continuously enrolled (excluding summers) until finishing the degree program, unless the student has applied for a leave of absence. If a student fails to enroll for a semester or year without having applied for a Leave of Absence before departing, the student will be required to apply for readmission upon return.

Study Abroad

Study abroad is a vital part of graduate education in Comparative Literature. All Ph.D. students are encouraged to apply for internal and external funding (Fulbright, Canadian dissertation fellowships, Charlotte Newcombe dissertation fellowships, DAAD fellowships, etc.) when they are preparing to write and writing their dissertations.

Departmental Fellowship for Study Abroad:

Clint Goodson Fellowship for Graduate Student Study Abroad in Honor of Albert S. Cook: Established by COL Ph.D. A. Clint Goodson to honor his professor and mentor, Professor Albert S. Cook. \$5000 awarded annually to student in fourth year for study/research abroad.

Criteria for the two departmental fellowships include timely completion of all course work and exams (no later than the end of the fifth semester), plus the completion of a draft of the dissertation prospectus by 15 February of the sixth semester of study. The Department will constitute a committee of the whole to decide to whom to award these fellowships.

Conference and Summer School Funding

Conference funding for graduate students is limited in the Department of

Comparative Literature. Annually, the Department sets aside funds to help defray the cost of

attending academic conferences. Students are eligible to apply for these funds no more than twice during their graduate careers. Funds are also available from the Graduate Student Association and, for conferences and papers relevant to its mission, from the Melodia Jones Chair in French. Students may also apply to other Endowed Chair holders for funds, with the understanding that these funds are discretionary and that the faculty who hold these chairs are often besieged by requests and have inadequate resources to support all worthy applicants. For students interviewing for jobs at the MLA, the Department offers up to \$200 to help defray expenses.

In general, the Department of Comparative Literature encourages students to attend only conferences relevant to their dissertations and their specific fields of study. Conferences are ultimately rather expensive and the time spent writing several conference papers is usually better spent writing a dissertation chapter. While some conference activity is an important part of the curriculum vitae and perhaps necessary for the job market, quality should always be considered over quantity.

When possible, the Department funds students to attend important summer schools such as the Collegium Phaenomenologicum in Italy, the School of Theory and Criticism at Cornell University, and the Summer Seminars at UC-Irvine, Middlebury summer language institute. At present we are unable to do this every year.

Application for Departmental funds for conferences and summer schools should be made to the Director of Graduate Studies. Criteria for selection include whether or not the student is presenting a paper; standing in the Department; relevance of the conference to the student's field.

[The Job Market](#)

If students proceed through the Ph.D. program in the optimal way, they will be ready to apply for jobs in the fall of their 4th year, excluding leaves of absence to study abroad, etc. At the latest, students should be ready by the fall of the 5th year. The job market requires serious preparation, which, in addition to the dissertation, includes a teaching portfolio, publications, conference papers, dissertation fellowship and/or other external grants.

Although no student should conceive of a dissertation topic on the basis of what is currently needed or popular in the profession, every student should position the dissertation in relation to the recognizable fields and discourses of the profession. In short, part and parcel of conceptualizing the dissertation is an understanding of the terms of the debates in which the dissertation will intervene.

In the summer prior to going on the job market, the student should prepare the job letter, the curriculum vitae, a teaching statement, and samples of possible syllabi. These should be standard "in-field" courses (French literature of the 18th century, post-civil war US literature survey, introduction to feminist theory, etc.), but also courses focused on the student's research interests. Students should also prepare a writing sample (20-30 pages) to be sent upon request to prospective employers and, as well, the all-important job talk,

usually of some 35-45 minutes in length.

Every student going on the job market should be observed teaching. Every student should be mock-interviewed. Every student should have the job letter, cv, teaching statement, and writing sample critiqued by one's principal advisor and the Job Placement Director. Typically, the student's dissertation committee does much of this work, but other faculty should also be brought into the process.

Graduate Student Participation in Departmental Committees

Sexual Harassment

The Department of Comparative Literature agrees with and abides by the University's policy on sexual harassment.

Statement of Policy

The University at Buffalo is committed to creating and maintaining a community in which all persons who participate in University programs and activities can work together in an atmosphere free from all forms of harassment, exploitation or intimidation, including sexual. Every member of the University community should be aware that any form of sexual harassment is unacceptable and that such behavior is prohibited both by law and by University policy.

What constitutes sexual harassment?

Any unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature constitutes sexual harassment when:

- 1. Submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of an individual's employment or academic advancement;**
- 2. Submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used as the basis for employment or academic decisions affecting such individual;**
- 3. Such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's work or academic performance, or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive environment.**

For more on the University policy on sexual harassment, contact the Office of Equity, Diversity and Affirmative Action (645-2266) or see [their website](#).

The University encourages people to deal with sexual harassment as locally as possible. In situations where direct confrontation is not possible, however, the harassed party is encouraged to discuss the matter with the Department Chair, the Director of Graduate

Studies, or other trusted advisor. The harassed party may also contact the Office of Equity, Diversity and Affirmative Action for advice on how best to proceed toward resolution of the problem.

Departmental AI Policy

Purpose

Tools like ChatGPT and other generative artificial intelligence (genAI) tools are rapidly becoming accessible and are often used in search engines, marketing, pharmaceutical development, and customer service. Such tools are also often used for simple writing tasks, organizational management, and other basic functions. While such tools have potential for relatively simple tasks (e.g. customer service prompts, basic factual questions, etc.), genAI technologies are not able to accurately and carefully track complex interpretative questions like those most common to the humanities and other scholarly areas of research. Given that Comparative Literature's graduate programs (and much education in the humanities) focus on guiding students through their own original research, students in our department will benefit most from developing their own writing voice and ideas over time. For this reason, permitted GenAI use in our programs will be quite limited.

Scope

This policy covers the use of generative artificial intelligence in Master's Theses, PhD Proposals, and Doctoral Dissertations (appropriate AI use in graduate courses is determined by individual faculty and clearly stated on course syllabi).

Permitted Uses

Generation of preliminary bibliography for research; revision of translations of source material (students are responsible for verifying the accuracy of translations); editorial functions (spell-check, thesaurus); formatting text (again, students responsible for verifying the accuracy of any AI-assisted formatting according to the appropriate style guide).

Prohibited Uses

The following functions are prohibited by the Dept of Comparative Literature: the creation of content; drafting of sentences, using AI to develop arguments; summarizing books. In sum, the conceptualization, research, and writing of the project must be the student's original work.

Disclosure Requirements

AI-assisted translations must be noted either universally or in each specific instance of assistance (this would follow the practice for acknowledging that one has either translated source material oneself or that one has throughout modified already published translations); all AI use must be documented completely (program used, date/time of access, extent of use, in some cases this might include providing screen shots of prompts, etc.). Failure to document AI use may constitute plagiarism.

Consequences

Sanctions determined in consultation with UB's Office of Academic Integrity, the faculty

advisor, DGS, and Chair. Possible sanctions range from rewriting implicated passages to expulsion from the program.

Review Process

This policy will be reviewed/revised as needed in subsequent semesters.