Department of Comparative Literature
Graduate Student Handbook

I. INTRODUCTION TO THE DEPARTMENT

The Department of Comparative Literature at New York University offers a doctoral program which requires all Ph.D. candidates to earn an MPhil degree in the process of working towards the Ph.D. The Department also offers a five-year B.A./M.A. dual degree, which is housed in both the College of Arts and Science (CAS) and the Graduate School of Arts and Science (GSAS).

We are committed to providing an innovative and rigorous approach to comparative literature as an inquiry into the nature of literary language, an investigation of literary representation in relation to other forms of cultural expression, and an exploration of the social, political, and aesthetic contexts of literary practice. Comparative Literature is also the home for interdisciplinary and cross-cultural work engaged with philosophical and theoretical problems of language and interpretation. For these intellectual reasons, the department’s graduate students are required to work in several linguistic traditions, to acquire an expertise in literary criticism, theory, and history, and to develop an awareness of the larger disciplinary and cultural implications of literary analysis.

While such a course of study is rewarding in itself, the graduate program at NYU also presumes that many of its students will ultimately seek academic jobs. Consequently, the program is designed to prepare students for success on the academic job market. The requirements and guidelines which follow are meant to enhance the intellectual goals with which all students enter, and simultaneously to provide the best and most pragmatic training for future job placement.

Courses are chosen in consultation with the Director of Graduate Studies and, by the third year of coursework, with a faculty adviser who shares the student’s intellectual and/or linguistic interests. It is crucial to remember that the purpose of coursework is to provide a foundation for structuring the student’s doctoral exams, formulating and carrying out the dissertation project, and preparing for an academic career. It is also intended to help students develop interests beyond those with which they entered the program. Students should aim for both depth and breadth in their studies, making sure not to take courses in one period, genre or theory to the exclusion of others. In other words, keep a literary, historical, and theoretical balance in mind—students who focus on twentieth-century modernism, for example, should be sure to do work in earlier periods and in other modes.

Students are required in their doctoral exams to demonstrate an expertise in a particular field, called the teaching field, as well as more specialized knowledge of theory and of a field encompassing a specific comparative focus and, in some cases, broadened by genuine knowledge of a non-literary discipline (see below). It is this combination which seems to give
comparative literature students an edge over job candidates trained in a single national literature. The competition for jobs and fellowships, and the special challenges and benefits a comparative literature degree provides, make a six-year plan to the degree ideal. Financial aid possibilities, teaching opportunities, and professional advancement are all strongly affected by the timely pacing of graduate studies. For example, students are often ineligible for NYU awards and summer fellowships unless they have completed their coursework and exams; faculty recommendations often hinge on adherence to the six-year plan outlines. Faculty Advisers, the Chair and the Director of Graduate Studies, as well as the Graduate Administrative Aide and the Departmental Administrator are all dedicated to making this progress a reality for students.

Not everyone will want to use their doctorate to enter the academy. Our department acknowledges the range of other job possibilities and makes such opportunities known to students whenever possible. Graduates will find that career opportunities in academic administration, positions in international foundation and associations, jobs in publishing and translating, and openings in business, political, and entertainment fields are enhanced by the Ph.D. degree in Comparative Literature.

II. PH.D. PROGRAM

A. COURSEWORK

The Ph.D. requires students successfully complete 72 points of coursework of which 40 points are in Comparative Literature, and 32 points are outside of the department as electives relevant to the student’s research and teaching goals. The following courses must be taken:

- COLIT-GA 1400, Seminar in Literature: Research Methods and Techniques – Practice and Theory, (this course must be taken during the first semester of enrollment)
- Writing Seminar, COLIT-GA 2000, in two consecutive terms
- a course in literature and/or theory from a non-U.S./Western European context
- a literary criticism/theory class before 1800
- a contemporary (20th century) literary criticism/theory course
- a pre-1800 literature course
- Thesis Research, COLIT-GA 3991

The student’s program of study should be designed around the formation of a primary field, intended teaching field, as well as a secondary field of specialized interest and a theory field. By teaching field we mean the area of expertise the student will claim as a scholar and an academic on the job market—e.g., Renaissance drama, comparative modernism, the history of the novel, Caribbean poetry, etc. The secondary field will be formulated with specific reference to the proposed dissertation research. Courses should be chosen in consultation with an adviser.

B. LANGUAGES
PhD students must demonstrate proficiency in three non-English languages OR two non-English languages and a disciplinary field.

To demonstrate proficiency:

1. Be a native speaker in the language.*
2. Hold a degree from a non-Anglophone foreign university.*
3. Pass a graduate level literature course, taught in the language (grade of ‘B’ or better), in any of the language departments at NYU.*
4. Pass an upper level, undergraduate LITERATURE class, taught in the language, taken at NYU for which you received a ‘B’ or better.*
5. Pass a translation exam, which is administered (for a fee) three times a year by GSAS. Note that registration dates are usually at least a month in advance of the exam. Check the registration website here.
6. Other examples of proficiency (i.e. published translations in another language) will be considered for approval by the DGS on a case-by-case basis.*

*Note: if you choose to satisfy your language requirements using any of the methods besides #5, you must apply for "language equivalency." This means that even if you take 3 courses, for example, in the Spanish department, or you are from Austria, or you had an undergraduate major in French, and so forth, you will not have proven proficiency until you have applied for such with the departmental Graduate Administrative Aide. You are strongly encouraged to apply for language equivalency as soon as you are able -- in the cases of undergraduate equivalency and native speakers, for example, you should apply in your first semester. Similarly, after you have finished a graduate course in a national language, apply immediately. Failure to do so may prevent you from obtaining your degree in a timely manner. Filing for language equivalency is the student's responsibility.

If you would like to register for an undergraduate CAS language course to gain language skills necessary for dissertation research and writing, please note that these courses will not be covered by your MacCracken. To avoid tuition and registration fees, take the following steps:

1. Fill out the Tuition Scholarship for Undergraduate Skills Course form on the GSAS website.
2. Obtain our DGS’s signature on the form.
3. Register for the course and email the form to the Graduate Administrative Aide for processing.
4. If you are blocked from registering on Albert, email the professor of the course stating that you are a PhD student and explaining your reasons for enrollment. If the professor approves, forward the email to the Department Administrator for the department sponsoring the course. Include a copy of the signed scholarship form and request that the Administrator enroll you in the course or provide you with a permission code to self-enroll. Administrator contact information can be found on each department’s respective website.

In addition, GSAS offers language courses for reading knowledge each summer that can aide you in preparing for the Foreign Language Proficiency Exam. These courses are taught in English, graded pass/fail, and free of charge for selected students. Enrollment information can be found on the GSAS website.
i. Third Language/Disciplinary Field

Doctoral candidates may replace the third of their three (non-English) languages with genuine advanced knowledge of a non-literary discipline: past examples include History, Anthropology, Performance Studies, Cinema Studies, Political Science, Philosophy, etc. The department in question must offer a doctoral degree. This option is available only in cases where the non-literary discipline is certain to become an integral part of a student’s doctoral research and dissertation. It can be taken only after discussion with the student’s departmental adviser and must be approved by the other department. It requires a minimum of three doctoral level courses in that department, where the student must also have an adviser (usually chosen, or at least envisaged, by the student after having taken a first course in the field). That adviser must participate as a member of the doctoral exam committee, and eventually serve as one of the first three (of five) readers of the dissertation. Due to time constraints and other requirements, a student choosing this option will often need to start preparing for it (and probably take a first course in the field) by the end of their first year of study.

Remember that before the non-literary disciplinary-field adviser can be officially appointed, the student must have this option approved by the DGS. To obtain approval, you must submit a statement to the DGS which includes the following:

1. A brief explanation of your reasons for wanting to acquire competence in a third discipline. This should address how the third discipline will be integrated into your field of specialization, and eventually your dissertation project.
2. An account of what course(s) in the third discipline you have already taken (if that is the case), and what courses you plan to take.
3. Identification of an appropriate adviser in that discipline (bearing in mind that he or she must serve as an examiner on your written doctoral exam and participate in your Dissertation Prospectus Conference as a member of your dissertation committee). Describe what your contact has been with this potential adviser.

Students on the MPhil/Ph.D. track should submit this statement to the DGS no later than the end of their third term. Students entering with a previous master’s degree should submit the statement no later than the end of their first term.

1. This deadline is absolute. Any exceptions to this deadline can only be granted by the DGS.
2. Please refer to the GSAS Policies and Procedures Manual for more detailed information on GSAS academic standards.
3. Students must have completed a minimum of 66 percent of credits attempted in order to remain in “good standing.” Courses with grades of I, W, N, or F are not considered successfully completed, and if your ratio of attempted credit hours falls below 66% your registration will be blocked by GSAS.

C. QUALIFYING PAPER (formerly referred to as M.A. thesis)
All graduate students in Comparative Literature are required to submit a qualifying paper for their degree. The paper is meant to be one which the student has already submitted for a seminar and would like to return in order to polish the argument to a “publishable” standard.

Guidelines for the Qualifying Paper:

- It must be typed and legible.
- Length is variable but should generally fall around 20 pages or more.
- During their second year review meetings, all students should communicate their decision on which seminar paper they would like to turn in as a qualifying paper. We encourage students to choose their best paper in consultation with their seminar leader and/or advisor. In the interest of moving forward to dissertation writing, major revisions are not expected to the paper.
- The final version must be preceded by a title page. PhD students should follow [this sample](#) for the MPhil.
- The Qualifying Paper is read and approved by TWO readers, each of whom must sign the title page and a reader sheet. PhD students should use [this reader sheet](#) for the MPhil. The readers for the qualifying paper are the student’s advisor and the DGS. Students are responsible for obtaining these signatures.

Approved qualifying papers and signed forms should be submitted to the Graduate Administrative Aide at least two weeks before graduation deadlines (in January, May, and September). This means that qualifying papers must be submitted to both readers well in advance so that they have the time to read your work and you have time to make all required changes and submit the paper again for their approval. Deadlines for graduation requirements can be found [here](#).

**D. SECOND YEAR REVIEW**

During the 4th semester, students participate in a Second Year Review, conducted by the Department Chair and DGS. The review provides an opportunity for ensuring that students have completed all requirements to date, and discuss the plans for students to formulate for their upcoming Doctoral Preliminary Examinations. Students will complete a Second Year Review Form provided by the Graduate Administrative Aide and bring it to the review meeting. They should come prepared knowing with whom they would like to work on their Doctoral Preliminary Examinations.

**E. PROCEEDING TO THE Ph.D. PROGRAM**

PhD students who have not received their MPhil (otherwise known as reaching PhD candidacy) by the end of their fourth summer will be placed on academic probation, meaning that their status will be under serious review; the department will also have to submit a request for extension of time to candidacy. Extensions will be granted for a maximum of one year. **All students are required to get an MPhil regardless if they enter the PhD program with an existing master’s degree.** To be eligible for an MPhil, students must complete all PhD requirements (including proficiency in three languages) except for the dissertation. Should the student fall behind, the student will fall out of good standing. Also, the university will still demand that the student register to maintain matriculation while completing outstanding requirements, an unnecessary and unwelcome financial burden. Lastly, this may jeopardize the student’s financial aid status and put the student at risk of
termination from the PhD program. Additional information about time to candidacy can be found in sections 6.8 and 6.9 of the GSAS Policies and Procedures Manual.

Once you are eligible for an MPhil, you will automatically be applied for MPhil graduation by the Registrar for the next available conferral date. Degrees are conferred each September, January, and May. The Graduate Administrative Aide will contact you to confirm that you have been applied for MPhil graduation. Physical degrees will then be mailed to your address in Albert 6-8 weeks after the conferral date.

F. INCOMING M.A. STUDENTS

Those entering the program with a transferable M.A. (or equivalent) from another university must apply WITHIN THE FIRST YEAR OF COURSEWORK for a transfer of up to 40 points towards the Ph.D. Application during this time is absolutely imperative. Click here for an explanation of transfer credit policies and directions on how to initiate a request. It is possible to use transfer credits towards required PhD courses, such as the pre-1800 requirement, with DGS approval. The student should confirm with the Graduate Administrative Aide that these substitutions have been recorded. All transfer credits count towards the 32-point external credit requirement for the PhD unless approval is given by the DGS to count them towards the 40-point departmental residency requirement. Thus, students who know they want to participate in the consortium option, study abroad, or take courses in external departments may not want to transfer as many credits. The number of credits transferred detracts from the 72-point requirement which is funded by the MacCracken Fellowship. Any coursework taken beyond the 72 points will be the student's financial responsibility unless the student is enrolled in a certificate program. See the certificate program page for more details.

G. DISSERTATION

For rules and regulations regarding the length, form, and procedures surrounding the Dissertation, please access a formatting guide on the GSAS site. (University guidelines allow the candidate to use MLA or Chicago style. Additionally, you may use endnotes or footnotes. You may choose which best suits your work, but you must be consistent throughout.) The department has established a minimum page count of 200 pages for all dissertations.

In lieu of a standard PhD thesis, students can elect to undertake a full-length translation from a foreign language on the model of a scholarly rendition (i.e. including introduction and notes). In the case where there is already an existing English translation, the translation must demonstrate a substantial revision and contribution to original scholarship.

   i. Defense

   • Before graduating, you must defend your dissertation. The dissertation defense committee is normally comprised of the three members of the dissertation committee as well as two additional readers. Although the candidate normally chooses these two additional readers, the DGS in consultation with you may appoint them. Please note: GSAS requires that you have a total of 5 people on your defense committee. Please consult the GSAS Policies and Procedures Manual for a list of eligibility requirements
for defense committee members. The defense must be officially scheduled, well in advance, through the Graduate Administrative Aide.

- At least one member of your committee must be a Comparative Literature faculty member or an Affiliated/Associated member of the Comparative Literature faculty.
- You are allowed a maximum of 2 non-NYU readers, subject to approval of the DGS.
- One person may be absent and submit a written report.
- Arrangements may be made for telephone conferencing for one absent committee member if he/she is part of the core (three-member) committee.
- Dissertation defenses are closed unless the candidate arranges for an open defense in consultation with the DGS and the Dissertation Director.
- As a general guideline, you should send your dissertation to all committee members at least one month prior to the defense to allow sufficient reading time. Your defense must also take place at least two weeks (but at least one month is recommended) before the final GSAS dissertation deadline in case your committee recommends edits to your dissertation following the defense.

ii. Graduating and Receiving Your Degree

In order to graduate with a Ph.D., each student must register to graduate via Albert. Once registered, this activates the graduation process with the Registrar. PhD students do not need to apply for graduation for the MPhil.

Preliminary dissertations must be submitted to the Office of Student Affairs so that they may verify that the correct format has been used throughout. Final dissertations are due in the Office of Academic and Student Affairs (OASA) and the Department of Comparative Literature by the deadline set by OASA in order for the student to graduate.

PhD students should contact the Graduate Administrative Aide and request the packet of graduation deadlines to determine their administrative responsibilities. Students should also consult the GSAS website on "Submitting Your Dissertation" for important graduation deadline information and paperwork.

H. FUNDING

i. Departmental Grants

The department offers several travel awards to Ph.D. students throughout the year, as well as the Anais Nin and Penfield Awards for outstanding ABD students. See details here.

ii. MacCracken Fellowship

- Doctoral students are fully funded by Henry Mitchell MacCracken Fellowships, which provide a living stipend and full tuition for five academic years: three years of coursework followed by two years of dissertation writing.
• In the event that students receive additional, external funding, they may want to choose to reserve their MacCracken stipend. By reserving the stipend, students elect not to receive their funding which they would normally obtain. At any point in the program, those who have elected to reserve their stipend may choose to receive it. Most students claim reserve funds in year six when they are no longer eligible to receive the MacCracken Fellowship. Reserve funds are distributed at the going rate for the academic year in which the student elects to receive the funding, not the going rate for the year in which they reserved the funding. In this way, students receive a greater fellowship because it accounts for the nature increase in the cost of living. It is important to note that students may only reserve funds in 25, 50, 75 or 100 percent increments. Students who receive reserve funds in more advanced years are ineligible to apply for GSAS Fellowships.

• MacCracken awards are contingent on maintaining superior academic performance and may be revoked by the department if that requirement is not met. If a student’s GPA drops below 3.0 or if they carry more than the permissible number of Incompletes from one semester to the next, the University will revoke the award.

iii. Financial Support While Completing the Dissertation:

If you run beyond your MacCracken, consult the Director of Graduate Studies early each semester to discuss applying for university fellowships as well as to discuss external fellowships for which you may be eligible. Attend the grant-writing and fellowship workshops offered by the university. The department will also post announcements of scholarships, grants, and adjunct teaching positions.

iv. Summer Funding

• Funds permitting, the department will allocate summer funds in addition to the MacCracken fellowship to students who are in good academic standing and present a research-based need (i.e. travel, archival research). These funds are awarded in the spring semester prior to the summer of use and award amount varies in accordance with the department’s annual resources. Typically, students will receive a summer stipend in their first, second, and third summers, with the possibility (budget permitting) or application-based grants in later years intended to make it possible for them to finish writing their dissertation. More detailed information about summer funding can be found in the Financial Aid section of our website.

• Students are strongly urged to apply for outside funding sources to cover the costs of summer months.

• Foreign Language and Area Studies (FLAS) Grants (also available for the academic year) and Pre-doctoral Summer Fellowships are available from GSAS based on university-wide applications. See the GSAS website and the Hagop Kevorkian Center for Near Eastern Studies website for information and deadlines.

J. MAINTAINING MATRICULATION
• All students must maintain matriculation every semester they are taking courses or working on their dissertation, unless they are on a leave of absence.
• Ph.D. students beyond year 7 should register for the MAINT-GA 4747.004 course on Albert (please note that this timing plan will be different if you have taken a leave of absence. In those cases, please contact the Graduate Administrative Aide for more information about your individual situation). Registering for the matriculation "course" will incur various fees for health insurance and library and other privileges that will be added to your Bursar bill. To remain a graduate student, you must pay the matriculation fee in a timely fashion. If you let it lapse for more than one calendar year, you will be considered inactive and will have to reapply for admission to be able to continue with your studies. You must register every semester unless you are granted a leave of absence. Generally, if your fees are waived, you will be automatically registered for maintenance of matriculation as well as the Comprehensive NYU Student Health Insurance plan. You may choose to waive the insurance with other non-NYU insurance, or you can defer to the Basic plan by navigating to the Enrollment section on the NYU Student Health Center website. The Graduate School grants hardship waivers only to those experiencing extreme financial difficulty. The Graduate School’s guidelines are very stringent and these waivers are not easily obtained.
• If you are in year 7 or under and have finished with your coursework, you will be enrolled in the non-paying section of MAINT-GA 4747 by Graduate Enrollment Services (again, this timing plan will differ if you have taken a leave of absence). All matriculation fees will be waived for these students.
• Note: Under no circumstance does maintaining matriculation permit an extension in the time-to-degree allowance (ten years to the Ph.D. from the B.A., seven years from the M.A.). Please also be aware that taking a Leave of Absence does not stop the clock from ticking towards time-to-degree.
• All students are advised to maintain matriculation over the summer to have access to the library, gym, and other resources. There is no charge for summer MM.

K. TEACHING
• The Department considers teaching to be an important part of graduate training, and students should plan to do so starting in their seventh semester (third year, second semester). Teaching is not guaranteed and is subject to availability. Priority is given to students without prior teaching experience. Students will be paid an adjunct teaching salary in addition to their MacCracken stipend.
• The Department will try its best to place eligible Ph.D. students in appropriate teaching positions (recitations) in each of these terms (subject to availability). In addition to the occasional departmental teaching opportunity, placements available to us are in the CORE program and national language/literature departments (as language instructors).
• It is important to note that placements available to us (e.g. in CORE) cover a broad comparative context and may not deal directly with the student’s specific period or area of research. Since other departments must first offer adjunct teaching positions to their own graduate students, it is extremely difficult for Comp Lit Ph.D. students to find teaching positions in areas other than those noted above. If a student feels strongly about exploring teaching positions elsewhere, the student is encouraged to do so; however, this must first be discussed with the Director of Graduate Studies.
• GSAS also offers resources for teachers, including workshops and trainings, in their Ph.D. Toolkit.
• Post-MacCracken Adjunct positions may exist within the University. These positions must be negotiated directly between the student and the hiring program. Positions are not guaranteed and availability varies each year.

L. TIME TO DEGREE

• A student must satisfy the MPhil requirements within 4 years (including the 4th summer) of their initial registration. Ph.D. candidates have 10 years unless they have transferred 24 or more credits towards the degree, in which case the degree must be completed within 7 years. Exemptions to this rule must be approved by the Department Chair as well as the Dean. UNDER NO CIRCUMSTANCES IS A STUDENT WHO IS PAST TIME TO DEGREE ALLOWED FULL TIME EQUIVALENCY. (See section IV. General Academic Policies).
• Please see the GSAS Policies and Procedures Manual for more information about time-to-degree policies.

M. COMPREHENSIVE WRITTEN EXAMS

Step one in preparing for the exam: in your third year of coursework you will take a required year-long Writing Seminar for the purpose of exam preparation. This gives you course credit for the efforts involved in setting up your reading lists and undertaking your reading for the exams, which are administered in January before the start of the spring semester. In addition, students must also submit an outline of their dissertation project at this time. Register for this course, and then proceed to approach your three-member faculty committee for the exam. You should approach each faculty member individually with a request to be the examiner for ONE of the three sections of your exam. This same faculty panel typically serves as the dissertation committee for your prospectus meeting.

The three sections are:

1. a literary criticism/literary theory section, tailored to your own specific interests and knowledge, and your one year of required coursework in the subject. The reading list for this should be between 20-30 texts; the written answer to the examiner’s question should be between 7-8 pages long. (ONE question)

2. the major field, or the teaching field, represents the area of study you have declared to be your specialization, and the field for which you intend to seek academic jobs. It is therefore the broadest field of the three. This field may certainly be a comparative one, but it may also focus on one national literature if appropriate. In other words, if you see yourself as a Caribbeanist, that’s your major field, although it must be narrowed down, preferably to a period and/or particular linguistic focus; you could have a major field in the 19th century novel, in Renaissance drama, or in Anglo-American modernism, for example. Choose your language(s) of concentration and your genre or period with rigor and care and an eye to your likely job market niche. The reading list is the longest for this field at 30-50 items; the answer to the examiner’s question is also the longest, at approximately 15 pages. (ONE or TWO questions at examiner’s discretion.)

3. the dissertation preparation field represents an area essential to your dissertation research around which you need to read widely. This may include some necessary critical perspective, some historical or thematic aspect, a theoretical issue, or further explorations in your non-literary discipline (if you’ve chosen that option): in fine, any
matter essential to the grounding of your dissertation, whether or not it actually becomes part of it. The reading list contains 20-30 texts; the written answer to the examiner’s question is 7-8 pages in length. (ONE question)

The faculty member involved with each section approves the reading list through discussion with you. You should also show your lists to the DGS early in the procedure. Remember that for this exam a text may be a complete book, an essay, a long poem or a group of shorter poems, or an excerpt from a book. When you have all three lists finalized with approval of their respective examiner, you MUST submit the resulting plan to the DGS and your principal advisor for their joint final approval. This is to ensure that the overall exam is the best expression of your intellectual training, goals, and professional direction; that its sections do not overlap; and that each student’s exam provides analogous coverage. Be sure to turn in your final reading list to the Graduate Administrative Aide as this goes in your file and will become available for reference in the department’s “Sample Reading Lists for the Written Exam” notebook. The exam sections are not given titles, as if they were essays or articles; these are topics/fields with corresponding reading lists that demonstrate your mastery of a field, area, critical perspective or ancillary discipline, topics that can and will be listed on your C.V. as your areas of interest and teaching expertise.

Exams will take place two weeks before the start of the spring semester.

Two months before the exam: After your reading lists have been approved by your examiners, you should email the Graduate Administrative Aide with a list of your examiners along with their corresponding exam fields and email addresses (if they are non-NYU).

Two weeks before the exam: Committee members submit their questions to the Graduate Administrative Aide.

Monday of exam week: The Graduate Administrative Aide will email you the exam questions. You will have one week to write your responses, which should be emailed to the Graduate Administrative Aide by the following Monday as a single Word document.

One month after the exam: The Administrative Aide will email the student with a Written Exam Results Memo.

N. PROSPECTUS MEETING

The prospectus meeting is scheduled after your dissertation director approves an initial prospectus. The prospectus defense committee is comprised of your dissertation committee members (director, second, and third readers). In most cases, they will be the same three faculty members who administered the written exam. After the written exam has been passed, however, students may consider changes as they are putting their dissertation committees together in advance of the Prospectus Defense. For all committees, at least one of the three members must be a Comparative Literature Faculty Member or an Associated member of the department’s faculty.

This prospectus is 15-25 typed pages, including the dissertation bibliography. Its basic organization is as follows:
1. Begin by justifying your project and its thesis, the materials on which they will work, its relation to other work, and its originality within the context that it will exist. They should also provide essential information on the project's significance and contribution to the field. You may or may not want to suggest what you think may be some conclusions (it is also correct to say that this can't be done until you've done the work). This is fairly low-key and will normally take 5-10 pages.

2. Create a chapter-by-chapter account of the dissertation, involving preliminary chapter headings and a description for each of its material and arguments. This is essentially a road map of the student's research and the writing of the dissertation. It is important to note that the eventual dissertation's introduction is likely to base itself on this prospectus, although a student should also not think of writing such an introduction until the rest of the dissertation has been finished. This road map of chapters will be 5-10 pages.

3. Preliminary bibliography (around 5 or so pages).

Since students have the option of submitting a full-scale translation from a foreign language (on the model of a scholarly edition with introduction and notes), their prospectus may vary somewhat from the above description.

It must be circulated to the entire three-person committee no later than three weeks before the prospectus meeting and approved by your director in order for the Conference to be scheduled. The director's approval signals his or her confidence in the viability of the prospectus and your readiness for the Conference.

The purpose of the prospectus meeting is to give your dissertation committee the opportunity to discuss and perhaps recommend changes to your prospectus so that you are in the best possible position to initiate dissertation research and writing immediately. In general, students provide opening remarks at this meeting to summarize their prospectus, and faculty then ask questions about how the proposed dissertation will fit into the field and what plans the student has for the outline. Official approval of the prospectus will be granted at this meeting, unless the committee feels that major adjustments must be made in advance of their approving your prospectus. In that case the committee will set a deadline by which changes should be made; in no case will this be more than one month after the Dissertation Prospectus Conference was held.

O. YEARLY ADVISING MEETINGS

Starting with year four, each Ph.D. student should arrange one yearly in-person meeting with all three core members of their faculty committee. These meetings are to take place in the spring semester by the last day of classes each year. If faculty members are not in residence, they will be invited to Skype in for the yearly meeting. The student should submit recent work well ahead of the meeting (2 weeks minimum), so that faculty can read in advance and provide feedback on the dissertation and student progress to degree.

It is the graduate student’s responsibility to arrange for a workable time for all four participants in this meeting. To minimize logistical work, it is recommended that the meetings take place in one of the committee members’ offices. If this is not feasible, our Graduate Administrative Aide will assist with finding a suitable room.
Once the meeting has been completed, faculty should sign the **Yearly Advising Meeting Form**. Students should submit the signed form to the Aide for processing.

**P. THE INTER-UNIVERSITY DOCTORAL CONSORTIUM**

The Inter-University Doctoral Consortium (IUDC) offers eligible GSAS students the opportunity to take graduate courses at distinguished universities throughout the greater New York area. The IUDC has been in existence for over 25 years and offers students an enormous array of courses and opportunities for contact with faculty and students in their fields. The IUDC is open to doctoral students from participating schools who have completed at least one year of full time study toward the Ph.D. Terminal masters students and non-Arts and Sciences students are not eligible.

Participating schools are:

- Columbia University, GSAS
- Princeton University - The Graduate School
- CUNY Graduate Center
- Rutgers University
- Fordham University, GSAS
- Stony Brook University
- Teachers College, Columbia University
- New York University, GSAS, Steinhardt
- Graduate Faculty, New School University

To register, please complete the IUDC Registration form found [here](#). Please review the IUDC website for registration instructions and review the stipulations below:

- Tuition is calculated by and paid to the home institution only. Additional charges may be assessed by host institutions for lab fees if applicable.
- You may obtain information about an ID card for the host institution from the host school consortium office.
- It is the student's responsibility to coordinate their registration and grade transfer with the host institution.
- Also note that NYU has an agreement with the Jewish Theological Seminary. Please contact the JTS for the required procedure.

For further questions, please contact the consortium office of either the home or host school. Contact information can be accessed on the GSAS website.

**III. M.A. PROGRAM (as part of dual-degree B.A./M.A.)**

The Department of Comparative Literature at NYU does **not** offer a master’s degree program other than our five-year dual-degree B.A./M.A. and the M.Phil. degree that students receive on the way to the Ph.D.

**A. COURSEWORK**
The Master of Arts degree requires 32 points of coursework, of which 20 points are in Comparative Literature, and 12 points outside of the department (and relevant to the student's research and teaching goals). Of these 32 points, the following courses must be taken:

- COLIT-GA 1400, Seminar in Literature: Research Methods and Techniques - Practice and Theory, (this course must be taken during the first semester of enrollment)
- a literary criticism/theory class before 1800
- a contemporary (20th century) literary criticism/theory course
- a pre-1800 literature course

Students taking a degree in comparative literature follow a program of courses corresponding to their proposed professional interests. Flexibility of choice is provided by a broad spectrum of offerings available in neighboring departments. When arranging the course of study, the student consults with the chair of the department or the director of graduate studies, as well as an assigned faculty adviser.

B. LANGUAGES

MA students must demonstrate proficiency in two non-English languages.

To demonstrate proficiency:

1. Be a native speaker in the language.*
2. Hold a degree from a non-Anglophone foreign university.*
3. Pass a graduate level literature course, taught in the language (grade of 'B' or better), in any of the language departments at NYU.*
4. Pass an upper level, undergraduate LITERATURE class, taught in the language, taken at NYU for which you received a 'B' or better.*
5. Pass a translation exam, which is administered (for a fee) three times a year by GSAS. Note that registration dates are usually at least a month in advance of the exam. Check the registration website here.
6. Other examples of proficiency (i.e. published translations in another language) will be considered for approval by the DGS on a case-by-case basis.*

*Note: if you choose to satisfy your language requirements using any of the methods besides #5, you must apply for “language equivalency.” This means that even if you take 3 courses, for example, in the Spanish department, or you are from Austria, or you had an undergraduate major in French, and so forth, you will not have proven proficiency until you have applied for such with the departmental Graduate Administrative Aide. You are strongly encouraged to apply for language equivalency as soon as you are able -- in the cases of undergraduate equivalency and native speakers, for example, you should apply in your first semester. Similarly, after you have finished a graduate course in a national language, apply immediately. Failure to do so may prevent you from obtaining your degree in a timely manner. Filing for language equivalency is the student's responsibility.

In addition, GSAS offers language courses for reading knowledge each summer that can aide you in preparing for the Foreign Language Proficiency Exam. These courses are
taught in English, graded pass/fail, and free of charge for selected students. Enrollment information can be found on the [GSAS website](http://gsas.columbia.edu).

**C. QUALIFYING PAPER (M.A. THESIS)**

All graduate students in Comparative Literature are required to submit a qualifying paper for their degree; this is also referred to as an M.A. thesis for dual-degree B.A./M.A. students.

Guidelines for the Qualifying Paper:

- It must be typed and legible.
- Length is variable but should generally fall around 20 pages or more.
- We encourage students to choose their best paper in consultation with their seminar leader and/or advisor.
- The final version must be preceded by a title page. BA/MA students should follow [this sample](http://gsas.columbia.edu) for the MA.
- The Qualifying Paper is read and approved by TWO readers, each of whom must sign the title page and a reader sheet. BA/MA students should use [this reader sheet](http://gsas.columbia.edu) for the MA. The readers for the qualifying paper are the student's advisor and the DGS. Students are responsible for obtaining these signatures.

Approved qualifying papers and signed forms should be submitted to the Graduate Administrative Aide at least two weeks before graduation deadlines (in January, May, and September). This means that qualifying papers must be submitted to both readers well in advance so that they have the time to read your work and you have time to make all required changes and submit the paper again for their approval. Deadlines for graduation requirements can be found [here](http://gsas.columbia.edu).

**D. MAINTAINING MATRICULATION**

All M.A. students must maintain matriculation every semester they are taking courses or working on a thesis, unless they are on a leave of absence. All M.A. candidates who are not proceeding to the Ph.D. may maintain matriculation (in order to complete outstanding requirements) for one year after having completed their 32 points of course work. Fees will not be waived for M.A. candidates under any circumstances.

**IV. GENERAL ACADEMIC POLICIES**

**Advising**

The DGS serves as an adviser to all new students. Students may also decide to work with a faculty adviser of shared academic interests. The student should consult his or her adviser and/or DGS regarding class load and progress toward degree. In addition, the Chair is always available for consultation.

**Applying for Jobs**

Please attend the Job Market Workshop held each year at the end of the first semester. Current academic openings are posted in the MLA Joblist and elsewhere. It is the student’s responsibility to keep up with job opportunities, including those at NYU, as they arise. It is
recommended that students also consult NYU Wasserman resources for professional development events and job openings.

**Full Time Equivalency (FTE)**

Ph.D. students who have finished coursework and are writing their dissertations or preparing for exams can still be considered “full-time” students. In order to receive full-time equivalency, you must request it every semester from the Graduate Administrative Aide. Students who are past time to degree constraints are ineligible for FTE. In order to maintain legal status in the U.S., all F-1 and J-1 international students are also required every semester to either register full-time or request full-time equivalency from the Graduate Administrative Aide.

**Good Standing**

The University requires that all students registered in either coursework or maintaining matriculation be in “good standing.” “Good standing” is defined as having a GPA of at least 3.3 and complying with departmental standards and time-to-degree trajectory. Please keep in mind that as a MacCracken Fellow you must meet the minimum standards for “good standing” set by both the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences and this department. Failure to be in “good standing” may result in academic probation. If you are not in good standing, it is your responsibility to make an appointment with either the DGS or the Chair to discuss your situation.

**GSAS Conference Travel Grants**

GSAS Travel Grants are available in sums up to $300 from the University for students who are presenting papers/posters at a scholarly or professional conference. These grants are limited and available on a first-come, first-served basis, so you are encouraged to apply at the beginning of each semester or as soon as you are able. Effective fall 2011, the maximum number of awards that Ph.D. students may receive is two. Applications may be obtained on the GSAS website.

**Incompletes**

- Students who receive a grade of “Incomplete” have one semester to complete the work necessary for a letter grade. This means that if an ‘I’ is received in the spring semester, the grade must be submitted by the beginning of the following Spring semester; similarly, if an ‘I’ is received in the Fall, the grade must be submitted by the beginning of the following Fall semester.
- It is the student’s responsibility to submit completed work to the professor in question at least two weeks before grades are due and notify the Graduate Administrative Aide that the work has been submitted. The Aide will then be in contact with the course professors to have the grade changed.
- Incompletes produce penalties from the graduate school in terms of registration, financial aid and eligibility for jobs, teaching, and degree. Two or more at any one time constitutes “poor standing” and leads to academic probation. Grades of ‘I’ not completed within a year will automatically revert to ‘F’. To prevent this from
happening, you must get an official extension from the DGS. These will be given only in exceptional circumstances.

Independent Studies

- Students are not permitted to take more than one independent study (i.e. Directed Research I/II, Thesis Research, or Individual Research) in any given semester.
- Students can only elect to take a course pass/fail if they are not concurrently taking an independent study.

International Students

- International students should contact the NYU Office of Global Services (OGS) for all questions concerning international status and procedure. Time to degree for international students may vary due to individual visa requirements.
- OGS is located at 383 Lafayette Street. They can be contacted via email at ogs@nyu.edu and by phone at (212) 998-4720.

Leave of Absence

- In order to be granted a leave of absence, you must demonstrate serious cause to the Director of Graduate Studies. A leave of absence will count towards your time to degree. A leave will waive your matriculation fees but will also preclude you from using NYU facilities, including the library. It is expected that students will fulfill the terms of their MacCracken. Time off, except for emergencies, is not normally permitted.
- If you wish to go on leave after the second week of the semester, you will have to go through the term withdrawal system. This will give you all “W” grades on your transcript for that semester’s classes. If you are considering a leave, you should first contact Li Cao and Charles Boyle in GSAS before going through the term withdrawal system to determine appropriate advisement measures.
- Accommodations are also available for students who are new parents. Please be in contact with the Graduate Administrative Aide for more information.