

Northwestern University Department of English

2008-2009

Guide to Doctoral Study

The Department of English Guide to Doctoral Study supplements the Graduate School website, which contains general regulations and deadlines on a wide range of academic and financial matters pertaining to graduate study. The Guide contains information about departmental regulations and requirements for the doctoral program and degree. When departmental regulations concerning a particular aspect of the program change during your tenure of study at Northwestern, you will ordinarily follow the rule in effect when you matriculated, except by permission of the Director of Graduate Studies. The Guide sometimes refers to general regulations of the Graduate School, but it must always be used in conjunction with the most recent update to the Graduate School website.

*As a student in the Graduate School, you will at any moment be one of several thousand degree candidates, and during your stay here you will have to interact directly and indirectly with a set of bureaucracies that includes, among others, the Federal Government. It is your direct responsibility to keep abreast of the general regulations and deadlines of the Graduate School and to comply with them in a timely fashion. The Department will help you, but **you should not rely on it to tell you what you need to do and when.** While the Graduate School will be compassionate in dealing with difficulties that are beyond your control, equity and time constraints make it hard for rules to be bent when problems arise from students' negligence.*

The Graduate Office 2008-2009

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1. RESIDENCY, REGISTRATION, AND GRADES

1.1. Course and Registration Credits

If you are a full-time student in the Graduate School, credits are based on residence rather than credit hours. Three registrations are required for full-time standing in a given quarter. You may take a fourth course without adding to your tuition bill. Consult the website of the Graduate School for regulations concerning residency and post-candidacy research.

Within the framework of the Graduate School residency requirements, the Department will determine the number and distribution of courses required for your particular program of studies. In consultation with the Director of Graduate Studies (DGS), you will choose your coursework from courses offered in the English Department as well as in other departments and programs. You may count the following types of registration toward full-time standing in the Graduate School:

- **300-level undergraduate courses**, provided they are listed in CAESAR as Graduate School courses. (Some 300-level courses do not carry graduate credit)
- **400-level graduate courses**. These are standard graduate seminars that form the core of your coursework.
- **500-level graduate courses**. These are special courses, such as Eng 570: Teaching Composition, not necessarily more advanced in nature than 400-levels.
- **ENG 499 Independent Study Registrations**. These registrations are considered appropriate only in specific situations, such as a lack of course offerings in a student's area of specialization. To register for a 499, you must first file with the DGS a formal 499 Proposal (see the Graduate Program Assistant for an application), which describes the topic that you will study, the syllabus, the frequency of meetings with the instructor, and the requirements for written work. Both the student and the professor must sign this proposal. At the end of the quarter, an evaluation by the professor must be filed with the DGS. These classes cannot count towards the pre/post 1800 requirement.
- **ENG 490 Reading and Pedagogy Registrations**. This registration carries no particular assignments or duties but gives you time to prepare for exams or do your work as a teaching assistant. You may register for one unit of 490 in every quarter in which you are a teaching assistant. 490 registrations carry an automatic passing grade for students in good standing.
- **ENG 590 Research** is the registration you use when you prepare the prospectus for your dissertation and read for the second part of your Qualifying Exam. The Department recommends that third-year students seek every opportunity to benefit from intensive work with faculty and fellow students in their fields as they pursue their two objectives of finishing the second part of the Qualifying Exam and producing an accepted prospectus for a dissertation project. To that end, third-year students should register, over the course of the year, for three seminars, 499s, and/or other courses that promise to contribute significantly to their intellectual goals. Seminars and independent work may be taken Pass/Fail with English Department faculty, with the understanding that you will do reading and participate in discussions but will be exempt from final research assignments, at the discretion of the instructor. This will allow you to keep your exams and dissertation proposals as a first priority. In conjunction with this recommended course work, third-year students will normally register for three 590s, generally one per quarter, but this can vary depending on the coursework offered across quarters. Where a good case can be made for the intellectual potential of taking extra 590s rather than third-year coursework, a student may, with the approval of the DGS, be permitted to register for up to three extra 590s.
- **TGS 598** (Resident Doctoral Study) is a registration that allows you to interrupt your formal course of study without losing standing as a full-time student. It is most commonly used after coursework is completed without all candidacy requirements being fulfilled, and for summer registration prior to candidacy.
- **TGS 599** (Post Candidacy Research) Once you are admitted to candidacy, the Graduate School requires that you register for three quarters of TGS 599 Post-Candidacy Research. Registering for 598 may waste fellowships you will need to pay for the required 599s. TGS 503 is the lowest tuition registration and is available if you have completed the three 599s but need to be registered. Three 599s are required, and are not replaced by 598 registrations.
- **TGS 503, 512, & 513**. Once you've finished your third quarter enrolled in TGS 599, you will enroll for TGS 503 during every quarter in which you are receiving funding of any kind, and TGS 512 (tuition is \$100/quarter) for any unfunded quarter (excluding summer) up to your ninth-year degree deadline. After that point, you must register for TGS 513 (tuition rises to \$1000/quarter) in every quarter of the academic year between the deadline and your submission of the dissertation. Being granted an extension by the Graduate School obviates this stipulation

Ordinarily, the program takes five or six years to complete, but if you and your committee determine that you need more time, provisions can be made for an extension. The Graduate School requires that you register as appropriate throughout your time here in the doctoral program until you defend your dissertation.

1.1.1. Transfer Credit

Ph.D. candidates who arrive with both a B.A. and an M.A. in English may, upon request, transfer two units of M.A. credit to be used in the fall and winter of the third year, enabling them to take a unit of 590 (research registration) in lieu of auditing one seminar in each of those quarters. Transfer credits cannot be used in place of any of the required pre- and post-1800 courses.

1.2. Grades

Your English instructors will often use intermediate grades, and these will appear in departmental records. The Graduate School will also record letter grades with plus or minus distinctions on your official transcript.

1.3. Incomplete Work

In order to remain in good standing for fellowships, you must make up any incomplete work from an academic year no later than two weeks prior to the beginning of classes in the following fall quarter. This rule supersedes any rule set down by the Graduate School. We do strongly recommend that you complete all work for your courses before the beginning of the subsequent quarter whenever possible. In cases involving such unavoidable circumstances as illness or a death in the family, you may, on or before the deadline, submit a written petition for an extension to the DGS.

Be aware also that the Graduate School closely monitors incomplete work (Y, N or X grades). To qualify for summer funding, a student in years 1-4 and on University funding must be held in good academic standing by both the English Department and Graduate School definitions. The latter requires that the student have no more than one incomplete on his or her record at the end of the spring quarter. Further, if any incomplete is not made up within a year, you will lose the residency credit for the course and will need to register for an additional course at your own expense. You will receive warning letters or probation letters from the Graduate School each quarter in which you have more than one incomplete grade on your record.

The Graduate School further requires that all incompletes be made up by the time you advance to candidacy at the end of the third year. Failure to observe this rule will result in your becoming liable for additional tuition charges, for which the department will not be able to provide funding.

1.4. Departmental Evaluations

For every course you take, your instructor will file a written evaluation on a standard form. A crucial part of your permanent record in the department, they are given close attention in deliberations about continuation and fellowships. Students should consult them as they appear and use them in measuring achievement and planning goals. The Graduate faculty—including Policy Committee members, the DGS, or the Chair—may consult all student records.

2. THE PH.D. PROGRAM

2.1. The First Year of the Doctoral Program

The Ph.D. program provides scholarly training in the history and criticism of literature written in English and in literary theory. The aim of our regulations for the first three years of doctoral work

is to guide you in a course of study that will give you a broadly based historical knowledge of English and American literature and lead you toward an informed choice of the field in which you propose to write a dissertation. Whether you enter with a B.A. or M.A., the first year of the doctoral program will consist of course work.

Your goal in the first year will be to explore the range of options in literary study generally and the particular resources of the Northwestern faculty as you approach the choice of your field of specialization. Specifically, you will:

- Take English 410 (“Introduction to Graduate Studies,” see 2.1.2) in the fall quarter and eight other courses throughout the year, to develop both your general knowledge and your particular interests.
- Complete the Language Requirement by taking the written exam in the Department, or determine a plan for how to make progress toward completing that requirement, ideally in your second year (but absolutely no later than the summer of your third, in any case).
- Undergo, in the spring of your first year, a First Year Review, which is conducted by the Graduate Committee. The Graduate Faculty as a whole will consider the Committee’s recommendation and decide on your continuation (see 2.1.5. below).

2.1.2. Introduction to Graduate Studies (Eng 410)

English 410, “Introduction to Graduate Studies,” is the one course required of all doctoral students. This course is designed to introduce students to library resources, research methods, scholarly endeavors such as textual editing, constructions and deconstructions of literary history and canons, influential theories underlying analytic and critical practices, the history of the profession of literary studies, and/or contemporary issues within and around the discipline.

2.1.3. Pre/Post 1800 Course Requirement

In order to insure that students become acquainted with literature from diverse historical periods and contexts, we require that you take:

- at least four courses in literature written before 1800
- at least four courses in literature written after 1800

At least three courses from each group must be at the 400 level; the other in each case may be at the 300 level if it is listed in the Graduate Course Catalogue. Ordinarily, Independent Study courses (499) may not be used to satisfy this requirement, nor may courses you took as an undergraduate. To have a CIC Traveling Scholar Program course count toward any of your requirements, you must get approval from the DGS. If a given course straddles the line, the instructor will determine how it should count. **Courses in literary theory do not normally satisfy this requirement.**

2.1.4. The Language Requirement

Knowledge of a second language and some experience of literature written in that language are of extraordinary benefit in deepening one's awareness of language as the medium of literature. The Department considers this benefit so valuable that it requires of all its doctoral students an advanced reading knowledge of a second language broadly relevant to the study of English and American literature. Completion of the language requirement is a prerequisite for admission to candidacy.

Although the general language requirement exists independently of particular research interests, you are encouraged to choose the language that will be most beneficial to you in the definition and pursuit of your research.

The Language Requirement is satisfied by passing a 3-hour reading exam administered by the English Department. The exam requires you to read three passages of academic prose in a modern foreign language and answer a series of comprehension questions by writing short essays in English. The essays must respond directly to the questions and must demonstrate a clear, accurate, and nuanced understanding of the passages at hand. The comprehension exams do not require any specialized knowledge of the authors, texts, or fields in question, and in fact, you should avoid drawing on material outside the text. Use of a dictionary is permitted, but excessive reliance on it may compromise your ability to complete the exam in the time allotted.

The language exams are set and graded by two members of the English Department. If the examiners disagree, the exam will go to a third reader. Exams are offered in every quarter during the year, but if you choose to take the exam in the summer, the results may not be available until after the start of the fall quarter.

Students are not normally admitted into the doctoral program without some knowledge of a second language, and you are strongly encouraged to develop an advanced reading knowledge before entering the program in order to pass the exam while still in course work. If you do not pass it on the first attempt, you will work out with the DGS an appropriate plan for completing the requirement in good time. You are strongly encouraged to complete the Language Requirement no later than the spring of your second year. As noted above, you will not be admitted to candidacy until you have completed this requirement.

If you need to acquire or improve your proficiency in a second language before passing the language exam, you may register for undergraduate language classes as a fourth course each quarter, for credit and a grade, as long as necessary. You can also satisfy the language requirement by taking a 300-level literature course with all readings done in the second language (though discussion may be conducted in English), and passing it with a grade of A- or above. Grammar and conversation classes, or courses below the 300-level, may not be used to satisfy the requirement.

Non-credit reading groups in various languages, directed by advanced graduate students, are offered when talent and funding permit. The Graduate School also offers funding for intensive summer language courses at the University of Chicago and elsewhere, including overseas if needed.

In addition, students specializing in medieval literature must pass a 3-hour translation exam in Medieval Latin, offered by the University of Toronto in September and April of each year. There is a \$50 registration fee for this exam, for which the department will reimburse you if you pass. A non-credit Medieval Latin Workshop is offered every quarter throughout the year.

The Language Requirement is normally waived for students whose native language is other than English.

2.1.5. The First Year Review

The satisfactory completion of all courses is a necessary, but not in itself sufficient, condition for continuation into the second year. That decision rests on the judgment of the Graduate Faculty that you have demonstrated the ability and motivation to plan a substantial scholarly project and carry it to completion within the time limits for the degree.

Toward the end of the spring quarter, the Graduate Policy Committee will schedule a formal interview (20-30 minutes) with each first-year doctoral student. The interview will give you an opportunity to discuss your work, your interests, and your plans for the future, and it will give the committee a chance to assess your progress over the year. To serve as a basis for discussion, the committee will ask you to submit in advance one paper that you consider representative of your work. The paper should involve research and documentation and be ideally 10-12 pp.—the committee will not consider papers shorter than 8 pp. or longer than 20 pp. While the paper need not be from your intended field of study, it should certainly demonstrate your theoretical interests and rhetorical strengths.

The essay submitted for evaluation should be free of any comments or corrections. Students may correct typos and refine phrasing of the original draft; they may also expand or edit papers as necessary. To ensure that the Graduate Committee can evaluate student work from the spring quarter, first year reviews will take place during Reading Week.

On the basis of your academic record in the first year and the interview, the Graduate Committee makes recommendations about continuation to the Graduate Faculty. The Graduate Committee reserves the right to recommend against continuation, even if a student's performance in every course has been adequate, and/or to put a student on probation; in the latter case, a second-year review is required. The Graduate Committee is likely to make such a recommendation if weak performance in some areas has not been balanced by strong performance in others. The Graduate faculty as a whole makes final decisions

on all recommendations

2.1.6. Planning the Second Year

If you are at all like other first-year graduate students, you will find that your coursework demands most of your energy. Nevertheless, it will be important for you to look ahead and to think about the directions your studies are likely to take from this point on. In the final weeks of the spring quarter and over the summer you should think seriously about possible fields of specialization, dissertation topics, and committees, and plan some reading to advance you toward your goals. You should consult the standard Qualifying Exam lists (posted on the department's website) in order to develop a plan of reading for the summer and the second year. You are also advised to consider that you will be trained as a teacher in your second year. In the spring quarter, you may want to arrange to observe the section of one of the current graduate teaching assistants in order to prepare yourself for your initiation into the classroom.

2.1.7. The Master's Degree as Part of the Ph.D. Program

Having successfully completed the first year, you may receive a non-terminal Master's degree upon application. A student not continued into the second year of the doctoral program still is eligible to receive the Master's degree as long as she or he has satisfied the requirements of the Graduate School.

2.2. The Second Year of the Doctoral Program

In the second year of the doctoral program, you will complete your area requirements and take the first part of your Qualifying Exam. You are encouraged to complete the Language Requirement by the end of this year as well. Because you will be particularly busy in the winter and spring quarters with your preparation for the Qualifying Exam, it would be a good idea to plan to complete the Language Requirement in the fall quarter, if you have not already done so in your first year.

You should map out a plan for moving toward your field of specialization in consultation with the DGS. Throughout the fall and winter quarters, you will choose an advisory committee of three faculty members who will formally supervise your progress toward the degree after the successful completion of your first Qualifying Exam. This committee, which may go through changes of composition over the next two or three years, will serve successively as the committee for the written component (part 2) of your Qualifying Exam, your prospectus committee, and finally your dissertation committee. Technically, there is no dissertation director until you have been admitted to candidacy. However, most students select a dissertation advisor before taking the written Qualifying Exam.

2.2.1. Graduate Assistantships

You are likely to be funded by Graduate Assistantships beginning in your second year. In preparation for teaching, you will

attend an orientation meeting at the beginning of Fall Quarter. You may also be assigned a Teaching Assistant Mentor who is a current graduate student in the Department. You will probably find the experience of teaching to be equal parts rewarding and exhausting. As you learn the basics of pedagogy (assuming you have no prior experience), you should keep in mind that a Graduate Assistantship is a part-time position (approximately 20 hours per week), and that your primary responsibility will be to move steadily toward your degree. Do not allow teaching to become all-consuming.

As a graduate assistant, you hold an appointment in the Graduate School with duties assigned by the Department. It is your responsibility to keep abreast of all Graduate School regulations that relate to the appointment, remuneration, tax status, and academic standing of graduate assistants. Awarded by the Graduate School on nomination by the Department, appointments of graduate assistants are not confirmed until the end of the spring quarter.

2.2.2. Eng 490 Registrations

In order to ease your workload as a graduate student and graduate assistant, you may register for one unit of Eng 490 in every quarter in which you hold a Graduate Assistantship. Thus your normal course load as a graduate assistant will consist of two seminars and/or independent study courses.

2.2.3. Teaching Assistant Responsibilities

As a teaching assistant you will support instructors, normally in large undergraduate lecture courses. Your duties will include:

- reading all the books in the course;
- attending all lectures;
- leading up to two discussion sections (a total of no more than fifty students) and grading their papers and exams;
- holding conferences with students and maintaining two regularly scheduled office hours per week (WCAS requires that these hours be held on two different days of the week, and at two different times of day);
- returning the papers and exams of students in your section;
- assisting the instructor in other tasks involved in running a lecture course;
- giving one of the lectures in the course, if the instructor so desires.

For further details about teaching assistant duties, please consult the English Department's *Teaching Assistant Handbook*, distributed at the start of each academic year. The assignment of teaching assistants to particular courses is the joint responsibility of the chair and the DGS, with advice from the GPA. These decisions depend ultimately on enrollments at the undergraduate level. All involved shall make every attempt to give you assignments that either fit your interests or fill gaps in your

coverage of literary periods, but the needs of the undergraduate curriculum must take precedence over other considerations (as it does for professors).

As a teaching assistant in the Department of English you may be assigned to a Comparative Literature, Gender Studies, or other interdepartmental course taught by a faculty member from another department. The regulations of the English Department apply in that case, and you may not be asked to teach more students than you would in an English course. Be sure to notify us in the case that what is being asked of you falls outside the limits we have set.

2.2.4. The Qualifying Exam

The purpose of the Qualifying Exam as a whole is to test your command of the primary literature and your grasp of the relevant historical and theoretical contexts in the field in which you intend to write your dissertation. The Qualifying Exam is thus designed to cover an area larger than your dissertation and to qualify you generally to teach in a given field. The Qualifying Exam is divided into two parts: the first part is an oral exam, administered at the end of your second year, that asks you to demonstrate in-depth familiarity with a list of core texts in your field; the second part is a take-home written exam, administered at the end of the fall quarter of your third year, that asks you to demonstrate critical engagement with a selection of texts and research approaches that will inform your dissertation prospectus. The department sets the texts and examiners for the first part of the exam; you draw up the list for the second part of the exam in consultation with a committee of three faculty members you have chosen.

2.2.5. The Qualifying Exam: Part One (Oral)

In the spring of your second year, you will take the first part of the Qualifying Exam in a specified field. The department currently offers qualifying exams in the following fields:

- Medieval English Literature
- British Literature 1500-1650 (also called “Renaissance” or “Early Modern”)
- Eighteenth-Century British Literature
- Nineteenth-Century British Literature
- American Literature
- Twentieth/Twenty-First Century Literature in English
- Drama in English

By the summer of your first year, you will select one of these fields and begin reading the standard field list. These lists are available from the first day you enter the program, and the DGS will have distributed the lists in all fields to you during your first year. The list that is in place when you matriculate is the list you can expect to be examined on.

All second-year students will take the exam during reading week of Spring Quarter of the second year. The two-hour oral exam is administered by a committee of three faculty members appointed

by the DGS. Students are encouraged to meet with the DGS if they have questions, and will be notified about the composition of the exam committee during the early stages of the Spring Quarter.

The oral component of the Qualifying Exam covers a list of core texts in your broad field. The list does not attempt to include every text important in the field or to establish a comprehensive canon. Instead, it designates a reasonably small set of texts that provides minimum competency in the literary forms of the period, national culture, or genre. Keep in mind that you will read more extensively and widely in preparing for the second part of the exam.

This first part of the Qualifying Exam is designed principally to test—and to help you demonstrate—detailed knowledge of the texts stipulated on the reading list. It focuses on the interpretive reading of these texts. You will be asked to show specific, detailed recall of literary works and an ability to offer a textured reading of the works at hand. You will also be expected to understand the basic terms and concepts necessary for literary study (epic, novel, figures of speech, poetic terms). Questions will deal with the thematic patterns and artistic characteristics of individual works on the list and with significant interrelations among works. Broader questions about literary history (“discuss the main forms of Renaissance drama”) and about the relations of works to their historical, biographical, and cultural contexts are allowable, but only to the degree that they are immediately relevant to the understanding of, and are illustrated by, works on the list. “In what sense is *The Woman in White* a ‘sensation novel’?” is thus more suitable than “Discuss the relations of the ‘sensation novel’ to other styles of Victorian fiction.” You will receive a grade of Pass or Fail for the oral exam. If you fail the exam, you have one chance to retake it before the beginning of Fall Quarter.

In exceptional cases, students may petition the DGS and the Graduate Committee for an alternate Qualifying Exam field. To do so, a student must find three faculty sponsors and put together an alternate reading list during the fall of his or her second year. The Graduate Committee must then approve the alternate list before the student takes the oral exam at the end of the second year. Alternate fields must have a breadth and scope comparable to the standard fields.

2.2.6. Planning the Third Year

Your goal in the third year of doctoral study will be to advance to candidacy by finishing the second part of the Qualifying Exam and by developing a dissertation prospectus that is approved by your committee and the Graduate Committee.

In the summer of your second year, you will begin to draw up a reading list and to write a rationale that consists of a set of related research questions. Together, these two documents will serve as the basis for the second (written) part of the Qualifying Exam. You should meet with your committee members before the conclusion of Spring Quarter in order to develop a program of

reading for the summer, which will help you advance toward the exams and prospectus writing. You should devise the core of your reading list during the spring and summer of your second year, with an eye toward completing the rationale and revising the list by the end of the summer. With the prior approval of your committee, you will then submit the finished list and rationale to the DGS in the week before Fall Quarter of your third year. The deadline for submitting these materials will typically be the Friday prior to the start of classes, but you will be notified of the year's specific deadline in advance.

2.3. The Third Year of the Doctoral Program

By the end of your third year, you should have completed all of the requirements of the Graduate School for admission to candidacy: receiving a "pass" on your Qualifying Exam, gaining approval of the Dissertation Prospectus, completion of all course work, and successfully passing the Foreign Language Exam.

The third year of the doctoral program is in many ways the most challenging, because during the summer you will have begun an important transition. You move from completing specified assignments for particular courses and other set tasks to working more independently on goals of much greater scope, which you will have a far greater role in setting for yourself. While you will still receive guidance from faculty members (and should never hesitate to seek it at any point during the year), your achievements will depend increasingly on your own discipline, organization, ambition, and imagination. The third year completes your preparation for the largest task of your graduate study: the research and writing of your dissertation. In doing so, it advances you toward your ultimate goal of becoming a mature, self-motivated scholar, critic, thinker, and writer.

You may register for one unit of Eng 590 each quarter of your third year to give you additional time to prepare for the exam, research, and write your prospectus. You will continue to register for one unit of Eng 490 each quarter while on GAship, and may take courses Pass/Fail with the approval of the instructor.

2.3.1. The Qualifying Exam: Part Two (Written)

In the week before Fall Quarter of the third year, you will turn in your reading list and rationale to the DGS, who will review reading lists and questions in order to maintain uniform standards across fields.

The second part of the Qualifying Exam is the more arduous of the two, because it demands wider reading of more texts and more refined analysis. While the department sets the reading list for the first part of the exam, you will devise the reading list for the second part, in consultation with your committee. You will also draft a 4-5-page rationale that explains the research questions you will ask of the texts selected.

2.3.1.1. The "Rationale" for the Written Qualifying Exam

In the second part of the Qualifying Exam, you will focus on a body of texts and on a set of questions that you and your committee have identified as germane to a dissertation. You will need to articulate these questions in a brief (4-5 pages, double-spaced) essay, the "rationale," describing lines of inquiry intended to lead to the eventual formulation of a dissertation topic. The reading list that accompanies the "rationale," though narrower in focus than the standardized period list for the oral exam, should be deeper in its coverage, listing, in addition to primary texts relevant to your area of special investigation, extensive secondary sources in theory, history, and previous criticism. Normally, it will amount to 5-6 double-spaced pages, depending on the kinds of texts specified.

The Graduate Program Assistant will maintain a file of lists and rationales, which you should consult to get a sense of the scope, depth, and complexity expected. Remember that you must submit your reading list and a rationale for your exam to the DGS, in order to make sure that different comprehensive exams are comparable in scope.

2.3.1.2. The Written Qualifying Exam

The written exams are based on the "rationale" and are intended to determine that you have read widely and intelligently enough in your field to be able to formulate arguments that go well beyond the interpretation of individual texts. This second part of the exam is a take-home examination, which must be completed in one week plus the Thanksgiving vacation (10 days, with distribution the first morning, and submission by noon on the last). It will normally be given to you on the Wednesday before Thanksgiving of fall quarter of your third year, and will be due the Friday of Reading Week. Ordinarily, the exam will consist of three or four questions, two on which you'll write response essays. The combined page length for the essays ideally will be 25 pp. (12,000 words) and must not exceed 28 pp. (14,000 words; double-spaced, standard margins); all essays must be handed in at the time specified when the exam is distributed.

Your committee will not expect the argument of these essays to have the conclusive character of a dissertation chapter; nor will your essays necessarily represent elements of your eventual dissertation. Nonetheless, it is important at this point for you to think ahead, as you prepare for this exam, to the prospectus-writing stage, at which time you will need to have *tentative hypotheses* in hand, in order to determine the direction of your research. When the time comes for drafting the prospectus, you need to be confident that the provisional hypotheses guiding your reading during this later period will not lead to wild-goose chases or reinventions of the wheel. You must also be sure that claims of distinctiveness are not being made for texts that are in fact rather typical and representative in the period, or *vice versa*, that claims of representativeness are not being made for texts that are in fact anomalous or idiosyncratic.

In order to avoid such misjudgments, you will need to have a good grasp of the diversity, character, and scope of the literary and critical texts that define the period you are studying; it is your grasp of this landscape that the second exam is intended to evaluate. While crafting sustained arguments, your answers should also demonstrate specific command of texts and their critical reception, and should give evidence of careful thought about the issues identified in the “rationale.” Different exam committees and different research projects will call for appropriate variations in principles of selectivity of coverage and in the kinds of questions likely to appear on the exam; students and committees must work toward a shared understanding of these matters ahead of time.

There is no oral component to this exam, and it is graded simply ‘pass’ or ‘fail.’ You may appeal a failing grade to the DGS or (if the DGS is a member of your exam committee) to the Chair of the Department. The DGS or Chair will then convene an ad hoc committee composed of her/himself and two other faculty, who will give your exam a fresh reading and decide whether it is a ‘pass’ or a ‘fail.’ This committee’s ruling will be final.

Failure will result in dismissal from the program; the exam may not be retaken.

2.3.2. The Prospectus

When you return from the holiday break before the winter quarter, your main task will be to plan a course of reading so that you can develop a prospectus for the dissertation. Upon passing the second part of your Qualifying Exam, you will register for two additional units of 590 (for P/N credit) with two members of the Graduate Faculty, normally members of your Exam Committee. You may take one unit each in the second and third quarters of your third year, or you may choose to take two units in one quarter. The joint product of both units will be your prospectus. You should meet with both faculty members at the beginning of the quarter to work out a course of action, and you should have at least one meeting toward the end of the quarter to review progress and make sure that there is agreement among you on what remains to be done. You should also meet separately and regularly with each member throughout the quarter.

While much of the work in the winter quarter will be concerned with background reading and bibliographical spadework, it will be important for you to turn in several written drafts of your ideas. You are expected to submit a first draft of your prospectus by the start of the spring quarter and to meet with your committee members soon after that. This draft will probably be quite rough, and it may take several drafts to be satisfactorily polished, but it is important that you commit yourself to a topic firmly and early.

2.3.2.1. The Format of the Prospectus

The prospectus establishes a blueprint for the major accomplishment of your career in the doctoral program, the writing of the

dissertation. A concise and precise program for the chapter-by-chapter drafting of the dissertation, the prospectus allows both you and your committee to conceive of the dissertation project as a whole. Additionally, the prospectus places the dissertation in the context of current scholarship in the chosen field of study; it thereby indicates how the dissertation contributes to and potentially changes this field. Chiefly, the prospectus gives you an opportunity to anticipate and articulate the *thesis* of your dissertation: the line of argument it will pursue, the logical articulations linking each section to the others, and the method by which the line of argument will be elaborated by reference to evidentiary materials.

The prospectus should thus do the following:

1. describe the topic under consideration and formulate the argument to be proposed;
2. identify the methodological principles on the basis of which the research will be conducted;
3. specify the scope of the inquiry;
4. briefly explain the relation of the dissertation to major scholarly achievements and contemporary trends in the field;
5. outline the chapters, with a brief exposition of what each one seeks to accomplish;
6. provide an extensive bibliography that includes both primary and secondary material.

The bibliography is especially important; indeed, the entire prospectus is contained, so to speak, in its bibliography. Different fields require different kinds of bibliographies, with different degrees of inclusiveness. But, in general, a bibliography should include every item that would make a difference to the dissertation. Because the prospectus is a formal professional document, the bibliography should be presented in formal bibliographical style.

In general, a prospectus is 4,000-5,000 words (8-10 pages) in length, not including the bibliography. The GPA maintains a file of approved prospectuses which you are welcome to consult.

2.3.2.2. Approval of the Prospectus

When your three dissertation committee members judge the completed draft of your prospectus to be acceptable, and have signed it, the prospectus will be forwarded to the DGS, who will distribute copies to members of the Graduate Committee. After reviewing the prospectus, this committee will either approve it or, in the case of a prospectus that requires substantial revisions, send it back for amendment and resubmission. The DGS will notify in writing all candidates whose prospectuses are not approved and require revision. The Graduate Committee will comment on all prospectuses; in the case of approved prospectuses, the comments offered are advisory.

Prospectuses should be approved by your committee no later than May 15th (the date may vary by a day or two depending on the year, but will always be as close to this as possible) of the

spring quarter of your third year, and will then be submitted to the Graduate Committee. Prospectuses sent back for revision and resubmission must be approved by the three dissertation committee members **no later than one week before the beginning of the fall quarter** of the fourth year, and must then be resubmitted to the Graduate Committee for approval by the first day of classes that quarter. If you do not have the prospectus approved by the Graduate Committee by the end of the first week of the quarter, you must wait until winter quarter to achieve candidacy. When your three committee members and the Graduate Committee have approved your revised and resubmitted prospectus, the DGS will notify you. You should not assume your prospectus has been approved until you receive a letter to this effect from the DGS.

2.3.3. Admission to Candidacy

Admission to candidacy is a procedure of the Graduate School indicating that you have met all degree requirements except for the writing of the dissertation. You will advance to candidacy if you have met the area and language requirements, finished all course work, completed an approved prospectus, and passed both parts of the Qualifying Exam. The Graduate Program assistant will inform you of the specific procedures to be followed.

The Graduate School requires that you achieve candidacy by the end of the first week of classes following your twelfth quarter (in most cases, this will be the beginning of fall in your fourth year) in the program, and may exclude you from further graduate study if you do not meet this requirement. You may also be held responsible for additional tuition costs, and may be ineligible for future funding. Graduate School policy states, "It is not appropriate to appoint fourth year students who have not been admitted to candidacy as Graduate Assistants."

2.4. The Fourth Year of the Doctoral Program

Once you are admitted to candidacy, your progress toward the degree will depend very much on your own pace and initiative. While we would like you to make significant progress toward completing your dissertation by the end of your fifth year, it is not uncommon for students take three more years to finish. To ensure that you are proceeding at an appropriate pace, it is vital that you stay in touch with your committee during the writing phase.

Although you need not publish in order to get a job, a well-placed publication always strengthens your credentials. We strongly urge you to submit some version of a dissertation chapter for publication, ideally, in time for the piece to be accepted (not necessarily published) before your job search gets in full swing. You should plan to consult closely with your committee in this effort. On occasion a seminar paper written in your first two years of study will lend itself to being worked up for publication. In many cases, such a paper will also function as a draft for a dissertation chapter. With rare exceptions, we discourage students from spending large amounts of time early in their graduate

careers in attempts to transform seminar essays into publishable articles, in the belief that such labor is better spent on reading for the dissertation.

Registration for your first three post-candidacy quarters is TGS 599 Post-candidacy Research.

2.4.1. The Dissertation Committee

In writing your dissertation you will be guided by your committee, who will be both advisers in the process of research and composition and judges of the final product. As stated on the Admission to Candidacy page of the Graduate School's website, "The [Dissertation] examination committee must include no fewer than three full-time members of the Northwestern University faculty, two of whom, including the [committee] chair, must be members of the Graduate Faculty." With the approval of The Graduate School, a faculty member who leaves the University may still serve as one of the three full-time Northwestern Faculty members. On rare occasions, a specialist from another university may be asked to serve as a fourth reader as well.

2.4.2. The Prospectus and the Dissertation

It is useful to think of your prospectus as a memorandum of understanding between you and your committee about your dissertation. The prospectus is not a contract specifying provisions to be fulfilled. You will undoubtedly change your mind on many aspects of your dissertation as you proceed, and your committee members will expect such changes. But you must seek their advice and approval if you envisage substantial departures from the scope or method of your original proposal, and you must incorporate such changes in an amended prospectus. Such formal revision of the prospectus is especially important if you intend to reduce the scope of your dissertation, delete authors and topics, or make significant changes in your coverage and treatment of secondary literature. In general, it will be your responsibility to keep your committee informed of what you are doing, and to make sure that they will read your dissertation as a realization of plans they have had a chance to ponder and approve. **If your project undergoes radical revisions that are approved by your committee you must submit an updated prospectus to the Graduate Program Assistant for the archives so that your work is being accurately reflected.**

2.4.3. Communication with your Director and Committee

Formally your communication with your committee will be through your dissertation director, who chairs your committee and has the major responsibility for supervising your progress. It is the director's responsibility to make sure that the parts of your dissertation are presented to the committee in a sufficiently coherent and substantial form to permit evaluation and advice. No member of your committee is required to read any part of your dissertation until it has been reviewed by the director.

While your dissertation director has the leading role as your

adviser, all members of your committee are equal judges of the final product, and each member must certify by his or her signature that he or she is willing to accept your work as meeting the standards for a doctoral dissertation in the English Department of Northwestern University.

Within this framework, it will be up to you to develop a relationship with your committee that will work best for your dissertation. Some candidates will work mainly with their director, with other members of the committee serving primarily in a review function. There may be other cases in which interests and expertise on the committee are balanced in such a way that all members are actively involved at all stages of the dissertation. Whatever particular relationship you develop, it will be important for you to get your committee's criticism and advice on the bulk of your dissertation sufficiently early to take full advantage of it.

2.4.4. Changes in your Dissertation Committee

If a member of your committee leaves the University or resigns from your committee, the DGS will appoint a replacement after consultation with you, your committee, and the Graduate Committee. If you would like a faculty member who has left the University to continue on your committee and the faculty member has agreed to do so, the Graduate Committee will normally comply with your request if your dissertation is well underway, within the restrictions defined by the Graduate School.

2.4.5. Time Span for Reading Dissertation Chapters

Your committee members have an obligation to read individual chapters of your dissertation within three weeks, but you are required to give them advance warning of your timetable in order for them to meet this schedule. If you plan to hand in an entire dissertation at once, you must provide a month's notice if you expect the three-week rule to be followed.

Your committee members also have an obligation to read your dissertation while they are on leave. During leave and the summer months, it is up to you to keep in touch with them to make sure that they enough advanced notice so that they can allot the time necessary to your work. You should work out a schedule for contacting them over the summer in quarter preceding their going on leave or the end of the academic year, given that many faculty members leave the city/country fairly quickly.

2.4.6. Preparation of the Dissertation

Submission of your dissertation to the Graduate School will be performed electronically. Information on the process can be found on the Graduate School's website, especially in the Degree Requirements section of the Student Services page. You must consult the Graduate School website for the latest information on submission requirements guidelines. You should, however, give hard copies of the dissertation to each member of your committee. The department has funds available to assist in the

printing and photocopying, so be sure to speak to the GPA when the time comes.

Your dissertation is required by the Department and the Graduate School to follow with care and accuracy the latest edition of an approved model of scholarly citation. You may choose *The Chicago Manual of Style*, *the MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers*, *The Thesis Writer's Handbook*, *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association* or *Kate Turabian's A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations*. Your director is required to review your dissertation for scholarly accuracy and careful editing and to sign a certificate approving it before you receive your degree. It is very much to your advantage to choose one of the approved formats for footnotes and bibliography for your dissertation early on and to follow it meticulously throughout the stages of preparing your dissertation.

2.4.7. Dissertation Defense and Assessment

Your last examination as a degree candidate will be the oral defense of your dissertation. After this examination, your committee will comment on your dissertation, assessing in reasonable detail its strengths and weaknesses, making recommendations concerning possible publication, and of most immediate concern, recommend whatever final editing needs to be done prior to submission of the dissertation to the Graduate School.

In either case, submission of the fully edited dissertation to the Graduate School is the final requirement that must be fulfilled before you are eligible to graduate. Though specific dates will vary from year to year, **you should be prepared to submit the finalized dissertation to the Graduate School at least six weeks prior to the graduation date in question.** Spring graduation (including the hooding ceremony) is held in mid June, while Fall degrees are awarded at the end of December. Students earning a Fall degree may walk in the ceremony the following Spring if they so desire.

2.4.8. Time Limits

We hope very much that you will never have a need to worry about the Graduate School regulations concerning time limits for the Ph.D., let alone the provision for an extension. You should be aware, however, that these rules are firmly administered and that extensions require additional registrations for which the department cannot provide fellowships. Consult the Graduate School website for the most recent update to these regulations.

As of March 23, 2007, the graduate faculty policy was as follows: "Each doctoral student must complete all requirements for the PhD by an established deadline. Graduate Faculty legislation states the following: All requirements for the doctoral degree must be met within nine years of initial registration in a doctoral program.

Students who do not expect to meet the nine-year deadline may petition The Graduate School to extend the deadline. The petition must be based on a meeting between the student and the dissertation committee, in which the student reviews the progress made on the dissertation and proposes a timetable for completion during the period of the extension. All members of the dissertation committee must sign the petition for a deadline extension. If The Graduate School approves the petition, the student will have up to two additional years to complete all requirements for the PhD degree. Registration is not required as a condition of the extension.

A student on extension is not eligible for a teaching assistantship, University fellowship, or graduate research assistant tuition scholarship."

Additionally, "Beginning in Fall 2008, doctoral students after nine years from first term of enrollment and master's students after five years from first term of enrollment are required to maintain their affiliation with Northwestern by registering for TGS 513, Advanced Continuous Registration. Students must maintain this registration until completion of all degree requirements. Students are required to register for fall, winter, and spring quarters; the summer quarter is excluded. Any lapse in registration must be paid in full, including appropriate retroactive registration fees, or no degree will be awarded nor will a transcript be released. Students in this advanced continuous registration status are not eligible to receive federal loans or to qualify for the university health insurance subsidy, nor will they be eligible for fellowships, traineeships, teaching or research assistantships, and scholarships. This status is considered less than half-time and therefore does not provide students with the ability to defer loans or extend visas. Tuition for TGS 513 is currently \$1000 per quarter."

In practical terms, this means that you will have until the end of your ninth summer quarter (late September) to submit a completed, fully edited and committee-approved dissertation. In all but the rarest cases, only a medical leave of absence will shift this deadline. These are matters of serious concern, and though the GPA will help as best they can with reminders, we ask that you be very careful to keep track of these deadlines.

3. FUNDING & ASSISTANTSHIPS

3.1. Funding in the Second, Third, Fourth, and Fifth Years

University Fellowships and Graduate Assistantships are available only to students admitted to the doctoral program. The Department provides support through the fifth year for every doctoral student who has been continued into the second year and who remains in good standing in subsequent years. Additionally, funding will be provided in your first four summers, under the same restrictions as are listed above.

Funding between the second and fourth years will take the form of Graduate Assistantship, while your fifth year is covered by a

University Fellowship, as in your first year. This leaves you free of department responsibilities in the fifth year, affording you much more time to dedicate to the writing of your dissertation.

Recommendation of continuation from the department is prerequisite to the award of a Graduate Assistantship and all other forms of fellowship that involve Northwestern University funds. In addition, the Graduate School requires that you be in good academic standing to be a graduate assistant. This is defined as having at least a B average and no more than one incomplete grade.

Other circumstances that may jeopardize or otherwise negatively impact university funding include:

- Failing to make up incompletes by two weeks before the beginning of fall quarter;
- Taking a leave of absence, as financial aid packages are normally designed for 15 academic quarters plus 4 summers without provision for "banking" ; in other words, if you take a leave of absence in your third year, you will only have the funding that would cover your fourth and fifth years still available to you. The funding you would have received had you not been on leave will be lost. Only an approved medical leave of absence will exempt you from this policy;
N.B. You will **not** be eligible for summer funding (and will lose that quarter's worth of funding, as explained above) if you are not planning on registering in the following Fall quarter. If you are planning on taking a leave of absence beginning in the fall, be aware that you will not receive funding in the preceding summer.
- Not achieving candidacy before the beginning of the fourth year, whether because of still-standing incompletes, an unfinished language requirement, or failure to submit a prospectus that the Graduate Policy Committee considers acceptable.

It is important to note that the Graduate School expects you to apply for external aid during this period, and requires that you have pursued external funding at least once by your fourth year in the program.

3.2. Support Beyond the Fifth Year

In conjunction with Graduate Assistantships available via either the Graduate School or the Weinberg College of Arts & Sciences, the department also makes every effort to assist students in obtaining funding beyond the fifth year, provided the student continues to remain in good academic standing, and make significant progress toward the degree. Advanced students, in turn, are encouraged to apply for external funding in their fifth and sixth years. Doctoral students beyond their fourth year have frequently been able to secure part-time appointments in Northwestern's School of Continuing Education and the Writing Program, chiefly for the teaching of composition. The demand for such teachers is unlikely to slacken, but the state of the

job market has made such opportunities rarer than they used to be. It is fair to say that the School of Continuing Studies gives some preference in its appointments to qualified Northwestern doctoral students, but it is important to remember that all appointments of this kind are at the discretion of the Dean of the School of Continuing Studies.

3.3. Fellowships

Major Northwestern Fellowships

On an annual basis, the Graduate School conducts a university-wide competition, open only to students who are (or will be, the following year) in candidacy, for the Presidential Fellowship, the most prestigious graduate award given at Northwestern. The department nominates one student each year for the award, based on the applications and supporting letters submitted to the Graduate Policy Committee. Applications for the Presidential must be submitted to your committee by the beginning of the academic year in the fall quarter. The DGS will publicize the exact dates and provide information about the process to all eligible students.

In addition, the Weinberg College of Arts and Sciences accepts department nominations for their own Dissertation Research Fellowship (WDRF), an award that can be used to cover either a year of advanced research or a final dissertation year write-up. Application for this award is in early Spring Quarter.

The Heltzel and Brady Fellowships

Depending on the funds available each year, the Heltzel Dissertation Year Fellowship and Brady Fellowship are awarded by the English Department to advanced students. The Graduate Committee considers each student's overall record and dissertation prospectus in making these awards.

The Lawrence Lipking-Newberry Fellowship

This annual award is designed to enable a qualified student who has advanced to candidacy to spend a quarter conducting research at the Newberry Library. In addition to its superb collections, the Newberry will provide the privileges accorded to Fellows, which include a carrel, access during extended hours, and participation in the Fellows seminar. A stipend equivalent to one quarter of University Fellowship support plus tuition will be provided. The Lipking Fellowship is available for use in fall, winter, or spring quarters, and applications are accepted once each year in the spring.

Northwestern University Press Research Assistantships

One student per year is assigned to help the editors at the Northwestern University Press with the publication of the Tri-Quarterly Journal. The appointment is made jointly by the Press staff and the DGS.

3.4. Other Grants

There are various sources of funds inside and outside the Department and the Graduate School to help you with extraordinary expenses for research travel, travel to professional conferences to deliver papers, and research-related expenses. Announcements of grants are posted regularly, and the Graduate Program Assistant keeps both an electronic and a print listing of grant sources.

For instance, The Woodrow Wilson Foundation administers the Charlotte Newcomb Fellowship for candidates who write dissertations on topics with a religious or ethical component. The restriction is broadly administered and you should consider applying for this fellowship.

3.5. Jobs in Undergraduate Housing

Graduate students may apply for positions in the Undergraduate Housing System as counselors, advisers, or assistant masters of residential colleges. These positions may carry room and board, a cash stipend, or both.

3.6. Fellowships and Good Standing

Graduate Assistantships and other fellowship commitments by WCAS and the Graduate School are subject to your remaining in good standing as a full-time student. As explained above, the Graduate School and the department define good standing as holding at least a B average and having no more than one incomplete grade on record by the end of the academic year.

The English department is required to notify every student active in the program (all those still within their nine-year dissertation deadline) of their standing at the end of each academic year. The letters indicating the passage of the First Year Review, the Oral Qualifying Exam, and the Prospectus are considered indicators of good standing. From the fourth year until the eighth, all students in candidacy will receive a letter briefly verifying that they are still considered to be in good standing. If a student's standing is in question, they will receive a letter spelling out in precise terms the conditions which must be met to restore their status in the department. Ninth year students will be contacted separately early in the year to establish whether they intend to defend within the time limit declared by the Graduate School, and to help put together a time table for completion.

4. OTHER MATTERS

4.1. Department Organization

The Graduate Program of the Department of English operates under the authority and rules of the Graduate School. Responsibility for curricular matters, admissions, fellowships, and other academic and financial matters rests with the Graduate Faculty of the Department, but much of the day-to-day business is

delegated to the Graduate Committee. The DGS is the executive officer of the Graduate Program.

The Graduate Policy Committee is advised by two graduate student representatives from the English Graduate Student Organization elected by the graduate students for one-year terms (see below). They are consulted on all matters of policy, but they do not participate in discussions or vote on matters involving individual students or faculty, nor do they participate in admissions.

4.2. English Graduate Student Organization (EGSO) and Other Activities

The aforementioned English Graduate Student Organization (EGSO) operates with two co-chairs, each elected for one-year terms, along with elected representatives for students in coursework, and those in candidacy. Its activities and liveliness depend on you, but the department will provide funds to support its social and intellectual ambitions. Traditionally, EGSO has provided assistance both during the recruiting phase of admissions and during the campus visits by job candidates, along with organizing colloquia, reading groups, and less strictly academic social activities.

You will also want to make it a point to attend some of the many lectures by faculty from Northwestern and other institutions, and to congregate for discussion with other faculty and students at the receptions that usually follow such events. Attending talks by visiting speakers is an important part of your intellectual training, for these expose you to current research undertaken by scholars and to the protocols of scholarly conversation and debate. While it may seem that your coursework and other tasks take up all of your time, the Department strongly encourages you to attend these events. You will certainly be expected to do so if you take an academic job, and participating in such conversations can prepare you for future job interviews.

4.3. Placement Services

Ideally, graduate training in literary scholarship culminates in the attainment of a tenure-track job at a research university or a liberal arts college. While the vicissitudes of a difficult job market complicate the achievement of this goal, we believe that three vital milestones reached before graduation will put students in the strongest possible position: 1) a provocative and original dissertation; 2) publication of an article in an important journal in the field; 3) presentation of a paper at a national conference.

The Placement Officer, your dissertation director along with your other professors and advisers, and the departmental faculty in general aim to provide all possible assistance to Ph.D. candidates in their fourth year and beyond who are seeking academic positions. The Placement Coordinator will hold meetings to discuss placement issues and workshops for putting together CVs and letters of application for positions. We also review your dossier at the Placement Office, conduct practice

interviews to help you prepare for actual interviews at MLA, hold mock job talks for those called in for campus visits, and are available for consultation about specific issues as they arise. It is important that students who plan to go on the fall job market begin compiling a job application file (CV, job letter, and Statement of Teaching Philosophy) during the summer, in consultation with their dissertation director.

Going on the job market is, ultimately, much like taking on a full-time job, with commensurate demands on your time. It can also be costly, with the copying and posting of application materials standing as a potentially expensive element of the process. Do your best to plan for the demands the process will make on you. We are strongly committed to doing all we can both to train you well and to help you find a position, and do have funds available to help with incidental expenses incurred (like the aforementioned copying and postal fees) so don't hesitate to look to us for assistance.