

Guide for Graduate Students in German Studies

1. Introductory Remarks. The Graduate Program in German Studies is flexible to the extent that there can be as many programs as there are students. It is designed to meet the needs and interests of the individual student and to allow for optimal diversity. However, some uniform requirements are imposed by the Graduate School and the Field on candidates for advanced degrees at Cornell University. It is the purpose of this Guide to outline these requirements, and to familiarize the student swiftly and beforehand with the purely technical aspects of graduate study.

2. The Special Committee. One of the unique advantages in graduate education at Cornell is the fact that your graduate work is generally not defined in terms of field requirements but, rather, by you in consultation with a committee of several faculty members, chosen by you after the second semester in residence. The Special Committee will advise you in designing your program and will administer the examinations required for an advanced degree.

Upon arrival, you will be assisted by the Director of Graduate Studies, who will sign the necessary forms for you. Over the course of the second semester you will select two faculty members from the field of Germanic Studies, one of whom shall chair your committee. It is this committee that will conduct your Qualifying Examination (see below). As soon as you have decided on a minor subject (or minor subjects) you will add a third (or fourth) member to your committee representing the minor subject(s). It is recommended that at least one member of your committee should be a faculty member in the Department of German Studies. **You may change the constituency of your committee without petition at any time prior to the Admission-to-Candidacy Examination (see below).**

You should schedule at least one meeting per academic year with all members of your Special Committee in order to review with them your progress and to plan your future program.

3. Course Requirements. Generally speaking, requirements set by the Field of Germanic Studies are defined in terms of competence, not in terms of credit hours. Prior to being permitted to take the Admission-to-Candidacy examination for the Ph.D., a student must complete five of the anchor courses taught by a faculty member in the Department of German Studies in the following four areas of German culture: Middle Ages through the Reformation; the Baroque through the end of the eighteenth century; the nineteenth century; the twentieth century.

4. Duration of the Program. In order to be awarded a Doctorate from Cornell students must have earned at least six units of residence, which generally means that they must spend a minimum of six semesters in residence. A minimum of ten

semesters and four summers are usually needed for completion of the requirements (including the dissertation) for the Ph.D. in German at Cornell. Normally this period of study is unbroken, although it is of course possible to obtain a temporary leave of absence for non-academic reasons, just as it is possible to study abroad for residence credit at Cornell. While five calendar years should suffice to obtain the degree, exceptions are possible. We guarantee five years of funding.

Summer Study. Since you are expected to complete your entire program (including the doctoral thesis) in five calendar years, you will find it advisable to make full use of the four summers in this time span. All incoming students are guaranteed four summers of support.

Study Abroad. It is highly desirable to supplement work at Cornell by one or two semesters work at a foreign university. Cornell fellowships (including any summer stipend) can be used abroad with the proper approval. Annually, several DAAD stipends are awarded directly to Cornell. The University also offers a number of travel grants on a competitive basis for pre-dissertation research. Other opportunities for travel and research grants exist (please consult the DGS). In addition, Cornell has a student exchange program with the Universities of Heidelberg and Humboldt. Through faculty exchanges and Visiting Professorships, Cornell's German program has established good relations with a large number of foreign institutions.

5. Language Requirements. If your major subject is German Literature, the required second language is generally French. Your Special Committee may feel that an exception to this is desirable and recommend substituting another language. You can prove your competence in the second foreign language in one of the following ways:

- a. by satisfactory completion of a literature course in the language (approved by your Committee);
- b. by taking the SAT II examination administered by the Cornell Testing Center; consult the Director of Graduate Studies about the passing score, as these vary for various languages;
- c. by passing a translation examination given by the Director of Graduate Studies or a faculty member appointed by the Director of Graduate Studies; the examination will generally involve translating texts from literature and criticism;

It is in your interest to satisfy the requirement in the second foreign language as early as possible.

6. Subjects of Study. All students will devote the major part of their studies to

Germanic Studies. They are free to choose the minor subjects from a number of related areas such as Germanic Linguistics; Science and Technology Studies; Medieval Studies; Comparative Literature; Classics; English; Romance Studies; Philosophy; History; Government; History of Art; Music; Feminist Gender and Sexuality Studies; Theatre, Film and Dance; Anthropology, etc.

In addition to concentrating on your major and minor subjects, you are encouraged to devote as much time as possible to courses in your related areas. Should you wish this group of elective courses to be recorded officially as an additional minor, you must inform the Director of Graduate Studies and the Graduate School of your intention.

7. Teaching. Supervised teaching by the student is an essential part of the Ph.D. program. All those working towards the Doctorate in German must acquire teaching experience at Cornell. TA-ships are available in our language, writing and literature programs; all students are given the opportunity to teach a range of subjects.

Examinations

1. Qualifying Examination. You will schedule your "Q" examination at the beginning of your third semester. Its function is to help your committee assess your capacity for Ph.D. work and provide a basis for realistic advice.

In advance of the "Q" examination, your committee members will consider your written work (at least two research papers) produced for first-year courses. In addition, they will consult with colleagues about your overall performance during your first year.

This examination will consist of a meeting with your committee, which will discuss with you its evaluation of your academic work and future plans and will recommend to the field whether you should proceed in the Ph.D. program or should devote the second year to a terminal M.A. If your performance demonstrates significant weaknesses, the committee may give you a chance to correct these weaknesses by the beginning of your fourth semester. In this case your committee will inform you as to the specific nature of your academic weaknesses.

Additionally, your committee will indicate in what manner you can demonstrate a degree of improvement that would warrant continuation in the doctoral program.

2. Examination for Admission to Candidacy for the Ph.D. in German

1. Preamble. The following are the guidelines for the structure of the Examination for the Admission to Candidacy for the Doctorate (the "A" Examination). This examination forms the penultimate stage in the progress of a student toward the Ph.D. It is not intended to be a comprehensive survey of all of the knowledge in the field (or fields) of the candidate's

interest. Rather it is hoped that the examination will show competency in a range of areas and special depth in areas of the candidate's specific interest and choice. The examination should be structured by the candidate and the committee around the general area of the dissertation or a particular area of student interest. Reading lists (see below) reflecting this focus should be prepared by the candidate with the advice and consent of the committee. The "A" examination is the preliminary step in preparing to write the dissertation.

II. Prior being permitted to take the "A" examination, the candidate must fulfill the following prerequisites:

- a. The completion of five of the anchor courses taught by a faculty member in the Department of German Studies (each concluding with a final examination) in the following four areas of German culture: Middle Ages through the Reformation; the Baroque through the end of the eighteenth century; the nineteenth century; the twentieth century. Completion of these five courses (one each in three areas and two in one area) will constitute certification of a comprehensive study of the field.
- b. The completion of any "incomplete" grade in any of the candidate's course work.
- c. The completion of the language requirements for the degree.

III. Submission of Reading List. At least four months prior to the scheduled examination date, the examinee shall submit a proposed reading list to the committee members. The final reading lists and the exam format will be the result of extended discussions between the examinee and the committee members. Titles may be added or deleted only at the request of the examinee, with the approval of the committee.

IV. Filing of Examination Outline. One month prior to the examination date, and following discussion between the candidate and the committee of the examination outline, the committee shall supply the examinee with a written outline of the examination questions (e.g., the number and type of questions).

V. Written Examination Procedures. Questions comprising the written and oral examinations may only be drawn from the accepted reading lists. Exam format options may vary at the discretion of the committee members in consultation with the examinee.

VI. Date of the Examination. According to the Cornell University Guide to Graduate Study, "the "A" exam may be taken at the earliest after two

registration units have been accumulated in a Ph.D. degree program or in a master's program leading to an M.A./Ph.D. degree in the same field. Unless special permission is obtained from the Dean, all doctoral students must attempt the Examination for Admission to Candidacy before beginning their seventh semester of registration." The Graduate School must be notified of the oral part of the examination at least seven days in advance. The written part is usually submitted to the committee members two to three weeks before the scheduled oral examination.

VII. Dissertation and "B" Exam; Final Examination for the Doctor of Philosophy Degree: Students who have passed the "A" exam are considered candidates for the doctoral degree. A doctoral candidate takes the Final Examination upon completion of all requirements for the degree but no earlier than one month before completion of the minimum registration unit requirement. A minimum of two registration units must be earned between passing the "A" exam and scheduling the "B" exam. For Graduate School guidelines concerning the formal requirements for the dissertation, please see the booklet *Doctoral Dissertation, Master's Thesis, and Advanced Degree Requirements* available in the office of Graduate Records.

VIII. Appeal Procedure: In the event of any perceived irregularity or grievance with the process, students have the right to appeal. Please see the Graduate School Guides to Graduate Study under section *Grievances* for procedural advice.