

PhD Degree, Art History at UNC-Chapel Hill

PhD students take a total of nine courses, at least four of which are research seminars (900-level), plus a final course, ARTH 994 (Dissertation Registration). Students may enroll in graduate seminars at Duke and in other campus units - these are generally designated at 700-level). Coursework (including independent reading courses as necessary) should support the dissertation prospectus and develop the secondary research and methodological/thematic areas of study, preparing the student to take the Written and Oral Exams in the Spring semester of Year 2 (students pursuing a formal External Minor take the Preliminary Exams during the fall semester of their third year).

For full requirements & details of the Doctoral Degree see the Graduate School Handbook: <http://handbook.unc.edu/phd.html>

PROGRESS THROUGH THE DEGREE - SAMPLE TIMETABLES

Summer before program begins

Teaching Assistants training

YEAR 1

Fall - Semester 1

- ARTH 850 Methods (Required)
- Research Seminar 1
- Mixed or Graduate Level Course (or independent reading course)

Establish residency

Fulfill Language Requirement (The Graduate School administers Foreign Language Proficiency Assessments - generally in November)

Spring - Semester 2

- Research Seminar 2
- Research Seminar 3
- Mixed or Graduate Level Course (or independent reading course)

In consultation with advisor confirm dissertation topic, committee(s).

Plan summer research/travel & grant applications

Summer

- language study (if necessary)
- travel/research to establish dissertation feasibility
- Draft dissertation prospectus & plan grant applications

For students pursuing External Minor: Secure prior approval of the minor department. Copy of the proposed courses to be taken must be signed by both departments and entered in the student's permanent record in the Department of Art and the UNC-Chapel Hill Graduate School.

YEAR 2

Fall - Semester 3 –

- Research Seminar 4
- Mixed or Graduate Level Course (or independent reading course)
- Mixed or Graduate Level Course (or independent reading course)

Fulfill Language Requirement (if necessary)

Schedule written and oral exams in consultation with advisor, committee(s) & Student Services Representative

Spring - Semester 4

- Arth 994 (+faculty section#) - Dissertation (Required)

Written & Oral Exams (for students **not** pursuing external Minor):

March

- 1st week - final reading list should be submitted to all members of the exam committee
- 3rd week - questions solicited from exam committee

April

- 1st week - questions organized for exam and submitted to student services representative
- 2nd week - examinee sits for written exams
- Reading day - oral defense of exam (& prospectus).

YEAR 3 and beyond:

Fall – Semester 5 (students completing external minors take exams)

All students register for 3 credit hours of Arth 994 (+faculty section#) - Dissertation (Required)

Once the student has completed all courses, including a minimum of three credit hours of thesis substitute (992)/thesis (993) or a minimum of six credit hours of dissertation (994), s/he must continue to register for three credit hours of 992/993/994 each academic semester (fall/spring) until the degree is completed to reflect academic progress and in order to use University resources (including faculty time).

FINAL DEFENSE & SUBMISSION: IMPORTANT DATES

The precise deadlines are set every year, and can be found on the Graduate School's 'Graduation Deadlines' page here:

<http://gradschool.unc.edu/academics/resources/graddeadlines.html>

In general the important dates to note:

Mid-February: Deadline to apply to graduate in ConnectCarolina

March - Last month in which to schedule the defense. The oral defense must be scheduled no later than 2 weeks prior to the mid-April final submission deadline

Mid- April – deadline, final submission of electronic doctoral dissertations and master's theses

May (generally 2nd weekend)

[Doctoral Hooding Ceremony](#)

[University Commencement Ceremony](#)

Degree Award Date for May graduates

Part I. Rationale for PhD examinations

The PhD examinations are intended to serve two purposes: to insure the student's comprehensive, broadly based knowledge of a given field of inquiry in preparation for teaching, and to prepare the student for specialized research. To these ends, the examinations will test a student's knowledge of historical information pertaining to the art and culture of the period, historiography and methods of the field of inquiry, and theory and criticism (both historical and contemporary) appropriate for the field. We, as a department, wish to recognize that all these aspects of art history are important for every field.

Part II. Division of the History of Art

We have attempted to make our divisions based on the conventional field definitions of art history, on the demands of the job market, and on the constellation of art historical fields represented in this particular department. In some cases, there will be an overlapping of the fields, and boundaries are intended to be somewhat flexible to meet the needs of the individual student's program.

Faculty and students are expected to adhere rigorously to the spirit of the exam structure. The student will be examined in three fields selected in consultation with the committee chair: one major, a second major, and one methodological or thematic field related to the student's dissertation research.

1. The choice for the major fields could be two contiguous fields but need not be. An external minor in another discipline (e.g., Medieval Studies, Women's Studies, History, Classics) can count as one of the two fields. A specialist in the external minor will be added to the examining committee.
2. The methodological/thematic field will be a focused exam on methodological or thematic questions related to the student's dissertation research.

Major Fields:

African, Classical

African, Modern and Contemporary

African American

Byzantine, 4th c. – 1453 CE

China, 1st – 11th c. CE

China, Modern

Contemporary

Early Modern Mediterranean Europe, 1250-1600 CE

Western European Art and Architecture, 1000-1400 CE

European Art and Architecture, 1400-1680 CE

Modern Architecture, 19th-21st c. CE

European art, 1680-1850 CE

European art, 1850-1960 CE

Greek Art and Architecture

Early/Medieval Islamic Art and Architecture (7th-14th c. CE)

Late Antiquity/Early Medieval (200 – 900 CE)

Art and Architecture of Colonial Latin America

Latin America, late 19th c. – present CE

North American, 1700-1945 CE

Roman Art and Architecture

South Asian

Part III. Internal Structure of the Examinations

(Please consult GRADUATE SCHOOL HANDBOOK

<http://handbook.unc.edu/phd.html>)

The faculty recognizes that each field exam presents its own specialized problems in current scholarship, historiography, and material culture. The division into three general areas of examination allows for flexibility within each field area. The PhD exam recognizes the Graduate School's requirement for both a written and an oral exam that must be passed successfully by a majority of the examining committee. An oral exam will take place within two weeks of the written exam. The oral will be on the

content of the written exams and may also include a defense of the dissertation prospectus.

The exam format can be flexible as to the distribution of the questions; specialists in the different fields decide what is most appropriate for each field. Each field exam will be 6 hours in duration. The exams will be taken over the period of 5 business days.

The student will be examined on a reading list that is prepared by the student in consultation with the examiners, preparing a sufficient bibliography that covers the major issues and artistic traditions of each field exam. A qualitative approach will be the model for the exam preparation, with the examiners taking into consideration publications in foreign languages when appropriate to the field exam. Each examiner will approve the number of books and articles and breadth of coverage appropriate for the field exam in their area of expertise.

All examiners will contribute questions to the relevant field exams, to be coordinated by the committee chair.

Oral Exam in the 3 field areas:

Within two weeks of passing all the written examinations and within the same semester, students will take an oral examination on the three field areas chosen by the student and the committee chair. Graduate School regulations stipulate that students must have fulfilled, or will have fulfilled by the end of the semester in which the oral doctoral examination is to be taken, all of the required course work. The minimum residence credit requirement for the doctorate should also be satisfied at this time. The student's appointed committee will examine in both the written and oral portions. The oral examination will use the student's written examinations as a point of departure but may cover any aspect of the three fields. A majority of the committee members must judge the candidate's performance acceptable for a passing grade (2 out of 3; or 3 out of 4).

Dissertation Prospectus:

A dissertation prospectus should be submitted to the committee chair of the student's examination committee for approval. After the prospectus has been approved by a majority of the examination committee during an oral exam, the student should submit the prospectus to the departmental archive. The prospectus defense could take place during the oral exam held two weeks after the written exams, or it can take place within three months of the written exams. The submission due date for the prospectus will be determined by the committee chair in consultation with the dissertation writer.

Composition of the PhD examination committee and roles of committee members:

The committee chair, in consultation with the graduate student, will select the members of the examining committee. The committee will consist of at least three members, who must be full-time active graduate faculty in art history or adjunct teaching faculty. If the student opts for an external exam, the committee chair will add a faculty member from the external field, for a total of four examiners. The chair of the committee will solicit questions from the other committee members. From these questions the chair will make a final selection and organize the exams. The chair of the committee is expected, as far as possible, to make the examination a collective enterprise of the committee. The chair will then circulate the examination for approval by the committee. All committee members will read all parts of each exam and return the exam within a reasonable length of time.

Part IV: Examinations

A doctoral written examination, a doctoral oral examination, and a final oral examination covering the dissertation and other topics as required by the examining committee are required for doctoral degree completion.

The first two items together constitute a comprehensive examination of the student's command of his or her field. If the student declares a minor, the student will be examined on the minor in at least one of the two doctoral examinations. Together they should:

assess the extent and currency of the candidate's knowledge in a manner that is as comprehensive and searching as the best practices of that field require;

test the candidate's knowledge of all transferred courses;

discover any weaknesses in the candidate's knowledge that need to be remedied by additional courses or other instruction; and

determine the candidate's fitness to continue work toward the doctorate.

The final oral examination is primarily a true defense of the dissertation. It may be open to the public, limited in attendance to the candidate and the committee, or a combination of the two. Questions that relate the dissertation to the field are appropriate.

Exam Assessments:

The examinations are graded as Pass with Distinction (*H*), Pass (*P*), or Fail (*F*); pluses or minuses, while sometimes awarded, make no difference in the student's official grade. Students taking the examination for the first time shall fail if they do not receive a grade of *P* or *H* on all portions of the examination. Such failure will be reported to the Graduate School on the appropriate form as failure of the examination. Failing students shall be required to retake only the part or parts on which they received an *F*. As a rule, they will not be allowed to substitute a major or minor different from the one they have failed. Graduate School regulations require that at least three months elapse before a second taking of an examination. On retaking, students must pass all remaining parts of the examination with a grade of *P* or *H* or they will be judged to have failed the examination for the second time. A student who fails an examination for the second time becomes academically ineligible to continue in The Graduate School.

Student Responsibilities in Preparing to Re-Take Examinations:

A student who has failed an examination once is responsible for making an appointment with the faculty member named in the letter from the Director of Graduate Studies within a month of receiving the letter or by the end of the semester, whichever is earlier. After this meeting, the student is urged to consult other members of the examining committee.

The student should bring to the meeting a list of courses taken in the area of the failed examination and a brief description of the way in which he or she

had prepared for the examination, including his or her focused reading lists and the comprehensive list for the field(s).

After the conference, the student is encouraged to make up a revised study plan, incorporating suggestions from the faculty member. This plan may be presented to the faculty member for review at the student's initiative.

The student should keep the Director of Graduate Studies informed of the progress being made in preparing for the retake so that a second examination can be scheduled in a timely manner. As already noted, Graduate School regulations require that at least three months elapse before the second taking of an examination.

Reinstatement

When special circumstances warrant, a student made academically ineligible under the conditions stated above may be reinstated upon petition initiated through the student's academic program. Students and academic program representatives must fill out the [Request for Reinstatement to Graduate School Form](#).

The student's director of graduate studies must submit the petition together with a statement endorsing or declining to endorse the student's request to the Graduate School. Final approval rests with the Graduate School. Graduate School staff are authorized to consider routine, first instances of reinstatement requests. If there is a disagreement between the student and his/her academic program, or for any subsequent reinstatement requests, the Academic Policy Committee of the Administrative Board of the Graduate School will hear and vote on the situation. Decisions are final and cannot be appealed.

After academic eligibility reinstatement, any subsequent grade below P or failure of the third attempt of written or oral examinations will result in the student becoming academically ineligible again.

Time Line for PhD exams and prospectus

Examinee should make arrangements with the exam committee members to discuss reading lists.

Spring:

First week of March, final reading list should be submitted to all members of the exam committee

Third week of March, questions solicited from exam committee.

First week of April, questions organized for exam and submitted to student services representative

Second week of April, examinee sits for written exams

Reading day of spring semester, oral defense of exam.

Fall:

First week of October, final reading list should be submitted to all members of the exam committee.

Third week of October, questions solicited from exam committee

Second week of November, questions organized for exam and submitted to student services representative.

Third week of November (or week before Thanksgiving Break), examinee sits for written exams and prospectus distributed to all members of exam committee.

Reading day of fall semester, oral defense of exam

For further information, including forms, see The Graduate School Handbook: <http://handbook.unc.edu/phd.html>

Dissertation Prospectus

revised 11/30/ 2014

I. Dissertation prospectus

A dissertation prospectus is a proposal for the topic and making of the dissertation, as well as a research plan necessary for the writing of the dissertation.

II. The Committee

The examining committee for the dissertation prospectus should be the same as the committee for the student's Doctoral Committee.

The committee should consist of five regular faculty members and the selection should be made by the DGS with consultation of the student.

Students are permitted to invite scholars from outside the program or from other institutions to serve on the committee. Three of the committee members, however, must be regular members of this department. Outside members have to be approved by the DGS and advisor, who will submit a [Report of Doctoral Committee Composition](#) for approval by The Graduate School.

III. Submission of the dissertation prospectus to the Committee

Students are expected to begin formal discussion with their advisor about their dissertation proposal during the preparation for the Doctoral Examination.

After a dissertation topic is proposed and approved by the advisor, the student should begin to draft a dissertation prospectus.

The prospectus should be carefully developed in consultation with the advisor. The student should inform the members of the student's dissertation committee about the development of the prospectus and solicit advice or questions for improvement before the exam.

A final draft of the dissertation prospectus should normally be submitted to the committee at least 2 weeks before the scheduled oral defense of the prospectus.

IV. Scheduling an oral defense for the dissertation prospectus

The defense of the dissertation prospectus can coincide with the preliminary oral exam. If the prospectus is not defended in the oral exam, this defense

should take place within four months of the written exams of the Doctoral Examination.

Students who enter as MA students are advised to complete their exams and oral defense of the prospectus by the end of their 8th semester. For those who enter as PhD students, the exam and defense will take place by the fourth semester; if the PhD student has a minor, the exam and defense will be completed by the fifth semester.

V. The content of the dissertation prospectus

The dissertation prospectus should consist of a narrative description of the dissertation project in no more than 15 double-space pages, a substantial bibliography, and a list of images critical to the dissertation project with all images included as an appendix.

The prospectus must 1) present the thesis and questions to address in the dissertation project; 2) engage with relevant scholarship to explain why the proposed work needs doing and what the potential significance of the results might be; 3) elaborate the theoretical perspective(s) or methodology for the proposed research; 4) offer a chapter-by-chapter overview of the dissertation; and 5) demonstrate the student's broad familiarity with research materials and relevant primary and secondary literature.

VI. Criteria for passing the dissertation prospectus

The prospectus should include the components outlined above with a clearly structured narrative and organization.

The prospectus provides a valid research topic in the proposed field(s) of study.

The proposed research must be practical in its scope, and it must be based on research materials that are largely attainable.

It shows potential to make contributions to the specific field(s) or art history in general.

VII. Approval or Disapproval of the dissertation prospectus

A. Approval:

A student passes the defense after the approval of a majority of the examining committee members. Committee members will then sign off on the report to be submitted to The Graduate School.

In the case that the prospectus has errors, problems, or missing components and should be revised, but in the judgment of the majority of the committee members, it meets the criteria, the defense should be considered successful. The committee, however, can request that the student submit a revision afterwards. OR, the committee may, at its discretion, require revision of the prospectus as a condition of final acceptance.

B. Disapproval:

A student fails to pass the defense if a majority of the examining committee members find the prospectus unacceptable.

If a student does not defend the dissertation prospectus successfully, the advisor will report the result to the DGS, who will file a document to be kept in the student's file.

A second defense may not be scheduled until at least three months after the first defense.

In order to be admitted to Ph.D. candidacy (becoming ABD), students must defend the prospectus successfully.

A student who fails to pass the defense the second time becomes academically ineligible to continue in the program.

Note:

For the University regulations related to the Dissertation Prospectus, see the section, Doctoral Degree Requirements, in the *Graduate School Handbook*.

Here is the weblink to the section:

<http://handbook.unc.edu/phd.html>

Language Requirement

By the end of the third semester students are required to have met the language requirement of one language, other than English, appropriate to the area of study. The language will be determined in consultation with the student's advisor, the Director of Graduate Studies, and the graduate committee.

The student can demonstrate competency by obtaining a passing grade on the UNC-CH Foreign Language Proficiency Exam (FLPE), offered for German, Italian, Latin, Spanish, and French. Foreign Language Proficiency Assessments are offered as an alternative to special language courses offered on campus.

Foreign Language Proficiency Assessment: The Graduate School administers Foreign Language Proficiency Assessments for **enrolled, degree-seeking graduate students** who have a foreign language proficiency requirement as part of their degree program. The assessments are offered as an alternative to coursework (601/602 language courses) for those students who have proficiency in a language but may not have a documented means of showing it. The assessments are reading proficiency exams equivalent to a final exam in a 602 course. Principally, the exams include the translation of a prescribed general interest text and a section focused on reading comprehension skills. For more information, see [Foreign Language Proficiency Assessment](#)

From the Graduate School Handbook:

Foreign Language or Research Requirement

Language and research skill requirements differ for each academic program. Students must acquire competence in those foreign languages needed for research or teaching in their disciplines. At an early stage, a student should consult his or her academic program advisor concerning what foreign languages, if any, will be required.

Graduate students must satisfy the foreign language requirement from a list of acceptable languages other than English as approved by their academic program.

Foreign Language Proficiency Assessments are offered as an alternative to special language courses offered on campus. For more information, see [Foreign Language Proficiency Assessment](#).

Each academic program determines at what point a student must fulfill language or research skill requirements, provided that all such requirements are satisfied before a student is admitted to candidacy. The student's director of graduate studies will need to certify on the [Application for Admission to Candidacy](#) and the [Program Certification of Degree Requirements form](#) that all such requirements have been met.

Electing an External Minor (optional)

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PhD students may choose to complete a formal External Minor, which consists of at least three (but may be as many as five) additional courses in a field related to her/his area of specialized study (such as, communication studies, women's studies, history, or medieval studies). The student must secure prior approval of the minor department, and a copy of the proposed courses to be taken must be signed by both departments and entered in the student's permanent record in the Department of Art and the UNC-Chapel Hill Graduate School.

From the Graduate School Handbook:

With the approval of the major and minor programs, a student may elect to declare a formal minor in any program that offers a graduate degree. The student should submit an approved [Minor Declaration Form](#)  to The Graduate School.

The minor must comprise at least 15 credit hours. All credits must be for courses listed (or cross-listed) in programs other than that of the major, and cannot also be counted toward the major. A minor may consist of a set of related courses, some of which are listed by one program and some of which are listed by another. In most cases, the minor would not include courses from more than two programs. Only one program name will be listed as granting the minor, and the director of graduate studies in the minor program must agree to accept any courses from outside the minor program offerings.

The minor must be approved in advance by the director of graduate studies in both the major and minor programs. When a satisfactory minor has been planned and approved by both programs, a copy of the proposed minor course of study should be signed by the director of graduate studies in the major and minor programs and sent to The Graduate School to become a permanent part of the student's record.

Checklist: Coursework for Formal External Minor

- 1.
- 2.

- 3.
4. (if applicable)
5. (if applicable)

Year 3 – Fall Semester

Register for Arth 994 (+faculty section#) - Dissertation (Required)

Timetable for Written & Oral Exams

October

final reading list should be submitted to all members of the exam committee

3rd week - questions solicited from exam committee

November

2nd week - questions organized for exam and submitted to student services representative.

3rd week (or w(or week before Thanksgiving Break), examinee sits for written exams and prospectus distributed to all members of exam committee.

Reading day, oral defense of exam

Defense & final dissertation submission

Maintain regular contact with your advisor and committee members as you draft the dissertation. The general expectation is that every member of the dissertation committee receives at least one draft of all the key chapters before the final draft is sent in preparation for the defense. Committee members should have had a chance to help you through at least one version of the manuscript.

Maintain regular contact with your advisor regarding when to schedule the defense. In consultation with advisor and committee, and keeping DGS apprised, identify potential defense dates. The Student Services Rep will assist with scheduling a room for the defense, and with any technical needs that may be necessary (Skype, conference call)

Once the dissertation is completed and approved students defend the finished dissertation.

Schedule the dissertation defense no less than two weeks prior to the submission deadline, which falls mid-April for May graduation. (for the August graduation submission deadline is in mid-July, and for the December graduation in mid-December.) The precise deadline is set every year, and can be found on the Graduate School's 'Graduation Deadlines' page here:

<http://gradschool.unc.edu/academics/resources/graddeadlines.html>

Important dates:

February 16, 2018:

Last day to apply to graduate in [ConnectCarolina](#)

March - Defense (Yulianna can help you with scheduling the room)

April 13, 2018 before 4pm:

Due date for submission of electronic doctoral dissertations and master's theses

Saturday, May 121, 2018:

[Doctoral Hooding Ceremony](#)

Sunday, May 13, 2018:

[University Commencement Ceremony](#)

Degree Award Date for May graduates