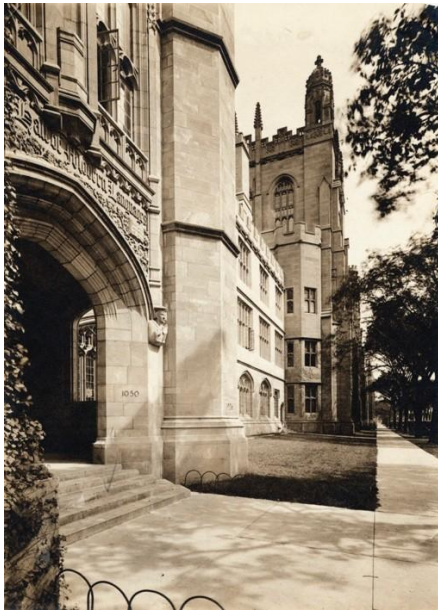




THE UNIVERSITY OF
CHICAGO

**DEPARTMENT OF
GERMANIC STUDIES**
Division of the Humanities



The **Graduate Student Handbook** serves as your guide to graduate study within the Department. It is intended as a supplement to the “University Student Manual of University Policies and Regulations” <http://studentmanual.uchicago.edu/university>. Many academic matters are determined by University and Divisional Policy, and students are expected to familiarize themselves with these policies and follow them accordingly.

The contents of the Graduate Student Handbook are subject to revision.

If the Handbook does not answer specific questions, please consult the Department Administrator or the Director of Graduate Studies.

2025-2026

WELCOME

Welcome to graduate studies at the Department of Germanic Studies!

The Department is characterized by what we call a “hub-and-spoke” structure of research and teaching. The hub is our shared commitment to the Germanic-language traditions in literature, theater & performance, philosophy, and the visual arts (among others). The spokes extending out from this hub are the multiple interdisciplinary connections entertained by our faculty and students. Faculty hold joint appointments in Theater and Performance Studies, the Divinity School, Art History, Cinema and Media Studies, Jewish Studies, and the Committee on Social Thought, among others, and each member of the faculty is engaged in research and educational collaboration with colleagues from these and other fields. Affiliated faculty from other departments at the University often serve on our students’ dissertation committees and our degree programs encourage students to carve out individual intellectual agendas that take full advantage of the flexible interdisciplinary culture at the U of C.

PHD PROGRAM OVERVIEW

Time-to-Degree

Please note that starting with the incoming cohort in Autumn 2025, students in the Department of Germanic Studies are **expected to graduate within six years**. In specific circumstances, students **may be granted a seventh year of registration with approval of the Chair and Director of Graduate Studies**. We expect all students to finish in six years, especially those students entering with MA degrees. Students who enter with a BA will more likely be seeking a seventh year of registration. Students in their sixth year need to submit a petition for seventh-year registration. A one-to-two-page petition explaining the rationale for the extension, including a completion plan, must be submitted by Friday of Week 6 of the first quarter of the student’s sixth year. The student’s committee, in consultation with the DGS, will make a decision regarding the extension by Friday of Week 9. Please note that the calculation of time to degree remains the same even if students win fellowships (e.g., DAAD, Fulbright, etc.). Students will be expected to complete the entire dissertation over years 5-6 (and 7 if they have been granted an extension). Students who do not defend their dissertation by the end of their sixth year (if they have not been granted an extension) or by the end of their seventh year (if granted an extension) will be withdrawn from the program. Withdrawn students have the option of finishing their dissertation independently and petitioning to defend it at the University of Chicago in the years following withdrawal.

Note for all continuing students our expected time to degree is 6 – 7 years.

Program Outline

In briefest outline, the program has the following components: Study towards the M.A. degree, usually completed after the first year, is intended as an introductory period, a time for both faculty and students to decide on the suitability of an extended graduate program. It is followed by a period of increasingly specialized research, culminating in the Ph.D. exam and, ultimately, the writing of the dissertation. Training for language teaching is part of the sequence usually in years 1, 2, 4 and 5.

Students in the Department of Germanic Studies are admitted to the entire Ph.D. sequence of study. Students entering the Ph.D. program with a master's degree in German or related fields from another institution can either acquire an additional M.A. or count their previous M.A. toward the Ph.D. (this decision will be made in consultation with the DGS.) Students who opt to count their previous M.A. toward the Ph.D. will take an essay exam at the end of the first year in which a seminar paper of their choice is submitted to a one-hour discussion with three faculty members.

Academic Honesty

The University of Chicago has adopted the following statement on academic honesty:

It is contrary to justice, academic integrity, and to the spirit of intellectual inquiry to submit another's statements or ideas as one's own work. To do so is plagiarism or cheating, offenses punishable under the University's disciplinary system. Because these offenses undercut the distinctive moral and intellectual character of the University, we take them very seriously. Proper acknowledgment of another's ideas, whether by direct quotation or paraphrase, is expected. In particular, if any written or electronic source is consulted and material is used from that source, directly or indirectly, the source should be identified by author, title, and page number, or by website and date accessed. Any doubts about what constitutes "use" should be addressed to the instructor.

<https://studentmanual.uchicago.edu/academic-policies/academic-honesty-plagiarism/>

Plagiarism or other forms of cheating, including the unauthorized use of ChatGPT and similar generative AI tools to complete assignments, may result in a grade of "F" for the course and may also result in additional disciplinary measures at the discretion of the instructor and/or the Dean of Students, including expulsion from the University.

M.A. Exam

The purpose of the M.A. exam is to test students' ability to work with concepts central to the discipline, to articulate literary-historical arguments, to discuss significant patterns that extend

beyond individual texts, and to articulate how such concepts relate to the interpretation of individual works. Just as importantly, it initiates and gives form to a departmental conversation around the student's interests that, once started, needs to keep building until the completion of the dissertation.

The M.A. examination generally takes place in the eighth week of Spring Quarter of the student's first year of graduate study. Its basis is a list of some twenty to twenty-five texts selected by the student in consultation with the members of the student's M.A. exam committee. The committee—usually consisting of three members of the department's core faculty (unless otherwise approved)—is to be designated by the DGS in consultation with the student. The list of texts should reflect a category of literary research such as a genre, a period, or a general concept bearing on a mode of writing. Examples of the former might be "The Bourgeois Tragedy" or "Modern Urban Short Prose" or "The Elegy." Periods can be variously conceived: e.g., Enlightenment, Realism, Weimar Republic. General concepts are more abstract categories such as "narrative" or "performance" or "argumentative writing." Lists could also be organized along thematic lines or in terms of a traditional narrative subject. The point is that the list be designed so as to sustain a process of coherent intellectual inquiry. In addition to the 20-25 primary texts, the list will also include a representative cross-section of secondary literature addressing the topic under study.

The examination itself has two components:

- a) a take-home written examination, and
- b) an oral examination approximately one hour in length.

The take-home component consists of three essays (each of two and one half, never more than three double-spaced pages) written in answer to questions devised by the faculty. These questions offer the student an opportunity to demonstrate their ability to explore various intellectual issues raised by the list as a whole as well as by specific works on the list. Students will usually receive these questions on Friday morning of the eighth week of classes and submit their completed essays by 5:00 p.m. the following Monday. The oral examination is devoted to a critical discussion of the students' three essays as well as to works included on the list but not addressed in the written part of the examination. It will usually take place one week after the written exam. Following a discussion of the essays (ca. forty minutes), the student and the faculty examination committee will assess the student's overall progress, including course work. If a student fails their M.A. examination, they will be administratively withdrawn from the program.

A crucial aspect of the M.A. examination is planning and advising. Students should choose their examiners and have one planning meeting with each examiner by the eighth week of Autumn Quarter. Students should choose examiners and design the lists with a view to the seminars they

plan to attend throughout the year. Students must submit their lists for approval at the end of the fourth week of Winter Quarter. Two weeks after submission, they should meet with their examiners to discuss preparation for the exams. During Spring Quarter, students should meet with their examiners twice prior to the exam in order to discuss questions arising from their readings. Throughout the process students are encouraged to discuss questions arising from their readings with other faculty members, both inside and outside of the Department.

Ph.D. Exam

The Ph.D. exam consists of a four-hour, open-book, written exam and an hour-long oral exam. The exam takes place in the second or third Ph.D. year, as determined by the DGS, and focuses on a small archive of literary, philosophical, and literary critical works (approximately 50 works) established by the student. This “major field list” should be organized around a broad topic that will in many cases anticipate the larger field within which the dissertation project will be situated. Some examples from previous exams: “Discourses of Madness from Kant to Musil,” “Worldly Provincialism: German Realism 1850-1900,” and “The Aesthetics of Sacrifice in Postwar German Literature and Art.” Works on the list should be grouped into clusters according to categories and questions relevant to the topic. These criteria should be expressly formulated in the list.

Students are encouraged to meet with as many faculty members as possible as they work on these materials. In consultation with the DGS, they should determine an exam committee of three faculty members: An exam chair plus a second faculty member (normally both members of the department) to compose and evaluate the written examination questions, and a third faculty member (from either departmental or resource faculty) to serve as an additional examiner for the oral exam. The exam chair oversees and schedules the exam with the examiners.

Five weeks prior to the exam, each student will submit to the exam committee and to the DGS a final draft of the list. As noted, the list should be organized by way of the categories and questions that indicate what the students considers to be the salient issues animating the different clusters of texts. Faculty will use this list as a guide in preparing the exam. Within two weeks of the exam, the full committee will meet with the student for an hour-long discussion that will encompass the exam and plans for the dissertation. Students should then begin work on their dissertation proposals. The final proposal is due no later than one quarter (not including summer) after passing the Ph.D. exam. If a student fails their Ph.D. examination, they will be administratively withdrawn from the program.

For further details regarding the Ph.D. exams, including a detailed timeline, please consult the program completion plan below.

Please note: Starting with the matriculating cohort in Autumn 2025, if by the end of Year 3 in the program, a student has not advanced to candidacy, they will be placed on academic probation. If, by the end of Year 4 in the program, a student has not advanced to candidacy, they will be administratively withdrawn from the program.

Genres of Writing

In preparation for their academic careers, students will need to develop expertise in a number of different genres of writing. These include, e.g., longer research papers; interpretive essays; conference papers; response papers or reading diary; short book reviews; review essays; *Forschungsberichte*; take-home exams. In order to ensure that students have a chance to gain a facility in these different formats and have time to complete assignments in a timely fashion, students will be required to write three research papers during their course work (usually, one during the M.A. year; one during each of the two post-M.A. years). A research paper (20-25 pages) should include a reasonably comprehensive survey of the relevant literature on the chosen topic. Students will inform the instructor of the seminar no later than 5th week if they plan to write their research paper in that seminar. The deadline for submission of the research paper is 4 weeks after the end of the quarter in which the seminar is conducted. If students wish to write additional research papers under the same conditions, this is, of course, permitted and welcome; such papers might well become the basis of later publications or dissertation chapters. Students should also inform the DGS about the classes for which they intend to write research papers. All choices of genre must be approved by the instructor of the seminar.

Incompletes

Incomplete Policy within the Department

In general, in the Germanic Studies Department, papers are due on the date assigned by the instructor of the course. These dates allow the instructor to enter a letter grade by the deadlines set by the Registrar. (See below.) Instructors have the option of offering an extension of four weeks beyond the due date during which time no grade will be entered. At that point, if the paper has still not been turned in, a grade of "I" is entered on the student's transcript. However, the student still has a chance to earn a letter grade for the course. This window closes for all courses of a given academic year at the outset of the autumn quarter of the following academic year. The classes in which students write research papers have a modified schedule. Students who do not turn in the research paper by the deadline, i.e., four weeks after the end of the quarter in which the seminar is conducted, will be granted an additional four weeks. The final deadline for a research paper is the outset of the autumn quarter of the academic year following the quarter in which the paper was initially due. If students do not have quality grades by then, the Incomplete grades become UW grades or Unofficial Withdrawal. UW grades bear no credit. Students who

accumulate three UW grades will be placed on academic probation and be given a written timeline to return to good academic standing.

Additional divisional grading policies are provided by the Registrar here:
<https://registrar.uchicago.edu/records/grading/grade-policies/>

Dissertation

Committee Constitution and Responsibilities

The Dissertation Committee is to be constituted within three weeks following successful completion of the PhD Examination. Notification of the Committee membership is made to both the DGS and the departmental administrator. Typically, the Dissertation Committee consists of a Director and two Readers; the roles of Director and Reader are distinct. The Director is the primary advisor in consultation with whom the candidate develops the overall direction of the dissertation as well as the details of its execution. In short, the Director has the primary advisory role and closely monitors the production of the dissertation to ensure its timely completion and its qualification as a genuine contribution to scholarship. Readers, by contrast, have a primarily “inspirational” role; they are “resources” for the doctoral student and their primary task is to suggest concepts, connections, and archives that might further the project as well as to call attention to potential problems. A consequence of this distinction of roles is a division of labor in the evaluation of chapter drafts. Chapter drafts are always read first and thoroughly commented on by the Director. All revisions called for by the Director are to be completed before the chapter drafts are submitted – now in nearly final form – to the Readers. Readers, then, receive substantially complete chapter drafts. Their task is limited to the identification of errors or lacunae that may have been overlooked as well as the suggestion of minor additions (e.g., useful references, comparisons, clarifications).

The Dissertation Proposal

The dissertation proposal, consisting of approximately 15 pages and a bibliography, should be problem-driven and question-oriented, and should contextualize the project within relevant scholarly debates. It ought not attempt to predict the final conclusions of the project before the research is fully under way. Instead, it should seek to divide the project into subordinate questions and to rank the parts of the project in terms of priority. It should include a preliminary bibliography and a potential chapter structure, and also indicate a rough timetable for the research and writing of the dissertation. The student will discuss the project in a proposal defense with the dissertation committee, to be scheduled in consultation with the primary advisor and the departmental administrator. This will usually be done one quarter (not including summer) after

the Ph.D. examination. Students must file copies of their exam lists and proposal with the departmental administrator. Typically, proposals will accomplish the following:

1. Characterize the topic or problem with evident invention and conceptual acuity.
2. Indicate an exceptional grasp of previous work on the topic or problem.
3. Sketch the proposed methodology and its relationship to extant methodological precursors.
4. Outline what the dissertation will contribute to the field.
5. Sketch the proposed chapters including an overview of the salient conceptual stakes and the analytic claims to be covered.
6. Provide a comprehensive working bibliography, and
7. Demonstrate the capacity to integrate critical feedback.

The student's dissertation committee will make a judgment on the dissertation proposal defense. If a student fails the defense, they will be administratively withdrawn from the program. In some cases, where the proposal shows promise but still requires work, the committee will assess and determine whether the student can revise the proposal. If the student can revise the proposal, they will be placed on academic probation. In the latter case, the student has until the end of the next quarter (the one after the quarter in which the initial defense was scheduled) to rework their proposal, reschedule the defense, and to pass it. Students who do not adhere to these terms, will be administratively withdrawn from the program.

Meetings of the Dissertation Committee

A first meeting of the Dissertation Committee with the candidate occurs for the discussion and evaluation of the Dissertation Proposal. If the Proposal, a description of the dissertation project including an outline of the chapters and a working bibliography, is deemed acceptable by the Committee, the student is "advanced to candidacy." Advancement to Candidacy should occur no later than Winter Quarter of the fourth year (Spring Quarter of the third year for students who have entered with an M.A. degree). Furthermore, the Committee should collectively meet with the candidate at least twice per academic year. These meetings provide an opportunity for an exchange of ideas bearing on the development of the dissertation as it has taken shape in the course of research and writing. It is the responsibility of the Director (perhaps with the aid of the departmental administrator) to arrange these meetings, typically in Fall and Spring quarters.

Joint Direction

Doctoral students may find it useful to have two directors. This is often the case when students are pursuing a joint Ph.D. degree, in which case there will typically be a Co-Director from each Department or Division. But joint directors can also be useful when a dissertation topic bridges two areas of specialization each represented by different members of the faculty. In cases of joint

Directorship, there should be an explicit understanding among the Directors and the student as to the expectations for advising. It is also highly recommended that just one of the two Directors assume the responsibility for calling meetings throughout.

Submission of Chapter Drafts

As indicated above, chapter drafts are first submitted to the Director. Only when all alterations (expansions, clarifications, editorial changes, etc.) have been made, are chapter drafts submitted to the Readers. In all cases, it is expected that chapter drafts will be returned with comments to candidates within thirty days. In order to guarantee timely response to submitted chapter drafts, candidates should notify the departmental administrator upon submission. The administrator will then send out a three-week alert reminding Director and Reader that the thirty-day deadline is approaching. If the one-month period has passed without response, the departmental administrator will notify the Department Chair and DGS.

Students should submit work to their committee chapter by chapter. A minimum of one approved chapter per academic year is required, but it is expected that most students will complete and receive committee approval for two (or more) chapters per year.

General Remark

The production of a dissertation is a complicated process involving at least four parties (Candidate, Director, Readers) and it is in everyone's interest that this process runs smoothly. It is therefore crucially important for candidates to remain in regular touch with all members of the Dissertation Committee, especially with the Director. Everyone should be apprised of the candidate's progress. Moreover, it is important, especially for the Director, to make clear what her expectations are regarding the frequency of progress reports, the level of "polish" required for drafts to be read, and any other factors that play into the cooperation. Readers should also be aware of both the responsibilities and the limitations of their role. Finally, everyone should cooperate in addressing tasks in a timely fashion and keeping the process moving efficiently toward completion.

Help for Dissertation Writers, including Workshops

Working on a dissertation is often a long and lonely experience. To alleviate the pressures of this situation, the University sponsors graduate workshops, one of the primary purposes of which is to provide a supportive intellectual environment for the dissertation writer. Graduate students often present chapters of their dissertations here for constructive criticism. Students are strongly encouraged to begin participating in one or more of these workshops even before starting the dissertation. Through the process, students will become acquainted with the forms of PhD proposals and chapters. The University also sponsors dissertation-writing support groups. Further

information on these and other resources are available from the DGS or the Dean of Students Office.

Dissertation Requirements

Doctoral dissertations are original contributions to scholarship. As a condition for receipt of the doctorate, all students are required to submit their dissertations to Knowledge@UChicago, the University's open access repository. If a dissertation includes copyrighted material beyond fair use, the author must obtain permission from the holder of the copyright.

The public sharing of original dissertation research is a principle to which the University is deeply committed, and dissertations should be made available to the scholarly community at the University of Chicago and elsewhere in a timely manner. If dissertation authors are concerned that making their research publicly available might endanger research subjects or themselves, jeopardize a pending patent, complicate publication of a revised dissertation, or otherwise be unadvisable, they may, in consultation with faculty in their field (and as appropriate, research collaborators), restrict access to their dissertation for a limited period of time according to the [guidelines](#) outlined by the Dissertation Office. If a dissertation author needs to renew an embargo at the end of its term or initiate an embargo after graduation, the author must contact the Dissertation Office with the embargo request. Embargo renewals may be approved only in rare instances, and in general no more than one renewal will be allowed.

All dissertations must follow the instructions provided in the University-Wide Requirements for the Ph.D. Dissertation, available from the Dissertation Office on the first floor of the Joseph Regenstein Library in the Center for Digital Scholarship. More information about this process can be found [here](#).

The Dissertation Defense

The purpose of the dissertation defense is for the student to defend the method and conclusions of the dissertation, and to demonstrate general and contextual competence in the field of study and research.

Scheduling the Defense:

Six weeks prior to the proposed exam date, the student must submit the following to the departmental administrator:

- Notice of the exam date. (The Departmental Administrator is available to help with scheduling.)
- A title and a 3-5 page, double-spaced dissertation abstract

Two weeks prior to the proposed exam date, the student must submit a copy of their completed dissertation draft, which will be circulated to the department chair. Defenses are ideally only

scheduled during the academic year. Please note: only students who successfully defend and submit their dissertations by the Spring Quarter deadlines are eligible to walk for graduation at the end of Spring Quarter. Students who graduate in Summer Quarter will be eligible to walk in the following Spring's ceremony.

In certain circumstances (e.g., the student has an academic job starting in the fall that requires a PhD in hand), exceptions may be made to schedule a defense in the Summer Quarter if all committee members agree to do so.

Format of the Defense:

Typically, the defense will last one to two hours (though this varies). At the beginning of the defense, the student should be prepared to formally introduce and contextualize the argument of the Dissertation (approx. 10 minutes). The rest of the defense will consist of questions from the committee and others. All Germanic Studies faculty and students are welcome to attend all defenses and participate in questioning if time allows.

After the Defense: Filing the Dissertation and Receiving the Diploma

Once the student has successfully defended their Dissertation *and* completed any changes required by their committee, they must file their dissertation with the Dissertation Office. In order to ensure all requirements are met, the student should consult the University Dissertation Office and the Department Administrator, who can provide students with details about the tasks that follow the defense process. For further information see:

<https://www.lib.uchicago.edu/research/scholar/phd/>

Format Reviews

Students must follow current University guidelines for formatting requirements and submission procedures. <https://www.lib.uchicago.edu/research/scholar/phd/>

The Dissertation Office also offers draft reviews each quarter. The office examines formatting requirements to ensure that the Dissertation conforms to University-administered guidelines. While completing a draft review is not required, the Department and the Dissertation Office highly encourage students to take advantage of this important resource.

<https://www.lib.uchicago.edu/research/scholar/phd/services/drafts/>

Submission

Doctoral candidates should contact their graduate program administrator as soon as they are ready to submit their dissertation to Knowledge@UChicago. After asking the department to review the dissertation, the student should not make any changes other than those requested by the department. The departmental review occurs:

- after the dissertation defense,
- after revisions requested by the dissertation committee have been completed,
- after proofreading and editing the dissertation,
- and before submitting the dissertation to Knowledge@UChicago.

The Department Administrator will then review the dissertation. Please allow at least one-two weeks prior to the submission deadline for the Administrator to review in case there are any requested changes. The Administrator will then provide the signed Departmental Approval Form

for the Ph.D. Candidate to submit this form with their dissertation. Please review the requirements in detail on the website of the Dissertation Office:

<https://www.lib.uchicago.edu/research/scholar/phd/students/final-submissions/>

Departmental Copy

The Department keeps a digital archive of all submitted dissertations. All students are required to email a final copy of their dissertation to the Department Administrator once the Dissertation Office has approved it.

Graduation

Typically, students will need to file an application to graduate in the first week of the quarter in which they plan to receive their degree. Final submission of the dissertation must be completed on the date set by the Dissertation Office, usually a Wednesday by 4:30pm towards the end of the quarter. Check with the Humanities Dean of Students office before the quarter of planned graduation to get the specific deadlines for that quarter or visit the Dissertation Office website at <https://www.lib.uchicago.edu/research/scholar/phd/students/dissertation-deadlines/>

Important Deadlines for the quarter in which a student wishes to graduate:

- Friday of the first week of the quarter: Students must complete an online Application for Degree form in their my.uchicago.edu account
- Candidates who submit their approved dissertation by 4:30 p.m. on Friday of the first week of a quarter and apply to graduate in that quarter will not be registered as students in that quarter. They will not be required to pay tuition or fees associated with registration (and will therefore not have access to the privileges associated with student status)
- Weeks 1-4 of the quarter: Students should contact the Dissertation Office to arrange a draft format review.
- End of week 7 of the quarter: Students must submit the final version of their Dissertation to the Dissertation Office and complete the following online:
 - o Survey of Earned Doctorates
 - o The University of Chicago Doctoral Graduate Survey

Dissertation Completion Fellowships

These fellowships (commonly referred to as DCFs) are designed to support students in their final year and usually do not permit any teaching. Indeed, evaluation of applicants for such grants usually includes some careful assessment of whether the student can truly finish their dissertation within a year.

Most Divisional dissertation completion fellowships require Departmental nomination. Students should submit a letter of application, an abstracts, and one completed chapter to the DGS and departmental administrator by the posted deadline, which usually falls in the middle of February. Departmental nominations are usually made by early March.

Divisional and departmental dissertation completion fellowships are subject to University terms and conditions. Most notably, fellowship recipients who do not defend, complete the dissertation, and graduate during the fellowship year will be withdrawn from their program at the end of the summer quarter. The full list of terms, conditions, and eligibility requirements is available on the

Division's website: <https://humanities.uchicago.edu/students/financial-aid/fellowships/internal-fellowships>

Students completing dissertations are encouraged to look for **other grants** beyond those offered at the University. Other agencies offer dissertation completion fellowships for which no nomination is required. There are also a number of national dissertation fellowships to which students may wish to apply, and many of these have earlier deadlines (often during Autumn quarter). Students are strongly encouraged to make a one-on-one advising appointment with the Assistant Director of Fellowships (for the Humanities) at UChicagoGRAD.

Conference and Research Travel Grants

Division of the Humanities Conference Reimbursement Grant

The Division of the Humanities has limited funds available for partial support for travel to academic conferences where the student is giving a paper. The Division of the Humanities Conference Reimbursement Grant provides up to \$400 in reimbursement for eligible travel expenses. Students can receive the grant a maximum of three times in their graduate careers, but only once in any given academic year (July 1 through June 30). See Division of Humanities Travel Grants: <https://humanities.uchicago.edu/students/financial-aid/conference-travel-grants>

Division of the Humanities Dissertation Research Travel Grants

The Humanities Division provides limited funding for students who plan to travel to conduct dissertation research. A student may only receive a Dissertation Research Travel Grant once in his or her graduate career and the grants are not renewable.

Funding from these grants is extremely limited. Students should first apply for travel grants from departments and centers (e.g., Nicholson, France Chicago, CEAS, COSAS) before requesting these funds.

Applicants will be awarded funds based on their specific travel and financial needs, the quality and feasibility of their projects, in addition to other academic qualifications.

Further information be found here: <https://humanities.uchicago.edu/students/financial-aid/dissertation-research-travel-grants>

Departmental Funding for Graduate Student Participation in Professional Conferences

The Department is committed to supporting graduate-student participation in professional conferences for students in good academic standing. Because the Department has limited funds available for such support, however, we have established the following guidelines. This policy is valid for Academic Year 2025-26.

- 1) Students are expected to apply for available Divisional support for travel to conferences.
- 2) The Department will generally provide support for conference fees for U.S.-based conferences.

- 3) The Department will endeavor to cover lodging expenses up to \$500 in any one academic year.
 - 4) If Divisional travel expenses have been exhausted, the Department will support travel to conferences and conference registration fees up to \$750 per year.
 - 5) The above support applies to conferences (symposia, etc.) held within the U.S. and Canada *only*. Support for travel to and lodging at conferences outside the U.S. can be awarded at the Chair's discretion, but this requires an application to the Chair indicating the importance of the conference in question for the student's professional development.
 - 6) These guidelines are predicated on maximum use of departmental funds. Students who have reached the limit in any given year should nonetheless contact the Chair regarding travel support. If available funds have been underused, then above-limit support may be available.
 - 7) Please note that reimbursement for expenses requires submission of receipts.
- To request this funding in adherence with the requirements above, please submit a letter to the department administrator providing details of the conference and including an itemized list of the funding requested.

Grant Opportunities

Information about Divisional grants and fellowships is available here:

<https://humanities.uchicago.edu/students/financial-aid/fellowships>

Students are also encouraged to contact the Assistant Dean of Students for Student Financials and Registration for more information on available grants.

Additional resources for information about grants include colleagues in Germanic Studies and other departments; the Office of International Affairs; the Office of Career Advancement; UChicagoGRAD, which has a library of grant directories, information, and successful applications; and other websites. Don't be passive when it comes to finding grants—no one person or place will have all the information needed.

Grants vary in the documents required. These may include transcripts, curricula vitae, budgets, itineraries, autobiographical statements, proposals, statements of progress, and letters of reference. No application will ask for all of these, but the list is a fair representation of what the student may be called upon to provide.

Academic Standing

Students are expected to progress through the program according to the schedule laid out in the Program Completion Plans found below in this document (one for students coming in with a B.A., one for students coming in with an M.A.). Successful progress constitutes “good academic standing.” Student progress will be assessed on a regular basis by the DGS in consultation with

departmental faculty, and more specifically in the annual spring review. Failure to maintain good academic standing may result in academic probation or withdrawal from the program depending on the unmet expectations as articulated in the Plan.

Students will be allowed to carry a maximum of three incompletes into the summer of any given year. Failure to complete all outstanding coursework satisfactorily by the end of the summer quarter will result in the incomplete grades changing to “unofficial withdrawal” grades, and will result in academic probation. Other reasons for academic probation, include: A student has a majority of B range grades in their coursework, is given the opportunity to revise an initial failed dissertation proposal, not meeting the dissertation committee’s standard for good academic progress.

If placed on academic probation, the student will receive written documentation from the department with required expectations to return to good academic standing and a timeline for completion of those requirements. Failure to meet the expectations in accordance with the timeline as outlined in the probationary plan, may result in withdrawal from the program.

Satisfactory Progress after Advancement to Candidacy

Satisfactory progress toward completing the Dissertation is defined as completing a minimum of one *approved* chapter each academic year. In most cases, the Department expects more rapid progress: it is expected that most students will complete and receive committee approval for two chapters per year. If a student has not completed an approved chapter by June 30th, they must send a plan to the Director of Graduate Studies to complete and receive approval for the chapter during the summer quarter. Should they miss this deadline, they will be placed on academic probation. A new deadline will be put in place and, should they miss that deadline, they will be withdrawn from the program. Students will be expected to complete the entire dissertation over years 5-6 (and 7 if they have been granted an extension).

Departmental Administrative Withdrawal

When a student is withdrawn from the program they are no longer enrolled in the department, and will no longer be eligible for fellowships, stipends, student loans, or other financial aid. The student may only return to enrollment by applying for resumption of studies (<https://studentmanual.uchicago.edu/administrative-policies/withdrawal-from-the-university/>).

The department will explore every avenue to help students complete their academic work. However, there are several points at which departmental administrative withdrawal will be considered:

1. A student on academic probation does not complete the necessary academic work by an agreed-upon deadline.

2. A student on academic probation meets such a deadline but completes coursework that is not of sufficient quality—understood as work receiving a grade of B- or lower – or not approved by committee.
3. A student does not pass the M.A. or Ph.D. Examination, or fails the dissertation proposal defense.
4. A student cannot satisfactorily perform their teaching duties, according to the assessment criteria detailed in the Pedagogical Training Plan (PTP). Note the student would be placed on academic probation prior, along with an extensive mentoring plan.

REQUIREMENTS FOR STUDENTS ENTERING WITHOUT AN M.A.

Please check the Pedagogical Training Plan (PTP) separately

YEAR ONE REQUIREMENTS

Take a minimum of 8 courses, including:

1. CCTE 50100: Language Pedagogy for the Contemporary Classroom (Winter Quarter)
2. One course each quarter from departmental faculty, and at least two additional courses from departmental faculty during the year (for a total of 5 courses with departmental faculty). All courses need to be taken for quality grades in the first year.

Meet with *all* faculty members during office hours at least once

Participate in department seminar (if offered this year)

Winter Quarter: complete 2-day teaching demonstration in GRMN 10200

Complete M.A. exam

Autumn Quarter Week 8: select 3 examiners for M.A. exam

Winter Quarter Week 4: submit M.A. exam list for approval

Winter Quarter Week 7: schedule meeting with examiners to discuss exam preparation

Spring Quarter: meet with examiners (and other faculty within and without the department) prior to the exam in order to discuss questions arising from readings.

Spring Quarter Week 8: complete written M.A. exam. Receive questions on Friday morning of the eighth week of classes and hand in completed essays by 5:00 p.m. the following Monday.

Spring Quarter Week 9: complete oral M.A. exam (one week after written exam)

Attend departmental events such as lectures, talks, conferences.

NOTE: Students who have successfully completed all requirements for the first year of PhD study may apply to receive the degree of Master of Arts by informing the Department Administrator of their intention to file for an MA degree.

YEAR TWO REQUIREMENTS

Take 4-6 courses (8 courses total must be taken in years 2 and 3 of which 5 must be taken within the department. 6 of these must be taken for a quality grade; remaining courses may be taken on a pass/fail basis.)

Participate in department seminar (if offered this year)

1 Week before Start of Autumn Quarter: Attend Teaching@UChicago and Germanic Studies Orientation

Teach first-year German language sequence

Students intending to complete the CCTL's certificate in Second Language Pedagogy participate in an Inclusive Teaching workshop, offered by the CCTL

Attend departmental events such as lectures, talks, conferences.

YEAR THREE REQUIREMENTS

Complete remaining coursework (8 courses total must be taken in years 2 and 3)

Prepare for and complete Ph.D. exam

Autumn Quarter: Establish Ph.D. exam committee in consultation with DGS
Identify exam committee chair, who will be in charge of scheduling exam

Winter Quarter Week 1: submit preliminary exam list to Ph.D. exam committee and schedule meetings with committee members to discuss list

Spring Quarter Week 2: submit final draft of Ph.D. exam list to exam committee and DGS. (Five weeks prior to the exam, each student will submit to the exam committee and to the DGS a final draft of the list.)

Spring Quarter Week 7: complete written Ph.D. Exam

Spring Quarter Week 8: meet with exam committee to discuss exam (Within two weeks of the exam, the full committee will meet with the student for an hour-long discussion that will encompass the exam and plans for the dissertation.)

Attend multiple pedagogy workshops offered by CLC, CCTL and/or LPD.

Prepare to teach a third-year course by participating in the Third-Year Working Group (1-2 meetings per quarter)

Meet with LPD to discuss teaching options for Year Five

Establish dissertation committee (The Dissertation Committee is to be constituted within three weeks following successful completion of the Ph.D. Examination.)

Spring Quarter Week 9: identify dissertation advisor and a) consult with her/him regarding other 2 committee members, b) discuss proposal and c) discuss the 2 syllabi to be developed during the summer

Spring Quarter Week 10: contact and confirm final 2 committee members

Develop 2 syllabi (one upper-level undergraduate seminar and one graduate-level seminar)

Attend departmental events such as lectures, talks, conferences.

Participate in department seminar (if offered this year)

In the summer: conduct research for proposal

YEAR FOUR REQUIREMENTS

Meet regularly with dissertation advisor – at least once/quarter

Autumn Week 2: meet with advisor to discuss syllabi developed during the summer and plans for proposal

Complete dissertation proposal (roughly 15 pages + bibliography. The final proposal is due no later than one quarter, not including summer, after passing the Ph.D. exam.)

Autumn Week 8: submit proposal to committee and department administrator

Autumn Week 10: meet with committee to discuss proposal and the final drafts of 2 syllabi developed during the summer

Meet at least twice with full dissertation committee

Advancement to Candidacy should occur no later than Winter Quarter of the fourth year.

Pass Academic Reading Comprehension Assessment (ARCA) in a foreign language other than German (Spring Quarter)

Teach one self-designed course at the third-year level (Erzählen, Arbeitskulturen, Drama, Film, Gedicht, Medien, or Philosophie)

Winter Quarter: Confirm plans for Year Five teaching with LPD

Attend departmental events such as lectures, talks, conferences.

YEAR FIVE REQUIREMENTS

Meet regularly with dissertation advisor – at least once/quarter

Submit at least one chapter to advisor and dissertation committee

Meet at least twice with full dissertation committee.

Complete final teaching requirement

Students may wish to work on developing a teaching philosophy (with CCTL workshop) and other portfolio materials for use on the job market.

Attend departmental events such as lectures, talks, conferences.

YEAR SIX REQUIREMENTS

Meet regularly with dissertation advisor

Meet at least twice with full dissertation committee

Complete remaining dissertation chapter(s) and submit to advisor and dissertation committee

Winter Quarter Week 10: schedule dissertation defense for next quarter

Spring Quarter Week 1: apply to graduate

Spring Quarter Week 4: submit dissertation to committee

Spring Quarter Week 6: defend dissertation

Spring Quarter Week 7: submit final draft of dissertation to dissertation office

Attend departmental events such as lectures, talks, conferences.

YEAR SEVEN: see below.

REQUIREMENTS FOR STUDENTS ENTERING WITH AN M.A.

Please check the Pedagogical Training Plan (PTP) separately

YEAR ONE REQUIREMENTS

Take 4-6 courses.

- 1.) 8 courses total must be taken in years 2 and 3, of which 5 must be taken within the department. 6 of these must be taken for a quality grade; remaining courses may be taken on a pass/fail basis.
- 2.) At least two extensive research papers (20-30pp) must be completed in the context of required seminar work in the department. Student will consult with instructor and DGS to determine the seminar for which a research paper will be submitted. (See Genres of Writing.)

Winter Quarter: Take CCTE 50100: Language Pedagogy for the Contemporary Classroom

Winter Quarter: complete 2-day teaching demonstration in GRMN 10200

If required, schedule oral proficiency interview with the language program director (LPD) and complete oral proficiency exam with Advanced-Mid rating

Meet with all faculty members during office hours at least once

Participate in department seminar (if offered this year)

Spring Quarter

- a.) Week 2: identify 3 faculty members who will read and discuss one seminar paper written in Autumn or Winter
- b.) Week 6: submit seminar paper to faculty. Notify department administrator, who will schedule discussion for week 8
- c.) Week 8: meet with faculty members to discuss paper

Attend departmental events such as lectures, talks, conferences.

YEAR TWO REQUIREMENTS

Complete remaining coursework (8 courses total must be taken in years 1 and 2, not including CCTE 50100). See year one requirements above.

Participate in department seminar (if offered)

1 Week before Start of Autumn Quarter: Attend Teaching@UChicago and Germanic Studies

Teach first-year sequence

Spring Quarter: Establish Ph.D. exam committee in consultation with DGS.

Identify exam committee chair, who will be in charge of scheduling exam

Students intending to complete the CCTL's certificate in Second Language Pedagogy participate in an Inclusive Teaching workshop, offered by the CCTL

Begin preparing for Ph.D. exam

Attend departmental events such as lectures, talks, conferences.

Summer Quarter: Compile Ph.D. exam list

YEAR THREE REQUIREMENTS

Advancement to Candidacy should occur no later than Spring Quarter of the third year.

Prepare for and complete Ph.D. exam

Autumn Quarter Week 1: submit preliminary exam list to Ph.D. exam committee and schedule meetings with committee members to discuss list

Winter Quarter Week 2: submit final draft of Ph.D. exam list to exam committee and DGS. (Five weeks prior to the exam, each student will submit to the exam committee and to the DGS a final draft of the list.) Exam committee chair should now schedule exam meeting for week 8

Winter Quarter Week 7: complete written Ph.D. exam

Winter Quarter Week 8: meet with exam committee to discuss exam. (Within two weeks of the exam, the full committee will meet with the student for an hour-long discussion that will encompass the exam and plans for the dissertation.)

Winter Quarter Week 10: identify dissertation advisor, consult with her/him regarding other 2 committee members. (The Dissertation Committee is to be constituted within three weeks following successful completion of the PhD Examination.)

Complete dissertation proposal (roughly 15 pages + bibliography. The final proposal is due no later than one quarter (not including summer) after passing the Ph.D. exam.)

Spring Quarter Week 8: submit proposal to committee and department administrator

Spring Quarter Week 10: meet with committee to discuss proposal and the 2 syllabi to be developed during the summer

Attend multiple workshops offered by CLC, CCTL or LPD

Prepare to teach a third-year language course by participating in the Third-Year Working Group (1-2 meetings per quarter)

Meet with LPD to discuss teaching options for Year Five

Summer: Develop 2 syllabi (one upper-level undergraduate seminar and one graduate-level seminar)

Attend departmental events such as lectures, talks, conferences.

YEAR FOUR REQUIREMENTS

Autumn Quarter: Pass Academic Reading Comprehension Assessment (ARCA) in a foreign language other than German

Autumn Quarter Week 2: meet with primary advisor to discuss syllabi developed during the summer

Teach one self-designed course at the third-year level (Erzählen, Arbeitskulturen, Drama, Film, Gedicht, Medien, or Philosophie)

- a. Meet with coordinator of the third-year language sequence on a regular basis.
 - b. Schedule and complete Individual Teaching Consultation (CCT)
 - c. Schedule one observation by 3rd-year coordinator or LPD
 - d. Schedule one observation by dissertation advisor
- Winter Quarter: Confirm plans for Year Five teaching with LPD

Meet regularly with dissertation advisor

Meet at least twice with full dissertation committee

Attend departmental events such as lectures, talks, conferences.

YEAR FIVE REQUIREMENTS

Meet regularly with dissertation advisor

Meet at least twice with full dissertation committee.

Complete final teaching requirement

Students may wish to work on developing a teaching philosophy (with CCT workshop) and other portfolio materials for use on the job market.

Attend departmental events such as lectures, talks, conferences.

YEAR SIX REQUIREMENTS

Meet regularly with dissertation advisor

Meet at least twice with full dissertation committee

Attend departmental events such as lectures, talks, conferences.

Complete remaining dissertation chapter(s)

Winter Quarter Week 10: schedule dissertation defense for next quarter

Spring Quarter

Week 1: apply to graduate

Week 4: submit dissertation to committee

Week 6: defend dissertation

Week 7: submit final draft of dissertation to Dissertation Office

YEAR SEVEN

As noted above, beginning with the matriculating cohort in Autumn 2025, the program is designed so that students can complete the degree in 6, or in some cases 7 years.

Students who remain in the program after year 6 are expected to create (and follow) a timeline to completion in consultation with their dissertation committee, the DGS, and the Chair of the department. A student will normally be granted an extension if the faculty advisors remain supportive of the student's candidacy AND if the student shows reasonable progress and a credible plan for completion of the Dissertation. Students in their sixth year need to submit a petition for seventh-year registration. A one-to-two-page petition explaining the rationale for the extension, including a completion plan, must be submitted by Friday of Week 6 of the autumn quarter of the student's sixth year. The faculty from the student's dissertation committee, in collaboration with the DGS, will make a decision regarding the extension by Friday of Week 9. This procedure is intended to ensure continued productive commitment on the part of both the candidate and the committee to the dissertation project and its timely completion.

Note for all continuing students our expected time to degree is 6 – 7 years.

Job Seeking and Placement: University Resources

UChicagoGRAD offers extensive career skills programming dedicated to graduate students, as well as one-on-one consultations with doctoral students on career discernment, interview preparation, alumni networking, and job documents. UChicagoGRAD is a dedicated resource for graduate students and postdocs to receive personalized, flexible training to complement their academic pursuits, from fellowship and writing support, to career preparation and internships, to training in public speaking and networking.

Advising appointments and links to additional information at:

<https://grad.uchicago.edu>

Academic Job Seekers should pay particular attention to the **Academic Job Market Summer Camp**, offered for one week each summer: <https://grad.uchicago.edu/career-development/career-events/?tab-section=academicjobmarketsummerncamp>

Chicago Center for Teaching and Learning (CCTL) offers valuable workshops and seminars on the teaching statement and teaching portfolio, as well as on pedagogy more generally.

UChicago Alumni & Friends: UChicago Alumni & Friends is an office dedicated to alumni support. They offer a job board, Alumni directory, and a calendar of activities, among other services.

Students are also encouraged to explore opportunities for **funded internships** sponsored by UChicagoGRAD: <https://grad.uchicago.edu/career-development/internships/>

CAS Workshops

The Council on Advanced Studies (CAS) (<https://grad.uchicago.edu/academic-support/council-on-advanced-studies-workshops/>) offers a range of research workshops for faculty members and graduate students. The format varies, but participants, including both students, faculty members, and invited guests, normally discuss common readings and present the results of their own research.

The department strongly recommends that PhD students participate in workshops relevant to their projects when preparing a Dissertation Proposal and working on the dissertation itself. Many students begin participating in workshops sooner than this.

Graduate Teaching Awards

Dean's Award for Graduate Teaching Excellence

Each year the Dean's Graduate Student Teaching Award will recognize a graduate student who has demonstrated exemplary teaching. Each department may nominate one student for the award. Any student who has taught a freestanding course is eligible. Students may be nominated for this award by each other, by faculty, or by themselves. More information at: <https://humanities.uchicago.edu/students/deans-award>

Stuart Tave Course Design Awards

The Stuart Tave Course Design Award recognizes up to three graduate students who have demonstrated exemplary course design. The award is intended to foster a culture of course design excellence among graduate teaching assistants and instructors. Any student who has taught a freestanding course is eligible. Students should submit their applications for these awards to their department chairs. More information at: <https://humanities.uchicago.edu/students/deans-award/stuart-tave-course-design-awards>

College Teaching Certificate with Focus on Second Language Pedagogy

Graduate students are encouraged to pursue the College Teaching Certificate with Focus on Second Language Pedagogy offered through the Chicago Center of Teaching and Learning (CCTL). This program aims to help PhD students to develop and critically reflect on their teaching practice, to receive formative and constructive feedback on their teaching, and to articulate and demonstrate an inclusive and student-centered approach to teaching.

More information at: <https://teaching.uchicago.edu/programs/college-teaching-certificate-program>

Teaching Fellows in the Humanities

The Teaching Fellow program is designed to enhance pedagogical skills and extend research training for recent graduates of the Humanities Division's PhD programs. Fellows participate in a two-year program of professional development under the joint supervision of the Chicago Center for Teaching and Learning (CCTL) and a faculty mentor in a relevant Divisional department. Fellows teach four courses—including at least two courses in the Humanities or Arts Core—while working to advance their own research, and are active members of the University's intellectual community.

More information can be found at:
<https://humanities.uchicago.edu/students/teaching/teaching-fellows-humanities>

Room Reservations

Affiliated students may reserve rooms controlled by their department on a first-come, first-served basis. Priority will be given to departmental academic and/or social programming. Room reservations must fall within building operating hours.

To reserve space, students must email their department administrator with the following information:

- Name and email of the person leading the event
- Title of the event
- Description of event
- Date of event
- Start and end time(s) of the event
- Estimated number of attendees
- Preferred room
- If there will be any food served

All room requests for the purposes of administering the Collective Bargaining Agreement between the University and GSU-UE should be directed through the [UChicagoGRAD Room Reservation Form](#).

Student Manual

The [Student Manual](#) is the official statement of University policies, regulations, and expected standards of

student conduct that are applicable to all students. While students should be familiar with the manual as a whole, the following are commonly referenced by graduate students: Student Life & Conduct, Leaves of Absence, University Grievance Policy for Graduate Students, Policy on Harassment, Discrimination, and Sexual Misconduct, Policy on Title IX Sexual Harassment, Policy on Religious Accommodation for Missed Classes, Assignments, and Exams, Academic Honesty & Plagiarism, Graduate Student Parent Policy, Registration for Students in PhD Programs

Divisional Manual/policies

The Division of Arts and Humanities student policies can be found here.

Collective Bargaining Agreement

The terms and conditions of employment for certain graduate students at the University of Chicago who are employed to perform instructional or research services will be determined by a Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA) between the University and Graduate Students United (“GSU-UE”) for the duration of the assignment to perform such services. Students can access the CBA and review frequently asked questions about graduate student unionization on the Provost’s office website.

Departmental and Dean of Students Office

Contact information for departmental staff and faculty can be found here. The Dean of Students Office is available to assist students with support/resources, answer questions/concerns, and provide review of policies and processes.

Concerns and Clarifications

Students with questions related to grievances or disputes, can review the information found here. Students with questions may contact their Department Administrator, Director of Graduate Studies, the Dean of Students, or the Director of Graduate Student Affairs in UChicagoGRAD.