

Film & Media Studies Graduate Student Handbook

Policies and Guidelines for Earning the Ph.D.

The Film & Media Studies Ph.D. program offers students the opportunity to study and develop original research in film, television, and digital media. This handbook describes the degree requirements, department guidelines, and general advice for navigating the Ph.D. program.

You may choose to supplement your FMS degree with interdisciplinary graduate certificates in [Asian American Studies](#), [Chicano/Latino Studies](#), [Critical Theory](#), [Graduate Feminist Emphasis](#), [Ancient Iranian Studies](#), [Latin American Studies](#), [Medical Humanities](#) and/or [Visual Studies](#).

Your faculty advisor, the Graduate Director ([Braxton Soderman](#)), and the Graduate Coordinator ([Amy Fujitani](#)) can answer questions you might have about the FMS Ph.D. program. Your best strategy for succeeding in graduate school is to meet regularly with your advisor.

Please report broken links to Braxton Soderman or Amy Fujitani.

University of California, Irvine
Academic Year 2025-2026

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Directory

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School of Humanities

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Part I: Program Requirements and Sample Timelines

Program Requirements

The following requirements, which are posted in the General Catalogue, have been approved by the FMS core faculty, the Dean of the School of Humanities, Graduate Council, and Graduate Division. Any exceptions to these requirements can only be made by permission of the Graduate Dean. Students are governed by the requirements that were enumerated in the General Catalogue in the year they first enrolled in the Film & Media Studies program. If you plan to petition for an exception to any of these requirements, you should first meet with the Graduate Director. [Academic Policies](#) approved by the Academic Senate cannot be amended.

The Film and Media Studies faculty conducts an annual review of each graduate student based on students' transcripts, end-of-year reports, TA evaluations, and comments from faculty. At the end of their first year, students will receive a written evaluation as part of their First-Year Review. Thereafter, students will be notified only if the faculty determine that a student needs to make specific improvements.

Students who do not make satisfactory progress towards meeting the following requirements as determined by their advisor, committee, and/or the FMS faculty will be recommended for [Academic Conditional Status \(ACS\)](#) and provided with written notification of a) areas that require improvement and b) a timeline for academic progress. Students who fail to meet the expectations laid out in their ACS document will be recommended for disqualification from the program.

Course Requirements

A. Required Core Courses (6 courses):

- FLM&MDA 285A: Film Studies: Theory and Methods
- FLM&MDA 285B: Television Studies: Theory and Methods
- FLM&MDA 285C: Digital Media and Game Studies: Theory and Methods
- FLM&MDA 286A: Film and Media Studies Historiography
- FLM&MDA 286B: Media/Power/Culture
- FLM&MDA 286C: Methods and Research Design

B. Elective Courses (7 courses)

Students must take three elective courses from within the Department of Film and Media Studies (FLM&MDA 291, 292, 295) and two outside Film and Media Studies. The remaining two electives can be taken within or outside the department.

Students entering with a M.A. may petition to have up to three elective courses waived, subject to the approval of Graduate Division. Students who have had three courses waived must take two elective courses from within the Department of Film and Media Studies and one outside Film and Media Studies. The remaining elective can be taken within or outside the department.

C. Required Practicums in Film and Media Studies (4 courses)

- FLM&MDA 287: Practicum in Pedagogy
- FLM&MDA 288A: Practicum in Professionalization I
- FLM&MDA 288B: Practicum in Professionalization II
- FLM&MDA 288C: Practicum in Professionalization III

D. Required Supporting Course (1 course)

- FLM&MDA 297: Prospectus Writing Practicum

Language Requirement

Students will consult with the program Director and their principal advisor(s) to determine whether they must demonstrate or develop proficiency in a second language for their research.^[1] If the program Director and principal advisor(s) determine that proficiency in a second language is required, the student must demonstrate this proficiency prior to advancing to candidacy. In the event a student does not need a second language to conduct doctoral research, they will not be required to demonstrate proficiency in a second language.

If determined to be required, the language requirement may be satisfied by one of the following means:

1. By passing the Film and Media Studies translation exam. A request must be made to the Film and Media Studies staff within the first two weeks of the quarter the student wishes to take the exam.
2. By completing, with a grade of B or better, a language course at the 2C level or equivalent, with the exception of Arabic, Chinese, Japanese, and Korean, which must be completed at the 3C level or equivalent.
3. By attaining a proficiency level of 2C on the Russian Exemption Exam or a proficiency level of 3C on the Chinese Exemption Exam offered by UCI's Academic Testing Center.
4. By petitioning the program. Grounds for a petition might include the student's being a native speaker in a language other than English or having completed an equivalent language requirement at a different institution. The granting of this petition will remain at the discretion of the Graduate Director, although students dissatisfied with this

determination may request the petition be considered by the full faculty. Students who have completed the language requirement at a different institution will need to submit transcripts with the petition. Students will inquire with the Graduate Coordinator to complete a petition.

^[1] Examples of when a second language would likely be necessary include Spanish proficiency for the study of Spanish-language media, Mandarin proficiency for study of media in Mainland China, or the relevant language for a project on non-English language transnational/diasporic media.

First-Year Review

Students are required to select and confirm their Primary Advisor by the end of the first year.

At the end of the Spring quarter, the Film and Media Studies faculty will review the performance and progress of each first-year student and provide written evaluation of their work. This evaluation will include an assessment of the student's ability to complete independent research.

A positive assessment indicates that the student is making good progress.

A cautionary assessment will be accompanied by a description of specific improvements that a student must make in order to advance to candidacy in the third year.

A negative overall assessment will place the student on [Academic Conditional Status](#). Faculty will give written feedback with specific areas for improvement and a timeline for future expectations of academic progress. Students who fail to demonstrate improvement may be recommended for disqualification from the program without a degree.

M.A. Requirements

All students apply for and are accepted into the doctoral program.

Students who enter the Ph.D. program with a prior graduate degree (M.A. or beyond) in Film and Media Studies or a related discipline may petition to waive the M.A. exam requirement in recognition of their prior degree; normatively, this will be approved. In these cases, students will not complete the M.A. exam requirement nor earn a second M.A. en route to the Ph.D. Film and Media Studies faculty will determine what graduate degree fields qualify as related disciplines. Students entering with an M.F.A. will typically be required to complete

the M.A. exam unless the Graduate Committee determines that the degree is equivalent to an M.A.

Students who have not earned an M.A. in a relevant field prior to matriculating in the Film and Media Studies Ph.D. program must earn an M.A. degree as part of the Ph.D. program. The program does not offer a stand-alone or terminal M.A., except in instances when a student does not continue in the program toward earning the Ph.D.

To earn the M.A. degree, the student must:

1. Satisfactorily complete six foundational courses (FLM&MDA 285A, B, C, FLM&MDA 286A, 286B, 286C);
2. Satisfactorily complete FLM&MDA 287;
3. Satisfactorily complete seven electives (three must be within the Department of Film and Media Studies and two outside the Department of Film and Media Studies);
4. Pass the M.A. Exam; and
5. File the necessary paperwork for conferral of degree with Graduate Division.

For the M.A. exam, the student will revise one seminar paper written while in the program and submit the revised paper before the start of the Spring quarter in their second year of study.

The requirements for passing the M.A. exam are as follows:

- The revised paper must present a substantive and original argument;
- It must reflect substantial revision from the original paper, demonstrating additional research and/or reconceptualization and responsiveness to feedback;
- It must demonstrate a command of the relevant literature;
- It must present adequate evidence to support its claims;
- It must be clearly written in an appropriate academic style; and
- It must be formatted according to MLA or Chicago Manual of Style guidelines with proper citation and bibliography.

This paper will be evaluated by a three-person M.A. committee, which consists of the student's primary advisor as chair and two additional department faculty members appointed by the Program Director in consultation with the student and the advisor. The committee will unanimously decide whether the student has passed the M.A. exam and if they are eligible to proceed toward the Ph.D., taking into holistic account the exam (revised paper) results, input from the core Film and Media Studies faculty during the First-Year Review, and the

student's progress during the second year of course work. There are four possible determinations:

- Positive: The student will earn the M.A. degree and qualifies to continue toward the Ph.D. exams.
- Cautionary: The student will earn the M.A. degree and qualifies to continue toward the Ph.D. exams but with areas for improvement communicated in writing to the student and advisor. This occurs when the student's holistic performance and promise outweigh a borderline exam or vice versa.
- M.A. Only: The student will earn the M.A. degree but is disqualified from continuing toward the Ph.D. exams. This occurs when the student's holistic performance and promise do *not* outweigh a borderline exam.
- Negative: The exam is unacceptable. The student will not earn the M.A. degree and is disqualified from continuing toward the Ph.D. exams.

Students may revise and resubmit the M.A. paper one additional time in case of a failure to pass.

Preliminary Examination

By the end of their second year, students will work with their advisor to plan their Examination fields for the following year. No later than the end of Spring in the second year of study, students will establish a three-person Qualifying Exam Committee, at least 51% of whose members, including the Dissertation Advisor, must be core faculty in the Department of Film and Media Studies.

The student will be examined on three bibliographies: The Standard Bibliography in Film Studies, Television Studies, or Digital Media Studies; the Field Bibliography, selected in consultation with the Exam Committee, and the Dissertation Bibliography. In the Fall and Winter quarters of the third year, the student will enroll in FLM&MDA 296: Reading for the Preliminary Examination and read the works on these three bibliographies. The three exam areas should serve to help the student define general areas of specialized competence that will aid them in establishing a broad base for the dissertation and in developing college-level courses. Students may not enroll in FLM&MDA 296 until no earlier than the Spring quarter of their second year.

The Qualifying Examination will be administered by the Qualifying Exam Committee and will include both a written and an oral component. The written component will consist of at least one question for each Exam bibliography for which the student has completed readings. Students will write at least one essay for each respective Exam. Faculty may offer a range of questions for each bibliography, giving the student a choice of which question(s) to answer. The Standard and Field Bibliography exams will consist of essays in response to questions from the Exam Committee. Both exams will be administered electronically and must be completed within five days. The Dissertation Bibliography will consist of a Literature Review. The oral component of the exam will take place in conjunction with the Prospectus Defense during the Spring quarter of the student's third year.

Dissertation Prospectus and Advancement to Ph.D. Candidacy

The student will enroll in FLM&MDA 297: Prospectus Writing Practicum and complete a prospectus that identifies the scope, approach, and rationale for their proposed dissertation. The student will present an oral defense of the prospectus to the Qualifying Exam Committee. When the prospectus has been unanimously approved by the Qualifying Exam Committee, the student will be advanced to doctoral candidacy. Students should have taken their preliminary examination, defended their dissertation prospectus, and advanced to doctoral candidacy no later than the end of Spring quarter of their third year. If a student will exceed the three-year normative time to candidacy, they must petition by Spring quarter of their third year for an exception, presenting an approved plan for timely progress to candidacy.

If a student does not pass the qualifying examination, consistent with UCI policy ([Academic Senate Regulation 467](#)) the student will be allowed one repeat attempt of the examination. This repeat examination will occur during the quarter following the initial examination.

Dissertation

The dissertation shall be an original research project of substantial length approved by the Doctoral Committee. The committee shall typically consist of the Doctoral Advisor and two additional faculty. At least 51% of the Doctoral Committee, including the Doctoral Advisor, must be core faculty in the Department of Film and Media Studies. The remaining members of the Doctoral Committee must satisfy Academic Senate requirements.

Dissertation Defense

A final examination in the form of an oral defense of the dissertation is required for the PhD. This examination will be supervised by the Doctoral Committee and will be given just prior to the completion of the dissertation. The defense will be open to all members of the academic

community. Faculty and graduate students of Film and Media Studies and the Graduate Dean will be given written notice of the date, time, and place of the examination at least five days in advance of the examination.

Time to Degree

The normative time to degree is six years (18 quarters). The first nine quarters are spent in pre-candidacy, the last 9 quarters in candidacy. Normatively, students will complete their course work within the first two years and prepare for and pass the Qualifying Examination and advance to candidacy in the third year. The maximum time to degree is seven years.

Sample Timeline

Quarterly Timeline

Students must enroll in a minimum of 12 units (3 courses) per quarter. Teaching Assistants who hold a 50% teaching positions may enroll in University Teaching (FMS 399), along with two regular graduate courses, to maintain the required 12 units for full-time enrollment.

Year 1

Fall	Winter	Spring
FMS 285A	FMS 285B	FMS 285C
Elective 1	Elective 3	Elective 5
Elective 2	Elective 4	Elective 6
		First-Year Review
<i>Develop plan to satisfy language requirement, if applicable.</i>		Upload Faculty Advising Agreement, IDP, & unofficial transcript to OneDrive.
<i>Submit course-waiver petitions, if applicable.</i>		<i>Discuss M.A. paper with your advisor, if applicable.</i>

Year 2

Fall	Winter	Spring
FMS 286A	FMS 286B	FMS 286C
Elective or <i>FMS 295: M.A. Paper, if applicable</i>	Elective or <i>FMS 295: M.A. Paper, if applicable</i>	FMS 296: Exam Reading
FMS 287: Teaching Practicum		Form prospectus and exam committees; notify exam committee members of which Standardized and Field exams you will complete. Submit PhD Committees & Prelim Exam Declaration Form .
	<i>Submit M.A. exam prior to start of Spring quarter, and advance to candidacy for the M.A., if applicable</i>	<i>File conferral paperwork for the M.A. degree, if applicable</i>

Year 3

Fall	Winter	Spring
FMS 296	FMS 296	FMS 297: Prospectus Writing Practicum
FMS 288A (Practicum)	FMS 288B (Practicum)	FMS 288C (Practicum)
Complete written and oral portions of the Standardized and Field exams and submit dissertation bibliography	Submit the Literature Review exam to your Prospectus committee by week 9.	Prospectus Roundtable Defend dissertation prospectus, and advance to candidacy for the Ph.D.

- Normative time to advancement to candidacy for the Ph.D.: 3 years.
- International students must advance to candidacy for the Ph.D. within 9 quarters (three years) excluding Leaves of Absences in order to maintain their funding.

Year 4

Fall	Winter	Spring
FMS 299: Dissertation Research	FMS 299	FMS 299
<i>Apply for dissertation fellowships.</i>		

Year 5

Fall	Winter	Spring
FMS 299	FMS 299	FMS 299
<i>Apply for dissertation fellowships.</i>		

Year 6

Fall	Winter	Spring
FMS 299	FMS 299	FMS 299
		Oral Dissertation Defense
<i>Apply for jobs and post-doctoral fellowships.</i>	Distribute dissertation draft to your committee	File paperwork for the Ph.D.

- Normative Time to Degree for the Ph.D.: 6 years.
- Maximum Time to Degree for the Ph.D.: 7 years.
 - Students who are beyond maximum time to degree may be unable to register and are not qualified to TA.
 - Students may TA for a maximum of 18 quarters, excluding Summer.

In Absentia and Leaves of Absence

In absentia status is a form of registration available to students undertaking necessary coursework or research related to their degree programs outside of California or in some cases by exception, within California but outside the Southern California area e.g. not residing/working in Orange, Los Angeles, Riverside or San Diego County. Students registered in absentia are assessed 15% of the Student Services and Tuition Fees, the full health insurance fees, and the Associated Graduate Student fee. For more information on in absentia status, please review the [In Absentia FAQ](#).

A Leave of Absence (LOA) may be granted for up to one academic year (3 quarters) if, following review of the student's academic record, it is deemed consistent with the student's academic objectives and progress toward degree. For more information on leaves of absence, please review the [Leave of Absence FAQ](#).

International Students

For students entering in 2021 and beyond, Non-Resident Supplemental Tuition (NRST) is covered for three years in general--by the School of Humanities during the first year with the first-year fellowship and by Graduate Division during the second and third years through the NRST remission program. If a student chooses to take an Academic Leave of Absence (LOA) prior to advancement to candidacy, the NRST remission program will be paused for a maximum of 3 quarters. A student on part-time status is not eligible to receive funding through the NRST remission program as they must be enrolled full-time (12 units).

International students must advance to candidacy by the end of their year 3. Per UC system-wide policy, nonresident students advanced to candidacy are eligible for a 100% reduction in the NRST for a maximum of three consecutive calendar years including time on Academic Leave of Absence. This reduction in NRST begins with the first academic term following advancement to candidacy. Any nonresident student who continues to be registered or who re-registers following the three-consecutive-year maximum time will be charged the full NRST rate that is in effect at that time of enrollment ([p. 17, B. 2](#)). More details about this UCI pre-advancement NRST policy and for cohorts entering UCI before F2021 can be found [here](#).

Recommended Quarterly Activity

Year One

Week	Fall
0	Activate your UCInetID and start regularly checking your UCI email for updates.
0	Review the Admitted Student Checklists available on Graduate Division's website for general campus requirements.
0	<u>International students</u> , register your Glacier account to ensure proper tax withholdings.
0	Register for FMS 285A and two graduate-level (200+) electives via StudentAccess . Do not register for courses in the FMS 286 series in your first year. Keep in mind that you must complete at least 7 electives, three of which must be FMS courses and two of which must be outside the program. (The remaining two electives can be in or outside FMS.) The FMS faculty recommend that you apply no more than two directed readings toward your seven required electives. Course listings and descriptions can be found on the School of Humanities' Office of Graduate Study website . The Registrar's Schedule of Classes includes courses offered campus-wide.
0	If you are a U.S. citizen or permanent resident relocating to California from another state, you must establish California residency by next September. Read Ten Things Graduate Students Need to Know . Keep all receipts from your move to validate when you began residing in California.
0	Sign up for Direct Deposit (ZOT account). Please note that you will need to re-register for Direct Deposit when you begin TA'ing as your salary is managed through a separate system (UC Path).
0	Submit your updated contact information and material for the program website (a photo, your pronouns, your preferred name, and a list of three to five research areas) to the Graduate Coordinator.
0	Attend the School of Humanities New Graduate Student Orientation and the FMS Welcome Week Orientation and Graduate Reception.
0-2	<p>Meet with your advisor to discuss your academic goals and plan of study, including pursuing a graduate emphasis. An advisor will be assigned to you during your first year in the program. You may change advisors at any time by submitting a signed Faculty Advising Agreement to the Graduate Coordinator.</p> <p>If applicable, discuss your plans for completing the language requirement and M.A. exam. If you have completed the language requirement elsewhere or are a native speaker of a language other than English, consider petitioning to waive the</p>

	requirement . If you have already earned an M.A., discuss your petitions to waive up to three courses.
0-2	Meet with the Graduate Director to discuss your plan of study, language requirement, and any petitions you plan to submit.
0-2	Contact the Graduate Coordinator to initiate any petitions you plan to submit.
Week	Winter
0	Register for FMS 285B and two graduate-level (200+) electives.
1-3	Meet with your Primary Advisor to discuss your progress and plan of study.
0-11	Update or create your <i>curriculum vitae</i> (CV). The Professor is In offers guidance on what to include and in what order. You will need your CV and a teaching statement for your TA application and your end-of-year report.
Week	Spring
0	Register for FMS 285C and two electives.
1-3	Meet with your Primary Advisor to discuss your progress and plan of study and to review your CV.
1-5	Meet with the Graduate Coordinator to review your degree audit ("DegreeWorks" available through StudentAccess) and any petitions.
5	You should receive the call for TA applications for the next academic year around week five. Be sure to submit your application on time. FMS recommends that students TA for FMS 85, 86, and 87 in their first year of teaching. The department will prioritize assigning FMS graduate students to FMS classes.
7	Select your Primary Advisor for the next academic year and upload your updated Faculty Advising Agreement to your FMS OneDrive file.
7	Complete and upload your FMS IDP, CV and unofficial transcript to your FMS OneDrive file. Your materials will be distributed to the full faculty for your first-year review.
8	<u>If your M.A. requirement has not been waived</u> , talk to your advisor about which seminar paper you will revise. Develop a plan for revising the seminar paper into your M.A. exam paper prior to Spring quarter of your second year.
10	First-Year Review: At the end of your first year of graduate study, the full FMS faculty will review your performance and progress and provide a written evaluation of your work.

Year Two

Week	Fall
0	Enroll in FMS 286A, an elective, FMS 287 (Practicum in Pedagogy), and the 399 University Teaching associated with the class you are TAing. Registering for 399s is optional and designed to permit you to register for a reduced course load while you are working as a TA. Please see the FMS TA Guidelines for more information about your duties as a TA.
0	<u>If your M.A. requirement has not been waived</u> , enroll in FMS 295 Directed Reading with your advisor, who will supervise your M.A. paper. You must submit a draft of the M.A. paper to the Graduate Director before the beginning of Spring quarter.
0	Petition for Resident Classification. Review " How to Establish Residency " for general guidelines and contact the Registrar's Office if you have additional questions.
0	Attend TA the two-day TA Professional Development Program .
0	Register for direct deposit through UCPath .
1	Meet with your advisor to discuss your goals and progress. <u>If your M.A. requirement has not been waived</u> , discuss your revision plan for the M.A. paper.
1	Meet with the Graduate Director to discuss your progress and any questions you might have about program requirements.
Week	Winter
0	Enroll in 286B, an elective, and 399: University Teaching (if applicable).
0	<u>If your M.A. requirement has not been waived</u> , enroll in FMS 295 Directed Reading with your advisor to complete the M.A. paper revisions, which must be submitted to the Graduate Director before the beginning of Spring quarter.
1-3	Meet with your Primary Advisor to discuss your progress towards exams, completing your language requirement and M.A. paper (if applicable), and advancing to candidacy in your third year.
6	<u>If your M.A. requirement has not been waived</u> , work with the Graduate Coordinator to submit the "Advancement to Candidacy for the M.A." by the end of week 6.

11	<u>If your M.A. requirement has not been waived</u> , Submit your M.A. paper to the Graduate Director along with a list of suggested M.A. committee members. Keep in mind that your preferred faculty may not be available to evaluate the M.A. paper. The Graduate Director will convene an M.A. committee, which will typically be chaired by your advisor.
Week	Spring
0	Enroll in 286C, 296: Exam Reading with your chair or a committee member, and 399: University Teaching (if applicable).
1	Notify the Graduate Director and Graduate Coordinator of who has agreed to serve on your Exam Committee and which Standardized and Field exams you will take in the Fall. Keep in mind that all members of your Exam Committee must be FMS Core faculty and/or FMS Affiliates.
3-8	<u>If your M.A. requirement has not been waived</u> , your M.A. committee will provide you with written comments within three weeks of receiving your M.A. paper. It is very likely that the committee will require revisions, which must be submitted to the M.A. committee by Week 8. The deadline to submit conferral paperwork for your M.A. degree is Friday of Week 10.
5	You should receive the call for TA applications for the next academic year around week five. During your second year of teaching, FMS recommends that you teach in the 101 series if possible.
7	Complete and upload your FMS IDP, CV, and unofficial transcript to your FMS OneDrive file.
7-11	Search ProQuest Dissertations and Theses Global for completed dissertations in your field and select a handful to read over the summer so that you are familiar with the dissertation as a form.

Year Three

Week	Fall
0	Enroll FMS 296: Exam Reading with your chair or a committee member, FMS 288A, and a 399 (if applicable).
1	Meet with your Primary Advisor to discuss your expectations for the year. It is important that you work in close consultation with your Primary Advisor while developing your prospectus. Schedule regular meetings throughout the year.
1-3	Schedule your 90-minute Oral Exam with your Exam Committee for week 10. Work with the FMS Graduate Coordinator to reserve a room for the Oral Exam.
1-10	Identify your dissertation topic and begin to develop dissertation bibliography and methodologies.
5	Apply to teach a course in summer session.

8	Complete written exams.
10	Complete 90-minute oral exam.
11	Submit Dissertation Bibliography and preliminary list of media objects to your Prospectus Committee.
Week	Winter
0	Enroll in FMS 297: Prospectus Research with your chair, FMS 288B, and a 399 (if applicable).
1	Review your Degree Audit Form ("DegreeWorks" available through StudentAccess) with the Graduate Coordinator. All your degree requirements except the dissertation must be completed <i>before</i> you advance to candidacy in the Spring.
9	Submit Literature Review to your Prospectus Committee.
11	Submit project description, literature review, and media list to the Graduate Director and Graduate Coordinator for distribution to the full faculty.
Week	Spring
0	Enroll in FMS 298: Prospectus Writing Practicum, FMS 288C, and FMS 399 (if applicable).
1-3	Discuss your project description, literature review, and media list with the full faculty during the first faculty meeting of the Spring quarter
1-3	Schedule your two-hour Prospectus Defense with the Prospectus Committee. Work with the FMS Graduate Coordinator to reserve a room for your Prospectus Exam.
5	Distribute your prospectus to your Prospectus Committee and ask that they give you written comments within three weeks.
5	You should receive the call for TA applications for the next academic year around week five. Be sure to submit the application on time.
7	Meet with your advisor to discuss the committee's comments on your prospectus and develop a revision plan.
7	Complete and upload your FMS IDP, CV, and unofficial transcript to your FMS OneDrive file.
8-9	Distribute your final prospectus to your Prospectus Committee.
6-11	Establish a writing accountability group for summer and the coming academic year. Students who have earned their Ph.D.'s report that writing groups are extremely helpful. Graduate Division offers many forms of writing support , or you can form an accountability group within your cohort.
10-11	Complete your Prospectus Defense with the Prospectus Committee. Work with Graduate Coordinator to submit Ph.D. Advancement to Candidacy form by Friday of Week 11.

Students who do not advance to candidacy by the end of their third year will be recommended for Academic Conditional Status.

Years Four and Five

Fall
<p>Enroll in FMS 299: Dissertation Research.</p> <p>Meet with your chair to discuss your goals for the year. What written work will you complete? Will you apply for any fellowships? Submit a conference proposal? Submit journal articles or book chapters for publication?</p> <p>Apply to teach a summer session course and consider registering for University Studies 390X and applying to the Pedagogical Scholars Program.</p> <p>Meet with Humanities Center staff to discuss fellowships for which you might apply.</p>
Winter
<p>Enroll in FMS 299: Dissertation Research.</p> <p>Meet with your Chair to discuss your progress and goals for the quarter.</p>
Spring
<p>Enroll in FMS 299: Dissertation Research.</p> <p>Meet with your chair to discuss your progress and goals for the quarter.</p> <p>Submit your IDP, CV, and unofficial transcript to your FMS OneDrive folder.</p> <p><u>Year 4</u>: Submit at least one full dissertation chapter to your Chair.</p> <p><u>Year 5</u>: Discuss your career plans with your chair. Keep your CV up-to-date and develop Research and Teaching statements, if you plan to apply for academic jobs. Ask your chair and other mentors to look over these documents and to upload letters of recommendation to Interfolio.</p>

Year Six

(This timeline will move up if you complete, defend, and file your dissertation early, whether in Year Five or before Spring of Year Six; adjust your plan accordingly.)

Fall
<p>Meet with your chair to discuss your timeline for filing the dissertation. Your Doctoral Committee will most likely suggest revisions, so be sure to schedule enough time to revise.</p> <p>Notify your Doctoral Committee that you plan to file your dissertation in Spring. Let them know when they can expect to see a draft of the completed dissertation.</p>

If you are applying for academic jobs, consider giving a mock job talk to the FMS community. If you are considering a career outside academia, meet with Humanities Center staff. Job applications are generally submitted in the Fall with interviews and campus visits taking place in Winter. The job search takes up a great deal of time, so plan accordingly.

Winter

Meet with your chair to discuss your plan for completing the dissertation.

Distribute a draft dissertation to your Doctoral Committee and ask for feedback. If appropriate, ask committee members to identify which feedback is required for the dissertation and which is suggested for eventual publication. Expect and allow time for at least some revisions.

Consult the [UCI Thesis and Dissertation Formatting Manual](#) for instructions on formatting your Dissertation and take a look at Graduate Divisions instructions for [Doctoral Degree Completion](#) to be sure you understand all the steps you'll need to take to file your dissertation next quarter.

Work with the Graduate Coordinator to be sure you have everything you need to submit your final degree paperwork packet by the Spring filing deadline.

Spring

Schedule your two-hour Oral Defense. Work with the Program Coordinator to reserve a room for your Oral Exam. The defense should occur at least three weeks before the filing deadline.

Distribute your completed dissertation at least three weeks before the Oral Defense.

Request a [Pre-Submission Critique](#) well ahead of the filing deadline to be sure the dissertation is formatted correctly.

Ask your Chair whether they recommend that you embargo the dissertation.

Part II: Guidelines and Recommendations

Professional Development

Etiquette

Be respectful of people's time. We are all balancing research, teaching, professional service, and personal responsibilities. Please be mindful of how your actions impact faculty, staff, and your fellow students.

- Respond to emails in a timely manner. As in any professional setting, you should respond to emails within one to two business days, and you should expect responses to your emails within that amount of time. If you are unable to fully respond to an email within two business days, acknowledge receipt of the email and offer a timeline for when you will get back to the sender.
- Meet your writing deadlines. Faculty often schedule time to read your work into their calendars. When you miss a deadline, it can be difficult to reschedule this time.
- Schedule your appointments with faculty at least one week in advance. Ideally, you will meet with them during their posted office hours.
- Be on time. If you must be late to a class or meeting, alert whomever you are meeting as soon as possible. Similarly, be fully present when you are in a class or meeting.
- Avoid asking anything of faculty during the summer or when they are on sabbatical. Most faculty in the School of Humanities are not paid for their summer labor, and sabbaticals are hard earned. You should not ask faculty to work with you on independent studies or other projects when they are not in residence. The one exception to this rule is that exam, prospectus, and dissertation committee members will read your work and write letters of recommendation during their sabbaticals.

Conference Presentations

Conferences offer an invaluable opportunity to meet other scholars who share your research interests. You are strongly encouraged to present your work at the annual meetings of national scholarly organizations, such as the following:

- [Society for Cinema and Media Studies](#) (SCMS). If you plan to pursue a career in Film and Media Studies, it is a good idea to prioritize attending SCMS.
- [American Studies Association](#) (ASA)
- [Association of Internet Researchers](#) (AoIR)
- [Console-ing Passions](#)
- [Digital Games Research Association](#) (DiGRA)
- [European Association for the Study of Science and Technology](#) (EASST)
- [European Network for Cinema and Media Studies](#) (NECS)
- [International Communications Association](#) (ICP)

- [Society for the History of Technology](#) (SHOT)

Also keep your eye out for calls for papers (cfp) for smaller conferences, which tend to be more intimate.

The School of Humanities Office of Graduate Study [website](#) provides information about conference travel funding through the Humanities Center and the Office of Graduate Study.

Publishing

If you plan to pursue a career in academia, you should publish at least one peer-reviewed article before you file your dissertation. The UCI Library Search page can help you determine whether or not a journal is peer-reviewed.

Peer-reviewed journal articles carry the most prestige, followed by chapters in peer-reviewed edited collections. Book reviews, encyclopedia entries, and other non-peer-reviewed publications are far less valuable to your CV.

The following are well respected journals within the discipline of Film & Media Studies.

- *Camera Obscura*
- *Celebrity Studies*
- *Communication, Culture, and Critique*
- *Convergence: The International Journal of Research into New Media Technologies*
- *Critical Studies in Media Communication*
- *Game Studies*
- *Games and Culture*
- *JCMS* (this is the official journal of the Society for Cinema and Media Studies)
- *Feminist Media Histories*
- *Feminist Media Studies*
- *Film History*
- *Film Quarterly*
- *Historical Journal of Film, Radio and Television*
- *New Media and Society*
- *Quarterly Review of Film and Video*
- *Television & New Media*

Funding and Other Resources

- [Graduate Division Fellowships](#)
- [Humanities Office of Graduate Study](#)
- [Humanities Center](#)
- [Associated Graduate Students](#)
- [President's Postdoctoral Fellowship Program](#)
- [The Mellon Foundation](#)
- [National Endowment for the Humanities](#)

Funding

The most common forms of financial support for Humanities Ph.D. students are fellowships, Teaching Assistantships (TA) and, less commonly, Graduate Student Research (GSR) appointments. Please note that all students must meet specific academic requirements to receive funding from the University. These academic requirements differ slightly between [fellowships](#) and employment ([TA](#) and [GSR](#)).

Below are *general* key points for each funding type. For specific questions, please contact the Graduate Coordinator and/or the Humanities Office of Graduate Study.

Fellowships

- “Fellowship” refers to stipends and/or fee remission.
- “Tuition” refers to Non-Resident Supplemental Tuition (NRST); “Fee” refers to California resident tuition and fees.
- Fellowships are managed by the Humanities Office of Graduate Study (OGS), in coordination with the academic unit (FMS) and Graduate Division.
- Domestic students receiving fellowship support must submit the [Free Application for Federal Student Aid \(FAFSA\)](#) each year they expect to receive fellowship funding.
 - You do not need to accept any loans you are offered through the Office of Financial Aid and Scholarships to receive your fellowship.
 - If you accept any loans, please make sure to contact the [Office of Financial Aid and Scholarships](#) if you receive a fellowship award after the academic year begins to ensure that your fellowship award does not impact your loan negatively.
- International students receiving fellowship support must establish a [Glacier](#) record upon matriculation (OGS will assist students with the initial setup). Glacier is an online nonresident tax compliance system used by UCI.
- In order for your fellowship funds to be directly deposited into your bank account, you must sign up for [direct deposit \(ZOT Account\)](#) at least two months prior to your first payment. Otherwise, a paper check will be mailed to the mailing address on file with the Registrar’s.
- Most of your fellowships will be managed by OGS, which releases academic-year stipends on or around the first of the month, beginning October 1 through June 1. Summer stipends are typically released on, or around, July 1.
- [Taxes](#)
 - Domestic students: Fellowship stipends are not taxed but are reported by the University as taxable income.

- International students: Fellowship stipends are taxed based on the information students provide on their Glacier records.
- In general, students may not receive fellowships while employed as a TA or GSR.

Employment: Teaching Assistants (TA) and Graduate Student Researchers (GSR)

- "Tuition" refers to Non-Resident Supplemental Tuition (NRST); "Fee" refers to California resident tuition and fees.
- All TA and GSR positions hired at 25% or more qualify for fee remission. TA positions within the School of Humanities are hired at 50%.
 - If you are a domestic, out-of-state student, you must declare [California state residency](#) after your first year in the program. Doing so will waive your NRST expenses while at UCI, provided that you are continuously registered. If you take a Leave of Absence for three consecutive quarters, you will need to reestablish California residency.
 - If you are an international student, your NRST fees are covered by UCI if you hold a TA/GSR position in years two and three. You must advance to candidacy for the Ph.D. by the end of your third year in order to have NRST waived for years four through six. More information regarding NRST Programs is available on [Graduate Division's website](#).
- All Humanities-based TA and GSR appointments are entered into the UC systemwide payroll system, [UC Path](#), by OGS. In order for your paycheck to be directly deposited into your bank account, you must sign up for Direct Deposit through [UCPath](#) at least two months prior to your first payment. Otherwise, a paper check will be mailed to the mailing address on file with UCPath.
- All students are restricted to working no more than 50% time, unless they have an approved exception from Graduate Division.
- Please contact the Graduate Coordinator if you accept a TA or GSR position outside of Humanities to ensure your payroll record is transferred to the correct hiring unit. Failure to inform the Graduate Coordinator in a timely manner may delay your pay or fee remission.
- Unlike fellowship stipends, which are dispersed at the beginning of the month, employment income is paid in arrears. Therefore you will not receive your first paycheck until the end of the first full month of the quarter in which you work. This difference is most noticeable during the transition between a fellowship year and employment; most students will receive the final disbursement of *fellowship* funds on or around July 1, but they won't receive their first *employment* payment until on or around November 1. In other words, when you

transition from fellowship to employment, there will be a significant gap (July 1-November 1) between your last fellowship payment and your first paycheck.

- Guaranteed TAships offered through the School of Humanities provide a guaranteed TA offer within the School—not within a specific unit. While FMS will make every effort to place their students in FMS courses, there may be occasions when students are offered TA placement outside of FMS.
- If you were admitted with a TA guarantee, please note that the School guarantees *one* offer of TA employment per quarter. If you decline your TA offer, the School views your TA guarantee as met for that quarter.
- Fee remission is tied to employment. If you decline a TA position, you will be responsible for paying your tuition (if applicable) and fees.

Miscellaneous Details Applicable to All Funding Types

- Students must enroll in a minimum of 12 units each quarter they receive funding support through the University. Students must enroll in at least 12 units prior to the fee payment deadline as posted on the [Quarterly Academic Calendar](#).
- All charges through the University will appear on your [ZotAccount](#). Be sure to check your ZotAccount prior to the start of the quarter to clear any outstanding fees from the previous quarter and to ensure fee remission is applied to your accounts.
- UCI uses two different systems to manage [direct deposits](#): One for [fellowships](#) and one for [employment](#). It is important to sign up for direct deposit at least 2 months prior to the first expected payment to avoid having a paper check mailed to the mailing address on file.

Coursework

Seminars and Directed Readings

You will complete six FMS core courses and seven electives (three within FMS, two outside FMS, and two in or outside FMS). You will also complete a teaching practicum in the Fall of your second year and a year-long professionalization practicum in your third year. Also in your third year, you will complete the prospectus writing seminar.

- You will complete the 285 series in your first year and the 286 series in your second year. Exceptions can only be made by petition.
- If you have completed graduate work at another institution, talk to the Graduate Director about whether you should submit a course waiver petition. A maximum of three seminars can be waived, and the waiver request must include a copy of the course syllabus and your transcripts. These waivers must be approved by the FMS Graduate Committee before they go to Graduate Division for approval. The Graduate Coordinator will initiate your petition once the request has been approved by the FMS Graduate Committee.
- Course listings and descriptions can be found on the School of Humanities' Office of Graduate Study [website](#). The Registrar's [Schedule of Classes](#) includes courses offered campus-wide.
- FMS 291 and FMS 292 are elective graduate seminars whose topics and instructors vary from quarter to quarter.
- FMS 295 denotes a Directed Reading under the supervision of an FMS faculty member. To enroll in FMS 295, first speak to the faculty member with whom you would like to work.
 - Typically, the faculty member will help you develop a reading list and meet with you weekly or biweekly to discuss the readings. Written assignments often include weekly or biweekly reading responses and a seminar paper. You must take the lead in a Directed Reading; rather than the professor's presenting material to you, you should plan to present material to the professor.
 - The faculty recommend that you apply no more than two Directed Readings towards your 7 required courses. Exposure to different topics and the range of faculty and student perspectives will enhance the breadth of your training and understanding of our discipline in a way that directed readings cannot.
 - Before you can register for a Directed Reading, you must submit a completed [295 Course Registration Form](#). Be sure to talk to the instructor well ahead of the registration deadline.

- All courses must be taken at the graduate level (with a course number of 200 or higher). If an upper-division (100-199) undergraduate class is being taught on a topic that is of interest to you, ask the faculty member teaching the class if they would be willing to supervise a concurrent Directed Reading. Typically, this would mean that you will attend the undergraduate class and the faculty member will devise alternate assignments for you. Be aware that the discussions in undergraduate classes will not be as advanced as those in graduate elective seminars.
- The faculty recommend that you complete all courses for a letter grade.
- It is very important that you participate actively in Seminars and Directed Readings. Faculty will address your performance in seminar discussions in their end-of-year review of your progress.
- If you have a disability that requires accommodations, please be sure to register with the [Disability Services Center](#) (DSC). We cannot make accommodations independently of the DSC.

Grades

You must earn a grade of B or higher in order for a class to count towards your degree.

- Acceptable grades for Ph.D. students in Film & Media Studies classes are A+, A and A-. Any final course grade lower than an A- (3.7) is an indication that you are not performing up to FMS standards. You should immediately speak with your advisor(s) about such grades.
- If you are unable to complete all the assigned work in a given quarter, and if you have completed 60% or more of the required work, you may request a grade of Incomplete from the professor. However, you should not assume that the professor will agree to the Incomplete.
- Students who earn a B- or lower may petition to have the class count towards their required core or elective courses despite the low grade. [Petitions](#) should include a brief justification for the petition (one or two sentences); a letter from the student's advisor; and a copy of the student's transcript. The graduate committee will review the petition to determine whether the course will count or if it must be re-taken. In making this determination, the committee will consider the student's track record, as evidenced by their transcript and the letter from their advisor. The petition must be approved by Graduate Division.
- Students who earn a B- or lower or have a cumulative GPA below 3.0 will be placed on [Academic Conditional Status](#). In most instances, students who earn a B- or below and have a GPA above 3.0 will be required to pass all their classes in the following quarter as a condition for getting back in good standing.

- To qualify to TA, you must maintain satisfactory academic progress, including earning letter grades of C, S, or above in all courses completed in the last three quarters and having no more than two Incomplete grades in the last three quarters. Please speak to the Graduate Coordinator if you do not meet these qualifications.
- If you make an error in registering for a course or directed reading, contact the professor immediately. If you are unable to resolve this before the end of the quarter, request that the professor assign you a grade of "NR" (No Report).
- If a grade of NR is not resolved within one quarter, it will become an F. If an Incomplete is not resolved within one year, it will become an F.
- Your TA contract forbids faculty from assigning 399 grades based on your job performance. FMS faculty will provide you with a 399 syllabus that clearly describes the basis upon which you will be graded.

Reading Tips

Don't approach academic books and articles in the same manner as you would a novel. Instead, you will need to develop reading strategies for identifying the authors' argument, methodologies, and interventions. Paul Edwards has published a helpful [guide](#) to reading academic books and articles.

As you read, answer the following questions:

- What is/are the author's
 - Central argument or thesis? Write this down in your own words.
 - Central research question?
 - Methods (Are their methods typical or atypical within the discipline? Which theorists do they cite?)
 - Key evidence (Think broadly here rather than getting too bogged down by detail.)
 - Limitations (What questions aren't answered? What perspectives aren't considered? What might be the cause of these limitations?)
 - Avoid the temptation to focus on limitations at the expense of thinking through what is generative about the reading.
 - If you identify a limitation, think about
 - why the author hasn't thought about this (for example, in what ways is the text a product of its time?)
 - how the inclusion of this question or perspective would affect the author's argument or intervention.
- How does this text relate to other things you've read? (When was it published? What books/articles does it cite? Whose ideas does the author build on or

challenge? Have you read books/articles that build on or challenge this?) Does it point you towards other texts you should read? Spend time looking at the notes and bibliography.

- What research questions arise from this reading? How might you build from it in your own scholarship?
- If you don't already have Citation Management Software, select one (the UCI libraries have put together a helpful [guide](#) to your choices) and start building a personalized bibliography.

You'll find that some books and articles resonate more with your research interests than do others. When you come across a text that you want to engage with, take the time to read it more closely. Consider why that text resonates for you and how it provides a model for your own work.

Resources

Graduate Division offers [resources](#) to help you maintain a work/life balance and to identify the hidden curriculum--the unspoken or implicit norms--of graduate school. If you run into academic difficulties that you would like to discuss with a professional outside the FMS program, set up an appointment to meet with the [Graduate Division Counselor](#), Phong Luong, or another staff member.

You can also make an appointment to meet with a Graduate Writing Consultant at the [UCI Center for Excellence in Writing & Communication](#) (aka the Writing Center).

Academic Integrity

You are expected to be familiar with standards of [academic integrity](#) and should be particularly attentive to one category of academic misconduct described by the Office of Academic Integrity and Student Conduct: "Submitting substantial portions of the same work for credit in more than one course without consulting all instructors involved" is an example of [Dishonest Conduct](#). This includes reusing your own work from a previous quarter, unless the instructor has explicitly granted permission for you to do so.

- If you plan to submit seminar papers on the same topic to more than one instructor, you must first obtain written permission to do so.

Teaching Assistantships (TA)

TA Requirements

TAs play a very important role in our undergraduates' education. Please be mindful of how your actions impact our students. For example, if you decline a TAship at the last minute, it's likely that your sections will be cancelled and students will need to move to another discussion section. If you are late with your grading, students will not have adequate time to learn from your evaluation of their work.

- Be sure you are familiar with the [FMS TA Guidelines](#).
- You are expected to be present for every class meeting. If the class you are teaching conflicts with a class you want to take, you will need to either take a different class or decline the TAship.
- All FMS courses are offered in person. It is important that you arrive to all classes on time and stay through the end of class.
- Most graduate students are eligible to receive up to twelve quarters (four years) of teaching as TAs before advancement to candidacy and eighteen quarters (six years) of total support. This is an eligibility for employment but not a guarantee.
- TAs typically enroll in FMS 399 University Teaching concurrently with their TAships in order to meet the minimum requirement of 12 units and to have their teaching included in the transcript. The 399 course code is located in the [Schedule of Classes](#) for the department for which you will be teaching (Film & Media Studies 399, etc.). Your grade for this course will not be tied to your job performance.
- If you require work accommodations, please talk to the Graduate Coordinator about how to register with Disability Management Services. Work-related accommodations are administered separately from academic-related accommodations.
- All Academic Student Employee (ASE) appointments are covered by a collective bargaining agreement between the University of California and the International Union, United Automobile, Aerospace and Agricultural Implement Workers of America (UAW). Click here to view the [entire contract](#).

TA Assignments

TAships are administered by the departments in which you TA rather than by the FMS graduate program. Questions and concerns about TAships should be directed to the relevant Department Chair and/or the Department Manager (for assignment concerns), or the Faculty Instructor of Record (for course-specific concerns). The FMS Chair will make every effort to assign you to FMS courses if this is your preference. However, you may be assigned to another department when there aren't enough TAships available in FMS.

- In the Spring, students who plan to teach the following year complete an application through the School of Humanities portal. You will be asked to identify the classes you would like to TA and to note any special circumstances or qualifications. As part of the application, you will upload your teaching philosophy and/or statement of interest (if you are applying outside FMS) and three recent teaching evaluations. Please be sure to meet the application deadline. Students in their second year and above should apply widely for TAship opportunities, especially in Composition.
- FMS 85-87 are lower-division, General Education courses that offer an introduction to film analysis, television studies, and digital media studies respectively. Typically, you will TA for these courses in your first year as a TA.
- FMS 101A-E are upper-division courses required of our majors. 101A covers world cinema through the introduction of sound, 101B covers world cinema from the 1930s through the New Waves of the 1960s; and 101C covers world cinema from the 1960s to the present. This series assumes familiarity with the language of film analysis. 101D covers the history of broadcasting, and 101E covers the history of digital media. FMS 85A is a prerequisite for the series.
- To qualify to TA, you must maintain satisfactory academic progress, including earning letter grades of C, S, or above in all courses completed in the last three quarters and *having no more than two Incomplete grades in the last three quarters*. Please speak to the Graduate Coordinator if you do not meet these qualifications.
- If you were admitted with a TA guarantee, please note that the School guarantees *one* offer of TA employment per quarter. If you decline your TA offer, the School views your TA guarantee as met for that quarter.

TA Training

During your first year as a TA, you will attend TA orientation events before the quarter begins. In addition, Film and Media Studies offers training through its TA practicum, weekly staff meetings, and written TA evaluations.

- You must complete the [TA Professional Development Program](#) and FMS 287: Practicum in Pedagogy during or prior to your first year of teaching.
- If you are teaching in FMS, the instructor of record will schedule weekly staff meetings and provide you with a written description of your duties, not to exceed 220 hours.
- If this is your first year teaching in FMS, the instructor of record will observe your teaching a discussion section.
- If you are teaching in FMS, the instructor of record will submit a TA evaluation to you and the department at the end of the quarter.

- If you are an advanced TA, please consider applying to the [Pedagogical Scholars](#) program.

Teaching in Summer Session

- Each Fall, you will receive a call for applications to teach a summer session course in the 85 or 101 series. Students who have TAed for a minimum of one year and (for the 101 series) have advanced to candidacy for the Ph.D. are qualified to serve as the instructor of record during Summer Session. Generally, students are expected to have TAed for a course prior to being eligible to teach it as the lead instructor of record.
- The university requires that graduate students only teach courses that are regularly taught. In other words, you may not teach a "topics vary" course.
- Summer Session courses that enroll 35 or more students often qualify for a TA.
- Summer Session courses must enroll a minimum of 13-16 students. Courses that don't meet this threshold will be cancelled.
- Although Summer Session courses are offered by the Department of Film & Media Studies, they are administered by Summer Session.

English Language Proficiency Requirements for TAs

All graduate students, except those who have earned an undergraduate degree from an institution at which English was the sole language of instruction according to the World Higher Education Database, are required to demonstrate oral English proficiency before they are appointed to Teaching Assistant or Associate Instructor titles. This exception only applies when the undergraduate degree has been earned within five years prior to admission to a graduate program at UCI.

In order to establish eligibility for appointment as a UCI Teaching Assistant or Associate Instructor, students are required to pass a campus-approved test, or if eligible, by an exception. Please contact the Graduate Personnel Analyst in the Humanities Office of Graduate Study with any questions.

- To help UCI graduate students strengthen their oral English proficiency, UCI offers a [Program in Academic English/ESL](#).
- Please talk to a DECADE advisor from the School of Humanities if you have any concerns about inequities or exclusionary practices related to the exam.

Mandatory Reporting

If a student tells you they have been abused or assaulted, please consult with the Instructor of Record for the course and get their support in addressing their abuse or

assault. (If you are abused or assaulted, please call 911 and/or see "Maintaining a Safe and Inclusive Environment" at the end of this document.)

- Like faculty, graduate student instructors are mandatory reporters under UC's Title IX provisions, which means you are required to report all incidents and disclosures of sex offenses to [UCI's Office of Equal Opportunity & Diversity \(OEOD\)](#).
 - Before a student confides in you, alert them that you are obligated to report abuse or assault.
 - For more information on policies and guidelines for reporting, please consult the [OEOD web site](#).
- If the student does not want their disclosure to be reported, point them to the following resources for learning about procedures and potential outcomes while remaining anonymous:
 - Campus Assault Resources and Educations (CARE) is located on the third floor of the Student Center (Suite G320) and can be reached at 949-824-7273 or by going to <https://www.care.uci.edu>
 - Campus Social Workers can be reached at 949-824-0101, via email at campussocialworker@uci.edu or by going to <https://whcs.uci.edu/csw/>
 - The [Campus Counseling Center](#) has walk-in Urgent Care during weekdays, 8-4:00 PM (949-824-6457).
 - Additionally, the student may make a report to [UCI police](#) and request to be treated as a "confidential victim."
- If a student is rude or abusive to you, please work with the instructor to develop a plan for addressing the student's behavior.
 - For more information on dealing with disruptive or threatening students, consult the Office of Academic Integrity & Student Conduct [website](#).
 - If the behavior of students is threatening or if you are harassed on the basis of your gender, race, sexual identity, or disability, please let the instructor of record know immediately. You can contact [OEOD](#) at 949-824-5594 or call the [UCI Police](#) at 949-824-5223.

Master's Degree

Completing the M.A. Paper

If you did not earn an M.A. in a related field prior to matriculating in the FMS Ph.D. program, you will earn an M.A. in Film and Media Studies *en route* to the Ph.D. All requirements for the M.A. must be completed before you begin work on your Ph.D. exams.

- If you have already earned an M.A. in a related field, confirm with the Graduate Director that you do not need to complete the M.A. requirement at UCI and submit a [FMS Program Petition form](#).
- If you have not already earned an M.A. in a related field, meet with your Primary Advisor in Spring of your first year to identify a seminar paper to revise, and develop a revision plan.
- During Fall and Winter quarters of your second year, you will enroll in [FMS 295](#) with your Primary Advisor. During this time, you will work with your advisor to revise a seminar paper written during your first year.
- Your advisor will offer you feedback for revising the paper to meet the following criteria:
 - The revised paper must present a substantive and original argument;
 - It must reflect a substantial revision from the original paper, demonstrating additional research and/or reconceptualization and responsiveness to feedback;
 - It must demonstrate a command of the relevant literature;
 - It must present adequate evidence to support its claims;
 - It must be clearly written in an appropriate academic style; and
 - It must be formatted according to MLA or Chicago Manual of Style guidelines with proper citation and a bibliography.

The Approval Process

You must submit your M.A. paper to the Graduate Director *before* the beginning of the quarter in which you plan to complete the M.A. (generally, Spring quarter of your second year).

- When you submit your paperwork to advance to candidacy for the M.A. (see below), the Graduate Director will assemble an M.A. Committee, which will typically be chaired by your Primary Advisor. The Graduate Director will ask you and your advisor to suggest faculty to serve on the M.A. committee. Your preferred faculty may not be available to serve on the committee. Therefore, it is a good idea to offer a robust list of possible readers.

- The Graduate Director will circulate your M.A. paper to the M.A. Committee in the first week of the quarter in which you plan to complete the M.A. requirement, though no later than Spring quarter of your second year.
- Within three weeks of receiving your M.A. paper, the M.A. committee will discuss the paper and determine whether revisions are necessary. Revisions are typically required. Revision requirements will be submitted to you and the Graduate Director in writing and will include a due date no later than Week 8.
- If the committee requires revisions, meet with your advisor to discuss how you will revise the paper. Be sure you understand what is expected of you.
 - In their deliberations, the M.A. committee will discuss your ability to respond to feedback and make revisions.
 - If you have questions about any of the required revisions, you should discuss this with your advisor and, if appropriate, the committee.
 - Be sure to demonstrate that you value the committee's feedback enough to engage with it and make revisions based upon it.
- After you have submitted your final M.A. paper, the committee will deliberate on your work and your progress in the program. Your M.A. committee must be unanimous in determining that you have passed the M.A. exam and are eligible to proceed toward the Ph.D. This determination will be submitted to you and the Graduate Director in writing.
- In making its determination, the committee will consider the M.A. paper, your First-Year Review, and your continuing progress toward the degree. There are four possible outcomes:
 - Positive: You have passed the M.A. exam and qualify to continue toward the Ph.D. qualifying exams. (This is the outcome in the majority of cases.)
 - Cautionary: You have passed the M.A. exam and qualify to continue toward the Ph.D. qualifying exams. However, areas for improvement will be communicated in writing to you and your advisor.
 - M.A. Only: You will earn the M.A. degree but are not eligible to continue toward the Ph.D. This happens in rare or extenuating circumstances when the committee determines that the student is not prepared for doctoral work. This decision will result in automatic recommendation for [Academic Conditional Status](#). Students who fail to meet the requirements laid forth in their ACS document cannot continue in the Ph.D. program.
 - Negative: You have not passed the M.A. exam and are not eligible to continue toward the Ph.D. This decision will result in automatic recommendation for [Academic Conditional Status](#). Students who fail to meet the requirements laid forth in their ACS document cannot continue in the Ph.D. program.

Degree Conferral

- Work with the Graduate Coordinator to submit the "Advancement to Candidacy for the M.A." at least one quarter PRIOR to the quarter in which you will earn the M.A. In other words, if you plan to earn the M.A. in Spring, you should submit this form in the Fall or Winter quarter.
- Your advisor will notify the Graduate Director and the Graduate Coordinator once the M.A. Committee has approved the M.A. paper.
- The committee's determination will be communicated to you and the Graduate Director in writing within two weeks of their receiving the final M.A. paper. The M.A. Committee's written comments will be submitted for your student file.
- Work with the Graduate Coordinator to submit the "Final Degree Paperwork for the Master's Degree" form. The deadline to submit the form is Friday of Week 10.

Language Proficiency

Satisfying the Language Requirement

If the Graduate Director and your advisor determine that your research requires knowledge of a language other than English, you must demonstrate proficiency in that language prior to advancing to candidacy for the Ph.D. in the Spring of your third year. If your research does not require proficiency in a language other than English, you will not be required to demonstrate proficiency.

- Certification of language proficiency will appear on your transcripts.
- In some cases it can take as many as three years to acquire the required proficiency. If your research requires knowledge of a language other than English, discuss this requirement with your advisor and the Graduate Director as soon as possible.
- If you already have proficiency in another language because you are a native speaker or have completed the equivalent language requirement at another institution, you may submit a [petition](#) to have this requirement waived. If you have completed the requirement elsewhere, you must submit your transcripts with the petition.
- Methods for satisfying the language requirement at UCI:
 - Talk to the Graduate Director about whether an FMS faculty member or faculty in another department might be available to administer a translation exam in your language.
 - Complete with a grade of B or better a language course at the 2C level or equivalent. Arabic, Chinese, Japanese, and Korean must be completed at the 3C level or equivalent.
 - Attain a proficiency level of 2C on the Russian Exemption Exam or a proficiency level of 3C on the Chinese Exemption Exam offered by UCI's [Academic Testing Center](#).
 - A limited number of language courses for graduate students may be offered in the summer. If you take a summer course as an Independent Study, you will receive a 50% discount on Summer Session course fees.
- The School of Humanities offers funding of up to \$1000 to assist Ph.D. students with the cost of taking language courses generally not offered at UCI. Only accredited language programs will be considered. The call for applications is generally distributed by the [SOH Office of Graduate Study](#) in the Spring quarter.

Exam, Prospectus, and Doctoral Committees

Chair (for Dissertation and Exam Committees)	Your Chair must be FMS Core faculty and must hold a Ph.D.
Exam Committee	3 minimum, including the Chair. All members of the Exam Committee must be FMS Core faculty.
Prospectus Committee (Normatively includes members of the Exam Committee)	3 minimum, including the Chair. At least 51% of the Prospectus Committee must be FMS Core and/or FMS Affiliate faculty.
Doctoral Committee (Normatively the same as your Prospectus Committee)	3 minimum, including the Chair. At least 51% of the Doctoral Committee must be FMS Core and/or FMS Affiliate faculty.

- You must identify your Exam Committee and Prospectus Committee to the Graduate Director and the Graduate Coordinator at the beginning of Spring quarter in your second year by submitting the [FMS PhD Committees & Preliminary Exam Declaration Form](#).
- It is your responsibility to secure a chair and committee members; the program or Graduate Director cannot appoint them. Students who are unable to confirm a chair and/or constitute a committee will be recommended for [Academic Conditional Status](#). You will not be able to proceed in the Ph.D. program if you are unable to assemble an Exam or Dissertation Committee.
- If you add or remove any member to the faculty committee after you have advanced to candidacy, you will need to submit a committee-change petition, initiated by the Graduate Coordinator and submitted to Graduate Division.
- 51% of the Prospectus Committee and the Doctoral Committee must be [FMS Core and/or FMS Affiliate faculty](#). If you plan to have more than one faculty member outside FMS on your committees, you will need to increase the size of the committee to maintain this 51% majority.
- If you would like to have a faculty member who has an MFA rather than a Ph.D. serve as a committee member, you will need to submit the faculty member's CV and a memo from your advisor addressed to the Graduate Dean explaining why this faculty member is qualified and a good fit for your committee.
- You may invite any faculty member from any college or university to serve on your Prospectus and/or Doctoral Committee. If you would like to have a faculty member from outside UCI serve on your committee, you will need to submit the person's CV and a memo from your advisor addressed to the Graduate Dean explaining why this faculty member is a good fit for your committee.

Written Preliminary Exams

Timeline for Written and Oral Exams

Year	Quarter	Week	
2	Spring	2	Notify the Graduate Director and Graduate Coordinator of which Standardized and Field exams you will take in the Fall and who will serve on your Exam and Prospectus Committees. Keep in mind that all members of your Exam and Prospectus Committee must be FMS Core faculty and/or FMS Affiliates.
3	Fall	1-3	Schedule your 90-minute Oral Exam with your Exam Committee. Work with the Graduate Coordinator to reserve a room for the exam.
3	Fall	8	Sit written Standardized and Field exams.
3	Fall	10	Sit oral exams with Exam Committee. Oral exams should be held in person.
3	Fall	11	Submit Dissertation Bibliography for approval by your Prospectus Committee.

Exam Bibliographies

Your exams will be based on three different [bibliographies](#) as follows:

- **Standardized Bibliography:** You will select one of the three standardized bibliographies, either in Film Studies, Television Studies, or Digital Media Studies. Each of these bibliographies includes roughly 50 texts, and you are expected to read all of them. You will take the Standardized Exam in week eight of Fall in your third year. Every student reading a given Standardized Bibliography will take the same Standardized Exam at the same time.
- **Field Bibliography:** You will select one of the provided field bibliographies. Each of these bibliographies includes roughly 60 texts, of which you are expected to read 40, selected in consultation with your Exam Committee. You will only be examined on those 40 texts. You will take the Field Exam in week eight of Fall in your third year. Students reading in the same Fields will *not* take the same exam.
- **Dissertation Bibliography:** In consultation with your Prospectus Committee, you will develop a bibliography of approximately 40 texts. This bibliography must be approved by your Prospectus Committee before the end of Fall quarter of year 3. The process for completing the Dissertation Bibliography exam is discussed with the Prospectus in the next section of this handbook.
- Standardized and Field exam bibliographies are available on the [program website](#).

Standardized and Field Exam Readings

During Spring of Year 2 and Fall of Year 3, you will complete your Standardized and Field Exam readings. The purpose of these readings is both to give you a foundation for teaching in the discipline and to prepare you to develop a dissertation project that is in conversation with the literature in the field.

- Your Primary Advisor or a member of your Exam Committee will serve as Instructor of Record when you enroll in [FMS 296](#).
- You are encouraged to form reading groups with other students who are completing the same Standardized bibliography that you are.
- You must submit a [FMS 296 Course Registration Form](#) to enroll in the course.

The Written Exams: Standardized and Field Bibliographies

The exam questions for the Standardized and Field Bibliographies will be emailed to you on Monday morning of week 8, and you will submit your exam responses electronically by 4:00 on Friday afternoon of week 8. Your oral exam will take place in person during week 10.

- Your Exam Committee will write the exam questions and evaluate your written exams. If more than one student is taking an exam on a given Standardized Bibliography, the students' primary advisors will convene a committee to develop the Standardized exam questions; there will be one standardized question for the Standardized exams.
- Your advisor will submit the Standardized and Field exam questions to the Director of Graduate Study and the Graduate Coordinator by Monday of week 7 in Winter quarter.
- The Graduate Coordinator will release the exam questions to you at 9:00am on Monday of week 8.
- Each exam essay (the Standardized Exam essay, the Field Exam essay, and the Literature Review) should be roughly 10 double-spaced pages.
- You must email your completed exam by 4:00pm on Friday of week 8 to the Graduate Coordinator.
- You may refer to books and online materials during the exam. However, all written work must be your own. You may not submit any text that has been generated by AI.
- Rather than simply repeat arguments and debates from your reading lists, your exam responses should synthesize and point to your own interpretation of these readings.

Oral Exams: Standardized and Field Exams

During week ten of your third year, you will sit your Oral Exams with your Exam Committee.

- The purpose of the oral exam is for you to demonstrate your command of the material and your ability to think on your feet. It is also an opportunity to correct mistakes or fill gaps left in your written exam.
- Bring a pen and paper to the exam. It is a good idea to take notes when you are being asked a question, and you may need to take a moment to gather your thoughts before you answer.
- You may consult notes during the oral exam. However, you should be familiar enough with the material to be able to express your ideas and answer questions in the moment rather than relying heavily on written notes.
- You may find it helpful to rephrase a question to be sure you've understood it correctly and that the committee knows what question you're answering.
- Bring water to the exam. You will be talking a lot!
- Talk to your advisor about how they plan to run the exam. Typically, you will be asked to leave the room at the beginning of the exam so that your Exam Committee can discuss your performance on the written exams and consult with one another about what questions they will ask you. You will be asked to leave the room once again at the end of the exam while the committee determines the exam outcome.
- Bring your cell phone to the exam so your advisor can alert you when it is time for you to return to the exam room.

Standardized and Field Exam Outcomes

Your Exam Committee will evaluate your Standardized and Field exams and determine whether you have earned a Pass, Conditional Pass, or Fail. Campus policy dictates that this decision must be unanimous. Your primary advisor will notify you, the Graduate Director, and the Graduate Coordinator of the outcome of the exams following the Oral Exam.

- In determining whether you have passed the Standardized and Field exams, your Exam Committee will evaluate your cumulative performance in the written and oral portions of the exam.
- You must pass the Standardized and Field exams in order to proceed with the Dissertation Bibliography and Prospectus Defense.
- In the event that a student earns a conditional pass or fails the exam, the exam committee will provide written feedback outlining what went well and how the student needs to improve. This feedback will be provided within two weeks of the exam, along with the notification of the exam's outcome.

- Students who submit a passing exam with significant flaws will earn a conditional pass and will be assigned a follow-up essay, which they must submit within two weeks of notification of the conditional pass. Students who do not submit a satisfactory follow-up essay will be put on [Academic Conditional Status](#) and must demonstrate mastery of the material by the end of the following quarter. The student's committee will determine what work must be submitted to demonstrate mastery.
- Students who submit a failing exam will be placed on [Academic Conditional Status](#) and will be given the opportunity to re-take the exam by the end of the following quarter. The student's exam committee will submit new questions for the follow-up exam. If the student fails the exam a second time, they will be recommended for disqualification.

The Prospectus

Timeline for the Prospectus

Year	Quarter	Week	
2	Spring	7-11	Search ProQuest Dissertations and Theses Global for completed dissertations in your field and select a handful to read over the summer so that you are familiar with the dissertation as a form.
3	Fall	3	Identify your dissertation topic and begin to develop your dissertation bibliography and methodologies.
3	Fall	11	Submit your dissertation bibliography and preliminary list of media objects to your Prospectus Committee.
3	Winter	9	Submit your Literature Review to your Prospectus Committee.
3	Winter	11	Submit your CV, project description, literature review, and media list to the Graduate Director and Graduate Coordinator for distribution to the full faculty.
3	Spring	1-3	Prospectus Roundtable: Attend the first faculty meeting of the Spring quarter to discuss your dissertation plans.
3	Spring	1-3	Schedule your two-hour Prospectus Defense with your Prospectus Committee. Work with the Graduate Coordinator to reserve a room for the exam.
3	Spring	3	Distribute draft prospectus to your Prospectus Committee and ask for their feedback by the end of week 5.
3	Spring	8-9	Distribute the revised prospectus to your Prospectus Committee.
3	Spring	10	Complete your Prospectus Defense with the Prospectus Committee. The Prospectus Defense should be held in person.
3	Spring	10-11	Work with the Graduate Coordinator to submit Ph.D. Advancement to Candidacy form by Friday of Week 11.

Dissertation Bibliography and Literature Review

Your Dissertation Bibliography exam will take the form of a Literature Review and will be evaluated by your Prospectus Committee.

- The Literature Review will be approximately ten pages in length and will be submitted to the Prospectus Committee by the end of week 9 of Winter quarter.
- The Literature Review will consist of a synthetic survey of the scholarship upon which you will build the dissertation. Its goal is to position your dissertation research in relation to existing scholarship on related topics, histories, and/or texts/objects. Rather than offering a laundry listing of every scholar's argument, the Literature Review should give a sense of the major and most pertinent discourses and debates and indicate how your work will build on or rethink these ideas.

Prospectus Roundtable

At the beginning of Spring quarter in your third year, you will participate in a roundtable with the full FMS faculty during which you discuss your plans for the dissertation. This is an opportunity for you to get feedback in the early stages of your dissertation research. This is not an exam.

- Before the end of Winter quarter, you will submit a CV, project description, literature review, and media list to the Graduate Director and Graduate Coordinator for distribution to the full faculty.
- You will attend the first faculty meeting of the Spring quarter to discuss your work-in-progress.

Prospectus Guidelines

Your prospectus is a document in which you articulate your dissertation project, situate it in relation to the existing scholarship, and map out your research plan. The prospectus gives you a structure to think through, formulate, and rationalize your project, as well as a plan for writing your dissertation. You will likely excerpt passages from your prospectus in abstracts and fellowship applications. Your ultimate dissertation will likely evolve—for instance in the number of chapters or specific case studies—as you research and write, but the prospectus gives you a foundation from which to work. Your committee will understand that your prospectus is speculative because you have not completed your research. The prospectus must demonstrate your ability to conceive and plan the research you need to do and articulate the questions and analytical frameworks that drive your project.

The prospectus should be 10-15 pages, not including the bibliography and should include the following five elements:

1. The Project Overview introduces the dissertation topic, articulates your guiding research questions, advances a preliminary thesis, and explains the stakes or intervention of your project.
2. Literature Review (draft submitted in week 9 of Winter quarter) offers a synthetic survey of the scholarly literature that your dissertation research will be in conversation with. The literature review addresses the question of *why* you will do this research. Rather than offering a laundry list of each argument, this should position your proposed research in relation to the existing scholarship.
3. Methodology explains the theoretical frameworks and disciplinary methods you will employ in your analysis. This is distinct from the literature review and will likely be shorter. Methodology addresses the question *how* you will research your topic and *why* this method is appropriate for your work. This section is particularly important if you are proposing innovative or alternative methods.
4. Your Chapter Breakdown explains the subjects of each individual chapter (typically one paragraph per chapter) and the structural logic of the dissertation as a whole.
5. The Research Plan provides a pragmatic overview of how you will accomplish the dissertation. The plan includes a schedule for research and for completing chapter drafts, revisions, and delivering the whole dissertation to your committee. It also identifies archives where you plan to conduct research and which fellowships and grants you plan to apply for. The plan should build in sufficient time for feedback and revision. Very few students meet the deadlines they set for themselves, but it is helpful to approach writing the dissertation as a series of smaller component parts, rather than taking on the project as a whole.
6. The Bibliography includes the scholarship that you anticipate citing. You may find it useful to organize your bibliography by subject rather than solely alphabetically.

Writing the Prospectus

By the third week of the Spring quarter, you will distribute the prospectus to your Prospectus Committee and ask for written feedback.

- In the Fall quarter of your third year, you will work with your advisor to develop a dissertation topic and identify the relevant literature and methodologies.

- In the Winter quarter of year three you will enroll in FMS 297: Prospectus Writing Practicum with your Primary Advisor as instructor of record. You must submit a [FMS 297 Course Registration Form](#) to register for the course.
- You are encouraged to meet individually with your committee members as you develop the dissertation topic and prospectus.
- Typically, committee members will suggest revisions to your prospectus. These suggestions should be given in writing.
- After you've received feedback on the prospectus, you will meet with your advisor to discuss your revision plan.
- If you choose not to incorporate feedback from one or more of your committee members, talk to your chair and the committee member who gave the feedback. You might have misunderstood their advice, or they might have misunderstood your project.
 - If they misunderstood your project, think about what you can do to clarify things and talk to your chair about how to address their feedback.
 - If you simply don't have time to incorporate their suggestions, let your chair and the committee member know how you will address their feedback in the future.
 - Do everything in your power to avoid giving your committee the impression that you don't value their feedback enough to engage with it.
- You will distribute the revised prospectus to your prospectus committee two weeks before your planned prospectus defense and oral qualifying exam.

Tips for Writing a Strong Prospectus

- Carefully review the guidelines for the dissertation prospectus so you have a clear idea of what the expectations are.
 - It might be helpful to think of the Project Overview as explaining *what* your dissertation will do, your Literature Review as *why* you will do this, and the Methodology section as *how* you will do it, framing your methods in relation to scholarship in the field.
- One of the difficulties of writing a prospectus is that you haven't yet begun your research. It is a good idea to find out as much as you can about your object(s) of study and available resources before you begin to write the prospectus.
 - Identify potential objects (films, television shows, social media, video games, etc.) as early as possible.
 - Identify relevant archives and on-line databases; conduct preliminary searches of their collections, and visit if possible.
 - Talk to the FMS librarian about resources you might draw on.

- Talk to your advisor and the Humanities Center Executive Director about fellowships and grants you might apply for.
- If your research includes interviews, talk to your chair and the Humanities Center Executive Director about whether you need [IRB clearance](#).
- Familiarize yourself with the expectations for a dissertation by looking at dissertations within your subject area. Using the library VPN, you can search for dissertations on [ProQuest](#).
 - Different disciplines have different conventions, so pay attention to the department or graduate program the dissertation came out of.
 - Be sure to pay close attention to bibliographies and footnotes. These will likely point you to resources and existing scholarship related to your topic.

The Prospectus Defense

The purpose of the Prospectus Defense is to ensure that you have a viable dissertation project and that you are prepared to engage in dissertation research. The committee's evaluation will be cumulative, reflecting on your performance in coursework, exams, and the prospectus.

- The Prospectus Defense will take no more than two hours. Early in the quarter, you will schedule the Prospectus Defense with your committee and work with the Graduate Coordinator to reserve a room.
- Ask your primary advisor how they will run the defense. Typically, you will be asked to step out of the room at the beginning of the exam while the committee shares preliminary comments on your prospectus, and you will be asked to leave the room again at the end of the exam while the committee deliberates on your prospectus defense.
- Typically, you will be given the opportunity to give a brief presentation (ten minutes or less) on your prospectus and planned dissertation research. Some questions to think about as you prepare this presentation: What is your contribution and/or intervention? Why is it important?
- If you do not pass the Prospectus Defense, the Prospectus Committee will give you a deadline by which you must distribute a revised prospectus. No student will be given more than two chances to pass any given section of the examination.

Students who do not advance to candidacy by the Spring quarter of their third year will be recommended for [Academic Conditional Status](#).

Tips for a Successful Prospectus Defense

- Be sure to bring a pen, paper, and water (you'll be talking a lot).
- Committee members are likely to suggest books and articles you might read, methods you might use, and/or objects you might consider. It might feel like they are being critical or asking you to move in too many different directions, but such engagement can be a sign of excitement about your project. Think of this as a brainstorming session. Unless the committee explicitly requires changes, it will be up to you to decide which ideas to pursue in the dissertation.
- Meet with your chair after the Prospectus Defense to talk through the committee's feedback during the defense and to plan your next steps.

Advancing to Candidacy

After you have completed all your other requirements, you will [advance to candidacy](#) and begin work on your dissertation.

- When you have successfully passed your Prospectus Defense, your committee chair will notify the Graduate Coordinator that you are qualified to advance to candidacy. Your Chair must also supply the following information:
 - Name and home department of each Dissertation Committee member
- The Graduate Coordinator will initiate the Advancement to Candidacy (Ph.D. I) form, which must be signed electronically by each committee member before the filing deadline, 5:00pm on Friday of week 11.
- International students *must* advance to candidacy by the end of year three in order to have their Non-Resident Supplemental Tuition (NRST) fees waived for years four through six.
- In order to advance to candidacy, you must have
 - Satisfied your language requirement (if applicable)
 - Earned the M.A. (if applicable)
 - Completed your course requirements (at least 60 quarter units)
 - Passed your three written preliminary exams
 - Passed your Oral Exam and Prospectus Defense

Prospectus Defense and Advancing to Candidacy

Oral Exam and Prospectus Defense

The combined Oral Exam and Prospectus Defense is typically two hours long. The exam portion will consist of questions prompted by your reading lists and written examinations. You are allowed to bring notes to this exam.

- Early in the quarter, schedule your two-hour oral defense with the Exam Committee and work with the Graduate Coordinator to reserve a room.

- After you have passed the Oral Exam and Prospectus Defense, your Chair will notify the Graduate Coordinator, who will initiate the paperwork for Advancing to Candidacy. Your Chair must also supply the following information:
 - Name and home department of each committee member
- If you do not pass this portion of the exam, the committee will give you a deadline by which you must distribute a revised prospectus and/or re-take the oral exam(s). No student will be given more than two chances to pass any given section of the examination.

Students who do not advance to candidacy by the Spring quarter of their third year will be recommended for [Academic Conditional Status](#).

Tips for a Successful Oral Exam and Prospectus Defense

- Be sure to bring a pen, paper, and water (you'll be talking a lot).
- Ask your chair how they plan to conduct the exam.
 - Typically, you will be asked to step out of the room at the beginning of the exam while the committee shares preliminary comments on your Written Exams and Prospectus, and you will be asked to leave the room again at the end of the exam while the committee deliberates on your Oral Exam and Prospectus Defense.
 - Typically, you will be given the opportunity to give a brief presentation (ten minutes or less) on your prospectus and planned dissertation research. Some questions to think about as you prepare this presentation: What is your contribution and/or intervention? Why is it important?
- How to prepare for the Oral Exam
 - Read through your written exams to identify any errors or omissions and prepare comments to present during the exam, if applicable.
 - Be prepared to discuss *all* of the readings, not just the ones you addressed in the written portion of the exam. It is a good idea to re-familiarize yourself with the central argument of each journal article, book chapter, and book you read and to think through points of tension or convergence.
 - Be prepared to respond to the questions you did not answer in the written portion of the exam if you were given a choice of questions.
- Tips for the Oral Exam
 - Keep in mind that everyone in the room wants you to succeed. The purpose of the Oral Exam is to allow you to demonstrate that you understand and can synthesize the readings. You are not expected to have memorized every detail of the readings.

- Take notes when the examiners are speaking. Don't hesitate to ask for clarification. Before answering a question, rephrase it in your own words so everyone knows precisely what question you're answering.
- Don't rush your responses. For complex answers, take a moment to jot down an outline that you can refer to if you lose your train of thought.
- Tips for the Prospectus Defense
 - The purpose of this discussion is to ensure that you have a viable dissertation project before you advance to candidacy.
 - Committee members are likely to suggest books and articles you might read, methods you might use, and/or objects you might consider. It might feel like they are being critical or asking you to move in too many different directions, but such engagement can be a sign of excitement about your project. Think of this as a brainstorming session. Unless the committee explicitly requires changes, it will be up to you to decide which ideas to pursue in the dissertation.
 - Again, take notes, ask for clarification, and rephrase the questions or suggestions in your own words.
 - Meet with your chair after the Prospectus Defense to talk through the committee's feedback during the defense and to plan your next steps.

Advancing to Candidacy

After you have completed all your other requirements, you will [advance to candidacy](#) and begin work on your dissertation.

- After you have successfully passed your Oral Exam and Prospectus Defense, your committee chair will notify the Graduate Coordinator that you are qualified to advance to candidacy. The Graduate Coordinator will initiate the Advancement to Candidacy (Ph.D. I) form, which must be signed electronically by each committee member before the filing deadline, 5:00pm on Friday of week 11.
- International students *must* advance to candidacy by the end of year three in order to have their Non-Resident Supplemental Tuition (NRST) fees waived for years four through six.
- In order to advance to candidacy, you must have
 - Satisfied your language requirement (if applicable)
 - Earned the M.A.
 - Completed your course requirements (at least 60 quarter units)
 - Passed your three written preliminary exams
 - Passed your Oral Exam and Prospectus Defense

The Dissertation

Dissertation Requirements

- While you are writing the dissertation, you will enroll in FMS 299: Dissertation Research. You must submit a [FMS 299 Course Registration Form](#) to enroll.
- Your doctoral committee, under the direction of your dissertation Chair, will supervise your research program and ultimately approve the dissertation.
- Your Chair will typically read at least one full first draft and at least one revision of each chapter as you complete it; committee members will likely only read revised versions of chapters. Some committee members may prefer to read the project chapter-by-chapter as it is written; others may wish to read only the full dissertation draft. Ask each committee member which they prefer. If a committee member is a specialist in an area relevant to a specific chapter, it will likely make sense to ask them to read the relevant chapter before completing a full dissertation draft.
- The doctoral committee may require additional course work or other forms of preparation for the dissertation on the basis of your past academic performance and proposed dissertation topic.
- The normative time for completion of the Ph.D. program is six years, and the maximum permitted is seven years. This means you should plan to complete the dissertation within three years of advancing to candidacy.
- The typical length for a dissertation is 200-250 double-spaced pages of text and notes, not including bibliography. The minimum length for a dissertation is 150 double-spaced pages, not including the bibliography. As long as the dissertation meets the 150-page requirement, students may also incorporate creative and/or digital humanities scholarship with the approval of their dissertation committees.

Oral Defense

After submitting a full dissertation to your committee members, you must pass an oral dissertation defense with your Doctoral Committee prior to filing the dissertation and earning your Ph.D. The examination will be open to all members of the academic community. The goal of the dissertation defense is to provide a forum for conversation among committee members about the project and to communicate substantive feedback. The defense also offers an important transitional discussion about revising the dissertation for potential publication and post-graduate professional development. The committee may request revisions before filing, but these are usually relatively minor; your committee should cancel the defense if your project is not sufficiently developed or if the necessary revisions are not plausible before the filing deadline.

Committee suggestions for more significant revisions, such as rethinking, expansion, or additional research are addressed to future published iterations of the project.

- Schedule your two-hour Oral Defense early in the quarter in which you plan to file your dissertation so that you can reserve a room and ensure that all your committee members are available to meet.
- The Oral Defense should take place approximately three weeks before the filing deadline so that you have time to make revisions based on recommendations that are made during the defense.
- You must distribute your completed dissertation at least three weeks prior to the Oral Defense. After reading the complete dissertation, your committee will determine if you are ready to move to the Oral Defense.
- The Oral Defense will be open to all members of the academic community. Film and Media Studies faculty and students, the Dean of the School of Humanities, and the Graduate Dean must be given at least five days' advance notice of the date, time, and place of the examination.
- Ask your Chair what to expect during the defense. Typically, it will begin with your brief presentation on the project followed by questions from your Doctoral Committee and audience members. After this portion of the defense, the Doctoral Committee will engage in a closed deliberation in order to provide you with specific feedback.

Filing the Dissertation

Information on filing the dissertation can be found on the Graduate Division website under [Thesis and Dissertation Submission](#). Online filing is the easiest and recommended method. Filing your dissertation is one of several steps required by Graduate Division to confer your degree, so it is important that you communicate your plans with the Graduate Coordinator *early* to ensure you meet the final degree paperwork deadline.

- Prior to filing the dissertation, be sure to discuss with your Chair whether you should embargo the dissertation. Although some instructions may indicate that embargos are recommended, many faculty discourage the practice.

Maintaining a Safe and Inclusive Environment

Film and Media Studies is committed to creating and maintaining an environment in which faculty, staff, and students can thrive. Discrimination, harassment, and exclusionary practices are antithetical to this goal.

If you encounter any instances of discrimination, harassment, or exclusion, please speak with your advisor, the Film & Media Studies Chair, the Graduate Director, the Graduate Coordinator, and/or the department DECADE mentor. Please refer to the [FMS Reporting and Resolution Workflow](#) to determine the appropriate person to direct your concerns to.

If you would like to talk to someone outside FMS, you can speak to the Director of the Humanities Graduate Office, Geneva Lopez-Sandoval and/or a [Graduate Division Counselor](#). You may also seek external mediation through the [Office of the Ombuds](#) or the [Office of Equal Opportunity and Diversity](#) (OEOD).

If you have ideas about how the program can develop better practices for fostering an atmosphere in which all students can thrive, please speak with the Graduate Director and/or the DECADE student representative. You are also encouraged to join the [DECADE](#) listserv in order to find out more about DECADE events, programs, and initiatives, including travel awards.

If you have been sexually harassed or assaulted on campus, it is important that you know that faculty and staff are mandatory reporters under UC's Title IX provisions, which means they are required to report all incidents and disclosures of sex offenses to UCI's [Office of Equal Opportunity & Diversity](#) (OEOD). If you do not want your disclosure to be reported, you can draw on the following resources to learn about procedures and potential outcomes while remaining anonymous:

- Campus Assault Resources and Educations (CARE) is located on the third floor of the Student Center (Suite G320) and can be reached at 949-824-7273 or by going to <https://www.care.uci.edu>
- Campus Social Workers can be reached at 949-824-0101, via email at campussocialworker@uci.edu or by going to <https://whcs.uci.edu/csw/>
- The [Campus Counseling Center](#) has walk-in Urgent Care during weekdays, 8-4:00 PM (949-824-6457).
- Additionally, you may make a report to [UCI police](#) and request to be treated as a "confidential victim."