

OLD CANDIDACY PROCESS

(This process may apply to students that were admitted to the PhD program prior to September 2014)

Working Bibliography

In addition to course work in the first year of the program, the student will begin working with the pro-tem Committee to develop an individually-focused research bibliography (or bibliographies) that describes the parameters and the depth of his/her prospective research in preparation for the Qualifying Papers. This bibliography is not simply a reading list, every item of which is to be accounted for at one particular point. Rather, it serves two purposes. It is a foundational tool that situates the student as scholar in his/ her chosen field (for example, combining genre/s with period/s and theoretical approach/es). It is also an adaptable and incremental tool that should continue to develop as the student's work becomes increasingly specialized. The bibliography (or bibliographies) will continue to evolve as the student moves through the qualifying process.

Paper Topics

Working with the bibliography/bibliographies and consulting with the pro-tem Committee, the student will identify four possible topics for Qualifying Papers. Two of these topics (Category A) will address broadly defined "teaching fields" (e.g. Renaissance Drama, Critical Theory, Canadian Literature post-1950) and two of these topics (Category B) will address the specific sub-fields of the thesis (e.g. "Sex and Gender in the Nineteenth Century", "Romanticism and the Aesthetic", "Vancouver Poetry" "Affect Theory"). Following approval by the pro tem committee, the student will submit the bibliography/bibliographies and topics to the Graduate Committee. The package will include a preliminary explanation of and rationale for the thesis project as mapped out by the bibliography/bibliographies and paper topics. This process serves to locate the student's proposed research in its historical, theoretical, critical and generic context. Its purpose is to combine broad coverage in the student's chosen fields, in order to prepare for teaching and for the job market, with the more narrowly focused research context of the thesis.

The qualifying process package (bibliography/bibliographies, paper topics, rationale) should be submitted to the Graduate Committee by October 15 of Year 2.

Qualifying Papers

Upon approval of the qualifying process package by the Graduate Committee, the pro-tem committee will choose two of the four possible topics (one from each category). This choice should be made within two weeks of the return of the qualifying process package, and communicated to the student, who will take these topics as the focus for two papers (20-25 pages each), to be written independently as a take-home exam. These papers need not be considered thesis chapters or article-like interventions. The category A paper, the field essay, is intended to be a survey akin to the "companion" article or the anthology introduction. The category B paper might more closely resemble the literature review of the thesis (and may indeed become such a survey); it could also represent the student's early engagement with a particular subfield important to the dissertation. Both papers should address enough material so as to prepare the student to teach a senior undergraduate course in either field. While the candidate may consult with the pro-tem committee while pursuing his/her reading and preparation, the actual writing of the papers is not a consultative process, and the committee should not review drafts of the papers. These papers should ideally be handed in **no later than March 1** of Year 2. These two papers will be examined together, so while they may be completed consecutively, they should be conceived of in relation to each other, and should be handed in together.

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The Prospectus

With the completion of the field examination and qualifying paper, the pro tem committee is dissolved. Then the student, in consultation with the Graduate Chair, invites an appropriate faculty member to supervise his or her prospectus and thesis. Student and supervisor together then establish the full committee, which normally consists of the candidate's supervisor and two other members of the English Department. The names of all supervisory committee members are submitted to the graduate program. The supervisory committee will likely (but not necessarily) include some or all of the original pro tem committee. It may include a faculty member from another department and/ or another institution. Development of the prospectus should involve those committee members who will be overseeing the thesis to its conclusion.

The Faculty of Graduate and Post Graduate Studies has a page with links to policies and procedures relating to supervision and examination [here](#).

The thesis prospectus, prepared in consultation with the supervisory committee, should be submitted to the graduate committee with the full approval and the signatures of all three members of the supervisory committee. Addressed to the graduate committee, the prospectus must make good sense to academics outside the area of specialization and should focus on the thesis' tentative argument and originality. The prospectus should be roughly 2,500 words in length, excluding bibliography. Prospectuses should be submitted in 12 point Times New Roman font. Prospectuses that are longer than 2,500 words will not be read and will be returned for revision. The prospectus should contain four components:

- **Description and Justification:** This stage should articulate as clearly as possible the "why" as well as the "what" of the thesis. The prospectus should situate the thesis in its field, showing how it develops or departs from previous research and what the writer hopes it will contribute. The prospectus should also spell out the theoretical framework of the thesis.
- **Plan:** The prospectus is not necessarily a detailed blueprint, and it allows for changes of direction. Precise conclusions to inquiries not yet fully entered into need not be anticipated. However, the prospectus is to make clear the overall organization of the thesis as envisaged at this point in terms of its main stages of inquiry and its argumentative structure. Conventionally, the prospectus includes chapter summaries.
- **Thesis Bibliography:** This document should contain the essential reading for the dissertation. It should be no longer than 10 pages and should comply with standard formatting procedures (MLA or Chicago style; 12 point, times new roman font).

The entire graduate committee will read and comment on the originality and value of the project. Should the Graduate Committee decide at this stage that the program of research has not yet been adequately conceived, it may invite the student, in consultation with his/her supervisory committee, to revise the relevant portions of the Prospectus for a second delivery, normally within **two weeks** after the student has heard the Committee's decision.