

The Art History & Visual Studies Ph.D. Program Statement of Expectations for the mentoring of Doctoral Students and Departmental Culture/Climate Issues

Spring 2021

The success of the Art History & Visual Studies Ph.D. program depends upon a climate of mutual respect among the faculty, students, and staff. We pledge to treat one another with dignity and kindness, acknowledging and honoring each person's individual worth and unique contributions to our community.

The Program is committed to providing thoughtful and supportive mentoring and advising of all students. The goal of the graduate faculty is to assist doctoral students in succeeding as candidates for and professionals in a field of their choice.

Responsibilities of Faculty/Department

Faculty advisors are responsible for:

- Informing students of program requirements and deadlines, academic and non-academic policies that pertain to doctoral students;
- Mentoring students in the conventions of academia and other relevant career paths and in their search for employment after the PhD is completed;
- Being responsive to students' communication and inquiries in a timely fashion (within 2 business days when teaching or a mutually understood period of time). This includes being available and responsive while on leave (within one to two weeks when on leave).

MAIN FACULTY ADVISOR & DGS: ADVISING BEFORE ENROLLMENT

Provide accurate, up-to-date information to prospective students about the academic program, the research interests of the faculty as well as potential allied faculty in other Duke departments, and the degree requirements. This information should include data on time to degree, financial aid, funding opportunities, and placement of the program's graduates.

MAIN FACULTY ADVISOR & DGS: ADVISING STUDENTS IN THEIR FIRST YEAR

Both the DGS and the student's primary advisor are responsible for advising new students on program requirements, deadlines and academic expectations. These expectations should include the necessity of the student being part of the departmental community. This should begin before students arrive on campus, in order to help them, for example, decide on a first-year schedule of classes. As students are expected to take the first of their two foreign language exams by the end of their first year, the primary advisor should help them to choose appropriate languages for their area of interest, and discuss methods to gain the proficiency needed to successfully complete this requirement.

Departmental officers should provide a clear outline of students' service obligations. This should include an indication of what preparatory pedagogical support will be offered by the

department, and what students should expect in terms of advice and practical help from the instructor(s) with whom they work.

SUPPORTING FACULTY MENTOR(S)

While the primary faculty advisor always plays the most important role in the student's career, we recognize that a broader support network will help the student to develop professional relationships in the department and engage more consistently with it as a community. Supporting faculty mentor(s) provide that additional assistance for each entering student. These mentors engage the student's interests, recommend faculty/sources helpful to the student's project, and otherwise extend the core relationship of the student with their primary faculty advisor.

The DGS and the primary advisor will help the student identify appropriate faculty to serve in this role.

ADVISING CONTINUING STUDENTS

After the first year, the primary advisor and the DGS should continue to provide advice on program requirements, deadlines, and academic expectations. The advisor should guide the student in the development of academic areas of concentration. At the end of their second year, the advisor begins to prepare students for the preliminary exams, including discussing with them the format and subjects to be covered in the examination, the composition of the committee, and the topic of the dissertation.

During the fall of their third year, when the student is taking the Prospectus and Grant Writing Seminar, the advisor should work closely with her/him to develop and shape the dissertation prospectus. The advisor should also help the student to identify potential fellowship and grant opportunities, and support the development and writing of applications. If necessary, the advisor should assist the student in contacting members of the preliminary exam committee and in scheduling the exams. The advisor is responsible for collating the exam questions of each committee member and for supervising the preliminary exams.

ADVISING ABD STUDENTS

During the initial years of dissertation research, the primary advisor advises students on field and archival research, and supervises the further development of the dissertation topic. The advisor is also responsible for reviewing and commenting on grant and fellowship applications as well as drafts of dissertation chapters. The advisor should supervise the input of committee members; carefully read and help to edit the dissertation and respond to drafts or queries within 2 weeks.

In addition to the primary advisor and the DGS, the Supporting Faculty Advisor(s) can continue to engage with the student during her/his time as an ABD if the student so desires, to offer

contacts, help with grants as called for, and development of professional relationships. This role is meant to complement and extend the service of the primary advisor.

ADVISING DISSERTATIONS

The primary advisor is responsible for guiding the student in the process of research and writing the dissertation. The advisor and student should together determine an achievable timeline for the completion of the dissertation, and revisit that timetable periodically to make any necessary adjustments. The advisor should check in regularly with students to offer support and encouragement. The advisor should be available for regular meetings with the advisee as required or requested.

SUPPORT PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

The department encourages students to participate in both professional development programs and activities, while also weighing the costs and benefits of additional commitments and opportunities. The primary advisor, faculty mentor(s), and DGS advise in matters of professional training and orientation. The faculty will help to facilitate introductions to scholars and professionals outside of Duke who would be helpful for students' research interests.

Support for graduate teaching assistants and graduate graders: The faculty will provide students with the opportunity to develop course syllabi and design class sessions in order to gain hands-on teaching experience as part of their duties as a TA or grader. Written assessments of TAs and graders are provided through a class visit and a written report shared with the student. Faculty mentorship will prepare students to be responsible for a course as an instructor of record.

The primary advisor assists students in the preparation of applications for jobs and post-doctoral positions, and reviews their application materials. The faculty agree to participate in mock interviews and job talk rehearsals. The advisor and the committee commit to providing letters of recommendation in a reasonable and timely manner.

The advisor serves as the primary mentor in terms of professional activities such as conferences, lectures, publishing, and service to the field. The advisor will read and provide comments on the student's conference papers in a reasonable and timely manner; to schedule practice presentations to be performed for the faculty; and to discuss all aspects of the presentation, from the mode, design and length to the student's professional self-presentation.

The advisor helps to identify seminar papers or dissertation chapters that might have the potential for publication as a stand-alone article, and helps the student to navigate this process. The faculty advises students on how to respond to the common experience of rejection of manuscripts and other projects, panels, or grant proposals, to interpret readers' reports on a submitted manuscript, or to 'revise and resubmit' response. Most importantly, the faculty value the effort to submit one's work for review and to participate actively in the broader scholarly community.

Responsibilities of Students

CURRENT STUDENTS

Students are expected to take the initiative in establishing working relationships with faculty within and beyond the department as part of their intellectual and professional development.

Students are responsible for undertaking regular communication with advisers, including updating them on progress in courses and writing assignments, meeting deadlines for the presentation of written work and other projects, updating advisers (and committee, where appropriate) on the progress of research projects, and communicating any impediments to progress, changes in circumstance or requests for support (e.g. letters of recommendation) in a timely way.

Students should respond to any queries/emails from the advisor as expeditiously as possible, but certainly within 2 working days from the date of the email or a mutually understood period of time.

As part of their professional development, students in coursework are expected to participate in the full range of departmental programs and initiatives, demonstrated by attendance at departmental events, such as symposia and visiting lectures. Such events are considered integral to the students' research, intellectual developments and networking. ABD students are also expected to attend departmental events when they are in residence.

Additional responsibilities are outlined in the departmental Graduate Student Handbook. Students should familiarize themselves with this document, which enumerates the various program requirements, expectations, and deadlines.

POST-PHD

Once students successfully complete the PhD, they continue to be important and valued members of our intellectual community. The faculty are happy to write in support of your job and fellowship/grant applications, as we are invested in your continued success. When requesting such support, we ask that you submit the following helpful documents, which will allow us to write the strongest letter possible:

- 1) An up-to-date CV;
- 2) Copies of post-dissertation publications and a draft from your current research project as well as a description of that project and plans for its publication;
- 3) Full description of the opportunity for which you are applying;
- 4) The application materials (e.g., letter of application, grant proposal, teaching statement, etc.), and any supporting documents, such as publications, that you include in the dossier;
- 5) The recipient's address, including mailing address and email;
- 6) The deadline for submission of the letter of support.

We also ask that you inform us of the results of your application; and if you are willing to be an active member of our alumni network and speak to our current students about your experiences, please let us know.

Problem Resolution

In a case where the faculty advisor or the graduate student believes the advising process is failing, the situation should be reported to the DGS and Chair. The DGS and Chair will determine how best to mediate the advising relationship in an informal, constructive and even-handed manner. This could include a group meeting with the advisor and student together with DGS and/or Chair. If the matter between the advisor and student is unresolvable, the student will be assigned to another professor, given the agreement of all parties.

For additional information and guidance, consult the following Graduate School page: (<https://gradschool.duke.edu/academics/academic-policies-and-forms/standards-conduct/student-grievance-procedures>)