

## **Guide for Graduate Students in the Department of Literature and Comparative Literature Harvard University**

**Note:** This *Guide*, which has been substantially expanded in this edition, is intended to supplement the *Graduate School of Arts and Sciences Handbook*. Students are exhorted to consult the *Handbook* when Graduate School of Arts and Sciences, Faculty of Arts and Sciences, and/or University-wide regulations are at stake. In cases of discrepancy between this *Guide* and other publications by the GSAS, FAS, or University on such topics as policies and requirements about teaching fellowships or about the form of the doctoral thesis, the most recent version of those other publications takes precedence over this one.

Harvard University has offered courses in Comparative Literature since 1894. The Department of Comparative Literature was established by vote of the Faculty of Arts and Sciences on April 10, 1906, and was reorganized upon its present basis in 1946.

### *Advice on Use of this Guide*

Please take the time to read through this whole guide and keep it for consultation. Much information that pertains to later parts of the program will not be fully intelligible or relevant to you at the outset, but a careful perusal will help you to think of your program as an organic whole. The goals of the courses, examinations, teaching, and dissertation are to enable you to pursue your intellectual aims and desires while simultaneously acquiring credentials that will put you in the best position to obtain positions in teaching and research, or in whatever other sorts of employment you choose to seek.

### *The Degree Programs* The First Three Years

#### **Course Requirements**

The number of required courses for the Ph.D. in Comparative Literature is sixteen, of which only two may be reading courses; at least fourteen are to be letter-graded courses (i.e., not reading courses). Candidates are required to have at least as many 200-level courses as 100-level courses, and only in rare exceptions will courses below the 100-level be allowed to count toward the degree.

Candidates may arrange to produce extra work, often in the form of longer papers, so as to receive from the Department 200-level credit for courses that are listed at the 100-level in the *Courses of Instruction*. Such arrangements should be made early in the term when the course is being taken because they must be approved by the course instructor and the Director of Graduate Studies (DGS) or the Chair. This form is available from the departmental office or may be downloaded from the departmental website ([www.fas.harvard.edu/~complit/](http://www.fas.harvard.edu/~complit/)).

Each candidate will normally be expected to balance coursework in the following manner: 4 courses in the Department of Literature and Comparative Literature; 3 in a first literature; 2 in a second literature; and 2 in a third literature. The first literature must have a

historical component, whatever the student's area of specialization. Other coursework may include relevant courses in any of the above literatures; in another literature; in philosophy, anthropology, religion, linguistics, art, economics, and so forth. Under special circumstances, the substitution of no more than one of the four LCL courses will be allowed, with the approval of the DGS or the Chair.

**NOTE: It is important to remember that to satisfy literature requirements in first, second and third literatures, reading must be done in the original language. If we determine that work was not read in the original language, departmental credit will be withdrawn.**

In 2002-3 the faculty voted to accept courses as cross-listed only if they were taught by Literature and Comparative Literature faculty, pending approval by either the Chair or the Curriculum Committee. A course that is cross-listed in the Comparative Literature program will be counted toward either the Literature and Comparative Literature requirement or toward the national literature from which it is offered, but not toward both. For example, in 2003-4, German 180 was cross-listed with Literature and Comparative Literature and would count as either a Literature and Comparative Literature credit or as a German literature credit (if the readings were done in German). Students should communicate with the department administrator about how they want the credit to count.

Each degree candidate is expected to fulfill the 16-course requirement by including a significant dimension of comparative historical study. This dimension can be met by taking a minimum of three courses with a chronological emphasis or focus different from the candidate's primary chronological focus. It is important that these three courses be distinctly different from the main period in the candidate's program. Thus a candidate concentrating upon twentieth-century modernism would not be able to fulfill this requirement with three courses in the nineteenth century, nor would a candidate specializing in neo-classicism be able to claim satisfactory completion on the basis of three courses in the Renaissance.

### **Chronological, Generic, or Field Focus**

Many candidates will declare a chronological focus. However, candidates may request a focus that covers a genre or field of study if it is followed throughout a very broad historical range, e.g., tragedy or lyric poetry in languages ancient and modern. In addition, all candidates will be welcome to identify a special interest in a particular literary form (such as drama, lyric, narrative, and the like) or a topic of substantial scope in literary theory (poetics, literature in its social context, the relation between literature and one of the other arts, and so forth). Whatever choice the candidate makes, the decision must be communicated to the Chair by April 1 during the first year of study. If candidates can identify their focus already at the outset of their programs, they may do so.

It is the responsibility of the candidates to ensure that the Department knows if they wish to change their focus, since meeting certain departmental requirements is based on this focus.

### **Grades**

Candidates are required, in a given year, to receive more A's than B's and no grade lower than B-.

*Incompletes:* Students in this Department should avoid taking "incompletes." "Incompletes" can

turn out to be administrative nightmares that mar the transcript and damage the chances of students in applying for fellowships. Even worse, “incompletes” taken in one term can have a snowball effect that causes students to fall further behind in their coursework in the following term.

Students in Comparative Literature may not take more than one "incomplete" per semester. Under no circumstances are they permitted to take an "incomplete" in the Pro-Seminar (Complit 299ar). Students may take no more than two incompletes per year and remain in good standing with the Department. By GSAS rules “incompletes” must be completed before the end of the term that follows the one in which they took the incomplete (unless the professor sets an earlier deadline). According to departmental policy, two uncompleted incompletes may result in the candidate being asked to withdraw from the program or take a leave of absence. Furthermore, two “incompletes” will render a student ineligible for summer stipends, which are dependent upon satisfactory progress. As in all cases, students having academic difficulties should see the Chair of the Department at their earliest opportunity.

Please remember that it is the responsibility of students to consult the *Graduate School of Arts and Sciences Handbook* to determine exactly when papers or other work must be submitted in order to satisfy the requirements. These deadlines, which are very strict, are not set by the Department. Failure to abide by them may result in permanent incompletes.

### **Credit for Graduate Work Done before entering the PhD program**

According to a GSAS rule that is regulated by the Registrar, transfer credit may be awarded only after students have completed at least one full term of satisfactory work in the GSAS (in Comparative Literature, this would mean after one term of satisfactory grades has been reported to the Department by the Registrar). Under departmental rules, credit will be given only for courses on the graduate level, the correspondence between coursework done elsewhere and the department’s curricular requirements must be close: credit is not simply awarded automatically. At the end of the first term of completed work (or later) a student interested in receiving transfer credit should submit a transcript with the courses in question. A copy of the syllabus and/or papers written in the course are often required as well. These materials are reviewed by the Curriculum Committee.

The number of credits granted for graduate work done elsewhere will be based on these materials and on the department’s review of student performance in the first year of graduate study. The maximum number of outside courses to count toward the Ph.D will be four, and no more than two of those may count toward the requirement of four courses in Literature and Comparative Literature.

*Application for Academic Credit for Graduate Work Done Elsewhere* forms are available in the Department Office or can be obtained from the Registrar’s Office. The forms should be turned in with supportive material, no later than the beginning of the Fall semester of the second year.

### **Language Requirements**

Candidates should have knowledge of at least four languages variously related to their course of study and long-term interests. One language may be studied only for instrumental reasons and at least one must be studied because it stands in a useful “cross-cultural” or “diachronic” relationship to others.

After appropriate consultation with the Chair and/or DGS, candidates will draw up a list of four or more proposed languages; three of these will normally constitute the literatures declared by the student (“first”, “second,” and “third”) The list will be submitted to the Chair for consideration by the Department no later than October 1st of the first year and voted upon no later than November 1st. (The list of proposed languages may be revised and resubmitted at a later date so long as they meet the guidelines.)

Language requirements must be finished by the end of the third year (of course, candidates who want to take an A.M. after the second year must complete language requirements for that degree before the degree can be awarded).

*Instrumental language:* One of the four languages *may* be an “instrumental” means for reading criticism, or an access to philological and/or historical issues, or a first step toward eventually studying the literature. Candidates may exercise this option by taking an advanced language course or by passing a language exam in reading knowledge administered under the auspices of the Department. The instrumental language is an option that may appeal to candidates who seek in three languages a command that may extend to include speaking, listening, and writing, and in one language reading knowledge only; other candidates may choose to develop full command of all four languages.

*Premodern or cross-cultural language:* One of the four languages *must* be either premodern (diachronic) or cross-cultural. The term “premodern” implies that this language stands in a historically foundational or, in certain cases, diachronic relationship to one of the other languages. Foundational languages would include classical Latin and Greek, biblical Hebrew, classical Arabic, Chinese, Armenian and Sanskrit. Normally this language is not simply the “Old” form of a modern language which is studied in Old, Middle or Medieval, and Modern forms. In the event of uncertainty, candidates and/or their advisers should consult the Curriculum Committee. There are inevitably languages which are difficult to classify in this system. A case in point is classical Japanese. The Department has considered this case twice and has decided both times that although classical Japanese differs substantially from modern Japanese, the distinction is closer to a “medieval vs. Modern” distinction that could be found in other traditions (even English, since Old English differs sharply from Modern English). As a result, the Department has resolved that the standard foundational language for Japanese is classical Chinese; but the requirement can be satisfied by the ability to read *kambun*.

The term “cross-cultural” implies that this language is from another linguistic-cultural group than the others. Usually a candidate working primarily on European languages and literatures, and choosing not to study a premodern language, would need to study a language such as Chinese or Arabic to meet this requirement. Normally, English will *not* count as a cross-cultural language.

This requirement may be waived for students who are doing a combined AB/AM degree. However, if they are subsequently admitted to the PhD program, they must satisfy the

requirement.

### **Language Exams**

Competence in languages can be demonstrated by taking 100-level courses in the literatures of the languages (not language-learning courses, but ordinarily courses in the departments in which those languages are offered: arranging to do some of the required readings in the original language in a course taught in translation is not usually sufficient) or by taking a departmental translation examination. Under most circumstances Ph.D. candidates will demonstrate competence in three of their four literatures by meeting the course requirements for the first, second, and third literatures. For instance, a student who wishes to concentrate on literatures in English, French, and Spanish would take three courses in one of these and two in each of the others. Such a student might need to take an exam to meet the requirement for a language that stands in a “cross-cultural” or “diachronic” relationship to the candidate’s literatures. Students who hope to meet the requirement through an exam are encouraged to take it as early as they feel ready, since not passing the exam is no dishonor at all and since the exam can be taken again when it is next offered. Sometimes examiners in a given language have established a set group of texts from which passages for translation will normally be drawn. For example, the classical Latin exam has tended to be a passage of 20 to 25 hexameter lines from the poetry of Virgil. The goal of the exams is to demonstrate an ability to read the language in question effectively. For that reason, students taking the exams are allowed to use *dictionaries*. Students are allowed *one hour* for the examinations.

Students who wish to take a language exam should approach the departmental administrator. Often it will be possible for students to see copies of old exams, to get an idea of the length, difficulty, and variety. The administrator is responsible for scheduling the exam and for approaching (in consultation with the Chair) faculty members in the Department who are most suited to set and grade the exam.

**NOTE:** Candidates whose program of study requires more than the language and related study outlined in previous sections of the regulations, especially those involving coursework, may design in advance appropriate arrangements in consultation with the Chair and DGS.

### **Common Essay Examination**

Candidates must take a written, take-home Common Essay examination by the end of the second year. Candidates will be asked to answer one of six general/theoretical questions. As the instructions for this examination will indicate, candidates will be expected to write from a comparative perspective and not respond solely on the basis of one literary tradition. The exam is graded by an examination committee which awards grades of pass or fail.

*FOR FACULTY COMPOSING THE EXAM AND STUDENTS TAKING IT*

As is stated above in this *Guide for Students in the Department of Comparative Literatures*, “Candidates must take a written Common Essay examination by the end of the second year. Candidates will be asked to answer one of six general/theoretical questions. As the instructions for the examination will indicate, candidates will be expected to write from a comparative perspective and not to respond solely on the basis of one literary tradition.” The Department has voted that the Common Exam should be a take-home exam. This decision was based on a conviction that this change in format would make the exam a better test of knowledge, analytic skills, and imagination than would be the case with the two-hour written examination that was originally envisaged.

The faculty committee appointed to set the Common Exam should draw up 4-6 questions of a general nature regarding comparative literature. (Past Common Exams are on file for consultation by both faculty setting the exam and students planning to take it.) These questions will usually involve attention to literary theory, literary history, and practical criticism, with varying emphases depending on the particular question. The exam is not supposed to be designed to require research but the responses should contain references to specific reading.

Candidates will be expected to bring knowledge to the exam and, since the special interests of the candidates differ, the answers may be exemplified and illustrated with different materials from different literatures. However, it is expected that these will be comparative and not drawn from one tradition or language only.

Usually the exam will be made available in the morning on the third Thursday in April, and the responses will be due back by noon on the next Tuesday in hard copy form. The essay should have a maximum length of 10 pages double-spaced, including footnotes, with one-inch margins. The font used must be Times New Roman, 12 pt., with 10 pt. for footnotes. Footnotes can be single-spaced and should generally be for references only, or else to translate quotes in languages other than French or German; occasional substantive footnotes are fine, but they should not exceed a few lines in length. Within the text, quotations longer than 4 lines should be indented and single-spaced. This is a take home exam, but in preparing and writing answers students should not consult with others.

In the past it has proved beneficial when all the second-years have formed a study group, meeting every week or so to review materials and to give presentations. It has also been very useful to both the examiners and exam-takers to have a one-hour meeting in February to discuss the nature and aims of the examination, to answer questions about format, and to discuss approaches to studying for the exam. The Department has not (and will not) set a specific reading list for the Common Exam, but faculty members have made suggestions about books that are major landmarks or particularly helpful resources in the study of Comparative Literature. These books include:

Auerbach, Erich. *Mimesis: The Representation of Reality in Western Literature*. Trans. Willard R. Trask.

Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1953.

Bassnett, Susan. *Comparative Literature: A Critical Introduction*. Oxford: Blackwell, 1993.

Bernheimer, Charles, editor. *Comparative Literature in the Age of Multiculturalism*. Baltimore:

- Johns Hopkins University Press, 1995.
- Chevrel, Yves. *Comparative Literature Today: Methods and Perspectives*. Kirksville, Mo.: Thomas Jefferson University Press, 1995. Lanham, Maryland: University Publishing Associates, 1995.
- Easthope, Antony, and Kate McGowan, editors. *A Critical and Cultural Theory Reader*. Buckingham: Open University Press, 1992.
- Frye, Northrop. *Anatomy of Criticism: Four Essays*. Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1957.
- Fuery, Patrick, and Nick Mansfield. *Cultural Studies and Critical Theory*. 2d ed. Oxford University Press, 2000.
- Guillen, Claudio. *The Challenge of Comparative Literature*. Harvard Studies in Comparative Literature 42. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1993.
- Hartman, Geoffrey H. *A Critic's Journey*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1999.
- Hawthorn, Jeremy, ed. *A Glossary of Contemporary Literary Theory*. 4th ed. New York: Oxford University Press, 2000.
- Hendrix, H.; J. Kleok, S. Levie, W. van Peer. *The Search for a New Alphabet: Literary Studies in a Changing World*. Amsterdam: J. Benjamins, 1996.
- Higonnet, Margaret, editor. *Borderwork: Feminist Engagements with Comparative Literature*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1994.
- Koelb, Clayton, and Susan Noakes, editors. *The Comparative Perspective on Literature: Approaches to Theory and Practice*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1988.
- Leitch, Vincent B.; William Cain; Laurie Finke; Barbara Johnson; John McGowan; and Jeffrey Williams, editors. *The Norton Anthology of Theory and Criticism*. New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 2001.
- Lentricchia, Frank, and Thomas McLaughlin. *Critical Terms for Literary Study*. 2d ed. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1995.
- Levin, Harry. *Grounds for Comparison*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1972.
- Perkins, David. *Is Literary History Possible?* Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1992.
- Steiner, George. *After Babel*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1998.
- Wellek, Rene, Warren A. *Theory of Literature*. San Diego: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1977.

### **The A.M. Degree**

Application for admission must be to the Ph.D. program, unless one is an undergraduate of Harvard College with advanced standing and applies for a combined B.A./A.M. Students already in the program may receive an A.M. degree in passing.

To obtain this degree the candidate must complete 8 half-courses. One of these half-courses must be the Pro-Seminar, another one must be in Comparative Literature, and the remaining 6 must include 3 in the first literature and 2 in the second literature. No more than one of the 8 half-courses may be a reading course. Candidates are required to have at least as many 200-level as 100-level courses, and only in rare exceptions will courses below the 100-level be allowed to count toward the degree. The candidate must demonstrate proficiency in 3 languages, one of which may be English. Except for AB/AM candidates (see p. 5), one of the languages

must be premodern or crosscultural, as described in the requirements for the Ph.D.

### **Advising**

All incoming students (G1) are advised by the Director of Graduate Studies. At the end of the first year, every G1 student is assigned an academic advisor, who may function for only one more year or else continue as the student's academic advisor in G3 and beyond (by mutual agreement). During the G2 year, every student will meet with his or her academic advisor on a regular basis, especially at the beginning of each term; the advisor will sign off on courses, check up on Incompletes, and help the student prepare for the Common Exam & Reading Check. The faculty advisor may be one of the student's examiners for the Reading Check, though not necessarily.

By April of G3, every student will constitute a dissertation committee (*aka* prospectus committee), consisting of a "principal dissertation advisor" (PDA) and two other committee members (Readers). At least one of the three must be a member of the Literature and Comparative Literature faculty (more likely, 2 or even all 3 will be members). The "principal dissertation advisor" can be the same as the student's academic advisor (see above), but will often not be the same; if the PDA is a member of Literature and Comparative Literature, then he or she also acts as the student's departmental academic advisor; if the PDA is *not* a member of Literature and Comparative Literature, then the student will have a different departmental academic advisor, most likely another member of the dissertation committee. The departmental academic advisor (who may be the PDA, but not necessarily, as per above) will meet with the student at least twice a year, to check up on academic progress. In addition, the department as a whole will review the student's progress as part of its annual review of student progress every spring.

### **The Third Year and Beyond**

At the start of the third year, before registration, every student will take the Reading Check examination. Most students will start teaching in the third year, and students will also start to work on their Prospectus for the dissertation. A dissertation conference with the student's dissertation committee must be held during the 3<sup>rd</sup> or 4<sup>th</sup> year, such that the prospectus can be approved by the department faculty no later than May of the 4<sup>th</sup> year. Students should make every effort to schedule their Prospectus Conference no later than March of the 4<sup>th</sup> year, to allow time for revisions before the prospectus is circulated to the department.

#### **A. Reading Check**

The Reading Check is a take-home exam that will test students in their general knowledge of their literatures. Its purpose is to give students the opportunity before they begin a specialized dissertation topic to look at these three literatures and think both of general themes and problems, as well as re-examine specific texts. They will need to return to this sort of overview and critical examination as they begin teaching and preparing for the job market. The Reading Check seeks to ensure that these intellectual requirements of their profession will be fresh in mind.

Students are expected to assemble an examination committee with examiners in their three different literatures **no later than the last day of Spring Break of their second year**. The chair of this examination committee must be both an examiner and a member of the Department.

In the first Check the student will need to demonstrate range, both chronologically and generically. The second and third Reading Checks (on the student's second and third literatures) will concentrate on the focus (chronological, genre, or special field of study) that the student has declared.

The Reading Checks will focus upon lists tailored by the individual student, for which approval must be granted by the student's examiners and adviser. As indicated above, the list for the first literature should be broader in scope (generically, chronologically, or both) than the lists for the second and third literatures. The lists are not intended to be working bibliographies or laundry lists of all the "classics" in a given literature. Nor are they to be the first drafts of dissertation bibliographies. Instead, they are to offer a manageable sampling of texts that will testify to the breadth of learning of the student. These lists are to demonstrate -- albeit only partially -- that the student has the kind of knowledge that will provide the basis for subsequent work on the dissertation. Only under extraordinary circumstances should a list for the first literature include more than two dozen novel-length items or for the second and third more than a dozen items each.

Students must submit the lists of readings in each of their three literatures by the **last day of reading period in their second year**. Along with the reading lists, Students and examiners will discuss and reach an agreement about the format of the exam (for instance, will the exam consist of a close reading of selected texts; one large or several small essays) and submit a written summary of this agreement to the Department. The lists and summary must be approved and signed by the examiners before being turned in to the Department by the student. Each examiner will deliver his or her exam questions, preferably via e-mail, to the Department Administrator no later than the end of the Spring term exam period.

The entire class of third-year students will take the Reading Check examinations on the same day, between the hours of 9:00 am and 4:30 p.m. The examination will take place days before Registration in the Fall, but should not interfere with Bok Center events for first-time TFs. The exams will be distributed either electronically or in person, depending on where the student has decided to take the exam. The first literature Reading Check should be designed to be completed in 3 hours; the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> literatures should be divided into 1 ½ hours each. (Thus, the first literature exam will be sent out at 9:00 and returned to the Department Administrator by noon; the 2<sup>nd</sup> literature exam will be sent out at 1:00 and returned by 2:30; the third literature exam will be sent out at 3:00 and returned by 4:30 of the same day). The examinations will be administered according to an honor code. Students may use computers, but they are asked to pledge not to use any files or to consult any on-line resources. This is to be a "closed book" exam; students may not consult notes or texts. They may consult their actual reading list, NOT the texts on the list. With the permission of the examiner, students may consult a dictionary.

Examiners will review the exams (SAT/UNSAT) within 2 weeks, and will provide brief comments to be transmitted to the student. The DGS will notify students of the results: in some cases, the student may be required to do extra work in order to earn a SAT grade.

## **B. Prospectus Conference**

The Prospectus Conference will be a meeting between the student and the three members (or, if relevant, four) of his or her dissertation committee to discuss the submitted Prospectus in detail and determine if it can be approved as it is, be approved with minor changes or sent back for re-submission. The Prospectus Conference will include detailed discussion of the dissertation prospectus, with the aim of ensuring that the student is well prepared to move forward with the project and has developed both a viable conceptual structure and an appropriate outline of the chapters that will comprise the dissertation.

The following additional information pertains specifically to the prospectus:

*GUIDELINES FOR STUDENTS WRITING A PROSPECTUS  
IN THE DEPARTMENT OF COMPARATIVE LITERATURE*

A dissertation prospectus is a paradoxical object. It is not an abstract (which is to say, a summary of a completed dissertation) nor an introductory chapter of a dissertation but rather an attempt to describe what is planned before it has actually been done, it need not be a huge document. Indeed, it could be around 20 double-spaced pages in length with up to ten further pages of bibliography. As indicated, the prospectus should provide a preliminary description of the proposed dissertation. It should delineate what topic and area the dissertation will explore, why this topic and area merit such exploration, and so forth. Although a provisional chapter outline is not required, it is generally helpful to both the dissertation writer and readers to provide such information.

Finding, defining, and communicating a topic that is at once significant and of realistic scope are tasks that require discussion and collaboration between the dissertation writer and faculty members. Therefore the dissertation writer is encouraged to show drafts of the prospectus to potential directors/readers and other faculty members. After receiving approval from the committee of three directors/readers (at least one of whom must be a voting member of Comparative Literature) that departmental rules require, the candidate should submit the prospectus to the Department for circulation to the Prospectus Committee and arrange the Prospectus Conference. Once the Prospectus Committee has approved the prospectus, it will be circulated to the whole faculty of the Department for a vote. The responses of the Department to the prospectus will be reported to the dissertation writer by the Chair or by the director/reader who is a member of Comparative Literature.

Because the Department Literature and Comparative Literature entertains many different dissertations, its prospectuses have great variety. But all should answer, as best as possible at this early stage of research, certain fundamental questions:

1. What is the central problem that the dissertation will address? This problem could be theoretical, critical, or historical, but it should, in most cases, be presented as a question or related set of questions to which the dissertation will attempt to find answers. It is important that this problem and hypothetical answers be stated from the outset, so that your research will not risk becoming random and your exposition will not lapse into mere description.

2. Although you are writing a Comparative Literature thesis, your method may not be comparative in any obvious way. The comparative nature of it may inhere in the way it interrupts or revises existing narratives of explanation using new materials. If you will be relying on an intellectual framework developed by a particular theorist, you should say something about how the theorist's work will inform or be at issue in your work. What will count for you as evidence? Will your thesis aim at the revision of a paradigm, or the utilization of one? What will you be "reading" and what will you be presupposing? How does your framework fit your problem, and why have you chosen it? Are you testing it or using it? What kind of end point are you after? Do you want to make us understand something about the text(s), the world, the art form, or the analytic enterprise--or about the inextricability of all of these? Here is where you should define clearly any concepts or terms that will carry important analytical energy for you, and perhaps briefly explain their genealogy or provenance, especially when you are using contested, general, or often-misunderstood terms.

3. To persuade your reader that you are not just reinventing the wheel, or not just restating what has already been stated before, it is a good idea to start with a brief review of the present "state of the art" with respect to your topic. Has this topic been treated before? How does your approach differ from earlier ones? Has there been new evidence (for example, a new primary source) that has come to light since previous treatments?

For the sake of collegiality with previous generations of scholars, it is essential not to play games of upstaging for the sake of self-promotion ("My predecessor blundered [or even "made a mistake"] in not noticing what I have noticed").

4. It is helpful, for both yourself and the members of the department reviewing your prospectus, to include a chapter-by-chapter outline. Naturally, your final arrangement of chapters may look different from the one developed in your prospectus: if new perspectives open up in the course of your work on the dissertation, you need not feel committed to the organization proposed in the prospectus. Nonetheless, outlining a sequence of potential chapters will help you to clarify the argument of your thesis and check the balance of its parts in relation to one another. A chapter might be conceived as approximately 30-40 doubled-spaced pages. If the major sections of your dissertation seem likely to exceed this span, plan to subdivide them. You might consider organizing your topic in terms of six to eight main chapters. These should be presented in your prospectus in a manner that allows your readers to form a clear overview of the book as a whole. One good method is to arrange the numbered chapter titles as if in a table of contents, following each heading with a brief description of the issues it will address. You will probably find that developing this outline helps your thinking to move forward substantially, so that the actual writing of the dissertation will be more clearly focused.

5. Once you have drafted your prospectus under the guidance of your thesis director, you might want to have it read by someone who knows nothing about your topic, to see whether you have clearly set out your problem and defined a workable method. Seeking out a general reader right at the start is a good reminder that though you may be writing on a specialized topic, your thesis should be written in clear, intelligible prose. Make sure you define the theoretical categories you are introducing, and try to avoid technical jargon unless it is necessary to the

intricacies of your argument.

6. Remember that you are undertaking to write A BOOK. You ought therefore to think about that book as a whole rather than merely as a series of separate chapters. What overall message would you like the ordinary reader to take away from a reading of your book? Try to formulate your subject and your intended destination in a simple sentence or two; make sure that you locate this sentence or two in a prominent place in your introduction.

In thinking about your future book, you would do well to try to locate it in the broader field to which it is addressed. That is: as of now, you have a rather good command of current thinking with regard to your book's overall field. Indeed, just now, you are something of an authority. How is your book going to change people's ideas, add to the present picture, or revise commonly held views? Thinking in these terms should help you formulate your project for someone who is not immersed in its field.

7. The audience for an academic thesis/book ranges from members of your own generation to interested undergraduates, and advanced scholars. It also includes thinkers of the future. Be sure, therefore, to explain your scope or focus. While keeping in mind some such matters as history, theory, texts, and language, try to describe how your work does (or doesn't) fit into, develop from, or in some other manner deal with relevant (or only apparently relevant) work done by others. This will increase the chance of making your thesis the book you want it to be.

8. Prospectuses and theses tend either to lose themselves in detail or to be too general. To avoid these extremes, try to do what you would in any paper you write: make sure that your main argument remains clearly above ground and that each paragraph has a clear connection with both the preceding and following ones. Enough care and stylistic grace should be exercised so that the prospectus clearly and concisely articulates the project, its arguments, methods, and special considerations in a manner that anyone in Comparative Literature (or literary studies in general) can grasp.

### **Acceptance of the Thesis Prospectus**

After the conference, the prospectus is either passed; passed with the proviso that it be revised and given to the Principal Dissertation Advisor for approval of the changes; or required to be revised and resubmitted to the committee. The committee's decision is recorded on the form provided for that purpose.

Once all members of the Committee have signed and dated the prospectus sheet or sent to the departmental administrator and chair an email to signify their approval, the prospectus should be circulated to all department members a week before the next faculty meeting. Whenever timing permits, all approved prospectuses will be discussed and voted on at a regular department meeting or at a special meeting convened by the Chair. The prospectus is considered finally approved only after the Department (or a special committee of three or more members, if the timing makes a department meeting impossible) has voted to accept it. The Department will notify students of departmental approval; where appropriate, the first reader will communicate directly to the candidate any further suggestions for changing the prospectus and the

bibliography. If the Department votes for further changes to the prospectus (“passed with minor changes”), there is normally no need for the members of the Committee to reconfirm their approval.

## **Teaching**

Since this Department does not have an undergraduate component, it has in any given year very few teaching fellowships to offer, and therefore our students do most of their teaching outside the Department, primarily in the Core Curriculum, History and Literature, the Literature Concentration, or the departments of the languages they are presenting. Applications for posts as tutors in Literature and History and Literature are normally due in February (applicants should check with those concentrations early in the fall semester to be certain of the precise dates); these posts have been assigned mainly to post-generals students, but even pre-generals can inquire. Virtually all the other departments also have deadlines quite early in the spring semester for teaching fellowships for the following year, and applicants should check early to find out what those deadlines are. (Some departments notify this Department about their deadlines---some don't.) If you are interested in teaching languages, you should be aware that several departments offer formal courses or less formal orientation programs that are required of all prospective language teachers.

### *Teaching as a Component of the Ph.D. Program*

When students have choice about their teaching, it is wise for them to consider teaching alongside course taking, exams, and the dissertation as a component in their intellectual formation and as part of their preparation for the job market. For some students it makes sense to build on strength, by seeking to secure employment in courses that are in their major areas. For others teaching offers relief from the (overly) familiar and a chance to acquire knowledge of new material or approaches. Beyond the purely intellectual and/or professional, the personality of the student who wants to teach plays--and should play--a role in decisions about what sort of teaching to do: Some people love language teaching, others hate it; some thrive in one-to-one tutorials, others are more energized by section leading.

It is often advantageous to have achieved, by the time a student goes on the job market, a mix of two or more types of teaching, such as section leading in Core courses, language instruction, and small tutorials.

### *Learning To Teach*

All the information about teaching in this guide is meant only as an introduction in your search for a teaching position and for training as a teacher. Make sure to get a copy of the **Teaching Fellows Handbook**, which provides a more detailed discussion of some aspects of being a Teaching Fellow at Harvard, as well as a good deal of advice on how actually to teach once you've been given a section or a tutorial.

The Department strongly encourages all first-time teaching fellows to avail themselves of the resources provided by the **Derek Bok Center for Teaching and Learning**. The Bok Center is in room 318 of the Science Center, the website is [www.fas.harvard.edu/~bok\\_cen/](http://www.fas.harvard.edu/~bok_cen/). The Bok Center organizes workshops and orientation sessions on teaching. Not only will their basic one-day

orientation session for those who are new to teaching is worth attending look good on your academic resume as proof of an interest in teaching, not only is it a prerequisite for teaching in the Core Program, but it is also required by the Department of Comparative Literature for all first-year teaching fellows.

Since in almost all cases our graduate students teach in Core courses or tutorials or courses in other departments, Comparative Literature urges its students to participate in whatever orientation programs are offered by the various departments and units where they wish to teach, especially for the first time. In those rare instances in which graduate students in our program have their first teaching experiences in 100-level Comparative Literature courses, the professors who oversee such courses should ensure that these students receive appropriate training in pedagogical skills and professional conduct, perhaps by having these students included in the training program of a neighboring department. The Department requires that all first-year teaching fellows have their performance videotaped and evaluated by the Bok Center and that professors who head sectioned courses in Comparative Literature visit sections.

### *When to start teaching*

Teaching normally begins in the 3<sup>rd</sup> year. Occasionally, a degree candidate may have outside funding or a fellowship that permits a reduced teaching load or, for a term or a year, no teaching at all. There is no requirement to teach in any given term or year. In seeking teaching while pursuing the degree, degree candidates should carefully weigh their financial needs, their dissertation progress, and the importance of teaching as training for full-time job prospects. Some terms or years may be more heavily devoted to teaching than others. Try to plan ahead and design an ideal schedule beyond the next term or even the next year. Consult with your adviser about teaching loads and types of courses in which you might teach

### *Securing a Teaching Fellowship*

The Department may offer a session in the spring term to provide information on the art of securing teaching fellowships. Students who are considering teaching in the following year should express their interest in participating in such a session to the Chair by the end of the fall term. Applicants should also seek out professors who have advised them, who have taught classes they have taken, or who have been their employers in other capacities. In addition, students with skills in areas where enrollments are high and teaching fellows few (current examples would include Spanish and music) should consider seeking teaching in those areas. Finally, students are encouraged to speak with their peers, since the Comparative Literature grapevine often proves helpful. Most large courses are taught in the Core Curriculum; applicants should contact the instructors of these courses just as soon as course information is available (mid-spring) and also Dr. Jean Leventhal at the Core Office (38 Kirkland Street, [jleventh@fas.harvard.edu](mailto:jleventh@fas.harvard.edu)). Applications, in addition to the forms required by some departments, should include a cover letter outlining your qualifications for that particular course or tutorial program, and a résumé giving details of your education and experience (any courses or programs on teaching techniques (e.g., those at the Bok Center should especially be noted).

Students who have elected to spend semesters or years abroad must be particularly careful to seek teaching before their return to Cambridge. Without submitting applications in advance, it is not realistic to return in September after an absence, especially after not having had

any previous teaching experience, and to expect to find teaching for the fall semester without difficulties.

The following informal document was assembled by Guillermo Bleichmar and offers tips on securing teaching positions within the Faculty of Arts and Sciences:

*GETTING TEACHING:  
A GUIDE FOR STUDENTS IN COMPARATIVE LITERATURE*

**What kinds of teaching are available?**

There are three kinds of teaching positions open to students in Comparative Literature: sections, tutorials, and language teaching.

When you teach a section, you are in charge of a small group of undergraduates (no more than eighteen) with whom you meet once a week to discuss the material covered by the professor during lecture. Other than running the discussion, going to the lectures and doing the reading for the course, your duties include holding office hours and grading papers and exams. Because there are only so many Comparative Literature classes offered each semester and because most of them are not large enough to warrant sections, it's likely that the section you teach will be in a different department. Most of the time this will be a national literature department or in the Core Program, although it's possible to find teaching positions in departments further removed from literature, such as Music, History, Anthropology or Women's Studies (if not directly through the department, then by teaching Core classes in those subjects).

In a tutorial, you are matched with an undergraduate student who needs help with a particular project, for instance a junior essay or a senior thesis. Normally this means meeting students for an hour or an hour and a half every week, and reading the material they're working on so you can have a productive discussion about it. Tutorials are available in most departments, but Comparative Literature students usually teach them in the Literature Concentration. It is also possible to teach tutorials in the History and Literature program of the Core, but previous teaching experience is required.

Language teaching is carried out in the respective department. First-time applicants for language teaching position are almost always assigned to an elementary course, and some departments require that you take a propeaedeutic course simultaneously with your first semester of teaching.

**How much should I teach?**

Teaching at Harvard is organized around what is called the "fifths" system. Each teaching assignment counts for a certain number of fifths. A course section, for instance, counts for 1/5 in any given semester. Tutorials are trickier: most of the time a tutorial counts for 1/15, so you need three to make up 1/5, but in some departments a tutorial is worth 1/10.

In economic terms, there is a specific amount of money paid per fifth. One semester fifth (which could be one section in a class, for instance, or three tutorials in the undergraduate Literature concentration) is planned to be worth approximately \$4,740.00 in the academic year 2008-2009, so by teaching 2/5 each semester you would earn \$18,960.00 for the academic year. The value of a fifth changes from year to year, and you can find the exact amount in the "Financial Support" section of

the Teaching Fellows Handbook. But in general, most people are able to cover their living expenses for the year by teaching 2/5 per semester. Please note: the pay for the first month of teaching (and sometimes longer) can be delayed. Talk well in advance with other students or your financial aid adviser to find out how to budget appropriately.

Another thing to keep in mind is that there are limits on how much you can teach. Students who are G3 or higher and have not yet passed their General Examination are allowed to teach 2/5 per term. After passing the Generals, students can teach up to 6/5 per academic year, but may not take more than 4/5 in any given semester. So if you teach 4/5 in the Fall, you would only be allowed to teach 2/5 in the Spring. Furthermore, students are not supposed to teach more than 16/5 in their whole time at Harvard. It is possible to obtain permission to continue teaching past the 16/5 limit, but it is important not to let too much teaching get in the way of your own academic progress (this is the reason why the 16/5 limit was established). Remember also that once you have submitted your dissertation proposal you become eligible for writing grants that allow you to devote yourself to your work without having to teach.

### **What should I teach?**

In order to decide what kind of teaching to look for you need to consider two basic things. The first one is what kind of teaching experience you want, and the second is how much work each kind requires.

Teaching should be a useful, ideally an enriching experience in your academic formation. When you teach a section, for instance, you will get invaluable experience in what it takes to communicate ideas, generate discussion and lead a group. Tutorials are an entirely different experience: your relationship with the student will undoubtedly be much closer and you will delve into a subject in greater detail, learning about being an adviser but foregoing the group dynamics. There is thus a question of personal aptitudes and preferences. Some people feel more comfortable in a one-on-one situation than in a group. Language teaching often requires the patience of a saint and the enthusiasm of a cheerleader. If you have never taught before, the Core Program may be a good option because it usually has regular staff meetings with the professor and other section leaders to provide you with guidance and support.

Another important factor is which kind of section will be useful to you in professional terms once you graduate and look for a job. Someone who has never taught a section may have trouble convincing a search committee that he or she can teach a class with thirty students. And in many national literature departments they look for people who have taught languages.

Aside from the personal and the professional issues, there is the question of how much work you'll be doing. According to the GSAS Handbook, "as a general rule, teaching fellows should expect to spend roughly ten hours a week in teaching, preparation, correction of class work, and counseling for every one-fifth fraction assigned, although first-time teaching may require more time." In practice, however, the type of teaching you do will considerably affect how much work and time you need to put into it. Not all fifths, in other words, are equivalent. Language teaching for instance can be especially time consuming because you will first be assigned to an elementary class, which often means meeting five times a week, and because some departments require that you take a propaedeutic class. Taking a tutorial in an unfamiliar field is also a lot of work, and even if the student's project is close to your own interests, the general opinion is that tutorials require quite a bit of time and work in terms of preparation, especially as the deadline for the student's project

approaches. If you're planning to teach section, keep in mind that if you teach sections in two different courses (rather than two sections in the same class) you'll have to do double the work. As a rule of thumb, teaching two sections of the same class seems to be the most efficient system in terms of time and workload.

### **How do I get teaching?**

The time to start looking for teaching positions for both semesters of the upcoming academic year is early in the Spring term, in the months of March and April. In most cases you will find out by early June whether you've gotten the teaching you've applied for.

There are several steps to the search process. Most departments have application forms for the courses that expect to have sections, so you should stop by their office and sign up. If you're interested in teaching in the Core Program, their office is on 38 Kirkland Street. Particularly if you haven't found teaching by the time term begins, be in touch with the Core office to find out about overenrolled courses. In any case, if you want Core teaching, send an application as early as you can, specifying the courses to which you wish to apply. One thing to keep in mind about Core teaching is that there's a special security attached to it: once you have signed the contract, you are guaranteed that amount of teaching even if your course is underenrolled; you may have to teach a different Core course, but that is a choice and not a compulsion. To apply for tutorials in the Literature Concentration there is also a form, which you can pick up at their office in the basement of Boylston, across the hall from our department.

When you fill out the forms, you may want to sign up for classes that seem interesting or that deal with subjects you're familiar with even if you're not that well versed in them. It's always better to turn down a section than to be without one.

Besides filling out an application for departments that require it, it's a good idea to talk to professors. Find out beforehand from the university website or the catalogue of courses what they're teaching and then send them an email or stop by their office to say that you'd like to teach for them. Be aware though that professors are kind people with sometimes short memories, and that there are other students asking for the job. So if they are at all responsive and promise you a specific amount of teaching, try to get something in writing, an email for instance, that you can refer to when the sections actually begin to form.

Keep in mind also that professors often give preference to students from their own department. Other professors however are happy to hire Complit students. In general, if you're thinking of teaching for someone in another department it's a good idea to ask around and find out whether they usually hire Complit students or not.

Even if the professor is keen on Complit and wants you as a teaching assistant, he or she will not really know how many sections the course will have until shopping week is over and all students have registered. This means that a section you were hoping to get may not materialize, but it also means that new sections open up in classes that receive an unexpectedly large number of students. One way to find out about new sections at the start of the semester is to talk to department coordinators about where spots may be opening up. You can also ask your fellow students, and you should keep an eye on your email, since professors often send out mass emails or ask departmental administrators to distribute them when they're looking for more teaching assistants. Finally, if you apply for a section and are not hired for it, you may want to go to the first lecture with a copy of

your application in hand; that way if the professor sees more students than she expected, you can reapply on the spot.

Never underestimate the importance of your fellow student as a resource for finding teaching and for teaching successfully: Ask as many people as you can about their experience, what kind of teaching they prefer, how they got it, which professors are great to teach for and which aren't. No guide or handbook will be as up to date or as candid as your colleagues.

### **Your Dossier and Recommendations**

It is never too early to begin thinking about establishing a dossier at the Office of Career Services. OCS is located at 54 Dunster St. and at [www.ocs.fas.harvard.edu](http://www.ocs.fas.harvard.edu). A dossier is not only essential when you go on the job market but also facilitates in applying for grants or even seeking teaching fellowships. Your dossier may contain recommendations from faculty who have seen you teach, have examined you, or from whom you have taken a class. OCS offers assistance in preparing and improving your resume as well.

Allow plenty of time for a recommender to write on your behalf. Faculty are as busy as students, and they will write more detailed recommendations when they are allowed the time in which to do so. Even if you ask them orally, remind them by email of the date. (This is especially important if you are requesting multiple recommendations with different due dates: faculty will often tailor their recommendations to the different purposes for which you are applying, but they need to have a timetable to remind them of which letters are needed by when for which purposes.) You should also provide an addressed envelope.

## **The Dissertation**

### **Form of the Doctoral Thesis**

Students are responsible for complying with the requirements set forth in **The Form of the Doctoral Thesis** handbook. The answers to many questions not provided there must be determined through consultation of the dissertation directors and readers. One question that has arisen occasionally is about the language in which the dissertation may be written. **The Form of the Doctoral Thesis** handbook states that: "The language of the thesis is ordinarily English, although some departments whose subject matter involves foreign languages may accept a thesis written in a language other than English." In the Department of Comparative Literature more than nine out of ten dissertations have been in English, but occasionally dissertations have been written in the language of the literature with which the dissertation has been most concerned. Thus in the 1980's there was one dissertation in Spanish and one in French.

### **Submission of the Dissertation**

It is expected that students will submit chapters to their dissertation committee regularly, and revise each chapter after comments by the readers. A full version of the dissertation must be submitted to every member of the dissertation committee at least 6 weeks prior to GSAS Registrar's deadline for submitting dissertations. This deadline will allow committee members to make final suggestions and give their approval before the manuscript is printed in its final, formal version.

It is extremely important for students who are in the final stages of dissertation preparation to allow ample time to gather the signatures required on the acceptance certificate

and to ensure that the certificate is submitted by the proper due date.

**The Ph.D. in Comparative Literature with a Special Program  
in the Study of Oral Tradition and Literature**

The requirements for this special program are essentially the same as those listed above, except that at least one of the literatures must constitute (or at least include) a substantial corpus that is independent of written transmission and that derives from collections of performance recorded under strictly supervised conditions of fieldwork. A major resource for such purposes is the Milman Parry Collection at Harvard. Students in this program are overseen by the Department's Committee on the Study of Oral Tradition and Literature.

**Requirements for the Secondary Field in Comparative Literature**

The Department of Literature and Comparative Literature offers "Comparative Literature" as a secondary field in GSAS to enrich the background of Ph.D. students who seek to do research and teach across the institutional boundaries of national languages and literatures. Students in the various departments of literary studies may eventually be called upon to teach comparative courses or courses in general or world literature. The secondary field in Comparative Literature introduces students to basic issues in the field as well as providing a graduate literary theory course for students who have not already taken such a course in their primary department.

While we recognize the degree to which literatures in a single language constitute a coherent tradition, the Department of Literature and Comparative Literature seeks to develop an awareness of how literary works move across language borders, both in the original language and in translation. We seek to call attention to theoretical issues shared across not only the boundaries of languages but across very different traditions.

Prerequisites:

An ability to work in literatures in at least three languages. Normally this will be demonstrated by coursework in which at least some of the primary readings are in the language. In certain circumstances (for example, if one of the languages is the student's native language) the DGS may waive the requirement that competence in a language be demonstrated by coursework. If English is used as one of the languages, the other two languages should show some breadth; that is, they may not be closely allied, either linguistically or by academic convention (e.g., Spanish and Portuguese, Urdu and Hindi, classical and modern Chinese, or Greek and Latin). The judgment regarding what can legitimately count for the set of three languages will be at the discretion of the DGS.

Requirements:

- 1) Four courses, one of which may be the Comparative Literature proseminar and two of which must be Comparative Literature seminars at the 200 level. The remaining course requirements will be met by either seminars in Comparative Literature or 100-level Literature courses (which normally count for graduate credit in Comparative Literature).
- 2) Successful completion of the common essay exam for students in Comparative Literature at the end of the second year.
- 3) A seminar paper on a comparative or theoretical topic, to be read by the examination committee of the Department of Literature and Comparative Literature.

Contact the Director of Graduate Studies (DGS) (Professor Susan Suleiman – Suleiman@fas.harvard.edu/495-2543) for any further questions.

### **Graduation**

There are 3 months in which the degree may be conferred during the academic year; November, March and June. Students are strongly urged to check with the Department Administrator and the Registrar's Office about Department and GSAS deadlines for these graduation dates. The Department Administrator has *Information for Degree Applicants*, published by the Registrar's office, which explains many of the requirements for graduation. Students must fill out an *Application for Degree* form (copies are in the department office) which goes to the department chair for signature, and is then sent to the registrar's office to be filed. If the student doesn't graduate on the date applied for, the student must fill out a *Reactivation for Graduation* form to be signed by the chair. The *Thesis Acceptance Certificate* is the form which must be signed by all three dissertation readers and signifies that each has approved the thesis. These certificates, as well as other information on binding the dissertation and a booklet on *The Form of the Doctoral Thesis* published by GSAS, are available in the department office.

### **The Graduate School of Arts and Sciences/ Satisfactory Progress Policy**

To be eligible for any type of financial aid, a student in the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences must be making satisfactory progress. The following nine items provide a general definition of satisfactory progress and incorporate the modifications for Comparative Literature students.

1. During the first two years of graduate study any student who is permitted to register is considered to be making satisfactory progress.
2. A prospective third-year student must have a grade record showing more A's than B's, and no grade lower than B-, and must have passed the Common Essay Examination in the Spring and taken the reading check exam before registration in the Fall.
3. By the end of the fourth year a student must have obtained approval of the dissertation prospectus by the department faculty.

4. By the end of the fifth year and each subsequent year during which a student is allowed to register, he or she must have produced at least one acceptable chapter of the dissertation in order to obtain a grade of SAT in the appropriate 300-level course. Non-resident students who have traveling scholar status must also produce at least one chapter or the equivalent each year and to remain in communication with the Department.
5. The Department and the Graduate School fully expect students to finish the dissertation no later than the end of the 8<sup>th</sup> year; that is why Dissertation Completion Fellowships are provided to students in years 5 through 7 who have submitted 2 chapter drafts.
6. A student who has not completed the dissertation in the tenth year will be asked to withdraw; however, the student has the option of applying for readmission at a later date.
7. A student who fails to meet a requirement may, upon the recommendation of the Department, be considered to be an “exception,” and remain eligible for financial assistance, for a grace period of up to one year. At the close of the grace period, in order to be considered to be making satisfactory progress the student must have met both the requirement earlier missed and the requirement that would normally be imposed at that time.
8. No student may have more than one year of such grace during the Ph.D. Program.
9. In the case of pregnancy or the need to care for dependents, a student may request--and shall be granted--a Leave of Absence of a length appropriate to the given circumstances. Time shall be added to the “thesis clock” for students who must take such leave, as well as for students who must work at a reduced rate because of such circumstances.
10. In addition, the requirements of this calendar may be deferred by the Department during one year of departmentally approved leave.

If you have any questions concerning this policy, please see your adviser or the Chair of the Department as soon as possible.

### **Time Abroad**

Students in the program often ask about the rules governing time abroad. There is no simple answer, except that the Department of Comparative Literature is strongly committed *both* to having its students acquire mastery of foreign languages for their work with literature *and* to having its students meet requirements for satisfactory progress. In recent years students in the Department have fared very well in their efforts to win dissertation fellowships from sources within and without the University that allow them to go abroad. Students have the easiest time maintaining progress in the program if they take fellowships or teaching positions abroad while researching and writing their dissertations. Some go abroad in the early stages, as they seek out resources (both human and material) to help them define their topic and determine the scope of

their project. This kind of travel fits more easily into the program if it happens after the third-year exam, but it could happen beforehand. Others travel in the middle stages of dissertating. Finally, there are students who obtain fellowships (such as Rotary Fellowships) that take them out of the program at the coursetaking stage in the second year. If the student decides to be abroad in their 3<sup>rd</sup> or 4<sup>th</sup> year, they should contact the Financial Officer to make sure that teaching and tuition grant will remain intact upon return. Students who have possibilities for fellowship support or teaching positions abroad should discuss them with the Chair, DGS, and departmental advisers.

### **Fellowships**

In addition to the financial aid allocated annually by the Department through the Graduate School's Office of Financial Aid, there are many fellowships, both internal and external, for travel and research for which graduate students can compete. Information about many of these fellowships and their deadlines has been compiled by the Graduate School into two books issued annually which are available in the Department Office as well as from the Director of Fellowships. Notices and flyers sent us by the Graduate School and outside agencies are always posted in the Graduate Student Common Room.

Cynthia Verba, Director of Fellowships in the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences (Byerly Hall 200, [www.gsas.harvard.edu/academic/fellowships](http://www.gsas.harvard.edu/academic/fellowships)), is the first point of contact if you are interested in seeking most fellowships. She has published a small book entitled *Scholarly Pursuits* that includes examples of winning fellowship proposals and biographical essays and that covers other such matters as the curriculum vitae. Copies are available in the GSAS Dean's Office at Byerly Hall.

### **The Job Search**

Any student who is thinking about going on the job market should set up a placement dossier at the Office of Career Services and also notify the Department Administrator. The search has become an increasingly demanding and protracted process. For this reason, students who plan to seek jobs should start to assemble letters of recommendation, draft cover letters, polish their *vitae*, and prepare a writing sample the summer before the year they begin the job search.

Each year members of the Department Faculty serves as Placement Officers and meet, either individually or as a group, with the students who are actively conducting job searches. The Placement Officers and/or the Chair are willing to review students' cover letters, *vitae*, and Career Services dossiers upon request. With sufficient advance warning, mock interviews can be set up before the annual MLA meeting in December. Members of the Department Faculty are frequently available at the MLA meeting for job-seekers who wish to consult them. The Department subscribes to *The MLA Job Information Lists*, which may be consulted in the Department office or on-line at [www.mla.org](http://www.mla.org) with a password.

Starting in the academic year 2003-4, each student will be given a one-time total of \$500 to travel to the MLA or another professional meeting at which job interviews are conducted for as long as we have sufficient funds.

Whole books have been written on the academic job search. Probably the best known is Mary Morris Heiberger and Julia Miller Vick, *The Academic Job Search Handbook*, 3rd ed.

(Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2001). The Office of Career Services has its own publications on the job search and on negotiating a job offer. Additionally, information is also available in such general works on scholarly life as John A. Goldsmith, John Komlos, and Penny Schine Gold, *The Chicago Guide to Your Academic Career: A Portable Mentor for Scholars from Graduate School through Tenure* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2001).

### **Department Prizes.**

*Susan Anthony Potter Prizes.* These prizes were instituted in 1908 by Professor Murray Anthony Potter in memory of his mother, Susan Anthony Potter, and endowed in 1957 through a bequest of his wife, Bessie Lincoln Potter. The income from the fund is to be used to provide prizes for students in the Departments of Comparative Literature and Romance Languages and Literatures, such income to be divided equally among the two departments. By the terms of the bequest, two prizes in Comparative Literature are offered. One prize is offered for the best essay by a student (graduate or undergraduate) in Harvard University on any subject in the field of Comparative Literature. Another prize, to be one half the value of the prize just mentioned, is open only to undergraduates in Harvard College for an essay “on some subject of Comparative Literature drawn from the Middle Ages or the Renaissance.” The amounts paid for the prizes vary, depending on the income from the fund. In the academic years 1998-1999 and 1999-2000, larger prizes were \$1500 and smaller ones \$750.

*N.B.* Please consult the web site maintained by the Prizes Office to verify all this information.

*The Luisa Vidal de Villasante Award.* The Department of Comparative Literature may award a prize of \$100 annually for the best essay by a student, graduate or undergraduate, of Harvard University, on any subject in the field of Comparative Literature; preference will be given to subjects dealing in some way with Spanish Literature and/or language, either in themselves or in relation to other literature and/or languages.

The title page of each manuscript submitted in competition for these prizes should show the essay title, the writer's pseudonym (not his or her true name), the writer's academic standing, and the name of the prize. The writer's true name must be submitted inside a sealed envelope with the title of the essay printed on the front of the envelope. Prize-seekers should submit their manuscripts at the office of the Department of Comparative Literature, G03 Boylston Hall, by the date set by our Prize Committee, usually in late April. Although multiple submissions for one prize are not allowed, eligible candidates may submit different essays for consideration for each of the two prizes. Beyond the descriptions that follow, there are no restrictions on the types of essays that may be submitted—but the committee has expressed a strong interest in essays that are clear and readable in style.

### **Miscellaneous General Information**

*Graduate Student Council:* A policy has been instituted of having the first-year students in the Department assume collectively the responsibility for ensuring that the Department is represented at each meeting. This arrangement gives the first-year students an exposure to the workings (the existence!) of the Graduate Student Council, and it ensures that the burden—albeit light—of attending the meetings is spread evenly among students in the program. If the

Department is not represented, Comparative Literature students forfeit the right to compete for Graduate Student Council travel and conference grants. This forfeiture deals a serious blow to all the students in the Department.

*The Comparative Literature Liaison Committee:* This committee comprises five members or more elected annually by the Department's students and represents the students and their concerns to the Department's faculty. Ordinarily, this committee meets several times each semester; however events like junior faculty searches can require added participation, since traditionally a liaison member coordinates student participation in the search.

*Graduate Research Workshops:* The Graduate School of Arts and Sciences, with the aid of the Ford Foundation, funds, through grants awarded on a competitive basis, Research Workshops for faculty and advanced graduate students to discuss scholarship in progress. In the past there have been workshops in this Department such as: "Comparative Approaches to Medieval Literature," chaired by Professors Jan Ziolkowski and Eckehard Simon; "Comparative Literature," chaired by Professors Judith Ryan and Barbara Johnson; and "Literature, Nationalism, and Revolution," chaired by Professors Svetlana Boym and Susan R. Suleiman. These workshops are non-credit and provide a forum for exchanging ideas on research topics. They are often ideal milieu for trying out ideas for prospectuses, giving dry runs of job talks, and so forth. New ones may be proposed by two or more faculty members, who may belong to any department in the Faculty of Arts and Sciences.

*Departmental Suite.* Our department space has mailboxes for our students; a lounge with a sofa, easy chairs, recent journals; a kitchen which has filtered hot and ice water on tap, tea bags, and a refrigerator; and a well-equipped seminar room which can be used by our students when there are no classes scheduled.

*Graduate Student Work Room:* This room has work tables, computers (PC and Mac) and printers, a typewriter, bulletin boards for Dudley House and other student-related information and for notices about jobs (both internal and external), and a telephone (restricted to internal and local calls). The room is for any and all of our students to use for reading, studying, chatting, lounging, and meeting with each other informally or as a formal group. The one restriction is that a student may not use the room for a tutorial or office hours or any other activity which could make another student feel uncomfortable about coming in to read and use the phone or computers, or to chat with another student--the room is for the use of all, at all times.

*Letterhead:* The Department has a small supply of departmental letterhead for graduate students, to be used for such purposes as writing letters of recommendation for their students, for letters when submitting articles for publication, etc. This stationery is available in the Department office; small amounts are *gratis*; large amounts would have to be purchased.

*Other Facilities:* In addition to the lectures, colloquia, symposia, and informal seminars offered by this Department and the other departments with which our students are working, programs and amenities are also provided by various other facilities here at Harvard such as the Asia

Center, the Derek Bok Center for Teaching and Learning, the Center for European Studies the Center for Jewish Studies, the Humanities Center, the Center for Latin American and Iberian Studies, the Center for Middle Eastern Studies, the Center for Study of World Religions, The Edwin O. Reischauer Institute of Japanese Studies at Harvard University, the Harvard Ukrainian Research Institute the John K. Fairbank Center for Chinese Studies, the Minda de Gunzburg Center for European Studies, the Davis Center for Russian and Eurasian Studies, the Korea Institute, Real Colegio Complutense, the Ukrainian Research Institute, and the W.E.B. Dubois Institute for Afro-American Research. See the Complit website ([fas.harvard.edu/~complit](http://fas.harvard.edu/~complit)) under “Student Resources: Links”, for more information.

*Photocopying Privileges:* Graduate students may use the department copy machine for photocopying. Starting in Fall 2003, a policy is being tested to offer free study-related copying. If a student is a TF for a Complit course, the copying would also be free. Students who wish to use the photocopiers should see the Department Administrator for an access number.

*Travel Funds to Present Papers at Conferences:* The Travel Fund was established to reimburse students for travel expenses incurred traveling to present papers at conferences. This fund (which in the past has been supported entirely by alumni giving) sometimes becomes exhausted. Resources permitting, with the fund replenished, students are being offered \$500 a year (the year starts September 1 and ends August 31 of the following year) to travel to present papers. Receipts from lodging, transportation, food, or fees will be reimbursed when turned into the office, along with a copy of the title page of the conference schedule and page where the student’s name appears.

*Travel Funds to Attend MLA/APA for Job Interviews:* Resources permitting, students will receive a one time grant for \$500.00 to attend the MLA/AFA for job interview. Students should contact the Department Administrator in the year they wish to apply for these funds to check on availability.