

**University of Michigan
Classical Studies PhD Program**

PROGRAM HANDBOOK

I. INTRODUCTION

This handbook aims at providing background and guidance for successfully completing the requirements for a PhD degree in Classical Studies at the University of Michigan. It will explain why the program requirements are what they are. At the same time, it will offer some advice about how to complete the requirements successfully.

The Department of Classical Studies strives to provide an intellectually stimulating, diverse and friendly atmosphere in which all students can thrive. Among the various assets that the University of Michigan can offer to help each student reach his or her potential are the breadth of the interests of its faculty; the frequent visiting scholars; the active engagement in the various on-campus collections (Kelsey Museum of Archaeology; Papyrology Collection; etc.); and the close relation to students in the Interdepartmental Program in Classical Art and Archaeology (IPCAA) and the Interdepartmental Program in Greek and Roman History (IPGRH).

II. ADMINISTRATION

The Classical Studies PhD program is administered by a Director of Graduate Studies (DGS), appointed by the Chair of Classical Studies. The DGS also serves as Chair of the Fellowships and Admissions Committee. The DGS will report regularly to the faculty as a whole about matters pertaining to the graduate program. The current DGS is Basil Dufallo.

The primary graduate administrator for Classical Studies is Sarah Kandell-Gritzmaker. Funding and the dossier service are handled by Michelle Biggs.

III. PROGRAM OVERVIEW

The Classical Studies PhD program is designed to take five to six years, three years of coursework and two to three years of dissertation writing. It is the aim of the program to train scholars who can engage in cutting-edge research on the ancient world. The Department believes it is important that students develop into effective teachers as well as scholars, and works to achieve this objective in two principal ways. First, the ability to express ideas clearly is stressed. Students are expected to prepare frequent oral reports in graduate classes and in seminars, and there are oral components to both preliminary and dissertation examinations. Second and more importantly, students are required to teach for a minimum of four terms, under faculty supervision, in both the Elementary Latin and

Classical Civilization programs. Within the limitations of available funding, research assistantships are also offered which provide an opportunity for close collaboration in research with one of the department faculty.

The program is designed to provide students with the knowledge and skills required to conduct research and teach effectively in the field of Classical Studies. Students will acquire deep familiarity with a range of classical authors as well as their historical contexts. As is the case with most PhD programs, the requirements are rigorous and students must be disciplined in order to finish on time. Individual schedules vary slightly, but the general pattern is as follows.

First, Second, Third Years

During the first three years, students' efforts, both in classes and in self-study to prepare for examinations, are directed intensively toward five main goals:

- 1) Improving and refining a command of Greek and Latin, especially the ability to read the languages both intensively and extensively with understanding and enjoyment.
- 2) Gaining a broader and firmer grasp of the development of Greek and Roman literature in their historical settings—a knowledge based on, among other things, wide reading in the original languages.
- 3) Acquainting themselves with the various subfields and basic tools, methods, aims, and achievements of classical scholarship, and with the methodologies (literary, historical, linguistic) currently being applied to classical texts.
- 4) The ability to formulate research questions and develop a research program
- 5) The ability to communicate the results of one's research program in oral presentations and in clear academic writing.

In the first year, students will be supported by a Fellowship, and are expected to take four classes per semester (plus the one-credit Proseminar in the Fall semester). In the second and third years, students will be teaching as Graduate Student Instructors (GSIs) in the Department's Classical Civilization and Elementary Latin programs. In their second year, students are expected to take three courses each semester. In the third year, students usually register for two classes and one Greek or Latin 990 with the advisors of their Preliminary Exams (see below).

At the end of the third year, after meeting all course and exam requirements, including passing the Preliminary Exams, students will reach candidacy. Additional information on academic standing, satisfactory progress, and reaching candidacy can be found here <https://rackham.umich.edu/policy/section3/>, and in Section XI. Classical Studies Probation and Dismissal Policy.

Fourth, Fifth and Sixth Years

The final two to three years of the program constitute a period of intense research and writing under the supervision of a committee of faculty members. Students will be on fellowship their fourth year. By the beginning of Fall Break of the fourth year, students should present a Dissertation Prospectus (see below).

Rackham permits students to take one course per semester without fee while in candidacy (see below, IX C) and students are encouraged to do this as long as it does not slow progress on the dissertation. For example, some students take courses during these years if they are working towards a certificate or MA in a cognate field (see below). Students are also strongly encouraged to take Greek or Latin 602 (Professionalism) during their Candidacy. It is a good idea to confer with your advisor about these decisions. Funding for these years includes teaching as GSIs, U of M fellowships, and perhaps external fellowships from overseas institutions such as the American Academy at Rome or the American School in Athens.

IV. COURSE WORK

The Department requires the students to fulfill the following courses before advancing to candidacy.

- * Reading courses, both special and regular, in Greek and Roman authors or in periods or genres of literature. These are designed to help increase speed, accuracy, and pleasure in reading Greek and Latin and thus equip students for wider reading in classical authors. There is no required number, since each student has a different background and interests, but the department tries to ensure that every student has a similar amount of reading experience.
- * Greek and Latin Composition, **one course in each** at the graduate level.
- * History of Greek and Latin Literature Survey Courses (**three courses, at least one in each language**), the grades of which are recorded as the third part of the Preliminary Examination component of the program (see below). The survey courses include GRK 571, 572, and 573 and LATIN 571, 572, and 574.
- * Upper-level courses in the specialized disciplines (600-level): At some point before the students present themselves for the Preliminary Examinations they must have taken **one** course in the methods and problems of a particular sub-discipline such as linguistics, textual criticism, paleography, papyrology, numismatics, epigraphy, law, archaeology, philosophy, history, or religion.

- * Seminars involve advanced and intensive exegesis, in collaboration with the professor, of a classical author or subject, with particular emphasis on the independent research of the student in the form of reports and papers. Often these research papers result in a paper to be presented at one of the professional meetings such as CAMWS or SCS. **Two** seminars are required.
- * Cognates: The Rackham Graduate School has a four-credit cognate requirement but the Department requires at least **two cognate courses**. For students in the Classical Studies PhD program these can be courses in other departments or cross-listed with other departments (History, Linguistics, History of Art, Comparative Literature, etc.). Classical Studies PhD students are permitted by the Graduate School to count some courses in technical fields within the Department (such as paleography) as cognates, but the Department encourages students to take cognates offered outside the Department. Students may also wish to pursue a cognate discipline more intensively by working towards a certificate or MA in such fields as Ancient History, Archaeology, Women's Studies or Philosophy. These are usually obtained by taking a specified number of courses in the relevant department.

Rackham specifies that to maintain satisfactory academic standing students must have a minimum cumulative Rackham grade point average (GPA) of B (3.00 on a 4.00 point scale). This is especially important because students who do not maintain satisfactory academic standing are not eligible for the Rackham Predoctoral Fellowship, for which many of our students apply once they are actively working on their dissertations. For more on Rackham's grade policies, see:

<https://rackham.umich.edu/?s=grade+policies>

Apart from the required courses in prose composition and the surveys of Greek and Latin literature, students have considerable flexibility to decide which courses and seminars best suit their interests. As a rule, students are advised to meet the course requirements as quickly as possible, so as not to hinder the preparation of Preliminary Exams in the third year. At the same time, the Department realizes that individual student interests may not fit this general pattern. For example, it may be that the one cognate course that fits the student's research interests most is only offered in the student's third year.

The Department strives to offer required courses at regular intervals so that the student can meet the course requirements within the prescribed period.

Courses that are offered in a given semester can be found through the LSA Course Guide (<http://www.lsa.umich.edu/cg/>). Courses numbered 500 and up are for graduate credit only. Although upper-level 400 courses in Greek and Latin as a rule count towards graduate credit, Philology students in Classical Studies are discouraged from taking courses in Greek and Latin below the 500 level, though exceptions are sometimes made.

A *typical* course package will look as follows:

First year

- Fall: A Literature Survey Course (depending on which is offered; Greek or Latin 501 is sometimes recommended as well); two reading courses or a seminar and a reading course; a cognate class; one-credit Proseminar (which fulfills the Rackham Responsible Conduct of Research requirement)
- Winter: A Literature Survey Course (depending on which is offered); Advanced Prose Composition in Greek or Latin (depending on which is offered); a cognate class; a reading course or seminar

Second Year

- Fall: A Literature Survey Course; two classes, including a seminar
- Winter: A Literature Survey Course, if needed; two classes, including Advanced Composition

Third Year

- Fall: two classes, including a seminar; Greek or Latin 990 as needed to prepare for Preliminary Examinations
- Winter: two classes; Greek or Latin 990 as needed to prepare for Preliminary Examinations

Fourth, Fifth, and Sixth Years

Greek or Latin 995 for 8 credits: Independent Dissertation Research and Writing (under supervision of the Dissertation Chair; please see Molly Cravens to set up this class); no required courses; optional coursework.

V. TEACHING

Students begin teaching as **Graduate Student Instructors** (GSIs) in the second year of the program and continue to do so intermittently throughout the length of the program. Teaching assignments in the second and third years are in the undergraduate survey courses on Classical Civilization (101 and 102) and in the Elementary Latin sequence. The Department strives to have each student experience one year in both the teaching sequences before reaching candidacy. In later years, students teach in a wide range of courses, including Classical Civilization, Elementary Latin, and Great Books. One position as a GSI in Elementary Greek is normally available in Spring term.

In large lecture courses, GSIs teach two or three **Sections** of 18-25 students. In these courses, GSIs are typically responsible for leading discussions of topics raised in lecture and readings, and grading exams and essays. In smaller courses, such as Latin language courses, GSIs are the instructors of record, are responsible for assignments, grading, and the daily work of their classes, and contribute to course design and materials. GSIs in these courses are supervised by the Director of the Elementary Latin Program, Prof. Deborah Ross.

Students who will be GSIs are asked mid-way through each term for their teaching preferences for the following term. The Department tries to accommodate these preferences but cannot guarantee them. Individual preferences must be balanced against general departmental needs, and the Department must also ensure that each GSI teaches a broad range of different courses, as stated above. Course assignments are determined by the Grad Affairs Committee of the Department of Classical Studies; when enrollments require last minute changes, these are made by the Chair in consultation with the DGS.

In addition, the Rackham School of Graduate Studies, as well as the Center for Research on Learning and Teaching (CRLT), sponsor workshops and training sessions covering all aspects of the teaching process. Students are encouraged to take advantage of these opportunities. A workshop in late August put on by CRLT is required of all new GSIs.

VI. FUNDING

Support Package

In the first year of study students receive a fellowship that provides a stipend covering basic living expenses plus tuition and coverage in GradCare (health insurance).

In the second and third years, support usually comes in the form of a graduate student instructorship. These positions currently provide a stipend covering basic living expenses, tuition and health insurance. The precise terms of employment are the subject of collective bargaining between the University and the Graduate Employee Organization (GEO).

During the fourth and fifth years (while a Candidate) students may receive two more terms of fellowship and two terms of graduate student instructorships in courses offered by the Department of Classical Studies. Graduate student instructorships are normally also available to students continuing into a sixth or seventh year, if they are making good progress toward their degree, and if there is a departmental need. Both the fellowships and instructorships provide stipends, tuition, and health insurance. Students are also encouraged to apply for external fellowships outside the Department, offered either by the University or by outside foundations. Any external fellowships students receive can replace terms of teaching or can be used to extend support into a sixth or seventh year.

Summer Funding

The Department is committed to offering at least one summer of support with a fellowship stipend of up to \$4000.00 to be used for a specific project or program, such as an excavation or research in a European library. Although only one summer is guaranteed, students are welcome to apply for summer funding as needed – funds will be awarded based on availability of funds and number of requests the department receives in a given year.

In addition to the summer funding mentioned in the previous paragraph, the Department provides funding for students to take language courses during at least one summer. Students must submit a budget and narrative explaining the necessity of the course. It is available especially for students who need extra preparation in a modern language in order to pass their language exams, but is also open to students who need to learn an additional language for their dissertation research (e.g. Turkish, Arabic). Students may apply for these funds at any time during their graduate career.

Rackham Funding

In addition, students are eligible to apply for summer funds and conference funding from Rackham. Students can apply for one Rackham research grant of up to \$1,500 during pre-candidacy years and another of up to \$3,000 during candidacy. In the past, students have received these Rackham grants to participate in archaeological expeditions or attend workshops, such as those offered by the American Numismatic Society. Rackham also offers travel grants to cover the expenses for delivering a paper at a conference, one grant each fiscal (= academic) year of up to \$800 for a conference in the continental U.S. and up to \$1,300 for a conference abroad. The Department can also help with funding for research or conferences.

All support is contingent upon satisfactory progress in the Program.

VII. ADVISING, MENTORSHIP, PROGRESS REPORTS

Students are required to meet at the beginning and end of each term with the **Director of Graduate Studies**. These meetings provide an opportunity to discuss any aspect of the PhD program, but typically include course selection, examination scheduling, and the formation of preliminary exam or dissertation committees. Students are encouraged to meet as often as they wish with the DGS, as well as other members of the core faculty, for advice on meeting program requirements as well as broader issues of intellectual and professional development.

At the end of each academic year, the DGS will schedule a year-end meeting to discuss the student's progress in the program. The DGS will have received comments from all faculty who have worked with the student in the preceding year. The student can also bring up his/her Summer and future plans during this meeting, and discuss anything else that has come up in the preceding year. After the meeting, the DGS will draw up a written **Progress Report** (usually in the form of an email), which is sent to the student and kept in the student's file.

In addition to the DGS, each student submits preferences for a **Faculty Mentor**. The mentor is an additional source of advice and support for students on matters both personal and academic. For example, students may wish to discuss how to maintain a good

work-life balance or how to balance teaching and research and other aspects of career development. The mentor need not be the prospective thesis advisor but may be.

VIII. EXAMS

The Classical Studies PhD program requires a number of examinations designed to assess whether the student has acquired the knowledge and skills necessary for research and teaching in Classical Studies. All exams except the diagnostics are graded on a Pass/Fail system.

Diagnostic exams: these sight-reading exams in Greek and Latin are administered before the start of the first semester and are designed measure the student's command of the languages. The results are used to advise the student regarding course selection in the first year. These exams are not part of the students' files and are not assigned a grade.

Greek and Latin Qualls, Modern Language Exams, and History Exam:

General Point: Every graduate exam requires faculty time and effort both to prepare and to grade. When a student requests to take a certain exam at a certain time in the coming exam period, this should be regarded as a firm commitment to do so.

Qualifying examinations in the translation of Greek and Latin:

The Department expects the holder of the PhD in Classical Studies to have read a considerable amount of Greek and Roman literature in the original languages, particularly in those authors which the student can reasonably be asked to teach upon entering the profession.

The survey classes HGL and HRL are not always aligned with the Qualifying Exams reading lists, because these courses are the third component of the Preliminary Examinations (see below). Some instructors assign many readings from the list, some do not.

The reading list for the Greek and Latin Qualifying Exams can be found at:

<https://lsa.umich.edu/classics/graduate-students/current-students/ph-d--reading-list.html>

Instructions for Setting the Greek and Latin Qualls:

I. The exam will consist of two passages of prose and two passages of poetry (no passages that are suspected of major corruption will be set). Three of the passages will be taken from the reading lists and one will be a sight passage. The passages will be roughly

20 lines of poetry or prose depending on the author. The sight passage may be either prose or poetry. The exam is two hours long.

II. The translations of both seen and sight passages must demonstrate command of grammar, syntax, and common vocabulary of the ancient language in question. Numerous errors in these areas with the result that the passage is substantially misrepresented are a basis for failing the exam.

III. The sight passage need not be as accurate or smooth as the seen passages. One passage, seen or sight, may be weak if the remaining three passages are especially strong. Failure to finish a passage constitutes a serious weakness in that passage.

IV. The exam is graded in double-blind fashion by two readers. In the case of disagreement a third reader (not the DGS) is to be consulted. The assessments of these graders are considered final and the exam cannot be re-graded by other graders.

IV. While it is expected that students will be able to produce a smooth English translation, a lack of polish or elegance in the translations will not be a basis for failing the exam. As needed and requested, we will make accommodations for students whose native language is not English, and, for example, might allow the student to use a dictionary in the student's native language, but this will be negotiated on a case-by-case basis with the DGS.

V. Students will receive a "pass" or a "fail." There is no "low pass," but the DGS can point out areas where continued improvement should occur. The exam will be returned to the student, who will have the opportunity to review the exam with at least one of the graders.

Modern Language Exams:

(French or Italian and German). Knowledge of German, French and/or Italian is essential for reading modern scholarship on classical studies, and students must pass an exam designed to test their ability to read and make sense of scholarship in modern languages. These exams consist of a passage of roughly one page in one of the languages, to be translated into English in one hour with the help of a dictionary. Students typically prepare for these exams through independent study, though some have done some course work in these languages as undergraduates. The Department has summer funding available for students wishing to take language courses; we strongly encourage students to acquire a speaking knowledge of at least one modern foreign language.

Instructions for Setting the Modern Language Quals:

I. The modern language quals will consist of a standard page of scholarly prose of average difficulty. It is expected that the student will translate the whole passage without serious misrepresentation. A dictionary is permitted.

II. These exams will normally be set and graded in double-blind fashion by one faculty member, with a second grader (not the DGS) consulted only if the first grader is uncertain about the result.

III. Students will receive a "pass" or a "fail."

Ancient History Exam:

This single exam covers both Greek and Roman history for students in Classical Studies and the Interdepartmental Program in Classical Art and Archaeology (IPCAA).

The exam takes 4 hours and could be taken over two days or all at once. Students will be required to answer two of the shared topics and one of the topics in Greek History and one in Roman History (4 essays x 45 minutes = 3 hours). There will also be a section of the exam devoted to identifications. (2 sets of IDs = 2 x 30 minutes = 1 hour).

The exam will be given once per year in September with a possible re-take in May after classes are over. (The May date can also be used by IPCAA students wishing to take the exam for the first time). Philology students will be expected to take the exam in September of their second year.

At the beginning of each summer, the faculty member in charge of setting the exam will announce the bibliography for all of the essay topics, so that the students will have the summer to prepare for a fall exam. Updates to the bibliography will thus be possible (but not required) each year. Arrangements will be made to assure that the items on the bibliography are as accessible as possible over the summer.

This is a serious exam that requires a substantial amount of reading and studying. Students should prepare for the exam over the course of many months in order to gain the maximum benefit. Remember, the goal is not simply to pass the exam, but to gain a broad and deep understanding of Greek and Roman history and the approaches currently being used to interpret it.

The reading list and required terms for the History Exam can be found at:

<http://lsa.umich.edu/classics/graduate-students/current-students/ancient-history-exam.html>

Preliminary Examinations:

Two preliminary examinations of a kind described in A and B below are required, and students have the option of taking a third prelim of this kind if the potential prelim advisor and the DGS agree to this in advance of the exam. At least one of these exams must be on a Greek topic and at least one on a Roman topic and at least one must include attention to textual transmission. A third prelim of the type described in C below is also required: it consists of the students' work in the three required survey courses.

Apart from the survey courses, the preparation for prelims should be roughly a semester in length with a meeting between the student and the advisor every one to two weeks. The student may enroll in a 990 course with the advisor while preparing for the prelim but is not required to do so. The student and advisor should agree in advance on the general area of the prelim and compose a preliminary bibliography (to be shared with the DGS), which may be revised as the preparation progresses. If the prelim takes the form of an oral examination, the DGS is present as an observer. If the prelim takes the form of a research paper, the paper must be completed within a month after the advisor-student meetings have ceased and if revisions are needed these should be completed within another month after this. The final version of the paper is submitted both to the examiner and, for oversight, to the Director of Graduate Studies.

There are three categories of prelim, at least one of which should ideally help students transition from coursework to conducting independent research. Normally, apart from the survey courses, at least one of the prelims is an oral exam and at least one is satisfied with a research paper.

- A. The Latin/Greek examinations test the student on authors/periods/genres. These are typically oral examinations. The examination often takes the form of a discussion of three or four questions or topics agreed upon by the student and advisor in advance of the exam. The Director of Graduate Studies is present during the exam as an observer. The exam should not last more than 1 to 1.5 hours.
- B. The topic of a special field examination is typically chosen by the student from areas pertinent to Classics: for example, archaeology, philosophy, literary or critical theory, history, ancient scholarship or scholia, papyrology, religion, linguistics, numismatics, epigraphy, metrics, law, Medieval Latin, etc. It may have a pedagogic orientation. A professor in another department can be the director of a prelim by approval of the DGS. This requirement is normally fulfilled by a substantial research paper, but can also be met by an oral examination by agreement of the student, the examiner and the Director of Graduate Studies. If the student and the DGS agree, an exam of this kind may be replaced with a 600-level course beyond the one required of all students.
- C. Greek and Roman literature: The grades in the three required survey courses in the history of the literatures are used to fulfill this requirement and must be B- or above. The student must take at least one survey course in each language.

Typically the student should strive to have all exams except the Preliminary Exams finished by the beginning of the third year. This will allow the student to use the third year to prepare for Preliminary Exams and reach candidacy at the required moment (beginning of the fourth year). Preliminary Exams may also be prepared for and taken during the summer before or after the third year.

Students should strive to do two exams (including one Qualifying exam and one modern language exam) by the beginning of their second year, the History exam at the beginning of the second year, and the remaining Qualifying exam at the end of their second year (at the beginning or at the end of the summer). Typically, students should attempt the Qualifying Exam in May in the language that has been offered in the HGL/HRL sequence.

Once a student has passed all exams and completed all required coursework, Sarah Kandell-Gritzmacher will submit a **Recommendation for Candidacy Form** to Rackham.

IX. CANDIDACY AND DISSERTATION

Once a student has attained **Candidacy**, work may begin on a **Dissertation**. This is a work of original scholarship that usually requires 2-3 years of full-time research. The dissertation will shape your scholarly profile in the field and will form the basis of your publication record as you move from student to professional scholar.

A. Topic and Committee

As soon as possible after completing preliminary examinations, but no later than the Fall Break of the fourth year (usually the second week in October), the student should, in concert with the intended Dissertation Committee Chair and Members (if any are already known), identify the topic, geographical and chronological scope, theoretical or methodological approaches, and any other issues that the student wishes to explore in a dissertation. Many students use the bibliography and knowledge they acquire in one or more of their preliminary exam fields as a starting point for their dissertation project. Although students are encouraged to seek the advice of faculty members as they develop their ideas for the dissertation projects, the dissertation is intended to be a work of independent, original scholarship and an opportunity for students to pursue their own interests.

At this point, the student should also select a faculty member to serve as **Chair** of the **Dissertation Committee**. Many students select a faculty member from their preliminary exam supervisors as their chair, but this is not a requirement. Rather, students should make sure that they match their project and interests with a faculty member whose expertise will be most helpful to them as they research and write their dissertation. In some cases, it may be helpful to ask two faculty members with complementary interests to act as co-chairs. Students should not assume that a given faculty member will serve as chair of their dissertation committee, but should make sure to discuss their projects with that faculty member and ask him or her if they are willing to serve as chair early in the dissertation process. It is important that students ask faculty members to serve as their committee chair(s) quickly, so that research on the project may begin in a timely fashion.

A dissertation committee consists of at least four faculty members, including the chair(s). It is not necessary for students to settle on all the members of their Committee at once, and the Prospectus (see below) needs only the approval of the Chair of the Committee. Nevertheless, students are encouraged to identify their other Committee members sooner rather than later so as to benefit from their expertise and feedback during the bulk of the dissertation writing process. Students should select Committee members whose areas of expertise will be relevant to their project in different ways. Many students find it helpful to consult with their Dissertation Chairs when determining who would be most helpful on their committees. The Rackham Graduate School requires that one of the four members come from outside the department (the cognate member), but faculty who have joint appointments with another department or school may serve as cognate members. Students should consult with the Dissertation Chair to identify possible candidates. In some circumstances, it may be appropriate, following the Rackham rules, to appoint a scholar from outside the University of Michigan to the committee. See the [Rackham's Dissertation Handbook](#) for more info on committee formation as well as many other aspects of the dissertation process.

Once four members are selected, the Dissertation Committee Form can be submitted to Sarah Kandell-Gritzmaker. After it has been signed by the Department Chair, she will forward it to Rackham. Rackham rules require that the complete Committee be constituted at least six months prior to the dissertation defense.

B. Dissertation Prospectus

By the Fall Break of their fourth year, students should submit a **Dissertation Prospectus**. The purpose of this document is to demonstrate familiarity with the fundamental scholarly literature and issues pertaining to the dissertation topic and to outline what the dissertation will aim to do. The dissertation is the largest and most ambitious research project of one's graduate study. The Prospectus is intended to assist the student's progress on this project by requiring the gathering of scholarly materials, the organization of one's thoughts, and the committing of them to writing. The document is intended to be fairly brief (but at least 6 pages double-spaced including bibliography), and should include the following:

- 1) the topic of the dissertation
- 2) questions driving the dissertation
- 3) a brief and broad outline of current scholarship, with which the dissertation seeks to enter into a dialogue
- 4) some general idea about the structure of the thesis, ideally with a brief outline of subtopics, sections, or chapters
- 5) resources needed for successful completion (ASCSA, ANS Summer School, etc.)
- 6) a bibliography.

The bibliography must consist of two parts. First is a list of a minimum of 10 books and/or articles that the student thinks are most significant in the area of the intended dissertation research. Each item in this list must be briefly annotated in a few sentences

(up to one short paragraph) to explain its importance for the intended dissertation project. (It is assumed that in most cases the student will have become familiar with these during class work and/or preliminary exams.) Second, some additional works of relevance should be listed to demonstrate that the student is aware of the wider scholarship even if this scholarship has not yet been read.

The student should draw up the Dissertation Prospectus and the bibliography after discussion with intended members of the Dissertation Committee. The student should submit the resulting Prospectus to the Dissertation Chair by the Fall Break of the fourth year, who will give approval within 72 hours. The student shall then submit the prospectus to the other members of the Dissertation Committee (if any) and the Director of Graduate Studies. At the student's request, there may be a meeting of the full Committee to discuss the prospectus.

In some cases, the final dissertation will follow quite closely the plan outlined in the Dissertation Prospectus. In other cases, further research will lead to significant modifications of the project. It is important to understand that the Dissertation Prospectus provides a starting point for the dissertation and need not dictate the form and content of the final dissertation. Nevertheless, the Prospectus provides a helpful opportunity for committee members to contribute to the shaping of a project from its beginning stages. And while the Department recognizes that dissertation projects can evolve and change, students should take advantage of the Prospectus requirement in order to design a project that is clear in its goals and workable, and that is likely to hold their interest. See further below on the nature of the dissertation itself.

C. Candidacy

Coursework and Registration: Most students in **Candidacy** (including those who have their tuition paid through a teaching appointment or a UM Fellowship) are required to register for eight credits under Rackham's **Continuous Enrollment Policy**. These students should register for **Greek/Latin 995**, an independent research course, with their Dissertation Chair(s). See Sarah Kandell-Gritmaker to enroll in these courses.

Each semester, students in candidacy are permitted to elect one "free" course (in any department or at any level). Candidates can take one such course in the fall term and one in the winter term or, if they don't take one in the fall term, they can "bank" it and take two courses in the winter term. (They can't, however, take two courses in the fall in anticipation of not taking one in the winter).

It is essential that students remain in regular contact with their committees, not least because committee members are a vital resource for students facing the challenges of dissertation writing. Your committee wants to see what you are doing, and wants to help you put your research onto the page. Students are strongly encouraged to maintain a

regular meeting schedule with their Dissertation Committee and other faculty who can help them with this process.

Students in candidacy will be required to show progress towards their degree in order to remain eligible for teaching appointments and fellowships. Dissertation Chairs are often the primary arbiters of satisfactory progress. Progress will be discussed during the annual meeting with the DGS (see above).

Rackham Graduate School maintains a time limit for the completion of a dissertation project; for details please see [Rackham's Academic Policies](#).

D. The Dissertation

The dissertation is a work of original scholarship that serves as a young scholar's demonstration of research ability. Most dissertations are tightly argued discussions of particular issues—that is, potential monographs—but some are closer to a set of essays on related problems. Other dissertations are commentaries on texts, critical editions, or publications of papyri. The dissertation topic needs to be something the student truly cares about, since it will be a chief occupation for a long time, and since potential employers and other colleagues will see it as the student's most important self-definition. Advisors can sometimes suggest topics, but students need to make the subject their own. More often, students have a general idea, and the advisor helps them narrow and define it. Often, the impetus for a thesis topic will come from a seminar or preliminary examination. As students read the scholarship on a topic, they may perceive gaps, questions that should be asked that have not been asked, or established views that they think are wrong.

Because dissertations seek to display competence, they often include more citation of previous scholarship than most publications. A dissertation will often begin with a review of the state of the question. However, it is important not to become bogged down in a literature review—the dissertation is not a summary of what others have thought, but an original contribution. As much as possible, the dissertation writer should think of an audience beyond the dissertation committee

The longest dissertation produced in this Department in the past sixty years was 570 pp., the shortest, 98 pp. Most dissertations are around 200-250 pages; they have 3-5 body chapters plus introduction, conclusion and bibliography. Copies of completed dissertations are kept in the Department and University Libraries.

E. The Dissertation Defense

Candidates must be registered for eight credits of Greek or Latin 995 in the term in which they defend.

Students are responsible for scheduling their **Dissertation Defense** in consultation with their Dissertation Chair and the rest of their Committee, and for adhering to the Rackham requirements for preparing for and scheduling the final defense. Rackham maintains an important set of [online resources](#) that will help students in candidacy to accomplish this.

Students should consult these resources well in advance so that they are prepared to schedule the required meetings with the Rackham Office of Academic Records and Dissertations (OARD) and submit the appropriate paperwork. Failure to adhere to the requirements and deadlines as they are laid out by Rackham can result in delayed graduation.

Students should schedule the date and time of their dissertation defense in consultation with their chairs and committee members. Once a time has been agreed upon, the student should ask Sarah Kandell-Gritzmacher to reserve a room and send final confirmation to committee members. Candidates must provide the OARD with information about the date, time, and location of their scheduled defense so that the information may be publicized.

X. CONFERENCE PAPERS, JOB MARKET, AND PROFESSIONAL SUPPORT

The Department encourages students to present papers at professional gatherings and to publish the results of their research, as is appropriate to the project and to the extent that this does not interfere with their progress in the program. Students not yet in candidacy should discuss plans for conference presentations with the mentor and/or the DGS, and students in candidacy with the Dissertation Chair and/or the DGS. As already stated, the Rackham Graduate School provides Conference Travel Grants to defray the costs of attending conferences to present papers. Some conference travel funding is also available from the International Institute. Additionally, the Department offers funding to cover the cost of an economy flight and a shared hotel room if a student is traveling to the SCS to present a paper.

Students giving papers at conferences are strongly encouraged to practice them in the Department beforehand. Consult the front office staff for help with arranging a practice talk. Practice talks can also be given in the Literature Brown Bag series of lunchtime lectures, which is organized by graduate students.

As they near the completion of their dissertation, students can take advantage of a variety of support structures offered by the Department to help them enter the job market. The Dissertation Committee should be consulted to help determine the most advantageous timing of the dissertation defense. Each Fall, Michelle Biggs meets individually with students going on the job market. To aid in sending out applications, she maintains a dossier service, soliciting the cover letters and writing samples composed by the student as well as letters of recommendation from faculty, and sending the completed applications off. Students can also meet with the Job Seekers Committee to receive

general advice on writing cover letters and other aspects of the application process, and sample letters are kept on file as models. The SCS has a number of important resources on the ins and outs of applications and interviews.

Students who receive notice of interviews (usually conducted during the annual SCS meetings) may sign up beforehand for mock interviews conducted by faculty volunteers in the Department. Those who are invited later to give a job talk can also present a practice job talk. Job talks are typically based on a portion of the dissertation.

XI. Classical Studies Probation and Dismissal Policy (final, 1/24/19)

This policy is effective for all students in the Classical Studies PhD program in Classical Languages and Literatures beginning on September 3rd, 2019. If there are students who have become involved in disciplinary action under the previous regulations, they can at their request seek accommodation from the DGS under these new regulations. The DGS will bring the case to the Graduate Affairs Committee, which will then report it to the department.

Pre-Candidacy:

It is our expectation that probation will not be used before a student enters candidacy. In keeping with Rackham guidelines, a student can be dismissed if the student misses the Rackham candidacy deadline at the beginning of the student's fourth year in the program. This deadline can be extended, and this decision will be made by the Graduate Affairs Committee meeting together with the student's mentor (reasons for extending the deadline include documented health issues or other circumstances beyond the student's control). If there is no extension granted, the reasons for this decision should be explained to the department and the department may accept or overrule the decision. If the extension is not granted, the student will be notified within 24 hours. A student may take a [leave of absence](#) in which case the "clock stops" on the extension period, but if the student does not then the extension is for no more than one term.

In Candidacy:

Once a student is in candidacy, if the dissertation supervisor in consultation with the Dissertation Committee, insofar as it has been constituted, can demonstrate that inadequate progress is being made, the supervisor should notify the student that the supervisor will be recommending probation to the Graduate Studies Committee and the probation must be approved by a vote of the entire department. If probation is recommended, the probation will be for a minimum of two months and a maximum of one term. The level of funding prior to probation will be continued through the probationary period. At the beginning of the probation period the student will be informed in writing about the expectations for the lifting of probation. At the end of the probation period, the supervisor and the committee will decide whether the conditions have been met. If the conditions have not been met the student is dismissed from the program.

Appeals Process:

A student may appeal a decision for probation (candidates only) or dismissal (pre-candidates and candidates) within 72 hours of notification of the decision. If the student chooses to appeal, the Department Chair will constitute an ad hoc committee of faculty members from the Department of Classical Studies not including the dissertation supervisor. The decision of this committee is final. The student, however, may use Rackham's Academic Dispute Resolution process, but only for procedural issues of fair and equal treatment under the policy of the program, and not to appeal the academic reasons for the decision.

XII. FURTHER RESOURCES

Rackham School of Graduate Studies

<http://www.rackham.umich.edu>

American School of Classical Studies at Athens

<http://www.ascsa.edu.gr/>

American Academy in Rome

<http://www.aarome.org/>

Society for Classical Studies

<https://classicalstudies.org/>