

Department of Film & Media

Graduate Program Handbook

2025–26

For more information, visit the Department of Film & Media website:

<https://filmmedia.berkeley.edu/>

FILM & MEDIA OFFICE

7408 Dwinelle Hall

University of California, Berkeley

Berkeley, CA 94720-2670

(510) 642-1415

Hours: M–F 9–12 and 1–4

rfa@berkeley.edu

GRADUATE STUDENT AFFAIRS OFFICER

KATHLEEN PERA JANGAR

(510) 642-1416

7407 Dwinelle Hall

Hours: M–F 9–12 and 1–4 (M, T and F working remotely)

rfahgradadvising@berkeley.edu

HEAD GRADUATE ADVISER / FACULTY ADVISER FOR GSI AFFAIRS

PROF. WEIHONG BAO

6408 Dwinelle Hall

wbaoster@berkeley.edu

DEPARTMENT CHAIR

PROF. MIRYAM SAS

4333 Dwinelle Hall

mbsas@berkeley.edu

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Introduction

The combined M.A./Ph.D. in Film & Media encourages students to situate moving images within the larger theoretical and analytical frameworks of a range of other disciplines. Students integrate the traditions of history, law, literature, political economy, and critical theory to the newer disciplines of Film Studies and Digital Media, applying the tools of post-structuralism, psychoanalysis, new historicism, Frankfurt School, feminist theory, queer theory, post-colonialism, and critical race theory. Many combine their main degree study with a campus Designated Emphasis (graduate “minor”) in New Media, Critical Theory, or Women, Gender and Sexuality. Although the Film & Media Ph.D. emphasizes film and media history and theory, it also can accommodate a digital-media production component that can be interwoven with the student’s other areas of study to create a blend of critical studies and critical practice.

Faculty and Governance

The following department faculty are Academic Senate members who have an official appointment in the Department of Film & Media, teach regular graduate seminars, and are available for graduate committees, mentoring, and dissertation advising (in the cases noted below, faculty members also have an evenly split appointment with another academic department on campus):

Weihong Bao	Film & Media / East Asian Languages and Cultures
Rizvana Bradley	Film & Media
Natalia Brizuela	Film & Media / Spanish and Portuguese
Iggy Cortez	Film & Media
Jacob Gaboury	Film & Media
Anne Nesbet	Film & Media / Slavic
Miryam Sas	Film & Media / Comparative Literature
Nicole Starosielski	Film & Media
Kristen Whissel	Film & Media
Damon Young	Film & Media / French

A second group of Lecturers are available for coursework and consultation, but cannot serve on graduate committees:

Mira Kopell

A third group of Affiliated Faculty teaches courses in moving-image culture, film, or new media on an irregular basis and are not official members of the Department of Film & Media. They do, however, have film and media-related research interests and are potential outside committee members as Senate Faculty in other departments (that choice is not limited to this list, of course):

Nicholas Baer	German
Stephen M. Best	English
Deniz Göktürk	German
Jeffrey Knapp	English (Emeritus)

Linda Rugg
Rhiannon Welch
Abigail De Kosnik

Scandinavian
Italian Studies
Theater, Dance, and Performance Studies

Advising

Head Graduate Advisor

This is a faculty member in the department who is assigned (normally to a three-year term) to supervise the administration of the graduate program and the graduate admissions process. During the first three years in the program, it is the Head Graduate Advisor (HGA) for Film & Media who provides faculty advising on curriculum, progress through the degree, and activities related to professionalization. The HGA meets at least once per semester with each student in the first three years of the program.

After successful completion of the Qualifying Exam, students advance to candidacy and instead work primarily with their individually chosen Dissertation Adviser and other committee members on curriculum and professional development, although official program suggestions, questions, and formal petitions for exceptions to policy should still be submitted to the attention of the Head Graduate Advisor.

Graduate Student Affairs Officer

The GSAO is the staff member overseeing student progress to degree in both the Rhetoric and Film & Media graduate programs. The GSAO works closely with the HGA, the Department Manager, and the Department Chair to facilitate student progress through program milestones, manage GSI and Reader appointments, track student funding, and support the graduate admissions process.

Faculty Advisor for GSI Affairs

The Film & Media faculty member assigned to this role provides pedagogical advice to all Graduate Student Instructors teaching in the department in any given semester, regardless of the student's home department. This faculty adviser also, acts as the Instructor of Record for the Reading and Composition courses and conducts classroom observations of pre-QE GSIs. (Post-QE classroom observations are conducted by the Dissertation Chair or a member of the dissertation committee instead.

Progress evaluations

Every November, the Film & Media faculty meets as a whole to discuss each student's progress in all facets of the program (participation in the program, work in seminars, timely completion of papers, professional development). Students not making desired progress in the program will be notified at this time of how to address deficiencies.

In addition, after advancement to Ph.D. candidacy students are required to meet each spring with their dissertation adviser and at least one other dissertation committee member and to submit the Doctoral Candidacy Review (DCR) as an eForm to Cal Central. The student and the

committee members report to the Department and Graduate Division on progress to date and if necessary revise the timetable for completion of the dissertation.

Enrollment

General Academic Residence

Graduate students must register in any semester during which they are enrolled in formal courses of instruction, or making any use of University facilities (including access to the faculty), except those uses that are accorded the general public. The only exceptions are those semesters during which they officially withdraw from the University or are on Filing Fee status. No student may fail to register in any semester without having first obtained a formal release in the form of a withdrawal; failure to file for formal release constitutes voluntary withdrawal from the University and precludes readmission.

The UCB Graduate Division stipulates a minimum number of registered semesters of academic residence for the M.A. and Ph.D. degrees (this is not to be confused with *CA state residency for tuition purposes*; “academic residence” is a lower threshold and means registration for at least 4 units in any given semester). The M.A. candidate must be enrolled for at least two semesters at UCB before being awarded the degree; the Ph.D. candidate must complete an additional four semesters of minimum registration and coursework. Students doing a combined M.A./Ph.D in Film & Media must therefore complete a minimum of six total semesters of combined coursework in order to fulfill the campus academic residency requirement. It is not thus possible to complete coursework at Berkeley in less than two years for Ph.D.-only students (those entering with an equivalent M.A. in Film & Media), or in less than three years for combined-degree students.

Registration

Full-time study, on the other hand, is defined by the UCB Graduate Division as at least 12 units of upper division or graduate coursework per semester; in order to receive financial aid or hold academic appointments, all students must be registered at that level at the start of each semester. Seminars, undergraduate upper-division courses, language courses, and various independent-study courses (Film 298, 299, and 602) all may count toward that 12-unit total that determines full-time status.

The requirement of full-time continuous registration for graduate students is satisfied by attendance in the two semesters of an academic year. A student is required to be registered or pay the Filing Fee, whichever is applicable, for the semester in which the degree is conferred. Most international students have non-immigrant (F-1 or J-1) visas that require registration for fall and spring semesters of each academic year unless they have special permission from BIO (Berkeley International Office). International students who want to withdraw from the University or go on Filing Fee Status must discuss their plans with an Advisor at BIO before they withdraw in order to avoid visa problems with U.S. Immigration.

Grade Requirements

All required courses (Film 200, 201, and 203) must be taken for a letter grade with at least a B average. Only courses graded A, B, C (+/-), Pass, or Satisfactory may be applied to degree requirements. (When not assigning a letter grade, "Pass/No Pass" is used for undergraduate courses; Satisfactory/Unsatisfactory for graduate-level courses.) Elective Film & Media graduate seminars can be taken for the S/U grading option only if the student completes all course requirements aside from the final seminar paper, and no more than one-third of the seminars used for degree requirements can be taken for the S/U grade. Courses graded below C- do not yield unit credit toward a graduate degree, irrespective of the overall grade point average. Graduate students are required to maintain a B (or 3.0) grade point average.

Should the need arise to request an Incomplete (I) for a course due to circumstances beyond a student's control at the end of a semester, a new deadline (preferably before the start of the next semester) should be negotiated in a signed agreement with the relevant faculty member that specifies the work remaining. Incomplete grades cannot be used for Film 200, 201 or 203. The accumulation of more than two unresolved Incomplete grades will affect the evaluation of academic progress and prevent Graduate Division approval of any further academic appointments until the situation is resolved. Use of the Incomplete grade is thus best saved for emergency situations, with a prompt follow-up completion of the missing work and resolution of the grade.

Directed Independent Study

Film 298 (Special Study) is the course number used for independent study during the six semesters before taking the Qualifying Exam. The number of units is variable (from 1–4 units), and the course can be taken either for a letter grade or as S/U, all decided in advance through consultation with the sponsoring faculty member. Faculty take on these supervisions as overload work and cannot be required to do so, but will sometimes be willing to meet several times a semester to consult with students about a topic of special research interest leading either to a seminar-length research paper or annotated bibliography.

Film 299 (Directed Research) is used for registration by Ph.D. students who have advanced to candidacy and are working on their dissertations. Film 299 can only be graded on an S/U basis, and students will typically sign up for all 12 units with their dissertation adviser.

Film 602 (Individual Study for Doctoral Students) is used as an exam-preparation course number leading up to the Qualifying Exam and is also only graded S/U. Film 602 also has a variable unit registration, between 1–6 units. Students in their exam semester may take all 12 required units as Film 602, typically dividing the total number of units among committee members and meeting regularly with them throughout the semester to discuss preparatory work on the QE reading lists.

M.A. Degree Requirements

M.A. Coursework

A total of 24 units of coursework is required for the M.A. There are three specifically required seminars: Film & Media 200 (Film Theory), Film & Media 201 (Film Historiography), and Film & Media 203 (Proseminar). The first three required courses must be taken during the first year of study; Film & Media Historiography (201) and the Proseminar (203) are only offered in the fall, and Film & Media Theory (200) only in the spring.

In addition to the three core requirements, students must take three other graduate seminars with official Film & Media course numbers (usually 220, 230, or 240) for the M.A. With a minimum of two seminars per semester, students will typically complete the M.A. coursework in the third semester of residency. With permission from the Graduate Adviser and the instructor, students may also take up to two 100-level courses taught by Film & Media faculty to satisfy course requirements if linked to one unit of Film 249 (pending approval of this new course in SP 2023). No Graduate Division credit towards the M.A. degree will be awarded for courses other than those in the 100 and 200 series (lower-division courses numbered 1–99 may not be used for that purpose).

Students entering with a Master of Fine Arts or a Master's Degree in a field other than Film and Media Studies will be required to complete all requirements for the M.A. in Film & Media, including the M.A. exam, before proceeding to the Ph.D. program.

Students entering with a Master's Degree in Film & Media or closely related field from an equivalent program will normally be required to begin their studies by taking the three core M.A. courses (Film & Media 200, 201, 203), counting them as electives instead. Requests that equivalencies be granted for courses already taken in other programs or at other universities will be handled on a petition basis. Students should submit copies of previous course syllabi with a written request to the Graduate Adviser.

These students are not normally required to take the M.A. exam here before proceeding to the Ph.D. program since they will not be awarded a Berkeley M.A.

M.A. Examination

The Master's Comprehensive Exam for Film & Media students is based on the reading lists used in Film 200 and 201 in the year the student takes those courses. The exam questions are written and the answers evaluated by the two faculty members who taught those courses earlier that year. If one or both of the relevant faculty are on leave at the time of the exam, the written question and evaluation thereof will be submitted long-distance since there is no oral component of the M.A. exam itself. The current Head Graduate Adviser completes the committee as the third member and chair.

The exam is always administered within one day at some point during the first official administrative week of fall semester (the week before classes begin in August). Students will have taken the 201/200 sequence during the previous fall and spring semesters, will have had the summer to review, and take the exam upon returning to school in the third semester. The exam may be taken before completing all M.A. elective seminar requirements, but students are encouraged to finish these requirements during the semester of the exam in order to receive the

official M.A. degree in December of Semester 3. Students cannot be advanced to M.A. candidacy until all such requirements are completed, even after passing the written exam.

The M.A. written exam is a take-home, eight-hour, open-note/source written exam consisting of two parts, Film & Media Theory and Film & Media Historiography. Students choose between two alternative questions for each topic. The exam questions are emailed by the Graduate Student Affairs Officer to students by 9 A.M., and responses are to be returned to that same email by 5 P.M. The questions and reading lists are the same for all examinees, if more than one student is taking the exam. Written answers should be both synthetic and analytic, drawing on the material from the two introductory courses, and each answer typically runs about 1250 words or about two full single-spaced pages or four double-spaced pages.

There are three possible outcomes for the M.A. exam: Fail, Pass, and Pass with Permission to Proceed. Students may retake the M.A. exam one time in case of a fail. The decision on permission to proceed will take into account both the exam results and input from the core film faculty about the overall first-year performance in the program. Students will be notified of the exam results in writing by the Head Graduate Adviser.

M.A. Review

In September of the third semester, all students who have taken the M.A. exam at the start of that semester will be asked to participate in an M.A. Review. This is not an oral exam but an individual advising session in which the student and faculty discuss the results of the M.A. exam. There are three faculty members in attendance: the current Head Graduate Adviser and the two Film & Media faculty who administered the M.A. Exam.

When students have been given permission to proceed in the program, the M.A. Review serves as a planning meeting for their Ph.D. curriculum. Students should come to this meeting prepared to propose potential Qualifying Exam fields and committee members for their Ph.D. program. Two of those fields should be designed with topics that fall under the general rubrics of Film & Media Theory and Film & Media Historiography, and the third should be defined as an outside field that creates an interdisciplinary profile for the student.

Ph.D. Degree Requirements

Ph.D. Coursework

Within the campus requirement of four semesters of academic residency for Ph.D. coursework after the M.A. coursework (or entrance to the program, if entering with an equivalent M.A.), the department requires that each student complete a minimum of three additional graduate seminars before the Qualifying Examination. Of those three seminars, two are required in the Outside Field defined by the student, and one is an additional Film & Media elective with a 220, 230, or 240 number. These minimal requirements of three courses over four semesters allow students considerable flexibility in choosing between additional courses, managing teaching duties, language study, and independent exam preparation. Students interested in completing requirements for one of the campus Designated Emphases outside Film & Media will need to fit those classes into the four-semester Ph.D. coursework period as well (keeping in mind that

courses for the Film & Media student's Outside Field can overlap with the course requirements for a Designated Emphasis).

In addition to further seminars inside and outside the department, language courses and/or independent study units (Film 298 or 602) may be used to maintain full 12-unit registration and complete requirements and preparation for the Q.E. during this Ph.D. phase of a student's program.

Language Requirement

Research competence in one foreign language besides English is required for a Ph.D. in Film & Media. This requirement must be satisfied in order to register for the Qualifying Exam at the end of the third year in the program and cannot be postponed. Careful advance planning is therefore important, especially for students who are just beginning study of their chosen target language. These students should be starting language course sequences alongside their seminar work from early in their program in order to meet this requirement in a timely manner. In general, four semesters of university level courses plus some independent study of discipline-specific vocabulary will be sufficient to prepare for the exam, but this may vary by language difficulty and prior exposure. If a student has a native language other than English, this can be used for the language requirement on a petition basis (the main criterion being suitability for film-research purposes) by presenting a transcript showing secondary-education work completed in that language or by taking the department's usual exam without further preparatory coursework.

The language exam for the Department of Film & Media is an augmented version of the Option 3 model listed on the Graduate Division [website](#). The exam concentrates on testing genuine reading and comprehension skills in a single foreign language. These skills are evaluated in a three-hour exam made up of three parts:

- 1) a translation (with the help of a physical dictionary) of a 300–500 word passage from the student's field of study. This content of this passage will not simply be narrative or film-historical, but will include an element of academic argument.
- 2) two substantial and explanatory annotations of spots in the passage that present particular translation difficulties or ambiguities
- 3) a paragraph summary in English of the main argument of the passage

The exam passage will be chosen and graded by someone from the Film & Media faculty for languages within their existing areas of language expertise; in other cases faculty outside the department will be enlisted to help choose and evaluate the exam on an *ad hoc* basis. A passing exam will convey the sense of the passage in translation without major errors, although some minor errors that do not interfere with meaning are acceptable. The student's choice of terms for annotations should reflect an understanding of the internal workings of the target language and the paragraph summary of the argument should be accurate. Students may retake the language exam up to two times if the first exam is not of passing quality. There is no specified lapse of time between attempts at the language exam, although the evaluator will provide

suggestions for areas of improvement and further study to make a passing outcome more likely at the next take.

The Qualifying Examination Reading Lists

In preparation for the Qualifying Examination students develop a reading list in each of the three areas in which they propose to be examined. This reading list is designed by each student in consultation with the faculty members who will administer the examination, and the three faculty members must approve the lists in their final form before the start of the semester in which the exam will be taken. The approximate target length for each of the three QE lists should be the equivalent of 25 books, with 3-4 articles or chapter essays adding up to a “book” for the purposes of the list; each reading list can when appropriate to the subject matter also be supplemented with up to 10–15 films or other media objects to be included in the analysis. Each list should open with a brief (1–2 paragraph) statement explaining the logic of the list and the main questions being investigated in the student’s choice of selected readings and media objects. Students preparing for hybrid dissertations that include a practice or curatorial element may choose to design one list mainly around primary works (again, using a guideline of 25 major works anchoring the list and several shorter works as an equivalent to a major work). This list of films would then be supplemented as above by 10-15 items of scholarly discussion (books, articles, curatorial statements).

The Qualifying Examination

When the coursework and language exam requirements have been completed and the reading lists finalized, the student may schedule a date for the Qualifying Examination. Typically, written exams are scheduled at the end of April and orals in May but can also be scheduled toward the end of summer or Fall Semester by exception, depending on faculty availability.

At least two of the four-person Qualifying Exam committee must have official appointments in the Department of Film & Media; those two may include the committee Chair, but typically three of the four Q.E. committee members come from Film & Media faculty, two to supervise lists and one as Chair. At least one committee member must be a Berkeley Division Academic Senate Representative from outside the department. This Representative will also typically supervise the Outside Field reading list. In cases where Film & Media faculty have split appointments with other departments, they may supervise the preparation of the Outside Field reading list but cannot count as the Academic Senate Representative for Graduate Division purposes. It is also important to note that the Chair of the Qualifying Exam committee cannot also later serve as the sole Chair of the student's dissertation committee (but may serve as a Co-Chair). Officially, the QE Committee is nominated by the Head Graduate Advisor and officially appointed by the Graduate Dean (this procedure is accomplished by submission of Application for Qualifying Examination to Graduate Division at least 3 weeks before the oral Qualifying Examination).

The format of the exam includes a written and oral component. Students must first pass a departmental take-home written exam (open-note and -source) that will require them to

demonstrate a mastery of the major films, texts, and relevant scholarship in the three areas of specialization. The student will be given three questions, one from each field, together in one file by email at 9 a.m. on Monday and will turn in the answers to all three questions (with a combined total between 4000 and 7000 written words for all three answers) by return email to the GSAO at 5 pm on Friday. The QE Chair will circulate the answers to the examining faculty and will notify the student in writing of the result of the examination and of any conditions that may be imposed. Copies of the exam questions will be placed on file in the departmental library and copies of the written examination answers will be placed in the student's academic file.

Failing this written examination is cause for dropping the student from the graduate program. On occasion, the examination committee may, however, recommend to the Head Graduate Advisor that the same committee administer a second written examination in whole or in part. The second examination must be administered no later than one semester following the first attempt; failure on the second attempt will automatically result in the student being dropped from the graduate program.

Within two months and usually about two weeks after passing the departmental written examination the candidate must pass the oral Qualifying Examination. The parameters for the oral exam are set by the UCB Graduate Division and include the instruction that the oral examination not be limited to the dissertation topic or a narrow specialization, instead testing the breadth and depth of knowledge in the three chosen subject areas and the academic field more widely (questions do not have to be limited to items on the reading lists), although some questions may be an extension of those posed on the written portion of the exam. Examiners may also bring in clips from the student's filmography (or list of paintings, photographs, websites, etc.) that may or may not have been directly addressed in the written portion of the exam and use those for discussion.

The oral exam is scheduled for a three-hour time slot. The exam committee convenes briefly without the student at the beginning of the time for a discussion of practical matters in the administration of the oral. The student then enters the room and selects the order in which the examiners will ask questions (e.g., Theory field first, Outside field second, History field third). Generally, each examiner has a 20–25 minute turn to ask the student questions. If the committee has agreed to do so ahead of time, other committee members may ask follow-up questions within another committee member's turn; otherwise, a committee might arrange to withhold all follow-up questions until a brief period of time reserved at the end of the exam. The Chair of the exam is also entitled to pose questions to the student but is not required to do so or take a full turn of questioning. Students may bring copies of the written exam to the oral and may refer to it during the exam. Students may NOT refer to notes in the exam. However, it is a good idea to bring a pen and paper to write down questions as they are asked, particularly if examiners pose two- and three-part questions (please expect this possibility).

Once the committee is satisfied and has finished questioning, the student will be asked to leave the room. The committee will deliberate for a short time (10 minutes or so) and the student will then be asked to return to the room to be notified of the exam results. If the student has passed the oral portion of the exam, the committee will want to discuss the student's general plans for the dissertation. The student will be asked to describe the project briefly and to identify the

Chair of the dissertation committee, if that has been decided. The QE chair will set a deadline (typically three months after the date of the QE) for submitting the prospectus to the dissertation chair. Once this is done and all the appropriate paperwork has been signed, the exam is over.

When the requirements enumerated above have been satisfactorily completed and the residence requirements for the Ph.D. have been fulfilled, the student files an "Application for Candidacy" with the Graduate Division. The student completes and returns the form with the candidacy fee to the Graduate Division as soon as possible after completion of the Qualifying Examination in order to take full advantage of eligibility for tuition offset grants and time-in-candidacy. Students who have passed the Qualifying Examination are eligible for Advancement to Candidacy for the Ph.D. and the degree of C. Phil. (Candidate in Philosophy).

Failure to complete the Qualifying Examination by the end of the ninth semester of residence is grounds for dismissal.

The Dissertation Committee

Although the composition of the *exam* committee requires one Academic Senate representative from outside the department, the makeup of the *dissertation* committee does not. The minimum number on the committee is three, with a Dissertation Chair required to be from Film & Media and at least two additional faculty members, but all three may be members of the department. It is nevertheless also possible to use committee members outside the department or even to add a fourth faculty member, but the advantages and disadvantages of having a larger committee should be discussed thoroughly with the main dissertation adviser. Similarly, the decision to appoint two of the committee members as Co-Chairs can make sense in certain circumstances, but can also add complications to the advising and writing process that should be considered carefully in advance and weighed against the perceived advantages of that arrangement. The composition of the dissertation committee should be specified on the Advancement to Candidacy form.

The Dissertation Prospectus

Within three months of Advancement to Candidacy, the student is required to submit a draft of the dissertation prospectus to the dissertation chair for approval. The prospectus should be approximately 20 pages long (double-spaced, 12-point font). It should state the dissertation's proposed argument (or main line of inquiry) and should situate this argument in the context of current scholarship related to the topic. In the process of providing this contextualization, the prospectus should provide a (brief) survey of this scholarship. The prospectus should also describe each chapter and offer some explanation for the project's structure and organization. A bibliography and filmography should also be included at the end of the document.

Please note that the prospectus should be regarded as a proposal and is by nature somewhat speculative. During the course of researching and writing a dissertation, the argument/line of inquiry outlined in the prospectus will necessarily evolve and change. The prospectus is intended to help candidates think about the scholarly contribution their dissertation will make

to a field (ultimately, the dissertation must do this), about the structure and organization of the project, and the (re)sources that will be used. The prospectus will help guide initial forays into research and writing and will help candidates to foresee potential pitfalls around organization, argument, resources and, as a result, may help avoid rewrites and repeat visits to archives that might have been averted with careful, early planning.

Program Timeline

The following is a typical timeline for progress through the Film M.A./Ph.D. program for those entering with a B.A. There are several variations on this pacing (for example, students entering with an equivalent M.A. will follow a different model), but this can be used for reference:

Semester 1: Film 201 and 203, (+ language course or Film M.A. Elective #1).

Semester 2: Film 200 and Film M.A. Elective #1 or 2 (+ language course).

[Start of Semester 3: M.A. Exam (August) and M.A. review (September).]

Semester 3: Complete Film M.A. Electives #2-3, if not yet completed, and Film 375. M.A. degree officially awarded at the end of this semester.

Semester 4: Outside Field Elective #1, Film Ph.D. Elective #1 (+ language course). Financial support from first teaching assignment.

Semester 5: Complete Outside Field Elective #2 (+ language course, if necessary). Approach potential QE committee members about participating in exam and confer with them to prepare reading lists, which should be finalized by the end of this semester. Financial support from second teaching assignment.

Semester 6: Students register for reading units with committee members and work with them on the reading lists in preparation for the exam. Students must pass the language requirement before scheduling the Qualifying Exam (the language exam can't follow the Q.E.). Financial support comes from final semester of fellowship funding.

[End of Semester 6: Advance to Ph.D. candidacy]

[International students (non-permanent U.S. Residents) must take the Q.E. at the end of the third year in the program in order to avoid Non-Resident Student Tuition costs; international students who pass the QE by this Semester 6 deadline will be given another three years of NRST during their dissertation candidacy period, so this timing is crucial.]

Semester 7: Student completes the draft prospectus in this semester and schedules a Prospectus Meeting with all of the committee members together. Commences the research and writing of the dissertation upon approval of the prospectus. Typically, the student is either teaching or using the first semester of the Doctoral Completion Fellowship during this semester.

Semester 8: Student continues to research and write the dissertation, or the second semester of the Doctoral Completion Fellowship (DCF).

Semester 9: Research and Writing, supported with a teaching assignment or the second semester of the Doctoral Completion Fellowship (DCF).

Semester 10: Research and Writing, supported with a teaching assignment or the second semester of the Doctoral Completion Fellowship (DCF).

Semester 11: Research and Writing. [Teaching assignments are not guaranteed in advance past Semester 10 but in the recent past have been available to any interested student.]

Semester 12: Research and Writing. [Teaching assignments are not guaranteed past Semester 10 but in the recent past have been available to any interested student.]

The normative time established by campus for the entire degree is six years, or twelve semesters. The dissertation should thus be submitted within three years of advancement to candidacy.

Teaching Opportunities

Overview

Teaching assignments as Academic Student Employees are governed by the contract negotiated by the UAW, the union for graduate student workers. Salaries and workloads are set by the terms of that contract.

An important side benefit of these teaching opportunities, aside from the salary, is to prepare students to be competent classroom instructors when going on the job market at the end of their degree programs. The Department of Film & Media provides pedagogical training and supervision to that end. Classroom experience as a Graduate Student Instructor helps accomplish the following: developing a teaching style and pedagogical practice (including effective lecturing and facilitating classroom discussion); designing successful courses with requirements (exams, readings, essays) appropriate to the course level and topic; teaching students from diverse backgrounds with varying proficiencies; using clips and scene/shot analysis effectively within lectures and discussions; grading student work at appropriate skill levels; offering productive and constructive feedback, comments, and corrections on essays and essay exams; and administering the class (taking attendance, recording grades, making announcements, handing back work, etc.) effectively.

Students coming into the program with four semesters of university fellowship support typically initially use three of those semesters and save the fourth for the semester in which they are studying for their Q.E. so that they can concentrate on their reading lists without distraction. That means that students will typically begin teaching in an initial R&C or GSI section leader assignment in semester 4. Campus requires that all Graduate Student Instructors teaching R&C take a 375 class that addresses R&C training specifically, either before or during their first semester of teaching R&C. Film 375 is such a course and is taught in various departments around campus each fall semester, so students beginning their teaching in semester 4 will typically take Film 375 in semester 3. New instructors must also attend the Teaching Conference for New GSIs held by the Graduate Division at the beginning of the fall and spring semesters each year.

Please note that according to Graduate Division rules, in order to hold a GSI-ship or a Readership, you may not have more than two Incomplete grades remaining on your transcript.

Teaching Assignment Procedures

Each year the department generates a list of the teaching slots open in fall and in spring of the coming academic calendar, depending on curricular need and available budget. Around February, the HGA and GSAO send out a survey to all of the department's graduate students asking for a tentative indication of interest in teaching for the following year. Matching up students and slots becomes a juggling act. The Head Graduate Adviser (faculty), the Department Chair, and the Graduate Student Affairs Officer (staff) take the following into consideration when making teaching assignments:

- 1) Those who have not exhausted their initial guaranteed teaching assignments from their original five-year support package will have priority; we are almost always able to continue to offer teaching assignments to students past Year Six in the program as well, but that cannot be guaranteed. The Graduate Division limit for teaching assignments is twelve semesters total, with further appointments only possible by exception.
- 2) The student must be in good academic standing (students with more than two unresolved Incomplete grades are not appointable per Graduate Division regulation).
- 3) We have a general preference to track balance in types of assignments (R1A, R1B, lecture sections) for each student over their time in the program in order to help them create a varied portfolio (remember that teaching summer courses adds classes in the major to that balanced repertoire as well).
- 4) Completion of/enrollment in Film 375 or equivalent when teaching R&C for the first time is a campus requirement.
- 5) The wishes of students in the first two years who have an option of taking either a fellowship semester or teaching will be accommodated when possible, but those who must teach for their support (no fellowship remaining) have priority for teaching assignments.

Teaching assignments will be offered first to Film & Media graduate students, and then to Film DE and other students at the university if slots go unfilled.

Faculty Teaching Observations and Student Evaluations

Students teaching during the coursework phase of their program will be observed in the classroom either by the Faculty Adviser for GSI Affairs (if teaching R&C) or by the supervising faculty member when the GSI is leading discussion sections for a lecture course. Students who have advanced to candidacy will be observed by their dissertation adviser or another dissertation committee member. Students may arrange a specific date for the observation. The purpose of the observation is to provide GSIs with productive feedback to help develop teaching skills. Following the observation, GSIs will meet with the faculty member, go over the written comments, and have an informal discussion about what worked, what did not, and potential strategies for improvement.

At the end of each semester, all instructors (including GSIs) are required to have students fill out online teaching evaluation forms. This is not an optional process, but is required by the university. The links to the online forms will be sent to the GSI directly. There are a few required departmental questions for the course, but instructors can also add additional questions specific to the course in question. To ensure that students will give some care to their responses, it is advisable to set aside classtime in which they can work on the evaluations on their laptops. A strong response rate (percentage evaluations completed) is the sign of a successful class. Evaluations may be read by the Chair, the HGA, and the GSAO in order to assess the success of either the instructor or the course. The faculty member who conducted the classroom observation may also follow up with a discussion of the evaluation set. Only after instructors have submitted grades for the course will they be able to look at the evaluations.

The evaluations are also be used as one component in determining the Outstanding GSI Awards given in the department (there are one–two awarded each year). The numerical scores themselves will not be overemphasized in assessing the teaching performance in a course, as the prose comments tend to speak more accurately to the student experience and are more revealing than the numbers themselves. In addition, reports from faculty classroom observations and prepared course materials (syllabi, assignments, and bCourses interface) will be taken into account when making these awards.

Summer teaching

Each summer, the Department of Film & Media offers several undergraduate courses in the intensive 6-week summer sessions, many of which are taught by graduate students. Students must have prior experience teaching at least once during the academic year in either sections or R&C in order to be considered for summer teaching. While the usual criteria apply in the selection of GSIs to teach these courses, we also give added weight to prior experience with the course or topic as a GSI or Reader and the suitability of elective topics for the summer sessions. (Popular topics tend to work better than niche courses in the summer sessions.) Many

of the summer courses are extra sections of required courses for the major that function to meet overflow demand from the academic year, so teaching in summer is a good way for GSIs to get experience with core film lecture courses for their teaching repertoires (assignments that can only be given by exception to graduate students during the academic year).

Graduate Student Instructor Teaching & Resource Center

The GSI Teaching and Resource Center is an academic unit in the Graduate Division that prepares graduate students for the teaching they will do at Berkeley and the teaching they may do in future careers. They offer numerous programs and services for GSIs, including teaching conferences orienting new GSIs (held each semester); the online ethics course, “Professional Standards and Ethics in Teaching”; Workshops on Teaching that cover topics such as teaching critical reading, teaching with technology, and creating ground rules for discussion section; Course Improvement Grants that provide funding for GSIs who wish to incorporate special projects into their teaching to increase student learning; Research Groups; and the Summer Institute for Preparing Future Faculty. To learn about the details of these and other programs and services provided by the GSI Teaching & Resource Center, please visit their website:

<https://gsi.berkeley.edu/>

Professional Development

During the first year of study, students will begin familiarizing themselves with the requirements of academic professionalization in the Film 203 Proseminar. As students settle into the program, there are many other avenues to professional development.

Colloquia

It is extremely important and expected that students attend as many Film & Media colloquia (i.e. scholarly lectures, the Berkeley Film and Media Seminar, conferences and symposia, “job talks” by candidates, the Visual Cultures Writing Group, etc.) as possible, even if the topic is not directly related to a student’s own research interests. Colloquia are extremely important to the intellectual life and community in the Department of Film & Media. Moreover, they are designed to provide students with a sense of the state of various fields within the discipline and the proper protocols associated both with presenting a formal lecture in an academic context and participating in collegial, scholarly debate with fellow academics. Lectures, symposia, and conferences also provide the opportunity to meet and make a positive impression upon important scholars in the discipline.

Professional Organizations

Students in Film & Media should become members of the Society for Cinema and Media Studies (SCMS) or an equivalent professional organization in the first year and every year thereafter.

Such organizations often offer membership fees on sliding scale, which should make membership affordable for most. Most professional organizations also include a journal subscription with membership. For example, the *Journal of Cinema and Media Studies* is published quarterly by SCMS and features scholarly articles, Calls for Papers (CFP) for upcoming conferences, a member directory, a list of recent publications of film/media books and articles, conference reports, debates, and archival notes. Membership also provides access to the Job List, which is published three times a year (Fall, Spring, Summer). It is a good idea for students to peruse the Job List each time it is published whether or not they are on the market. Doing so will give a sense of the state of the market itself and the types and number of jobs that are available.

Conferences

In the second year, students should plan to present at least one paper at a scholarly conference such as the annual Society for Cinema and Media Studies conference or a smaller conference organized around a specific topic closely related to one's own research interests. Though quite large, the annual conference for the Society for Cinema and Media Studies (SCMS) can be a good place to start since so many Film and Media Studies graduate students and faculty attend each year. Please note that though the conference is held in March every year, the deadline for submitting a paper proposal is in the late summer (late August/early September). Also note that your chances for having a paper accepted increase exponentially if you submit a panel proposal rather than an individual paper proposal. Doing so takes considerably more time, but it is well worth the effort. You may want to revise a seminar paper into a conference paper or use the conference as an opportunity to begin a new research project.

Presenting a Paper

In most instances, you will present your paper on a panel with anywhere from two to three other panelists. Each panelist usually has 20-25 minutes to present a paper (note: this includes time for any clips shown). Chairs of panels may be more or less aggressive in enforcing time limits. No matter the case, as a point of courtesy and professionalism, you should always remain within the amount of time allotted. So, when practicing delivering your paper out loud before the conference (which should be done several times before leaving home) students should be certain to time themselves. It is also a good idea to find a paragraph or two that may be skipped over (without losing the thread of the overall argument) should one of your fellow panelists take up too much time or if time is lost time due to technological glitches (this happens). Always present a polished, well-researched paper.

Chairing a Panel

The Chair of a panel is responsible for introducing fellow panelists. If possible, ask each to email a brief (2-3 sentence) bio ahead of time. At this point, the chair should also remind each of the time limit for each paper. At the conference, enforce time limits using time sheets. When a

panelist has one minute left, slip him or her a sheet of paper with this information (i.e. 1 MINUTE) on it or hold it up so that it is visible if the panelist is standing at a podium. Once time is up, slip/hold up another sheet indicating this (i.e. TIME). Continue to do so at 20-second intervals until the presenter stops. Be polite, collegial, and gracious, but firm—this is the chair’s job and the other panelists will be most appreciative if it is done well. Most look forward to the Q & A period (usually 15-20 minutes), and if there is no time left everyone—including the audience—will be disappointed.

If the Q & A period for the panel is nearing its end and one of the panelists has not received any questions, the Chair should (ideally) be prepared to ask one (so, try to think of a question for each panelist as they present). Again, this is the collegial thing for the Chair to do, if possible.

Publishing

Ideally, students should strive to have two publications on the c.v. upon beginning the job search. Given the amount of time it takes to move an article from the submission stage to seeing it in print, the second year is a good time to begin thinking about publishing an article in a scholarly journal. Students should consult with the faculty adviser, the graduate adviser, or a faculty member with whom they have worked closely to determine which seminar paper or conference paper has the greatest potential for publication. Set a deadline for revising the essay and submit it to the Visual Cultures Working Group for peer review. While doing this, try to determine which journal might be the best place for this particular article (take into consideration factors such as methodology, audience, topic, etc.). The following journals are highly regarded in Film & Media studies and would garner your work a wide audience: *Journal for Cinema and Media Studies*; *Screen*; *Camera Obscura*; *Film History*; and *Film Quarterly*. There are other journals in area studies (for example, *October* is a top journal for scholarship on the history and theory of Art) or cultural studies (such as *Cultural Critique*) or the Humanities (*Critical Inquiry* and *Representations* publish articles on film and visual culture alongside scholarship on literature, art, and theories of culture) that might be more suitable for your work. Your adviser can provide you with some guidance on which periodical might be the best publication home for an article. Always aim high: begin by submitting work to the best journals in your field (again, with an eye towards matching your topic and methodology with a specific journal’s profile).

Note that the amount of time that transpires between the submission of an article to a journal and its appearance in print can be surprisingly expansive. With a few exceptions, one can expect to wait from three to six months after submitting an article before hearing back from the editor on whether or not it has been accepted. Most often, an acceptance letter is accompanied by a request for revisions. Authors may have anywhere from two weeks to a month to complete these. Once the editor is satisfied with the article, it will be slotted into the journal’s publication schedule. Sometimes an article may appear in print two or three months after the final version has been submitted and sometimes this process can take up to a year or more. So, begin thinking about publications sooner rather than later.

Conference proceedings/anthologies also provide an excellent opportunity for publishing research. Generally, one should try to strike a balance between such publications and anonymously peer-reviewed publications (such as the journals listed above), since the latter are often given more weight by search committees and tenure committees.

Finally, one rule of thumb: always submit a very polished, thoroughly researched, complete article. Seminar papers (as such) are rarely in and of themselves publishable, though sometimes they are potentially so. Be certain to develop and revise the article, present it at colloquia (such as the Visual Cultures Working Group or the Graduate Film Working Group) and at conferences, and obtain feedback from peers, faculty, and advisers before submission. Not only will this increase the likelihood of publication, but it will also reduce the number of revisions requested by the anonymous readers and editor (thereby giving the author more control over his/her own work) should the article be accepted.

Fellowships and Funding for Continuing Students

Incoming students generally begin their programs supported by incoming university fellowships. As they progress through the program, other funding sources are also available.

Departmental Funding

At regular intervals (each August, December, and February), the HGA and GSAO will poll the department's graduate students to take requests for extra travel and research funding.

Film & Media Graduate Presentation Travel Grant

Students in the Department of Film & Media can generally expect in normal budgetary years to be eligible for a Film & Media Graduate Presentation Travel Grant of up to \$1,000. These departmental stipends are available no more than ONCE per year to support a scheduled presentation of an applicant's original research at one of the following: a major meeting of a recognized learned society (such as SCMS, MLA, Visible Evidence, etc.), a smaller conference, an organized panel discussion, or an organized symposium or colloquium. These grants may also be used by students to present creative work at film festivals or museum exhibits. The funding is paid as a stipend, not as a reimbursement, but nevertheless requires submission of a preliminary budget to verify anticipated expenses.

Film & Media Graduate Research Travel Grant

Students in our graduate program may apply for a departmental research travel grant to attend a film festival (such as Telluride, Pordenone, Toronto, or Sundance) or travel to archives or other locations holding resources relevant to their research or creative projects. The amounts awarded will vary depending on the required length of stay and distance traveled, but students may ask for up to \$2000 once per year to help cover costs. Priority will be given

to the most relevant matches between research and event/venue and to students who have not yet received this grant. A maximum of four such stipends will be awarded in the department each academic year. This will also be paid in the form of a stipend, not a reimbursement.

Summer Dissertation Completion Grant

In addition to the travel funding for research/creative work and the presentation thereof mentioned above, it is possible to apply for a dissertation writing award for the final summer before filing the dissertation to relieve the student of other obligations.

University Funding

Graduate Division Fellowships and Grants

Detailed information and applications are available at the [Graduate Division Fellowship Office](#) or via the Graduate Division website.

Dissertation Completion Fellowship (DCF)

The Doctoral Completion Fellowship (DCF) provides an incentive for students in certain graduate programs, to complete their degree within a reasonable time. This is a fellowship program available to students in participating graduate programs (including Film & Media).

To be eligible for the DCF students must:

- *Be in good academic standing with a minimum GPA of 3.0
- *Have a current, satisfactory annual progress report on file with Graduate Division
- *Have participated in Ph.D. completion activities or in other requirements as directed by Film & Media.
- *Have applied for one other external fellowship
- *Have completed the Doctoral Candidacy Review (DCR)
- *Submit an application for Advancement to Doctoral Candidacy to Graduate Degrees (at the time of passing the Qualifying Exam).

Foreign Language and Area Studies Awards: One-Year Awards and Summer Awards

Enables students who are U.S. citizens and permanent residents to acquire a high level of competence in one or more foreign languages. Fellowships are awarded to students in modern foreign language and area studies, with priority given to students in the humanities, social sciences, and professional fields. For academic year awards, entering students must submit the combined Graduate Application for Admission and Fellowships by the departmental deadline. Continuing students should pick up an application and apply directly

to the Graduate Fellowships Office, 318 Sproul Hall, by February 2. Summer FLAS applications also are available at that office and are due by March 1.

Mentored Research Award

Gives academically promising graduate students the opportunity to do research that they would not be able to do otherwise and helps develop and strengthen their working relationships with faculty advisers. Must be a U.S. citizen or permanent resident whose background and life experiences enhance the diversity within the department or discipline.. NOTE: Departments nominate continuing graduate students for this award.

University of California Dissertation-Year Fellowships

Open to doctoral students who demonstrate strong potential for university teaching and research, and who are in their final year of dissertation work. Must be U.S. citizen or permanent resident whose background, life experiences, and/or work contribute to diversity. The Graduate Division requests nominations from departments in the spring semester. NOTE: Departments nominate continuing graduate students for this award.

Bancroft Library Study Awards

Awarded to outstanding continuing students enrolled at any University of California campus who plan to conduct advanced research on a subject for which source materials are available in the Bancroft Library.

Institute of International Studies (IIS) Fellowships

Funding for UC Berkeley graduate students conducting various pre-dissertation and dissertation research projects that explore social science issues on an international scale. See [website](#) for details.

Townsend Center Fellowship for Dissertation Writing

[Townsend Dissertation Fellowships](#) are awarded to graduate students at UC Berkeley who have advanced to candidacy for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) by the time of application, and whose dissertation projects involve humanistic material or problems that have a significant bearing on the humanities. Once selected, Dissertation Fellows are eligible to apply for the Jacobson Memorial Teaching Award.

Resources for Additional Extramural Fellowships

American Association of University Women (AAUW) Fellowships:
<https://www.aauw.org/resources/programs/fellowships-grants/>

Charlotte Newcombe Doctoral Dissertation Fellowships:

<https://newcombefoundation.org/fellowships/>

Mabelle McLeod Lewis Fellowships: <https://academicprogramsonline.org/ajo/award/23223>

Paul and Daisy Soros Fellowship for New Americans: <https://pdsoros.org/>

Woodrow Wilson Fellowships: <https://citizensandscholars.org/fellowships/>

For additional resources, please visit our website: [Student Financial Support and Employment](#).

Departmental Records

The Department of Film & Media maintains two kinds of records on each student: academic and employment. Graduate academic files are maintained in the Film & Media Graduate Office and are accessible to the individual student; to the Graduate Advisor; to the GSAO; and to members of review committees. The student's file is usually available upon oral or written request, except for letters of recommendation to which the student has waived inspection rights.

Graduate students' employment records are also maintained in the Film & Media Graduate Office. These files contain performance evaluations and classroom observations as well as records on length of employment. These matters are regarded as confidential and are accessible only to ladder faculty on the 1A/B Committee, to appointed review committees, and to the person maintaining the records. Employment files are not available to the student or to any "outside" parties.

The policies for reviewing, challenging, and expunging academic records are described in the department's grievance procedures. Further information on University policy in regard to access to student records and policy regarding disclosures of information pertaining to students is available from the College of Letters and Science. Individuals' addresses and phone numbers are not made available to the public unless the department has received permission to do so. Information such as dates of attendance, degrees granted, awards received, dissertation topics, and employment verification will ordinarily be released upon oral or written request to appropriate officials unless the student requests otherwise in writing. Copies of records will be reproduced in reasonable quantities for students at the actual cost to the department of such copying on departmental equipment.