

FILM AND VISUAL STUDIES

Guide for Graduate Students

****This guide is intended for general information and orientation. Updated information about program requirements is available on the Film and Visual Studies website, as well as from the Program Administrator, Emily Amendola, or the Director of Graduate Studies, Professor Eric Rentschler (Fall 2018) or Carrie Lambert-Beatty (Spring 2019).****

COLLOQUIA, LECTURES AND SPECIAL SEMINARS

Throughout the year, the Carpenter Center for the Visual Arts, the Film and Visual Studies Colloquium, and the Harvard Film Archive host distinguished guests who speak at colloquia, lectures, and special seminars. *All graduate students are expected to attend these events and to participate fully in the intellectual life of the program.* Information regarding these events can be found on the Visual and Environmental Studies website at <http://www.ves.fas.harvard.edu/>

COMPUTERS

The Graduate School of Arts and Sciences Handbook includes information about non-departmental computers and computing resources available to graduate students. Additionally there is a computer lab with PCs and Macs as well as a printer in the basement of the Dudley House. The door code can be obtained from the staff at the Housing Office in room B2.

IMPORTANT CONTACTS

Chair, Visual and Environmental Studies	Lucien Castaing-Taylor	n/a	n/a
Director of Graduate Studies	Eric Rentschler (Fall 2018) Carrie Lambert-Beatty (Spring 2019)	erentsch@fas.harvard.edu lambert2@fas.harvard.edu	496-4930 (Rentschler) 496-6830(Lambert-Beatty)
Director of Administration	Denise Oberdan	oberdan@fas.harvard.edu	496-8420
Financial Administrator	Mary Park	mpark@fas.harvard.edu	495-3252
Graduate Studies Programs Administrator	Emily Amendola	amendola@fas.harvard.edu	495-9720
Program Manager for Undergraduate Students	Paula Soares	soares@fas.harvard.edu	496-4469
Assistant to the Director of Administration, Faculty Support	Laura Sargent	laura_sargent@harvard.edu	496-3251

BUILDING ACCESS

After regular business hours access to the Carpenter Center and Sever Hall are enabled by card readers which can be activated with your University ID card. If your ID card does not operate the card readers to these buildings, please see the staff assistant at the front desk in the Main Office of CCVA. For security purposes, after-hours access is monitored.

E-MAIL

Prior to the start of the school year, the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences will email you about establishing your Harvard email account. Please be sure to set it up as soon as possible and begin checking it regularly.

FILM STUDIES LIBRARY

Key card access will grant you entrance to the Film Studies Library on the 4th floor of Sever Hall. Please contact the Film Studies Librarian (617)495-3254 for more information as well as for an orientation of the library.

ADVISING

In the first year of graduate study, students will be advised primarily by the Director of Graduate Studies

(DGS). After the first year, working with the DGS, the student will identify a faculty member as their advisor. The student will then consult that faculty member and the graduate programs administrator to confirm this agreement. If a student is unable to identify an advisor by the end of the first year, the DGS will remain his/her default advisor. By the end of their second year, however, students will be expected to have found an advisor. When considering an advisor, students should select a faculty member who would be a likely dissertation director. The dissertation director will take primary charge of advising the thesis, with a second and third reader involved to a greater or lesser degree according to the wishes of the student and the primary advisor. The dissertation director and advisers will also help students choose and prepare field topics for the general examination.

GENERAL EXAM

General exams normally take place after spring break in the third year of study. There are two components, a written and an oral exam. The written exam is tentatively slated to take place the week after spring break and the oral exam takes place one week after the written exam.

Prior to the general exam students must fulfill the following requirements:

- Residence and academic standing requirement (completion of two years of enrollment for full-time study, with a minimum of at least fourteen courses completed with no grade lower than B).
- Language requirement.
- Successful completion and submission of qualifying paper.

More information regarding the exam will be given to students during the spring semester of their second year of study.

FILM AND VISUAL STUDIES PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT FUNDING

Film and Visual Studies (FVS) PhD Professional Development Policy

The Film and Visual Studies (FVS) PhD program offers each graduate student professional development support in the amount of \$700 per academic year (please note this funding is through the department and separate from the professional development funding offered through the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences (GSAS)). To be eligible for this funding students must:

- Be in good academic standing.
- Be enrolled full time in the PhD program in Film and Visual Studies.
- Submit the completed FVS Request for Graduate Student Professional Development Funding [Form](#) to the Graduate Programs Administrator for approval.

Only approved accountable expenses can be reimbursed, these include:

- Transportation (by the most economical means available), lodging (excluding food), registration fees, and expenses related to attending conferences and events related to professional development.
- Restaurant bills are not reimbursable expenses.
- Individual membership fees to organizations are not reimbursable expenses.
- Support funds will not be provided in advance of purchases. Students must submit an application for funding and be approved prior to spending funds and expecting to be reimbursed. Unapproved purchases will not be reimbursed.
- Funds will be disbursed after the student has submitted to the graduate programs administrator a reimbursement form with all appropriate receipts.
- All receipts for reimbursement must be submitted within 30 days of incurring the expense.

Funding is subject to United States tax laws. For more information on taxes please visit the Harvard University Student Financial Services website:

<https://sfs.harvard.edu/taxes>

All application materials will be kept confidential.

GRANTS AND FELLOWSHIPS

Cynthia Verba, Director of Fellowships in the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences compiles an annual *Graduate Guide to Grants* as well as *Fellowships for Harvard GSAS Students*, which includes information and application forms for Harvard fellowship competitions. Copies are available from the Fellowships Office, Smith Campus Center 350.

In addition, Emily Amendola compiles a list of financial aid opportunities. If you have not received a copy of this list, please contact her.

GSAS HANDBOOK

Consult the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences Handbook regarding GSAS regulations and requirements.

HEALTH INSURANCE

The Graduate School of Arts and Sciences requires students to have health insurance. Unless you choose another source of insurance (for example the National Association of Graduate and Professional Students <http://www.nagps.org>), Harvard University Student Health Plan is available for most graduate students in the doctoral program.

HEALTH SERVICES

Harvard University Health Services, located in Smith Campus Center, will serve most of your health needs. You should choose a primary care team if one has not already been assigned to you. Information about individual clinicians is available online <http://huhs.harvard.edu/Home.aspx>. For more information about HUHS, please call Member Services at (617)495-2008.

Harvard University Health Services also provides mental health services. Information about these services can be found directly on their website: <http://huhs.harvard.edu/HealthServices/MentalHealthServices.aspx>.

Jacqueline Yun, Director of Student Services at the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences, serves as the resource person for GSAS students. She serves in an advisory role, provides ongoing support, and makes referrals to other sources of assistance, as necessary. Conversations are confidential. Jackie can be reached at (617)495-5005.

INCOMPLETES

A graduate student who receives a grade of INC (Incomplete), which is granted only at the discretion of the instructor, must complete the work of the incomplete course before the end of the term following that in which the course was taken, even if the student's registration status during that term is leave of absence, unless she or he is given an earlier deadline by the instructor. If the work is not submitted by that time, the INC becomes a permanent grade, unless the student has petitioned successfully for an extension. Petition forms may be obtained from the registrar, the Office of Student Affairs in Richard A. and Susan F. Smith Campus Center; the fee for each approved petition is \$15. Students should discuss the completion date with the instructor. Petitions must be approved by the instructor, the Director of Graduate Studies, and the Assistant Dean of Student Affairs. Extensions, when granted, ordinarily will not exceed one additional

term. INC grades incurred in cross-registered courses in another school are subject to GSAS rules and deadlines unless the other school's deadlines are earlier. Extensions must be approved both by GSAS and by the other school. Incomplete grades cannot be changed once a final degree has been awarded.

Additional courses will need to be taken in place of any permanent Incompletes, unless or until the required number of courses has been completed.

Delay in completing the required fourteen courses will necessitate the postponement of the student's general examination until the following year. A student who is still unprepared to take the examination at that time will not be allowed to continue the program.

Students may not take an Incomplete in any course in the second term of the second year.

Students taking incompletes are considered making unsatisfactory progress toward their degree program, which may affect their eligibility for financial aid. If you are considering taking an incomplete, you need to meet with the director of graduate studies, as well as to contact the graduate programs administrator.

LANGUAGE REQUIREMENTS AND COURSES

Advanced reading knowledge of one foreign language is required. This language must be relevant to the student's program of study. Students must provide evidence of language skills comparable to two full years of university study in one of two ways: (1) a grade of B or better on a proficiency examination administered by the relevant language department or (2) successful completion (a grade of B or better) of a full second-year or higher course of study taught in a foreign language. Please note that first- and second-year language courses do not count towards the FVS course requirements. Incoming students should discuss their language background with the Director of Graduate Studies in the fall semester of their first year of study and determine a plan and timeline to complete the language requirement prior to the spring semester of their third year of study.

LIBRARY RESOURCES

Film Study Library (FSL) at Sever Hall

The Film Study Library, located on the fourth floor of Sever Hall, has viewing facilities and a large, non-circulating collection of videos and DVDs, including many rare titles. Although the collection's holdings are not listed in HOLLIS (the Harvard Libraries catalogue), a catalogue can be accessed at the FSL.

Harvard Film Archive

Carpenter Center for the Visual Arts
24 Quincy Street
Harvard University
Cambridge, MA 02138
Fax: (617) 496-6750

<http://hcl.harvard.edu/hfa/>

The Harvard Film Archive presents films Friday through Monday nights year-round. Open to the public, all screenings are held in the Archive's 220-seat theater featuring state-of-the-art film and digital projection located in the Carpenter Center for the Arts.

Morse Music & Media Library

Located on the second floor of Lamont Library, Morse houses a large circulating collection of videos and DVDs with state-of-the-art viewing equipment. The collection is catalogued in HOLLIS. Harvard College Libraries Film and Visual Studies Contact:

Reed Lowrie, lowrie@fas.harvard.edu, (617) 496-2252

Fine Arts Library
Littauer Center
1805 Cambridge Street
Harvard University North Yard
Cambridge, MA 02138

Shalimar Abigail Fojas White, shalimar_white@harvard.edu, 617-495-0678

NON-RESIDENT STATUS

There are three statuses to which students may apply to register for an academic term or year with non-resident status:

1. **Traveling Scholar** status designates degree candidates outside the Boston area who are engaged primarily in their degree work.
2. **Leave of Absence** status designates degree candidates whose time will be devoted primarily to activities other than degree work. Any student who is teaching more than three-fifths over the year must be a teaching assistant instead of a teaching fellow and must register on leave of absence rather than in residence.
3. **Studying at Another Harvard School** status designates GSAS degree candidates who are registered and conducting study at a Harvard faculty other than FAS.

Applications for non-resident status must be submitted online by the student by **July 1** for the fall term or academic year, and by **December 1** for the spring term. Applications submitted afterward are subject to late registration fees. The student will be charged \$50 plus \$5 for each week that the application is late.

More information can be found here on the GSAS website: <https://handbook.gsas.harvard.edu/non-resident-students>

PHOTOCOPYING

Photocopy and scanner services are available through the Harvard College Library. Please see the following link for information on which libraries offer which services
<http://hcl.harvard.edu/info/equipment/index.html>. Additionally, copy service stores are located in the Cambridge area.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Guidelines for Requests for Letters of Recommendation

Every academic year faculty in the FAS write upwards of 30,000 letters for students and former students. Harvard professors take considerable time to write in detail and make every effort to present a candidate in the best possible light. Here are some suggestions to facilitate this process.

Be sure to provide at least three (preferable four or more) weeks' notice for any request. Even if you know that the instructor already has a letter on file, do not assume that it can easily be tweaked and sent out.

Letters may well require significant revision to fit a particular purpose. **Never** assume that a letter can be written at the last minute. This is not only impolite; it puts undue pressure on the person writing on your behalf.

Include a written statement of the due date and indicate whether it is a postmark or a receipt date.

Describe the purpose of the letter and/or provide a copy of instructions intended for the person writing. If you need multiple letters for different purposes, provide a description of each (e.g., a fellowship, a summer grant, an application for an academic job). Be sure to include the due dates and a description of how letters are to be passed forward. In many cases, institutions and dossier services will send your recommenders email messages to facilitate electronic transmission. In others, recommenders will be required to submit letters by regular mail. In this latter case, please provide an addressed and stamped envelope for each recommendation.

Provide copies of class papers and of any other directly relevant papers, with instructor's original comments if possible. It is advisable to provide a copy of your transcript (an unofficial one will suffice) and a CV.

Fill out any forms as completely as you can. Do not expect the person writing for you to provide information you yourself know.

Offer to have an individual conference about your application(s). At the very least, explain your requests with either a written statement or a draft of your project or statement of purpose to be submitted with your application.

Make certain to fill out any waiver request, either yes or no. Please know that confidential letters will carry more weight.

RESEARCH AND TRAVEL FUNDS

In addition to FVS Conference Funding, the Graduate Student Council (GSC) provides funding opportunities. For more information, please see the GSC web site <http://www.hcs.harvard.edu/~gsc/>.

RESEARCH AND WORKING GROUPS

VES 301 Film and Visual Studies Workshop

The Film and Visual Studies Workshop, in existence for more than fifteen years, is the site of monthly discussions about vanguard scholarship, theory, and criticism, presentations of student work in progress, and meetings with prominent scholars, filmmakers, and artists. Its faculty advisor is Professor Eric Rentschler; the student coordinator for 2018-2019 is to be determined.

SCREEN STUDIES

This workshop explores new interdisciplinary analyses and theorizations of the moving image in an expanded field. Screen cultures encompass a range of contexts in which the moving image is framed, distributed, received and interpreted. These range from the traditionally conceived sites of cinema, video and television to increasingly dispersed new media platforms. While Film Studies, in particular film theory, has historically privileged text-based approaches to the study of the moving image, this workshop aims to explore emerging scholarly practices that resituate these "texts" within visual culture at large. From locative media to public projections, new screen contexts require a varied set of methodologies for understanding the cultural, theoretical and historical implications of emergent moving image practices. The workshop will thus devote much attention to the study of different spatial practices relating to screens; from the proto-cinematic (e.g. magic lanterns) to contemporary forms (e.g. locative media, public projections), we are interested in tracing new genealogies of screen cultures and their relations to public life.

For more information regarding Screen Studies please contact the student coordinators:

Dan D'Amore, Film and Visual Studies

ddamore@fas.harvard.edu

Mingyi Yu, Film and Visual Studies

mingyiyu@fas.harvard.edu

Society for Cinema & Media Studies

The Society for Cinema and Media Studies is the leading scholarly organization in the United States dedicated to promoting a broad understanding of film, television, and related media through research and teaching grounded in the contemporary humanities tradition.

SCMS encourages excellence in scholarship and pedagogy and fosters critical inquiry into the global, national, and local circulation of cinema, television, and other related media. SCMS scholars situate these media in various contexts, including historical, theoretical, cultural, industrial, social, artistic, and psychological.

SCMS seeks to further media study within higher education and the wider cultural sphere, and to serve as a resource for scholars, teachers, administrators, and the public. SCMS works to maintain productive relationships with organizations in other nations, disciplines, and areas of media study; to foster dialogue between media industries and scholars; and to promote the preservation of our film, television, and media heritage. We encourage membership and participation of scholars and those in related positions not only in the US but around the world.

Other relevant professional organizations include the College Art Association (www.collegeart.org), as well as the American Studies Association (www.theasa.net) and other area studies organizations.

TEACHING FELLOWSHIPS

Information about teaching is available from Emily Amendola, 617-495-9720, amendola@fas.harvard.edu. Before a student begins teaching (normally in the third year), they must be eligible to take the general examination and all course work must be completed and graded (no “incomplete” grades). Please note that while students are encouraged to discuss ideas and preferences for teaching with the DGS, offers of teaching are made by the Chair and the DGS in consultation with the VES Administration based on enrollment figures for undergraduate courses in film studies and VES.

PROSPECTUS POLICY

FVS PROSPECTUS REQUIREMENT:

The Dissertation Prospectus

- Students should have discussions about potential topics with several faculty members in the fall of the G3 year, if not sooner. A committee of three readers should be constituted and formalized no later than January in the third year of study (keeping in mind that it is possible the committee members may change as the project develops).
- After successful completion of the general examinations, a topic for the dissertation will be decided in consultation with the student's dissertation director and advisers. Once a student has a topic and an advisor, s/he will prepare a dissertation proposal.
- The dissertation proposal elaborates the topic and initial approach, and serves as a student's working outline for researching and writing the dissertation; the proposal also serves as the basis for fellowship applications. Not including the bibliography, the proposal document should be about six and no more than seven pages (1,800 words).
- The proposal, depending on the project and the advisor's recommendations, typically includes the following sections: introduction; contribution of the dissertation; review of existing scholarship; chapter outlines; and a timeline.
- In order to maintain satisfactory standing, students are expected to have their prospectus approved by September 30th of their 4th year of study. In mid- or late October, they will also present a 15-minute description of their prospectus to program students and faculty in a public colloquium.

THESIS WRITER'S POLICY

The Film and Visual Studies program wishes to make certain that your progress toward the doctoral degree moves smoothly and steadily. To that end, Satisfactory Progress for dissertation writers will be at least one chapter each year. The chapter must be completed by April 15 starting no later than the G5 year. It is the program's hope that most students in the program will apply for a Dissertation Completion Fellowship (DCF) in the January/February application cycle of the 5th year. In order to do so, you will need to have completed two chapters.

More information on the application process and requirements for this fellowship can be found on the GSAS website:

<https://gsas.harvard.edu/financial-support/fellowships>

If you plan on applying for the DCF in your 6th year, please be sure to meet with your chief advisor as well as the DGS.

DISSERTATION DEFENSE POLICY

Film and Visual Studies Dissertation Defense Policy – November 2017

The Film and Visual Studies PhD program requires a public dissertation defense. Students should consult the timeline below for the pertinent dates and deadlines. After reviewing an unbound copy of the completed thesis, the dissertation committee will notify the student as to whether any revisions are required prior to the defense. If the required revisions are substantial, the student will be asked to submit the dissertation in the next graduation degree cycle.

Dissertation defenses will be scheduled for the last week of the month on which the committee approves the dissertation. (For May 2018 graduates, defenses will be scheduled for the last week of April.) The dissertation defense is an opportunity for the student to discuss and reflect on the project as whole as well as to receive feedback about how to transform the thesis into a book manuscript. To this end students should prepare a 20-minute presentation. It should address the following: what are the central questions that the dissertation addresses? What is at stake? What are the study's key contributions and chief arguments? After the presentation the dissertation committee will have 30 minutes for questions and comments. The audience will then have an additional 30 minutes for responses. Students will be asked to provide an electronic copy of the approved dissertation at least one week before the defense so that it can be made available to audience members.

Film and Visual Studies PH.D DISSERTATION INFORMATION

GSAS requires that each PhD student submit a dissertation through the online submission tool, which can be found at <http://etds.lib.harvard.edu/gsas/>.

Dissertations are catalogued in Harvard's online library catalog, HOLLIS, which helps grant student work a higher level of accessibility. A hardbound archival paper copy of the submitted, approved work is deposited in the University Archives. Students do not need to take action to secure and submit this copy. Order and submission of the printed bound copy is managed automatically via the ETDs @ Harvard tool and the Office of Scholarly Communication. Upon the student's submission of the application for degree, a one-time \$40 charge will appear on term bills for the required copy. (An additional \$40 will be charged to students from departments requiring a departmental bound copy as outlined in, "Additional Bound Copies," pg. 10 of

https://gsas.harvard.edu/sites/default/files/atoms/files/form%20of%20dissertation_Spring%202017_0.pdf.)

Students who apply for the degree without having met all degree requirements will not be charged when submitting future applications for the degree. A preservation copy, provided by Acme Bookbinding, is deposited in the Harvard University Archives as a fail-safe backup. The printed copy does not circulate and is not available for research use. If students would like to order personal copies through Acme Bookbinding, they may do so using their Thesis On Demand service. ***The Department requires a bound copy of the dissertation as well.***

A Dissertation Acceptance Certificate (DAC) documents the formal acceptance of the dissertation by the thesis committee. Signatures on the DAC are collected by the Programs Administrator for Graduate Studies (Emily Amendola), who should be notified by the student when the final unbound copy is submitted to the committee.

Students who have received the doctorate have found it immensely helpful to meet with the members of the committee as a group during their completion year. The Programs Administrator is glad to be of assistance in scheduling a meeting with the committee at any time during the writing process.

The dissertation should be an original contribution to knowledge. It must follow the guidelines in the Supplement to the GSAS Handbook entitled *The Form of the Doctoral Thesis*

<https://gsas.harvard.edu/academics/dissertations>.

Another helpful link from GSAS is found here:

http://handbook.gsas.harvard.edu/files/gdashandbook1617/files/form_of_dissertation_spring_2015.pdf

Before the degree is granted, a candidate is expected to defend the dissertation in a public forum.

Dissertation Defenses are scheduled by the Programs Administrator for Graduate Studies.

	<u>November 2017 Degree</u>	<u>March 2018 Degree</u>	<u>May 2018 Degree</u>
Full draft due to the dissertation advisor	May 1, 2017	September 1, 2017	January 1st of the Graduation Year
Full draft returned by dissertation advisor	June 1, 2017	October 9, 2017	January 30 th of the Graduation Year
Degree Application due the Registrar	August 7, 2017	December 15, 2017	April 6, 2018
Final unbound copy due the dissertation committee	August 1, 2017	December 9, 2017	March 30 th of the Graduation Year
Dissertation Committee will notify student of dissertation approval and/or additional revisions	August 20, 2017	December 30, 2017	April 20 th of the Graduation Year
GSAS Dissertation Submission Deadline	September 7, 2017	January 19, 2018	May 11, 2018

TRANSFER CREDIT

A PhD student who has completed at least one full term of satisfactory work in the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences may file an application at the Registrar's Office requesting that work done in a graduate program elsewhere be counted toward the academic residence requirement. Forms are available [online](#).

No more than the equivalent of eight courses (32 credits) may be so counted for the PhD.

An application for academic credit for work done elsewhere must contain a list of the courses, with grades, for which the student is seeking credit, and must be approved by the student's department. In order for credit to be granted, official transcripts showing the courses for which credit is sought must be submitted to the registrar, unless they are already on file with the Graduate School. No guarantee is given in advance that such an application will be granted.

Only courses taken in a Harvard AB-AM or AB-SM program, in Harvard Summer School, as a GSAS Special Student or FAS courses taken as an employee under the Tuition Assistance Program (TAP) may be counted toward the minimum academic residence requirements for a master's degree.

Academic and financial credit for courses taken as a GSAS Special Student or FAS courses taken as a Harvard employee prior to admission to a degree program may be granted for a maximum of four courses (16 credits) toward a one-year master's and eight courses (32 credits) toward a two-year master's or the PhD degree.

Applications for academic and financial credit must be approved by the student's department and should then be submitted to the Registrar's Office.