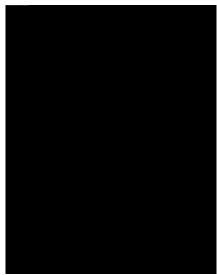
Guidelines

! from the director



Welcome to the fall 2023 edition of the guidelines for the doctoral program in English. By offering these guidelines, we mean to collect together materials—much of which have existed in the program for years—that will assist doctoral candidates in planning their degree programs. These are not literally the rules governing our work together; rather, we have tried to assemble descriptive materials that cover what candidates have customarily done, what past PhD directors and dissertation committee chairs have expected, how to find resources here at BC and beyond, and, in a few places, descriptions of the community we try to build here. As you know, we pride ourselves on offering a program that allows individual candidates the flexibility to shape many dimensions of their intellectual and professional work. At the same time, we believe

that the structures described here will assist you in crafting a program of study that will serve you well on the path to your doctorate and beyond.

My particular focus as PhD director has been on gathering some practical kinds of information previously not included in the guide, such as internal and external funding opportunities, information about how the stipend is paid out, darity on the history and rationale of the exam structure, advice for dissertators, particulars of dissertation fellowship application processes, and detailed academic and non-academic placement information for the past ten (now twelve) years for

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- 2. List of English Department "People" page. As of 2020 you count as people and are included on this page, because I spoke up about it. Yay!

 https://www.bc.edu/content/bc-web/schools/mcas/departments/english/people.html
- 3. The PhD "Student News" page. Please send any updates (publications, conferences, other significant activity and achievements) to our department's other administrative assistant, Olivia Baker bc.edu.

https://www.bc.edu/content/bcweb/schools/mcas/departments/english/graduate/doctoral-

The point-person for all money matters in our department is English Department administrative assistant Chelsea

In 2021, there was an issue with coverage for basic behavioral health services when the Boston College student health plan changed payers from Harvard Pilgrim to United Healthcare. Graduate

Clough Center Fellowships

In the past, BC's Clough Center for the Study of Constitutional Democracy offered year-long graduate fellowships (\$6,000 in 2021–22). In 2022, they reorganized how they disburse fellowships, making them both more lucrative and a larger time commitment. Now they favor a 2-to 3-year cohort model for Doctoral Fellowships. Fellows are expected to attend weekly seminars, provide feedback on peers' work across disciplines, and present once from their own work. The pay is \$7,500 in year 1 and \$5,000 in year 2, with the possibility of summer funding of \$1,500–\$3,000 in later years. Each year I nominate from among the rising first-years for this.

Current grads are eligible to apply each spring for "a small number of one-year doctoral fellowships," which pay between \$6,000 and \$7,500. My impression is that there are fewer of these to go around than before Clough switched to a cohort model for incoming grads. Current grads are also eligible to apply for Research and Public Service Fellowships, which provide up to \$4,000 in summer funding for independent work.

Graduate assistantships

Graduate assistantships are part-time on-campus positions filled on a rolling basis as needed. Here is an incomplete list of recurring positions in which English MAs and PhDs have worked or would be suited to work (there may be other, ad hoc assistantships in any given year—the best policy is to ask around):

- 1. ArtsFest (spring)
- 2. Boston College Libraries / English / History, Collaborative Digital Projects Lab (new)
- 3. Burns Library
- 4. Center for Digital Innovation in Learning (CDIL)
- 5. Center for Teaching Excellence (CTE)
- 6.

Stipended graduate candidates are not permitted to work more than nine hours per week during the academic year in on-campus roles on top of full-

École Normale Supérieure (ENS) exchange program

Thanks to a formal partnership that began in 1989, each year a Boston College graduate candidate is granted the position of pensionnaire étranger for one academic year at the École Normale Supérieure in Paris (and in turn, one ENS student comes to BC as Instructor of French). Founded

An incomplete list:

1.

- 18. Children's Literature Association (up to \$1,500) https://www.childlitassn.org/hannah-beiter-graduate-student-research-grant
- 19. Consortium for Faculty Diversity https://www.gettysburg.edu/offices/provost/consortium-for-faculty-diversity/fellowships/
- 20. Council for European Studies (\$27,500) https://councilforeuropeanstudies.org/grants-awardsfellowships/dissertation-completion/
- 21. Council of American Overseas Research Centers (CAORC) (transregional research) (\$11,500)
 - https://www.caorc.org/multi-fellowship-guidelines

22. Council on Library Information and Resources (CLIR) (research in original sources) https://www.dir.org/fellowships/mellon/

38. Hispanic Scholarly Fund https://www.hsf.net/scholarship

- 39. Houghton Library (Cambridge, MA) (\$3,600) https://library.harvard.edu/grantsfellowships/houghton-library-visitingfellowships
- 40. Huntington Library (San Marino, CA) https://www.huntington.org/fellowships
- 41. Institute for Citizens and Scholars ethical and religious values (\$27,500) https://citizensandscholars.org/fellowships/for-

- 58. National Oceanic and Atmospheric Association (NOAA) (marine policy) https://www.seagrant.noaa.gov/ Knauss-Fellowship-Program
- 59. Native Forward Scholars Fund https://www.aigcs.org/scholarshipsfellowships/#grad-schol
- 60. Newberry Library (Chicago, IL) http://www.newberry.org/fellowships
- 61. Paul and Daisy Soros Fellowships for New Americans https://www.pdsoros.org/apply/eligibility
- 62. P.E.O. (for women candidates) (\$20,000) http://www.peointernational.org/about-

- 78. Williams College (diversity) (\$50,000)

 https://faculty.williams.edu/graduatefellowships-2/graduatefellowships/
 79. Winterthur Museum, Garden, and Library (Winterthur, DE) (\$1,750/month)

 https://www.winterthur.org/fellowships-available/

 80. Yale Center for British Art (New Haven, CT)

 <a href="https://britishart.yale.edu/research/residential-sola@area/(artiol 0.3 ((i) 0.3y) 0.2 50(s) 0.1 (h) 0.5 (A) -0.5 (r) 0.5 (r

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	I. Advising, coursework, and program requirements	

Coursework

PhD candidates in English are <u>required</u> to take a PhD seminar in each of their first four semesters. The seminar is on a different topic and taught by a different faculty member each semester. We do our best not to have the PhD seminar conflict with other English graduate courses or with your teaching schedules, but in the nature of things no guarantee is possible. Those who enter the program without an M.A. degree are encouraged to take a methods course ("Introduction to Advanced Research," "Issues and Methods in American Studies," or "Issues and Methods in English Studies").

Candidates may take electives, including regular graduate seminars, independent study courses (called Readings and Research or "R& Rs"), and courses at partner institutions (see subsection below). Note that faculty are not compensated for R& Rs. Candidates participate in the pedagogy seminar in their second and third year. In their third or fourth year, they enroll in the Advanced Research Colloquium, a required professionalization seminar

- Boston-Area Graduate Consortium. Candidates are eligible to cross-register for one course
 per semester at Boston University, Brandeis University, or Tufts University. There is no
 cross-registration during the summer.
- 2. The Graduate Consortium in Women's Studies (GCWS) describes itself as "a pioneering effort by faculty at nine degree-granting institutions in the Boston area and MIT to advance women's studies scholarship." Faculty and candidates are drawn from BC, BU, Brandeis, Harvard University, MIT, Northeastern University, Simmons College, Tufts, and the University of Massachusetts at Boston. Several of our faculty members (notably Frances Restuccia and

- seminar customarily invites a faculty member or two to join the discussion and share their experiences. Workshop coordinators set the date/ time of meetings, select the topic, invite faculty, reserve a room (with the help of Olivia), and purchase snacks (save receipts and turn them in to Chelsea for reimbursement, or have Olivia order ahead of time thru BC catering). The pedagogy seminar for the 2023-2024 academic year is a hybrid learning experience that combines asynchronous learning in the form of micro-courses on Canvas and in-person, synchronous discussions that occur approximately once a month. Participants are eligible to earn digital badges for their completion of various learning activities online. At the end of the academic year, participants may also earn a digital badge representing their successful completion of the requirements of the pedagogy seminar for the year, including both asynchronous and synchronous components. The directors for 2023–24 are Noël Ingram <ingramno@bc.edu> and Kelly Gray <grayko@bc.edu>.
- 3. In prior years, candidates and faculty had an opportunity to participate in a series of Research Collaboratives organized and run jointly by candidates and graduate faculty. This was funded by the graduate school under the rubric of "Preparing Future Faculty," as part of a large teaching development grant to the university, and they were a great success for

to seeing them present highly polished work forthcoming or long since published. The event is all q& a, without any

Teaching

Doctoral candidates divide their teaching opportunities over three or four years in the program. Always keep in mind that the range of teaching opportunities available to you here is highly unusual: English PhD programs at the lvies and other tippy-top private universities 'protect' grads from almost all teaching obligations, while programs at big public universities put PhDs to work immediately as glorified adjuncts teaching multiple sections of composition over and over. The range of teaching experiences

FWS instructors followed by weekly meetings during the semester. You will find our department has an elaborate and effective administrative structure supporting sections of this course. Then, in the other semester, you commonly teach either Lit Core or an introductory course for sophomore and junior English majors: Studies in Narrative (SIN) or Studies in Poetry (SIP). For the non-FWS course, you will be assigned a faculty teaching mentor (see the next page). In both courses you will work closely with the directors of these programs, currently Paula Mathieu <mathiepa@bc.edu> (FWS) and Tina Klein <kleinc@bc.edu> (Lit Core).

In your fourth year, you teach an undergraduate elective of your own design in consultation with me and the Chair and either Lit Core, FWS, SIN, or SIP in the other. During this year, you will again have a teaching mentor. In addition, you may want to invite your adviser or another faculty mentor to visit your classes. Many professors have noticed that opportunities for true intellectual exchange about teaching are shockingly few and far between in the academic life, outside of high-stakes hiring and firing discussions. I know it's scary, but seize the opportunity to get constructive, lower-stakes feedback!

Note that your sections of Core classes in years 3 and 4 come with lower-than-normal enrollment caps in recognition that you are at the beginning of your pedagogical career.

There are teaching opportunities, of course, beyond the fourth year. Instructors past the stipend or fellowship years make the adjunct rate per course (\$7,340 in AY 2023–24) and teach Core courses with faculty-level enrollment caps (currently, 34 for Lit Core and 15 for FWS). We also think it is very worthwhile to expand your teaching experience to include teaching in the summer (for example in the Opportunities Through Education program) or adjuncting at other local institutions in the fifth year and beyond.

Advisers

Every candidate in the program, at every stage, will have a designated faculty adviser, drawn from among our tenure-track faculty (Assistant Professor, Associate Professor, or Professor, but not professors "of the Practice," who are full-time non-tenel N3 (s) 0.1 (s) 0.1 (i) 0.3 (g) 0.1 (n) 0.5 (9) 2.19 (2021) (2021

After that, you yourself discover the faculty member who will ultimately chair your dissertation, if it is not going to be your initial adviser. It might well happen when you begin your major field exam; certainly it will be settled as you compose your dissertation prospectus and prepare for the dissertation prospectus exam. Please notify me if and when there is a change in adviser. Your adviser has the same responsibilities as before, but much of her or his work is aimed towards (i) guiding you to complete your exam program, (ii) keeping tabs on your teaching, (iii) supervising work toward the dissertation, and (iv) supporting you as you seek academic or non-academic jobs

Teaching mentors

Teaching mentor assignments are made each spring for rising second-, third-, and fourth-years.

In your second year, when you serve as a TA, your faculty instructor for that course will serve as your teaching mentor.

In your third year, you will work one semester with the FWS mentoring system. In the other semester, you will have an assigned teaching mentor. In the spring, I will ask you to volunteer

school charges you for tuition up front and then removes the charge later, which is annoying, but we don't have direct control over it.

Research and Scholarship Integrity (RSI) requirement

The university organizes a series of panels for PhD candidates on ethical issues that arise over the course of a professional career. These are mainly geared toward the STEM fields, but some may be of interest to you. (We used to require you to complete the sequence, but as of 2022 we were given the opportunity to opt out, and we took it.) There are two

Teaching and writing prizes

Doctoral candidates are eligible for the Donald J. White Teaching Excellence Awards, which are given each spring. Award winners are nominated by me and the writing program director, in consultation with each candidate's adviser and past or present teaching mentors, and chosen by a three-person faculty committee, normally identical to the PhD admissions committee (the personnel changes every year). The award is \$600 for a TF or \$350 for a TA.

Doctoral candidates also compete for the Von Hendy Award for an article-length piece of critical writing (published or unpublished). One award goes to a PhD candidate, another to an MA candidate. The MA director announces and administers the Von Hendy Award. There is a special faculty selection committee for this award, unconnected to the PhD admissions committee. The award is \$250.

Academic conferences

During your time as a graduate candidate, it's a good idea to present a paper at a scholarly conference or two. Although graduate conferences offer opportunities to practice paper delivery skills and connect with other candidates, it's generally unwise to invest a great deal of time or money attending multiple graduate conferences outside Boston.

Victorian studies, as well-regarded generalist journals not quite on the top shelf, like Review of English Studies

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II. The exams

General guidelines

Here is the general philosophy of the sequence minor—major—prospectus—dissertation. Because it is meant to be a culmination of the PhD degree, a dissertation should be understood as part of a deliberately teleological course of study. Qualifying exams in particular should be planned with examiners to work together, the minor identifying a specific area of interest, the major expanding out from this area of interest to demonstrate expertise in a well-defined and capacious field, and the prospectus turning attention to the primary and secondary material explicitly relevant to the dissertation. Together, the exams should build momentum so that the writing of the dissertation will start quickly after the last exam and in con4 (I) 0.8hs nn4wrn eanaathorntl.2 (h) 0in the .2 (h) 0

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The candidate drafts the prospectus in consultation with her or his adviser and the intended dissertation committee. Committee members are chosen from among BC's faculty in English or related fields, or one or two (but usually not the committee chair) may be affiliated with other institutions.

(Re: "outside readers." There is a long tradition of this here at BC and in other programs. Reasons to consider including a faculty member from beyond BC would be: to add a specialization to your committee relevant to your project but which no one on our faculty has, to impress someone in the field and get them in your corner; to cross disciplines. A downside would be that you will likely get less handson writing help from this person. That is because they aren't expecting to be the person returning drafts with extensive comments week in and week out, though there may be exceptions. The process for inviting in a so-called outside reader is as follows: (1) check with me that there are departmental funds for the modest honorarium we pay; (2)

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	III. The dissertation	

General advice

A dissertation is a book-length, researched writing project. In the past, BC English dissertations have ranged in length from 31 pages (Steven Abrams, 1976) to 1,063 pages (Jorg Feodor Drewitz, 1994!). My current recommendation for length, keeping in mind that the dissertation is often the template or first draft of an academic monograph, is 150–350 pages (50,000–120,000 words).

However, we can imagine—and in the past, some of our graduates have written—other forms of dissertation that could not be dassified as primarily critical, literary-historical, or pedagogical-theoretical in nature. We recommend that dissertators interested in these forms of dissertation solicit input from all members of their prospective dissertation committees at the prospectus examination stage, or later as the project evolves. Candidates should be advised that some forms of dissertation carry greater risk on the tenure-track job market depending on how they are couched and executed.

Dissertations of non-traditional form or focus are bound by the same rigorous standards and general guidelines as traditional, literary-critical dissertations, with allowance made for the different ways that research might be expressed and the different archives in which it might be pursued, as well as the variety of conversations in which the dissertation might take part. We are aware of four types of dissertations of non-traditional form or focus, although we do not mean to suggest that these exhaust the possibilities or are mutually exclusive:

- 1. Dissertations focusing on cultural products other than literary works. For example, dissertations about film, photography, music, or bookmaking. Such a dissertation will find its home in our department on the basis of its methodology, which must combine dose attention to form with a comprehensive understanding of an archive, a field of study, a critical method, and/ or a place (town, city, region, nation, continent, hemisphere), just as a traditional dissertation must.
 - a. Examples: Timothy Lindgren, "Place Blogging: Local Economies of Attention in the Network" (2009); Nirmal Trivedi, "Witnessing Empire: U.S. Imperialism and the Emergence of the War Correspondent" (2009); Matthew Bolinder, "Solid Forests and Fluid Utterances: Reading the Maine Woods" (2008); Susana Martins, "Santos Unnatural Futures: Imagining the High-tech in Contemporary American Culture" (2003); Catherine Eagan, "'I did imagine. . .we had ceased to be whitewashed Negroes': The Racial Formation of Irish Identity in Nineteenth-Century Ireland and America" (2000)
- 2. Dissertations discussing and classifying a substantial primary-source archive. For example, a critical edition, where critical denotes textual criticism rather than literary criticism. Dissertations of this form must constitute a substantial, original contribution to knowledge in a field of study and would normally be expected to supersede any closely comparable prior works on the subject, just as a traditional dissertation should.
 - a. Example: Timothy Lindgren, "Place Blogging: Local Economies of Attention in the Network" (2009)
- 3. Dissertations primarily expressing research in a form other than analysis or criticism. For example, a dissertation whose voice primarily embodies rather than criticizes a place, text, perspective, or archive. Or again, a substantial translation of a significant work, with critical introduction and notes. In these cases, we require the dissertation to reflect an engagement

with primary and/or secondary sources as expansive and intensive as for a traditional

The dissertation defense

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After the dissertation is complete and has been approved by all the dissertation committee members, it is time to schedule a dissertation defense. The defense

! IV. Program outcomes

Placement officer

The job placement officer works closely with me to advise, guide, and track all jobseekers each fall. The primary focus is on academic employment, but the placement officer can also collaborate with the Career Center to advise on non-academic job opportunities. The most important tasks are close reading of all job materials, strategic advice on where to apply and how to present oneself to best advantage, and mock interviews later in the fall semester in preparation for MLA (or other) interviews in the winter. Conventionally, the Associate Director for the PhD program serves as the placement officer. My Associate Director for 2022–23 is once again James Najarian <najariaj @bc.edu>.

Time to degree

Excluding a non-traditional candidate who entered the program in 1989 and returned to complete her dissertation in 2020 after three decades away from academia (see below), the average time-to-degree in our program since 2011 is 7.4 years. This is typical for a humanities PhD program. See https://www.amacad.org/humanities-indicators/higher-education/years-attainment-humanities-doctorate (Indicator II–27b).

Graduation

There are a few considerations particular to the semester of graduation worth recording here. After graduation, you will lose your Boston College email address, your library privileges, and your "Student Profiles" page on the website by the end of the calendar year unless you continue to work part-time at BC. Anticipating this, if you don't have another university affiliation incoming in the near term, it is a good idea to send a large, bcc'd email blast to your professional acquaintances before graduation offering a non-BC professional email address so everyone can stay in touch. If you don't already have one, think in terms of some variation on firstname.lastname@gmail.com not art1chokeh34rtz@hotmail.com.

A savvy way to sustain your email address and library access after graduation is to pu-0.4 (o-0.3 (267.000 (-(e) -0.4

and Assistant Dean of Students, Harvard College, Harvard University (non-tenure-track) and Associate Dean and Assistant Professor (tenure-track), United S

- 32. legal intern, ACLU Racial Justice Project; was co-director, New York University Prison Teaching Project; earned a JD. from New York University
- 33. glassblowing teacher; was a part-time instructor at Boston College
- 34. homemaker, New York
- 35. podcast host; was candidate for Massachusetts State Representative, researcher for Boston Mayor Marty Walsh's transition team
- 36. published poet, Maine; was editor, Hunger Mountain (literary journal)
- 37. homemaker and homeschool teacher, Massachusetts

Full-time, permanent academic placements, 1990–2010⁵

- 1. Assistant Professor, Framingham State University (tenuretrack); was Assistant Professor, Penn State University at Altoona (tenuretrack)
- 2. Lecturer in Writing, Dartmouth College (non-tenure-track)
- 3. Director of Academic Services, Salem State College
- 4. Assistant Professor, Diablo Valley College, CA (community college) (tenure-track)
- Assistant Director for Design Innovation, Center for Digital Innovation in Learning, Boston College
- 6. Lecturer, Writing Seminar Program, Princeton University (non-tenure-track)
- 7. Digital Marketing Officer, University of Manchester

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