

School of
**FILM, MEDIA
& THEATRE**

2020-2021

PHD HANDBOOK

FMT.GSU.EDU

PhD Handbook 2020-2021

Doctor of Philosophy in Communication Studies

- **Concentration in Moving Image Studies**

School of Film, Media & Theatre

College of the Arts

Georgia State University

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Georgia State University

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INTRODUCTION

The PhD Handbook describes requirements for earning the Doctoral degree in the School of Film, Media & Theatre, College of the Arts, Georgia State University. It details School and program curricula along with School policies and procedures that govern graduate students. Students in the School are expected to be familiar with all the requirements, policies, and procedures described herein. Students are responsible for knowing about and complying with the School of Film, Media & Theatre policies and requirements described in this handbook as well as the policies and requirements of the College of the Arts detailed in the Graduate Catalog. In general, students must adhere to the course and other requirements in effect when they enroll, as described in the edition of the PHD Handbook that corresponds to the year they entered. However, students may elect to be

governed by a later edition of the handbook (in its entirety). To do so, submit a request in writing to the Graduate Director.

GRADUATE ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Dr. Greg Smith , Professor and Director, School of Film, Media & Theatre Suite 1016, 404-413-5605, gsmith@gsu.edu	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assistantship Assignments • Conflict Resolution • Final Budget Approval
Dr. Phil Lewis , Professor and Associate Director Suite 1010, 404-413-5673, plewis14@gsu.edu	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Course Scheduling
Dr. Ethan Tussey , Associate Professor and Graduate Director Suite 1023, 404-413-5881, etussey@gsu.edu	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Applications • Graduate Committee Requests • Progress to Degree • Graduation • Assistantship Applications • Assistantship Assignments • Forms
Ms. Karin Smoot , Graduate Program Coordinator Suite 1030, 404-413-5170, ksmoot@gsu.edu	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Applications • Progress to Degree • Graduation • Forms
Ms. Gina Anderson , Business Manager Suite 1030, 404-413-6559, randerson23@gsu.edu	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Financial Paperwork • Hiring Paperwork • Assistantship Assistance • Travel Funding
Mr. Beau Flournoy , Office Manager Suite 1027, 404-413-5321, bflournoy@gsu.edu	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Course Overrides • Room Scheduling
Mr. Matt Rowles , COTA Technology Officer 404-413-6701, cotatech@gsu.edu	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Technology Issues

GRADUATE STUDENT LISTSERV

FLME–Grads is an Internet mailing list for news and announcements regarding graduate study in the School of Film, Media & Theatre. FLME–grads is the primary way that the Graduate Director and the School Director communicate information to School of Film, Media & Theatre graduate students. All graduate students must subscribe. You can do so by visiting the [Listserv page](#) and selecting Join reaching out to the Graduate Program Coordinator.

GSU STUDENT HEALTH INSURANCE

Georgia State's Student Health Insurance Plan (SHIP) plan provides comprehensive, affordable health insurance to eligible students and their dependents. The plan complies with the Affordable Care Act (ACA). SHIP is a UnitedHealthcare Choice Plus plan, which provides coverage for preventive care, hospitalization, surgery, maternity, well-baby/well-child care, emergency care for

accidents or illness, medically necessary physician care, prescription drugs and mental health. Please visit the [Student Health Insurance](#) page for more details.

TRAVEL POLICY

Film, Media & Theatre graduate students are eligible to receive travel funding up to a set amount determined by yearly budget constraints. If a student is traveling to a conference to present a paper or qualifies to present work at a festival you can apply for travel funding by submitting a Travel Funding form available on the main website for the School of Film, Media & Theatre under [Graduate>Current Graduate Students](#).

TECH POLICY

The COTA technology support team (COTA Tech) provides technical assistance with audio-visual systems, computers, mobile devices, printers, and software in COTA offices and private classrooms, labs, and studios. Please note that COTA Tech support does not support personal devices —this includes troubleshooting and installation of hardware or software. Please contact COTA Techatcotatech@gsu.edu or 404-413-6701 with any questions.

REGISTERING FOR CLASSES

PROGRESS TOWARD DEGREE

Prior to each enrollment period, be sure to update your progress toward degree form, available on the main website for the School of Film, Media & Theatre under [Graduate>Current Graduate Students](#), and discuss your enrollment plans with your Advisor or the Graduate Director.

SCHEDULING CLASSES

Once enrollment is open you can add and drop classes through the first week of the semester. At the close of the add/drop period you will be charged for the credit hours even if you withdraw from the class. If you have not paid for tuition hours and student fees by the end of the add/drop period, you will be dropped automatically from your class rosters. **Please be sure to select the majority of your classes at the 8000 level** (students are permitted to take two classes at the 6000 level) as those are the courses that count toward your degree.

1. Log in to your PAWS account
2. Click on the "Enrollment" Tab
3. Click "Add/Drop/Withdraw Classes"
4. Select the appropriate semester
5. Select "Class Search" and then "Advanced Search"
6. Select "Graduate" and then "FILM"
7. Select the course you want and click register

Enrolling in three courses (3 credit hours each) for a total of nine-twelve credits (9-12) is considered a full course load but the decision of how many courses to take per semester is decision for the student and their advisor.

FILLED CLASSES

If there is a seminar you are particularly interested in, but the course is filled, feel free to contact the instructor to express your interest. The instructor may be willing to sign a Special Authorization form to admit additional students in specific cases.

DEGREE REQUIREMENTS

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY IN COMMUNICATION STUDIES CONCENTRATION IN MOVING IMAGE STUDIES (68 credit hours)

1. Required courses (5)
 - a. FLME 8111: Introduction to Graduate Studies (2)
 - b. FLME 8035: Pedagogy (3)
2. An additional thirty-three (33) hours in area of concentration:
 - a. FLME 6060: Close Textual Analysis
 - b. FLME 8160: Style & Narrative Analysis
 - c. FLME 8385: Critical Visual Cultural Studies
 - d. FLME 8420: Media Historiography
 - e. FLME 8430: Media Industries
 - f. FLME 8640: Television Studies
 - g. FLME 8680: Media Reception Studies
 - h. FLME 8690: Media and Cultural Studies
 - i. FLME 8980: Special Topics: Advanced Topics in Theory
 - j. FLME 8980: Special Topics: New Media and Convergence Culture
 - k. FLME 8980: Special Topics: Queer Media
 - l. FLME 8980: Special Topics: Black Popular Culture
 - m. FLME 8980: Special Topics: Aesthetics & Critical Race Theory
 - n. FLME 8980: Special Topics: Cinematic Objects
 - o. FLME 8980: Independent Study
 - p. FLME 8900: Internship
3. At least nine (9) hours of research tools:
 - a. FLME 8160: Style & Narrative Analysis
 - b. FLME 8385: Critical Visual Cultural Studies
 - c. FLME 8420: Media Historiography
 - d. FLME 8430: Media Industries
 - e. FLME 8680: Media Reception Studies
 - f. FLME 8980: Advanced Topics in Theory
4. Twenty-one (21) hours of FLME 9999 Dissertation Research

5. A written and oral comprehensive examination
6. A successful Prospectus defense
7. A successful dissertation
8. A successful dissertation defense

IDEAL DEGREE PATH

Semester	Coursework and Requirement Checklist
Fall Year 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FLME 8111: Intro to Grad Studies (2) • FLME 8035: Pedagogy (3) • Research Tools Course 1 (3) • Elective 1 (3)
Spring Year 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research Tools Course 2 (3) • Elective 2 (3) • Elective 3 (3)
Summer Year 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Elective 4 (3)
Fall Year 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research Tools Course 3 (3) • Elective 4 (3) • Elective 5 (3)
Spring Year 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Elective 6 (3) • Elective 7 (3) • Elective 8 (3) • Select Dissertation Advisor and Committee
Summer Year 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Elective 9 (3) • Elective 10 (3) • Comps Lists Approved
Fall Year 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Elective 11: FLME 8980: Independent Study (3) • Take and Defend Comps • Submit Comps Paperwork
Spring Year 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FLME 9999 Dissertation Research (7) • Find Outside Member of Dissertation Committee • Write and Defend Prospectus • Submit Prospectus Paperwork • Apply to Graduate
Fall Year 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FLME 9999 Dissertation Research (7) • Research Dissertation
Spring Year 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FLME 9999 Dissertation Research (7) • Complete and Defend Dissertation • Submit Dissertation Paperwork • Format and Upload Dissertation to Degree Works • Graduate

COURSES OUTSIDE THE SCHOOL AND OUTSIDE THE UNIVERSITY (ARCHE)

Students may take courses from any department in the university. Indeed, many of our students have earned an additional subject area certification, such as [the Women's, Gender and Sexuality Studies \(WGSS\) Graduate Certificate](#), by taking classes outside of the School. In addition, the Atlanta Regional Council for Higher Education ([ARCHE](#)) [cross registration program](#) gives access to courses offered by other area Schools. The student's Dissertation Advisor and the Graduate Director must approve the courses prior to the student's application to register. Application deadlines [are very early each semester](#), so students should consult participating Schools' course schedules as soon as they become available and provide the Dissertation Advisor and Graduate Director with syllabi and explanation with ample time for review. If approved these courses count toward your elective credits as long as they are 8000 level courses or equivalent (students are permitted to take two classes at the 6000 level).

INDEPENDENT STUDIES

Graduate students are eligible to enroll in supervised independent study for up to three (3) hours of course credit. PHD students can sign up for FLME 8980: Special Topics: Independent Study if they make arrangements with a faculty member willing to supervise it, and whose research expertise is related to the subject matter of the course. A form is available on the School of Film, Media & Theatre main website under [Graduate>Current Graduate Students](#). The negotiated workload for a three (3)-credit hour independent study must be fully equal to the workload normally expected in a standard 3-credit hour seminar. In addition, students must receive advance approval from the School Director for any independent study involving more than two (2) students on a related topic in the same academic year with the same instructor. Students are expected to take the vast majority of their coursework in regularly scheduled classes. Normally, no more than two (2) independent studies will count toward the degree. Students must petition the Graduate Committee to count more than two. Faculty are under no obligation to offer independent study access given their other responsibilities. Independent studies must be approved by the School Director and will not be approved if their content duplicates courses already in the catalog, regardless of whether those courses are offered at a time convenient to the student. Students interested in arranging an independent study should plan as far ahead of time as possible and should include the Graduate Director in their planning to assure the independent study will count toward degree requirements.

INTERNSHIPS

Graduate students are also eligible to enroll in internships for up to three (3) hours of course credit. Students must have completed twelve (12) hours of coursework in the department, have at least a 3.0 GPA, and have a full-time faculty member from their area of concentration sponsor them. Students should apply for an internship one (1) semester prior to the semester of actual enrollment. Applications for internship credit are available on the School of Film, Media & Theatre main website under [Graduate>Current Graduate Students](#).

TRANSFER CREDIT

- A maximum of six (6) hours of graduate courses in FMT or in an area related to the student's program of study from another accredited institution may be applied toward the PHD degree.

- Application for transfer must be made during the student's first two (2) semesters at Georgia State University.
- Transfer credit is subject to evaluation and approval by the School's Graduate Committee, the School Director, and the Associate Dean of the College of the Arts.
- To apply for transfer credit, the student should submit the Graduate Transfer of Credit Form available on the School of Film, Media & Theatre main website under [Graduate>Current Graduate Students](#) to the Graduate Director.

WAIVERS FOR REQUIRED COURSES

A student that would like to waive a requirement must contact the Graduate Director and the instructor of the course that they are attempting to waive. Upon the discretion of the Graduate Director and the Director of the School, the student may be permitted to present a formally written explanation of the skill sets and competencies that the student feels they already possess and that meet the goals of the course as defined by the syllabus and interpreted by the course instructor. Approval of the waiver ultimately resides with the Director of the School.

ASSISTANTSHIPS

The School of Film, Media & Theatre has three types for assistantships:

- graduate laboratory assistantships (GLAs), who assist the School in carrying out its teaching responsibilities under the direct supervision of a faculty member;
- graduate teaching assistantships (GTAs), who have the independent responsibility for overseeing and teaching an undergraduate course; and
- graduate research assistantships (GRAs), who assist individual faculty members in their research endeavors.

ASSISTANTSHIP BENEFITS

Students receive a full tuition waiver, a stipend, and a 10% discount at the university bookstore. Assistantships do not cover the cost of student fees.

ASSISTANTSHIP TIME PERIOD

Assistantships are normally awarded in the late spring, and the assistantship term is annual (i.e., running from July 1 – June 30) after the first year (first-year student assistantships do not begin until the start of the first fall semester in which a student has enrolled). Typically, assistantships offered prior to enrollment last for 4 years. No single assistantship is awarded for a duration beyond 4 years. Assistantships are subject to annual review and can be terminated if the student is not performing up to expectations. If renewed, your assistantship assignment will be assigned prior to the following fall semester. If your assistantship will not be renewed or if your funding line has expired, you will be notified after the end of year graduate student evaluation period.

ASSISTANTSHIP EVALUATION, PROBATION AND TERMINATION

Each spring the School of Film, Media & Theatre faculty review the work of each graduate student. During this evaluation period the student may be asked to complete a survey about their work in the prior year and will be asked to meet with their advisor or the Graduate Director to provide an updated plan of study form. In addition, students on Assistantship will have their work as an assistant reviewed.

Students will be evaluated on the following criteria (when applicable to the assistantship):

1. Feedback from the faculty advisor to whom the student is assigned
2. consistently achieve an above average student response score of 4.0 or above on their teaching evaluations, if they have assigned teaching duties
3. consistently receive a grade of satisfactory for their performance in FLME 8780 (Directed Research) if they are assigned research and/or lab duties
4. Maintain a grade point average in graduate coursework of 3.5 or above
5. if assigned teaching duties, submit all student grades correctly and completely, prior to leaving campus at the end of any given semester. This includes having those grades verified and approved, in writing, by the Graduate Program Coordinator or a staff member designated by the Director. Failure to do so creates severe difficulties for undergraduate students including the suspension of financial aid, and will result in the teaching assistant's graduate assistantship being immediately put on probation.

PROBATION AND TERMINATION

Students will be notified at the year-end evaluation of unsatisfactory work and whether they are on probation or if their assistantship is terminated. The School Director and Graduate Director will advise the student how to remedy problems that lead to probation. If the conditions of probation are not met in the following year the assistantship may be terminated.

At any time, a student's assistantship may be placed on probation or be terminated altogether based on a failure to perform assigned duties. Years in which funding has been denied because of the outcome of a probation situation count against one's years of total eligibility. That is, students are eligible for funding for two (4) years contingent upon performance; students who lose funding because of performance may or may not receive a total of two (4) years of support.

APPLYING FOR AN ASSISTANTSHIP

Any graduate student may apply for an assistantship (even those that have had an assistantship put on probation or terminated). Most assistantships are awarded during the application process. If additional funding becomes available, the Graduate Committee will consult the assistantship applications. To submit an application and be considered please fill out an application on the School of Film, Theatre & Media main website under [Graduate>Assistantships](#). Additionally, students seeking an assistantship should be attentive to the [FLME-Grads Listserv](#) as opportunities for funding are routinely distributed.

DIRECTED RESEARCH HOURS

Students on assistantship must register for a total of twelve (12) credit hours every semester, including summer semesters, to maintain their assistantship. To reach the 12 hours, students can sign up for FLME 8780 Directed Research under the name of the School Director. Sign up for as many credit hours of FLME 8780 that brings your total credit hours up to 12 hours. For example, if

you have signed up for three classes in a semester totaling 9 credit hours you would sign up for 3 credit hours of FLME 8780 to make a total of 12 credit hours.

MAINTAINING GOOD STANDING AND ACTIVE ENROLLMENT

It is the responsibility of students enrolled in the PHD program to keep themselves informed of rules and policies governing their program of study. Upon first registration, the university assigns each student an official email address, to which important information about a student's status is regularly sent. Students are responsible for regularly accessing that email account, thereby staying aware of important policy announcements.

RESIDENCY REQUIREMENT

At least half of all coursework-connected credit hours must be completed in residence.

GRADES

Students must earn a grade of B or above in all required coursework, including in their advanced methods course/s. If a grade lower than B is earned in a required course, it must be retaken (and grades earned in all attempts are calculated into the overall GSU grade point total). Given the plus-minus grading system in use at Georgia State University, a grade of "B-" does not fulfill this requirement. No course in which a student receives a grade of "C-" or below will credit to degree requirements.

In general, the College of the Arts and the School of Film, Media & Theatre expect students to maintain superior performance in coursework. The College requires that a grade point average (GPA) of 3.0 on a 4.0 scale be maintained and stipulates that a graduate student is subject to scholastic termination for failure to achieve a 3.0 cumulative GPA by the end of the next twelve (12) semester hours of enrollment in letter-graded courses after the student's GPA has fallen below a 3.0.

Graduate Assistants must meet a higher standard: they are expected to maintain a GPA in graduate coursework that falls between 3.5 and 4.0. Graduate Assistants will be notified at the year-end evaluation if their assistantship is put on probation or terminated, and the School Director and Graduate Director will advise the student how to remedy problems when they lead to probation.

CONTINUOUS ENROLLMENT REQUIREMENT

Students must take a minimum of six (6) hours in any consecutive three (3)-semester period (such as Fall-Summer-Spring). A student who has not registered for three (3) consecutive semesters is considered inactive and must [apply for reentry](#).

INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS

There is federal requirement that international graduate students residing in the US must register for at least 9 credit hours every semester. Students in their final year of course work can apply for a reduced course load through the [Office of International Student and Scholar Services](#).

GRADUATE STUDENT EVALUATIONS

Each spring the School of Film, Media & Theatre faculty review the work of each graduate student. During this evaluation period the student may be asked to complete a survey about their work in the prior year and will be asked to meet with their advisor or the Graduate Director to provide an updated plan of study form. Students will be evaluated based on their performance in class, in their assistantship (if applicable) and their professional interactions with the School of Film, Media & Theatre.

PROGRAM LEAVE OF ABSENCE

Students seeking an Academic Program Leave for one (1) to three (3) semesters must first contact the Graduate Program Coordinator to inform the department of their plans. Then the student would formally apply through the College of the Arts Graduate Office. The ten (10) year deadline for completing all degree requirements will nevertheless remain the same.

Graduate Assistants must, at the same time, submit a formal petition to the Graduate Committee to pause their assistantship for the duration of the intended leave. Students must continue to perform their assigned duties until and unless the College's Graduate Office formally approves the Academic Program Leave. During an approved leave, all parts of the graduate assistantship — workload, tuition waiver, and stipend — would be suspended, and the terms of renewal will be determined by the Director of the School, informed by the recommendation of the Graduate Committee.

Before reentry will be approved, the College of the Arts Graduate Office will seek approval from the Graduate Director and School Director.

APPLYING FOR REENTRY TO THE PROGRAM

Students who have been unable to maintain continuous enrollment or are outside the completion-term enrollment requirements are considered inactive and must apply for reentry by completing the [College of the Arts Reentry application](#).

DEGREE TIME LIMITS

All requirements for the doctoral degree must be completed within ten (10) years of the student's first semester in the program. In other words, only credits earned within ten (10) years of the semester in which the degree is to be awarded will count toward the degree. Students should be aware of and plan their course of study in accord with the time limitations on completion of various aspects of the program.

Time limit extension: While students may request an extension from the Graduate Petitions Committee of the College of the Arts, such extensions are only granted under demonstrably exceptional circumstances. Students should therefore be mindful of their timely progress through the program.

For consideration of an extension beyond the published time limit for degree programs, students must petition through the Graduate Office, College of the Arts. Upon receipt of the petition, both the

Graduate Director and the School Director are asked to make recommendations for or against the proposed extensions. Factors considered in those recommendations include: successful defense of the Research Dissertation/Creative Dissertation prospectus, demonstrated progress toward the completion of the exit project, level of support from the student's committee advisor, relevance of courses taken beyond the term limit to the student's exit project, and if a previous extension has been granted. Students should provide a convincing argument that includes a discussion of these factors. The Graduate Director and School Director may require a student to retake core classes (or classes that are particularly crucial to the student's exit project) if the student took those classes more than ten (10) years before the semester of petition and/or if the content of those courses has changed significantly. Students should also be made aware that the Graduate Council of the College of the Arts, the body who ultimately grants or denies petitions, only meets once each semester.

EMERGENCY WITHDRAWAL POLICY

Students may request an emergency withdrawal when a nonacademic emergency situation occurs, which prevents them from completing their coursework (e.g. severe medical problems, traumatic events) and when the timing or nature of the emergency prevents them from voluntarily withdrawing from their classes. Please see the GSU [Dean of Students Emergency Withdrawal Page](#) for further details.

In the event of an emergency withdrawal, any graduate assistant tuition waiver may be retracted. If possible and appropriate, student would meet with the Director of the School to discuss a plan and timeline for withdrawing and perhaps returning to the program.

POLICY ON ACADEMIC HONESTY

As members of the academic community, students are expected to recognize and uphold standards of intellectual and academic integrity. The University assumes as a basic and minimum standard of conduct in academic matters that students be honest and that they submit for credit only the products of their own efforts. Both the ideals of scholarship and the need for practices that are fair require that all dishonest work be rejected as a basis for academic credit. They also require that students refrain from any and all forms of dishonorable conduct in the course of their academic work.

The examples and definitions below are intended to clarify the standards by which honesty and academically dishonest conduct are judged. The list is merely illustrative of the kinds of infractions that may occur, and it is not intended to be exhaustive. Moreover, the definitions suggest conditions under which unacceptable behavior of the indicated types normally occurs; however, there may be unusual cases that fall outside these conditions that will also be judged unacceptable by the academic community. If a student has any doubts about what constitutes proper ethical conduct, he or she should err on the side of caution, citing original sources even in apparently ambiguous situations, and seeking clarification from the course instructor. These standards govern all work submitted in the course of degree program work; for instance, students should avoid plagiarizing material even when they are using it for ungraded classroom presentations or handouts.

DEFINITIONS AND EXAMPLES

Plagiarism: Plagiarism is presenting another person's work as one's own. Furthermore, plagiarism includes any paraphrasing or summarizing of the works of another person without acknowledgment, including the submitting of another student's work as one's own. Plagiarism frequently involves a failure to acknowledge in the text, notes, or footnotes the quotation of paragraphs, sentences, or even a few phrases written or spoken by someone else. The submission of research or completed papers or projects prepared by someone else is plagiarism, as is the unacknowledged use of research sources gathered by someone else when that use is specifically forbidden by the instructor. It is, for instance, plagiarism when an article abstract is copied without attribution into an annotated bibliography, or when images are copied into presentations without providing appropriate credit. Failure to indicate the extent and nature of one's reliance on other sources is also a form of plagiarism. The use of text copied from the World Wide Web, without specific attribution, is unethical and constitutes plagiarism. Finally, there may be forms of plagiarism that are unique to an individual discipline or course. The student is responsible for understanding the legitimate use of sources, the appropriate ways of acknowledging academic, scholarly, or creative indebtedness, and the consequences of violating this responsibility.

Cheating on Examinations: Cheating on exams involves giving or receiving unauthorized help before, during, or after an examination. Examples of unauthorized help include the use of notes, texts, or "crib sheets" during an examination (unless specifically approved by the instructor). Other examples include intentionally allowing another student to view one's own examination and collaboration before or after an examination if such collaboration is specifically forbidden by the instructor

Unauthorized Collaboration: Submission for academic credit of any work product, or part thereof, represented as being one's own effort, that has been developed in substantial collaboration with or without assistance from another person or source is a violation of academic honesty. Collaborative work specifically authorized by an instructor is allowed.

Falsification: It is a violation of academic honesty to misrepresent material or fabricate information in an academic exercise or assignment (for example, false or misleading citation of sources, the falsification of the results of experiment or of computer data).

Multiple Submissions: It is a violation of academic honesty to submit substantial portions of the same work for credit more than once without the explicit consent of the instructor(s) to whom the material is submitted for additional credit. In cases in which there is a natural development of research or knowledge in a sequence of courses, use of prior work may be desirable, even required; however, the student is responsible for indicating in writing, as a part of such use, that the current work submitted for credit is cumulative in nature.

Obligation to Report Suspected Violations: Members of the academic community - students, faculty, and staff - are expected to report violations of these standards of academic conduct to the appropriate authorities. The procedures for such reporting are on file in the Office of the Dean of the College of Arts Sciences and in the Office of the Dean of Students.

COMPREHENSIVE EXAMS

Each student must pass a School-administered comprehensive examination that tests the student's knowledge of theory and research relevant to their research and teaching aspirations. The test is designed, administered, and evaluated by the student's PhD advisory committee. Typically, this occurs during the student's third year in the program, after the last semester of coursework. Students usually pass the comprehensive examination at least one academic year prior to the conferral of the doctoral degree. A student should have completed the vast majority of their coursework, before scheduling the exam.

SCHEDULING THE EXAM

Students must submit to the advisory (plan of study) committee suggested research areas for questions in each of four examination areas. The student and the advisory committee work together to develop four bibliographies that represent the knowledge required to pass the comprehensive exams. Examination areas and bibliographies must thus be specifically approved by the advisory (plan of study) committee, who will create the questions to be asked. Advisory (plan of study) committees regularly use their discretion to add reading material to an area bibliography, even if such material was not part of prior completed coursework. The areas and bibliographies must be finalized no later than thirty (30) days before the examination is to take place, so as to provide significant lead time both for exam preparation and study.

Once the bibliographies are approved, the student is responsible for scheduling his/her examination, working with the Graduate Program Coordinator. Comprehensive examinations (both written and oral) may be scheduled during the fall, spring or summer semesters, excepting university holidays. Once the exam is scheduled, it should not be rescheduled within one month from the scheduled date, except in cases of documented emergencies.

DETERMINING YOUR FOUR EXAM LISTS

Medium: All comps exams include a medium specific canonical list that the student selects from one of three mediums *film, television, or new media/video games*.

Method: Most comps exams include a list that covers a research methodology derived from one or more of the required "Research Tools" courses the student has taken.

Area: Most comps exams include a list that covers an area of the Film and Media studies curriculum. Students could select an area that they plan to engage with their work and/or an area they plan to teach after they complete their PhD.

Dissertation Area: Most comps exams include a list that reflects the specific academic work, both foundational and contemporary, related to their potential dissertation project.

Once you have selected your medium specific canonical list, you will determine your three remaining lists with your advisory committee.

TAKING AND DEFENDING THE EXAM

The examination includes two parts, a written portion and an oral examination which should occur between two and three weeks, following completion of the written exam and will typically involve approximately two hours of questioning. Both parts must be passed by the student, and a failing

performance on one part of the examination cannot be redeemed with a strong performance on the other.

Students can select one of two options for completing the written portion of their comprehensive exam. During extraordinary circumstances (such as a global pandemic) only one option may be available.

Option 1:

The written portion of the examination is in two parts sub-divided by content areas. The student will have 16 hours over a two-day period (eight hours per day) to complete the written portion of the comprehensive examination. Students will be allotted four hours to answer each of their four examination areas. The examination will be administered in School of Film, Media & Theater spaces; the Graduate Program Coordinator will provide a private office and computer so that the written examination may be completed uninterrupted. The student must leave all personal items with the Graduate Coordinator, including cell phones.

Option 2:

The written portion of the examination is taken in four parts over four days. At a time determined by the student and the Graduate Program Coordinator, the student will receive a question or questions related to one exam area a day and have 24 hours to complete their response and submit it to the Graduate Student Coordinator. After the 24 hours, the student will receive the prompt for the second exam area and repeat the process for four consecutive days. The student can take the exam in any location they deem fit and have access to their notes and books. Evidence of outside assistance or answers written by someone other than the student assigned the exam will result in immediate failure of this portion of the exam. Given the extra time and access to reference materials, the advisory committee will expect that these exams display a corresponding level of professionalism, thoroughness, and polish. If the student has teaching obligations, it is the responsibility of the student to work with the Graduate Program Coordinator to find a colleague to cover their classes.

The written portion of the comprehensive examination always precedes the oral exam, and a student is only permitted to proceed to the oral examination upon the PhD Advisory (plan of study) committee's assessment that the written portion of the exam is defensible. In other words, a student may have, in some cases, provided controversial or relatively weak answers to some questions, but overall, the committee's judgment is that the written answers could be defended in oral argument. In order to proceed to the oral exam, all four content areas must be judged to be defensible. In the event, that the written portion is deemed indefensible, it is likely that the advisory committee will arrange a meeting to discuss ways of improving the written portion and deficiencies ahead of the second attempt. This meeting is advisory and does not count as an oral defense.

The oral defense portion of the examination requires the student to answer questions about their exam answers. The committee's questions will focus on the answers in the written portion of the examination but will also range more widely and students are expected to articulate responses showing a detailed understanding of their designated areas of expertise.

EVALUATING THE EXAM

The comprehensive exam is evaluated at two points in time. The first portion of the exam is the written exam, and the second portion is the oral defense. The written portion must be successful in order to move on to the oral defense, and both portions of the exam (written and oral) must be successful in order for the overall comprehensive exam to pass.

A “passing” exam is one that has successfully passed through both the written and the oral defense stages. A “failing” exam is one that has failed at EITHER the written stage or the oral stage. A single failure results in a second chance; a second failure results in dismissal from the program. Read carefully for details, and see the flowchart at the end of this section.

WRITTEN PORTION

The committee members individually evaluate all four areas of the written exam. The committee chair collects evaluations of the committee members, collates them and communicates the results to the committee members. The chair will then communicate to the student the outcome of the overall assessment, including whether particular sections of the written exam were considered to be weak and/or deemed indefensible.

The written exam is considered defensible (not “passing,” because only an overall exam can “pass”) and the student may proceed to the oral defense in either of the following cases:

Case 1) All four (4) areas of the written exam are deemed defensible by the majority of committee members. At that point, the student may work with the committee to schedule the oral defense.

Case 2) Only three (3) areas of the written exam are deemed defensible by the majority of committee members, AND the student satisfactorily (and within a timeframe designated by the committee) completes work that the committee assigns to improve or otherwise redeem the student’s performance in the one area deemed indefensible. The committee may require, in writing, that the student do one of the following:

- a) retest on that one area, OR
- b) submit other specified written work that certifies intellectual competence in the area, OR
- c) take additional coursework to bring the student up to a level of demonstrable competency.

For all these options, the specification of a completion timetable rests with the faculty committee, although new work should typically occur within six (6) months of the written examination. If the student completes the assigned task within the designated timetable AND the majority of the committee deems this improved response to be defensible (or the assigned work to be satisfactory), the student may work with the committee to schedule the oral defense. At this point, no part of the written portion of the exam may be attempted again; the student must pass the overall exam at the oral defense stage or be dismissed from the program.

The written exam is considered failing (and must be retaken again in its entirety) either of the following two (2) cases:

Case 1) Two (2) or more areas are indefensible. At this point, the student must retake the written exam again in its entirety, within six (6) months of the first exam. Once s/he does so, no part of the written exam may be attempted a third time.

Case 2) Three (3) areas are defensible, and the student does NOT satisfactorily (and within a timeframe designated by the committee) complete work that the committee assigns to improve or otherwise redeem the student’s performance in the one area deemed indefensible. In this case, the student must take the written exam again, in its entirety, within six months of the re-tested area or replacement work having been deemed indefensible. Once s/he does so, no part of the written exam may be attempted again.

If, following the student’s second attempt at the written exam in its entirety, all four (4) areas are deemed defensible, the student may schedule the oral defense.

If, following the student's second attempt at the written exam in its entirety, fewer than all four (4) areas are deemed defensible, the student will be dismissed from the program.

ORAL PORTION

The committee will decide if the student's combined performance on the written and oral portions of the exam constitute a pass or a failure. At this point, the student is not evaluated on an area-by-area basis; rather, the committee will make an overall assessment of the student's demonstrated competence in the oral defense and of their written arguments (including emendation). After the committee has deliberated and reached its conclusion, the student will be called back into the examination room and immediately notified of their examination results.

PASS OR FAIL

The overall exam is considered "passing" in either of the following cases:

Case 1) A majority of committee members (i.e., 2 of the 3) deems the student's overall exam (both written exam and oral defense) to be satisfactory. In this case, the comprehensive examination has concluded successfully, and the student may now begin the work of forming a dissertation committee and writing a prospectus. The chair of the advisory (plan of study) committee should notify the Graduate Director and the Graduate Program Coordinator of the examination's outcome.

Case 2) A majority of committee members does NOT deem the student's overall exam (both written exam and oral defense) to be satisfactory. However, if the student's written exam was deemed defensible upon the student's first attempt (that is, the student has not already re-taken any portion of the written exam), the committee may assign work to improve or otherwise redeem the student's performance on the overall exam. The committee may require, in writing, that the student do one of the following:

- A. retake only the oral portion of the exam (in which case, this second oral examination will normally occur within six (6) months of the first, at the discretion of the committee), OR
- b. retake the overall exam (both written and oral portions)

In addition, the committee may also require the student to complete additional work to prepare for a second attempt at the oral or overall exam. This may include, for example, extra course work or other forms of study, public presentations such as presentation at academic conferences or School seminars, participation in mock examinations, or training to better handle communication apprehension.

If, following this second oral examination or overall exam and the timely completion of any additional assigned work (depending on what the committee required of the student), the committee deems the overall exam to be passing, the comprehensive examination will have concluded successfully. The student may now begin the work of forming a dissertation committee and writing a prospectus. The chair of the advisory (plan of study) committee should notify the Graduate Director and the Graduate Program Coordinator of the examination's outcome.

The overall exam is considered failing if:

A) A majority of committee members (i.e., 2 of the 3) deems the student's overall exam (both written exam and oral defense) to be failing, AND the student has already failed the overall exam once before. (That is, a first attempt at the written exam was deemed indefensible, thus preventing it from getting to a successful oral defense and passing as an overall exam. A student may only attempt any given part of the exam twice.)

B) A majority of committee members (i.e., 2 of the 3) deems the student's overall exam (both written exam and oral defense) to be unsatisfactory, AND the student does NOT satisfactorily (and within a timeframe designated by the committee) complete work that the committee assigns to improve or otherwise redeem the student's performance on the overall exam (written and oral).

Students who twice fail the PhD comprehensive examination will also be terminated from the graduate program.

DISSERTATION

Dissertations must be the product of the graduate student to whom the degree is awarded. Approval by the student's committee of his/her dissertation is not only an approval of the manuscript and of the research described in it but also a certification that the student is qualified to conduct research on his/her own. Basic to that certification is the knowledge that the student is primarily responsible for designing the project or study, synthesizing the material examined, analyzing the data, and discussing the results, with guidance from his/her advisor, committee members, and others, and through the process, is able to conduct publishable research projects independently.

SELECTING A DISSERTATION CHAIR

The student must identify a faculty member who is willing and able to serve as the Dissertation Advisor. The advisor must be a member of the School's doctoral faculty (see list of doctoral faculty at the end of this document). The advisor must also be knowledgeable about the student's area of research. The student will nominate an advisor, who must be appointed by the Director of the School of Film, Media & Theatre by use of Dissertation Advisor Agreement Form available on the School of Film, Media & Theatre main website under [Graduate>Current Graduate Students](#). That form is submitted first to the intended committee chair for a signature, then to Director of the School for approval, then to the Graduate Program Coordinator for filing.

ENROLL IN FLME 9999 (DISSERTATION RESEARCH)

Once the student's selection of an advisor has been approved and filed, the Graduate Coordinator will authorize the student's enrollment in FLME 9999. The student must then enroll in FLME 9999. Usually students register for seven (7) hours a semester.

DISSERTATION COMMITTEE SELECTION

After selection of the committee chair, the student should nominate three (3) additional faculty members to serve on the dissertation committee. (More are allowable but not recommended.) Thus, the typical dissertation committee is comprised of four (4) faculty: the committee chair, two other School of Film, Media & Theatre doctoral faculty, and one outside member. In total, three (3) of the four (4) committee members must be appointed to the School of Film, Media & Theatre's doctoral faculty, and one of the four members must be a doctoral faculty from an allied department, either within GSU or at an accredited and appropriate outside organization. The decision whether to accept an invitation to a committee is entirely up to the faculty member. In the event that more than four (total) faculty are on the committee, the additional member(s) may hold the rank of graduate and/or doctoral faculty in the School of Film, Media & Theatre. All dissertation committee members must possess special expertise in the area of the student's proposed dissertation topic or research method.

In the interest of continuity and timely progress toward degree completion, the School discourages students from making changes to the dissertation committee at any time beyond a successful

prospectus defense. If the student deems a change absolutely necessary, the student may petition the Graduate Committee to make a change. The petition must include a substantive justification/rationale for the proposed move. If the change is approved, the student will be required to defend the prospectus again to the satisfaction of the new committee. The new committee must sign/date a new prospectus title page, coupled with a complete prospectus, to be submitted for the signature of the Graduate Director, for the student's files.

PROSPECTUS

The first step of Dissertation work is to develop a complete prospectus that the student will orally defend before their Dissertation committee. A prospectus is similar to a contract with the Dissertation Committee. It should detail the necessity of the project, its original contribution to the field, a thorough plan that explains why the methods proposed are appropriate to the goals of the project, and an explanation of what work the student plans to engage that would make the project recognizable to field. The prospectus, to be developed in consultation with the Dissertation Advisor and committee members, should include the following:

1. **Title Page**
2. **Abstract:** Brief summary (usually limited to half a page) of the significance of the project, its research question/hypotheses, and the method planned to conduct the research.
3. **Research Question/Hypothesis/Dissertation Statement:** Justification of why the project will extend the current body of knowledge or artistic practice in a way that is recognizable to the field that the student plans to engage. Identification of the problem or question the project will seek to answer, along with an outline of the proposed answer for the research question. Your proposed answer will help the committee direct you in finding appropriate sources. Identify what is outside the scope of the project and why.
4. **Object of Study:** A clear delineation of which primary text(s) will be examined in order to answer the research question or support the proposed Dissertation, including a justification of why these text(s) have been chosen and how they are appropriate to the significance of the project. Where appropriate, this could include a discussion of the method for obtaining and analyzing the text(s). Any use of students or others as research subjects but be described in detail and must be accompanied by advance permissions from the GSU Research Office.
5. **Literature Review:** critical discussion of existing relevant literature, situating the proposed project within a current academic debate and/or detailing an absence in the literature. Here the writer shows readers a broad awareness of the literature relevant to the chosen topic and what interventions you are making in those academic debates. This should not be merely a description of the field but rather an explanation of how your work fits within the current conversation.
6. **Method/Theoretical Frameworks:** justification for the theoretical or methodological framework chosen to pursue the stated Dissertation or research question. This includes an organized explanation of how the proposed project engages the existing academic debate and describes the specific procedures, theories, strategies for data collection and analysis, and selection of participants that will ensure the completion of the project (including permissions from the GSU Research Office if necessary). Think about what kinds of projects have used similar methodologies or theories and how yours replicates or diverges from this precedent.
7. **Organization:** brief summary outlining the step(s) that each chapter will make toward answering the research question or supporting the stated Dissertation (one or two

paragraphs per chapter). What case studies or topics will be in your dissertation? Why do these accomplish the task you set by the goals of the project? What will you do with your case studies? If the answer is “textual analysis,” then you should be able to give us a preview of what that argument will probably be for each textual chapter. If it’s historical work, then tell me where you’re going to look for historical materials (in as much detail as possible). Explain how it relates to similar work that has come before and accomplished similar tasks.

8. **Conclusion:** A summation or brief re-statement of the nature, scope and rationale of the project.
9. **Bibliography:** The prospectus will include a comprehensive bibliography, which will contain all cited references.

There are no firm requirements governing the length or specific form of the prospectus but they are typically between 20 and 30 pages double spaced. Meet with your Dissertation Advisor to discuss their expectations for a prospectus before you begin writing it. A large portion of the original text produced for a prospectus typically ends up being a part of the fuller Dissertation text.

PROSPECTUS DEFENSE

Once your Dissertation Advisor approves the prospectus, send the approved prospectus to the other members of your committee, at least two (2) weeks before the prospectus defense date. Contact the Graduate Program Coordinator to book a room for the defense. At the meeting, the student will answer questions about the prospectus. At the conclusion of the meeting, the committee will deliberate in closed session. Majority agreement of the committee (i.e. 3 of 4) is required to certify that the student successfully defended the prospectus. If the committee determines that the prospectus to be passing, the committee signs the Title Page for PHD Dissertation Prospectus (available on the School of Film, Media & Theatre main website under [Graduate>Current Graduate Students](#)). After the successful defense, submit this form to the Graduate Program Coordinator.

ADVANCING TO CANDIDACY AND WORKING ON YOUR DISSERTATION

Once you have completed your Comprehensive Exams and Defended your Dissertation you have Advanced to Candidacy meaning you have fulfilled all requirements but your dissertation (ABD). You can begin work on your Dissertation based on the approved plan or contract outlined in your prospectus. Be sure to check in regularly with your Dissertation Advisor to get feedback prior to submitting a final version of the Dissertation. Completing the Dissertation on time is the student’s responsibility. Only after the Dissertation Advisor signs off on the project can a defense be scheduled.

FORMAT DISSERTATION

Review the Dissertation Formatting Template available on the School of Film, Media & Theatre main website under [Graduate>Current Graduate Students](#).

The appropriate style requirements must conform to a standard bibliographic form, such as Turabian, MLA, APA, etc. The student’s committee must approve the specific style manual as appropriate for the Dissertation project. Deviations from this requirement must be approved in

writing by the relevant area's Graduate Director. Explicit guidelines for the Dissertation are available online and are determined by the Office of Graduate Studies of the College of the Arts.

DISSERTATION DEFENSE

A student must provide their Dissertation committee members with the completed Research Dissertation at least two (2) weeks before the oral presentation and defense date. The defense must be at a mutually agreeable time and should be scheduled no later than the midterm point of the semester the student expects to graduate. Contact the Graduate Program Coordinator to book a room for the defense. At the meeting, the student will answer questions about the Dissertation. At the conclusion of the meeting, the committee will deliberate in closed session. A majority of the committee (i.e. 3 of 4) is required to certify that the student successfully defended the Dissertation. Download, complete, and bring the Title Page for PHD Dissertation (available on the School of Film, Media & Theatre main website under [Graduate>Current Graduate Students](#)). After the successful defense, submit this form to the Graduate Program Coordinator.

SUBMITTING DISSERTATION

Once the defense is completed, the student should ensure that the formatting is correct before saving the document as a PDF and submitting to [ScholarWorks](#). If revisions are requested after the defense, the student must make the changes and ensure that formatting is correct before saving the document as a PDF and submitting to [ScholarWorks](#).

- If you want to embargo your Dissertation or creative projects, please select one of the two options and complete the appropriate paperwork.
 - The first option is a closed Dissertation, which makes the document immediately available, but limited to the Georgia State community. This option is a permanent restriction, unless the student later requests to release the restriction.
 - The second option is a complete embargo of the document, which makes the document unavailable for download to anyone. The complete embargo is time limited, with options for six months, one year and two years. Once the time limit is reached, the document is automatically released, unless the student submits a request for an extension.
 - If you wish to restrict access to your Dissertation using one of the embargo options described above, you will need to submit an embargo request to the Graduate Director before uploading your dissertation to the Scholarworks ETD. The College's Graduate Office will ensure that the request also has the support of the Graduate Director, as well as that of the Associate Dean of the College of the Arts.

FAILING THE PROSPECTUS OR THE DISSERTATION

Attempt 1: If a majority of committee members (i.e., 3 of the 4) does not approve of the student's prospectus or dissertation, the defense is considered a failure. The student is given another opportunity to revise and defend the prospectus or dissertation.

Attempt 2: If a majority of committee members (i.e., 3 of the 4) does not approve of the student's revision, the prospectus or dissertation fails, OR the student does NOT satisfactorily (and within a timeframe designated by the committee) complete the revisions the committee assigns to improve or otherwise redeem the student's performance.

Students who twice fail the prospectus or the Dissertation or fail to complete revisions at the agreed upon deadline will be terminated from the graduate program.

GRADUATION

Students must apply for graduation two (2) semesters in advance of their expected date of graduation. Complete the application form by logging into PAWS. To access the Graduation Application, select the Enrollment tab. The Application for Graduation link is located under the Updates/Requests Student Record section of the page. Once the link is selected, step-by-step instructions will be provided regarding the application process. Submit the form online with the graduation fee.

The graduation fee is \$50 for all graduate and undergraduate students. Students must apply for each degree earned and pay a separate fee. The fee covers the cost of printing, packaging and mailing your diploma.

If a student is unable to finish by the semester originally specified, it is the student's responsibility to change the date by contacting the Graduation Office. Once a student has applied to graduate, an audit of the student's records will be completed by the Office of Graduate Studies of the College of the Arts. It is the student's responsibility to discuss any discrepancies with their Graduate Director.

Students must be registered for at least 1 credit hour in the semester they are graduating.

APPENDIX: DOCTORAL FACULTY

Anselmo, Diana (Ph.D., University of California at Irvine, 2014). Assistant Professor. Areas of Research include historiography, fan studies, film history, gender and sexuality.

Barker, Jennifer (Ph.D., University of California at Los Angeles, 2004). Associate Professor. Areas of research include film aesthetics, spectatorship and phenomenology, and film theory.

Petermon, Jade (Ph.D., University of California – Santa Barbara, 2014). Assistant Professor. Areas of Research include African and Black Diaspora Studies, Cultural Studies and Women and Gender Studies.

Raengo, Alessandra (Ph.D., New York University, 2006). Associate Professor. Areas of research include cinema studies, visual culture, critical theory, and cultural studies.

Restivo, Angelo (Ph.D., University of Southern California, 1997). Professor. Areas of research include international film and media, critical theory, and global art cinema.

Smith, Greg (Ph.D., University of Wisconsin, 1998). Professor. Areas of research include style and narrative, media and emotion, and new media theory.

Tussey, Ethan (Ph.D., University of California – Santa Barbara, 2012). Associate Professor. Areas of research include media industries, media ethnography, television studies, new media.

