



**Department of
World Arts and Cultures/Dance**

**Graduate Handbook
Culture and Performance Ph.D.**

2026-2027

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Introduction

Defined by a dynamic blend of theory and practice, World Arts and Cultures/Dance (WACD) is led by a renowned faculty of scholars, activists, curators, filmmakers, and choreographers dedicated to critical cross-cultural analysis and art-making. We draw upon multiple disciplines and artistic approaches while encouraging students to position their work within broad social contexts.

The graduate program offers Master of Arts (M.A.) and Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.) degrees in Culture and Performance and a Master of Fine Arts (M.F.A.) in Choreographic Inquiry. Culture and Performance students research communities, cultures, and transnational movements through heritage and globalization studies, multi-vocal ethnographies, dance and theories of corporeality and embodiment, visual and material culture, critical museum and curatorial studies, documentary practice and internet interventions, as well as arts activism and interdisciplinary art-making. The M.F.A. in Choreographic Inquiry offers opportunities to engage multiple movement practices as students work on pioneering research in the form of new choreography. Students may focus on media, critical dance studies, and theories of the body as supplements to their work as choreographers.

While operating with considerable independence, the two graduate degree areas (Ph.D. in Culture and Performance and M.F.A. in Choreographic Inquiry) are unified by the department's common concern for aesthetic production, corporeality and performance, critical studies of the dynamics of tradition, and culture-building in contemporary societies. Connections are forged between critical theory and artistic practices and attention is given to the changing social roles and responsibilities of artists, practitioners, and scholars of the arts in the U.S. and worldwide.

Graduates have excelled in fields including technology and the arts, videography, documentary work, public service, education, theatrical/events production, performing arts, urban planning, law, environmental activism, public health, and medicine. They have made careers in community non-profits and activist groups, government arts agencies, museums, and arts foundations. Potential careers for Ph.D. graduates also include positions in research universities and colleges.

Culture and Performance Program

An abbreviated version of the information below can also be found in Division of Graduate Education's Program Requirements online under the academic year of your admission:

<https://grad.ucla.edu/programs/school-of-arts-and-architecture/world-arts-and-culturesdance-department/culture-and-performance/>

UCLA's Standards and Procedures Manual is also a valuable reference that provides detailed information and sets forth general policies, many of which emanate from the Academic Senate and its Graduate Council, regarding completion of degree requirements, M.A. and Doctoral Committees, examinations and foreign language requirements. General regulations concerning graduate courses, standards of scholarship, disqualification, appeal, leave of absence, in-absentia registration, withdrawal, normal degree progress and a number of other matters are also addressed: <https://grad.ucla.edu/academics/graduate-study/standards-and-procedures-for-graduate-study/>

The Ph.D. program in Culture and Performance (CAP) emphasizes research on all aspects of human creativity, artmaking, and performance from intercultural and interdisciplinary perspectives. Research topics can include symbolic expressions of religious, political, ethnic, racial, and gender identities; oral traditions, festive expressions and material cultures; dance, gesture and the body; cultural expressions such as healing rituals, religious performances and studies of space and place; theories of representation, popular culture and trans-colonial theory; and museum studies and digital documentation. A common denominator underlying these investigations is an emphasis on self-reflexivity, theoretical engagement, and rigorous primary research in the form of ethnography, archival research, discourse analysis, visual studies, and choreographic analysis.

Graduate students who are admitted without an approved M.A. degree are required to complete the M.A. degree requirements. You will complete the M.A. requirements while working towards the Ph.D. requirements.

Students entering the Ph.D. program with an approved M.A. degree in hand can proceed directly to the section on Ph.D. requirements.

Master's Degree

The Department of World Arts and Cultures/Dance offers the Master of Fine Arts (M.F.A.) degree in Choreographic Inquiry and the Master of Arts (M.A.) and Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.) degrees in Culture and Performance. The M.A. degree is only offered to students who are accepted into the Culture and Performance Ph.D. program but do not hold an accredited M.A. degree.

Advising

The Master's degree is organized around the relationship between the individual student, the student's Faculty Adviser, and the M.A. Committee. The entering student will be assigned a temporary faculty adviser from among the department's ladder faculty who will take primary responsibility for academic advising for the first year. Each student is expected to choose a Committee Chair and form an M.A. Committee during the first year of academic residence and apply for advancement to candidacy no later than Winter Quarter of the second year. The Faculty Adviser is fundamentally responsible for advising students in regard to program requirements, policies, and University regulations.

Academic progress is assessed yearly between the faculty and student. First-year students should initiate a formal annual review with their Faculty Adviser in the Spring quarter and submit the completed form to the Graduate Student Affairs Officer by the end of the quarter. Continuing students should initiate a formal annual review in the Fall quarter with their Faculty Adviser or M.A. Committee Chair and submit the completed form to the Graduate Student Affairs Officer no later than the end of the second week in Winter quarter. Annual reviews should be completed in a timely manner to enable accurate evaluation of student performance. Faculty

rely on the information from annual review forms for decisions pertaining to funding, fellowships, graduate research assistantships and teaching assistantships. It is the student's responsibility to 1) fill out their portion of the review form, 2) ensure that their Faculty Adviser or M.A. Committee Chair fills out their portion, and 3) send the form to the department's Graduate Student Affairs Officer.

Graduate students should make plans to meet with their Faculty Adviser, committee members and course instructors during the academic school terms (Fall, Winter, and Spring Quarters). Faculty generally conduct their research work in the gaps between quarters and during the Summer Quarter. Many make plans for fieldwork, residencies, and fellowship/grant research during the week immediately following finals week or the week immediately preceding Week One in every quarter. For the collective good of the department, we want to preserve as best as possible our faculty's time for focused research, development of creative projects, and writing. As such, advising work between Faculty and graduate students will occur between Mid-September and Mid-June as standard procedure.

Areas of Study

The requirements for your selected area of study vary widely among individual students and are determined in consultation with the Faculty Adviser and M.A. Committee. Students must demonstrate competence in their areas before commencing their M.A. research. The degree of further proficiency needed is directly related to the sort of field or library research in which the student will engage.

This department offers opportunities to develop specialized knowledge and skills in a diverse range of interdisciplinary fields such as arts activism, curatorial studies, dance studies, performance studies, and visual studies. Students will designate a Major Field of study in consultation with their Faculty Adviser. The student is expected to consult with their faculty adviser on a regular basis regarding area(s) of interest to determine associated coursework and research focus, and to plan the instructional schedule appropriately.

The Major Field for M.A. students will consist of at least three courses. The faculty strongly advise that one of these should be a course that provides an introduction to the special methods or discourse of the Major Field (whether in WACD or in another department). Examples of some possible fields would include dance studies, healing, museology, or visual studies.

Foreign Language Requirement

Students in the Master's degree program must demonstrate competence in one foreign language. The purpose of the language requirement is to ensure that students have the necessary skills to conduct independent research. Any foreign language useful for field study and/or library research in their topics or Major Field of study and geo-cultural regions of choice is acceptable. The appropriateness of a particular language should be discussed with the student's Faculty Adviser. The language requirement must be completed before students file the advancement-to-candidacy petition for the degree.

The language requirement may be met by either: (1) passing a departmental examination, administered by a departmental faculty member approved by the Vice-Chair of Graduate Affairs; (2) passing an examination administered by an officially accredited language expert outside the department, approved by the Vice-Chair of Graduate Affairs; (3) demonstrating the equivalent of five quarters or four semesters of training in an approved foreign language, completed within the last five years before admission to the M.A., with an average grade of B or higher in the courses; (4) placing at level six on the Foreign Language Placement Examination; or (5) petitioning to use English as a foreign language (only for international students whose native language is not English).

Test of Oral Proficiency Requirement for International Students

International students applying for Teaching Assistant (TA) positions must satisfactorily pass the Test of Oral Proficiency (TOP) to prove English-language proficiency prior to beginning TA appointments in any department on campus. This exam must be officially completed by the quarter before the student begins a TA-ship.

Students who received a bachelor's degree from a university located in a country where English is the primary language of everyday life may be exempt from taking the TOP. The TOP Team within UCLA Writing Programs approves exemptions from students who received a bachelor's degree from universities in the United Kingdom, Ireland, United States of America, Canada (*except Quebec and other provinces and territories where the population speaks French primarily*), Australia and New Zealand. For more information on who needs to take the TOP exam, FAQs, and more, please visit: <https://wp.ucla.edu/placement-exams/top/>

Course Requirements

All Master's students must successfully complete a total of 36 units (normally nine courses) taken for a letter grade (unless only offered S/U) and with a minimum 3.0 grade-point average. Of the 36 units, at least 24 must be completed at the graduate level. Of the required 24 graduate level units, a minimum of 20 units must be 200 or 500-series. No more than eight units of 500-series independent study courses (e.g., World Arts and Cultures 596A) may be applied toward the graduate course requirement. World Arts and Cultures 495 and 496 (courses required for teaching assistants) cannot be counted towards the course requirements.

Course descriptions can be found on the UCLA Registrar's website:

<https://registrar.ucla.edu/academics/course-descriptions>

The required courses are distributed as follows:

1. Four core courses (each at 4 units, for a total of 16 units), taken during the first year of study; World Arts and Cultures 200, 201, 202, and 204. Students must earn a "B" or higher in each core course for it to count towards the degree requirements.
2. A minimum of three courses adding up to 12 units in the designated major field, chosen in consultation with the student's faculty adviser. One of these should be a course that provides introduction to the special methods or discourse of the major field. Examples of methodologies include archival research, choreographic analysis, discourse analysis, ethnography, museum studies, oral history, phenomenology, visual analysis, and interdisciplinary frameworks.
3. A minimum of two elective courses (8 units).

Of the combined three Major Field and two elective courses, at least three of the five courses must be graduate-level courses taken within the department.

M.A. students can take undergraduate upper-division courses towards fulfilling their Major Field or elective requirements. They can also take studio classes with a graduate-level designation. These courses should be approved for Major Field or elective units, by the student's Faculty Adviser.

The minimum course load is 12 units per quarter. Students must be registered and enrolled full time during the academic year unless they are on an official leave of absence. Students may not be enrolled in more than 20 units per quarter without their Faculty Adviser approval.

Teaching Experience

Teaching experience is encouraged but not required.

Field Experience

Field experience is not required but is expected of students whose theses are based on ethnographic research.

M.A. Advancement to Candidacy (ATC) Requirements

Students can apply for Advancement to Candidacy (ATC) once they have completed their course requirements and foreign language exam, and constituted an M.A. Committee. Students need to formally submit the ATC form by Winter Quarter of their second year in the M.A. program.

Forming the M.A. Capstone Plan Committee

The Capstone Plan Committee does not require a formal nomination through the Division of Graduate Education. Nominations for the Capstone Plan Committee are submitted directly to the department using an internal form. The department follows the same regulations for the formation of the M.A. Capstone Plan Committee as the M.A. Thesis Committee listed below.

Forming the M.A. Thesis Committee

The M.A. Thesis Committee is formally nominated through Division of Graduate Education using the "Nomination of M.A. Committee" form found on Division of Graduate Education's website:

<https://grad.ucla.edu/academics/masters-studies/nomination-of-masters-thesis-committee/>. The M.A. Thesis Committee regulations are listed within the nomination form and below:

Regulations governing the nomination of M.A. Thesis Committees:

1. M.A. Thesis committees are appointed by the Dean of the Graduate Division, acting for the Graduate Council, upon nomination by the Chair of the Department (or Interdepartmental Program), after consultation with the student.
2. M.A. Thesis committees consist of a minimum of three faculty members from UCLA.
3. M.A. Thesis committee members must hold one of the following academic ranks:
 - A. Professor (any rank, regular series)
 - B. Professor Emeritus
 - C. Professor-in-Residence (any rank)
 - D. Acting Professor (any rank)
4. Adjunct Professor (any rank), Professor of Clinical X (any rank), and Visiting Professor (any rank) may serve as one of the three regular members (not as Chair) on professional [not M.A. or M.S.] M.A. Thesis committees.
5. Acting Assistant Professors may serve as regular members but not as Chairs.
6. The Chair of the committee and at least one other member must hold academic appointments in the student's department or interdepartmental program at UCLA. Faculty with Associate Professor Emeritus or Professor Emeritus rank may serve as Chair, provided they meet the eligibility criteria and hold a current UCLA Academic Senate appointment.
7. Additional members from any of the above titles as well as those with the title of Lecturer may be appointed to the committee and/or serve as Co-Chairs, and shall have the same voting rights and responsibilities as the other committee members.
8. By petition, one of the minimum three members may be a faculty member from another UC campus who holds an appropriate appointment as listed above.

Capstone Plan

Students who select this plan take a comprehensive examination that consists of three essay questions (chosen from six possible questions) based on reading lists developed in advance by the student in consultation with the student's M.A. Committee. This examination is designed to test the student's knowledge

of theories and methods in their research field, as well as their ability to apply these ideas and techniques to the study of particular practices, genres, geo-cultural areas, social groups, or historical periods.

Students must inform the Student Affairs Officer the quarter before they intend to take the exam. Students must have their records checked by the Student Affairs Officer to determine that they have satisfied degree requirements including required courses, the required number of units, approved M.A. Committee, and the language exam.

The exam employs a “take-home” format, as decided in consultation between the student and the Committee Chair along with the approval of the remaining committee members. The exam will be administered over seven days. The three responses will each be approximately ten pages in length, and accompanied by full bibliographic references. Essays should consistently follow one of the professional style guides, whichever is the norm for the discipline in question (Chicago, APA, or APS). Responses should be structured to demonstrate command of relevant literatures and independent thinking.

Although students are responsible for finding an agreeable date among the committee members, the Chair of the committee is responsible for the exam in all its parts: collecting questions from the committee members, giving the exam to the student on the assigned date, collecting the hard copy and electronic copy from the student on the final date, giving the Student Affairs Officer a hard copy for the student’s file, distributing the exam answers to the committee members, collecting their evaluations, and communicating the results to the committee, student, and Student Affairs Officer.

The Master’s comprehensive examination is graded either fail or pass. Students who fail the comprehensive examination are allowed to retake it once, no later than the following quarter. Students who pass will be awarded the M.A. in Culture and Performance and can make a formal request to continue working towards the Ph.D. in Culture and Performance.

If a student fails one question on their exam, they have failed the exam. To retake the exam, students need to submit a petition to the Master’s Committee in the same quarter that they completed the original exam. If the student failed the first exam and did not submit a petition for a second attempt within this time frame, they will be recommended for disqualification from the program. By majority vote, the committee may decide to allow the student to take the exam again no later than the following quarter. The student would then retake the number of questions they failed originally, not the entire exam. Although each committee member evaluates their respective question’s answer, any of them can comment on any answer. Though committee members may comment on each question, they will evaluate responses to their own questions as pass or fail. Failure at the second retake constitutes cause for dismissal from the program.

Students who do not pass the comprehensive examination on the second attempt will be recommended for academic disqualification and will not be able to make a formal request to continue into the Ph.D. program.

Thesis Plan

Every Master’s. degree thesis plan requires the completion of an approved thesis that demonstrates the student’s ability to perform original, independent research.

The purpose of the Master’s thesis is to demonstrate a student’s ability to conduct research in their chosen field, to interpret the results, to demonstrate the relevance of the work to conceptual and practical issues in selected disciplines, and to present the findings in lucid prose. Students who pursue this plan must submit an acceptable thesis prepared under the direction of their faculty adviser and the student’s Master’s Committee. The Master’s Committee should be appointed no later than Winter Quarter of the student’s second year. The length of the thesis will be determined by the student’s Chair and committee members, with most theses 80-

100 pages long. Upon passing the M.A. thesis, students can make a formal request to continue working towards the Ph.D. in Culture and Performance.

To continue towards the Ph.D. in Culture and Performance, students must develop a proposal, to be approved by the Master's Committee, after sustained conversation between the student and their Chair and committee members. Exceptionally, the proposal may also be approved solely by the Master's Committee Chair. Students are advised to meet with their committee Chair and members before submitting the proposal. The length of the thesis will be determined by the student's Chair and committee members; the general recommendation is 80-100 pages.

While it is expected that a thesis will consist primarily of a written document, prepared in accordance with the Division of Graduate Education's Regulations for Thesis and Dissertation Preparation (see Thesis and Dissertation Guidelines: <https://grad.ucla.edu/academics/graduate-study/thesis-and-dissertation-filing-requirements/>), students may complement the text with work in other media (including video or other visual materials, exhibitions, and performance projects). These options must be original to the M.A. project, must be approved in advance by the committee, and must explicitly relate to the written thesis.

Students who do not successfully fulfill this requirement will be recommended for academic disqualification from the M.A. and will not be able to make a formal request to continue into the Ph.D. program.

M.A. degree candidates are advised to select the M.A. thesis plan as preparation for the Ph.D. program in Culture & Performance.

Continuation to the PhD Program

Students who complete course requirements and pass the M.A. Capstone or M.A. Thesis requirement (see below) must apply to proceed to the stage of the program. Students need to submit a formal written request in this regard to the Culture and Performance graduate faculty in the same quarter they complete their M.A. requirements, or no later than the subsequent quarter. Requests submitted after this timeframe will be considered only on a discretionary case-by-case basis. The request should include a 500-word abstract of their proposed dissertation research and the name of their proposed dissertation committee Chair. The graduate faculty will vote on their request. Students can continue into the Ph.D. program once they have been notified in writing of the graduate faculty's approval of their request.

Students who pass their M.A. requirements but are denied permission to continue into the Ph.D. program by graduate faculty will be recommended for academic disqualification. The student will, however, receive a terminal M.A. degree.

Institutional Review Board (IRB) Requirement

Students conducting specific types of research involving human interlocutors (for example, ethnographic research and participant-observation) will need to apply for approval from UCLA's CITI and [IRB office](#) before embarking on their plans. All UCLA Personnel involved with human subjects research must have a current and complete UCLA Human Subjects Research certification or UCLA Good Clinical Practice (GCP) certification via CITI prior to inclusion in the IRB application. The IRBs are the committees designated by UCLA to review protocols of research involving human subjects that is conducted by UCLA personnel, including faculty, staff, and students. For details, please contact the [UCLA Office of the Human Research Protection Program](#).

Time-to-Degree (TTD)

The Master's degree is designed as a two-year program. Students are considered beyond "normative time" after their second year in the M.A. program.

Normal progress toward the M.A. degree is as follows:

- Completion of core course requirements: third quarter
- Completion of foreign language requirement: fifth quarter (must be completed prior to the nomination of committee)
- Approval of M.A. Committee: fifth quarter (your committee should be formed by the end of the third quarter)
- Advancement to candidacy (ATC): sixth quarter
- Completion of M.A. degree: sixth quarter

DEGREE	NORMATIVE TIME TO ATC (Quarters)	NORMATIVE TTD	MAXIMUM TTD
M.A.	6	6	9

Doctoral Degree

Advising

The doctoral degree is organized around the relationship between the individual student, the student's Faculty Adviser, and the Doctoral Committee. The entering student will be assigned a temporary Faculty Adviser, from among the department's ladder faculty, who takes primary responsibility for academic advising for the first year. Each student is expected to choose a primary adviser and begin forming a Doctoral Committee during the second year of academic residence. The Faculty Adviser is fundamentally responsible for advising students in regard to program requirements, policies, and University regulations.

Academic progress is assessed yearly between the faculty and student. First-year students should initiate a formal annual review with their Faculty Adviser in the Spring quarter and submit the completed form to the Graduate Student Affairs Officer by the end of the quarter. Continuing students should initiate a formal annual review in the Fall quarter with their Faculty Adviser or Doctoral Committee Chair and submit the completed form to the Graduate Student Affairs Officer no later than the end of the second week in Winter quarter. Please be aware that the annual reviews should be completed in a timely manner to enable accurate evaluation of student performance. Faculty rely on the information from annual review forms for decisions pertaining to funding, fellowships, graduate research assistantships and teaching assistantships. It is the student's responsibility to 1) fill out their portion of the review form, 2) ensure that their Faculty Adviser or Doctoral Committee Chair fills out their portion, and 3) send the form to the department's Graduate Student Affairs Officer [effective Spring 2022].

Graduate students should make plans to meet with their Faculty Advisers, committee members, and course instructors during the Fall, Winter, and Spring academic school terms. Faculty generally conduct their research work in the gaps between quarters and during the Summer quarter. Many make plans for fieldwork, residencies, and fellowship/grant research during the week immediately following finals week or the week immediately preceding Week One of classes in every quarter. For the collective good of the department, we want to preserve as best as possible our faculty's time for focused research, development of creative projects, and writing. As such, advising work between Faculty and graduate students will occur between Mid-September and Mid-June as standard procedure.

Major Fields or Subdisciplines

The department offers opportunities to develop specialized knowledge and skills in a diverse range of interdisciplinary fields such as arts activism, critical theory, curatorial studies, dance studies, film studies, performance studies, and visual studies. Students will designate a Major Field of study in consultation with their Faculty Adviser. Examples of methodologies include archival research, choreographic analysis, discourse

analysis, visual analysis, ethnography, museum studies, oral history or phenomenology. Students should also identify an area of geographical, cultural, and/or temporal focus. The student is expected to consult with their academic Faculty Adviser on a regular basis regarding area(s) of interest to determine associated coursework and research focus, and to plan the instructional schedule appropriately.

Foreign Language Requirement

Doctoral students must demonstrate competence in one foreign written and/or oral language. The purpose of the language requirement is to ensure that students have the necessary skills to conduct independent research. Any foreign language useful for field study and/or library research in their topics and geo-cultural regions of choice is acceptable. The appropriateness of a particular language should be discussed with the student's Faculty Adviser. The foreign language requirement must be completed before the student takes their qualifying exams for their dissertation. If the student has already fulfilled this requirement as an M.A. student in this department, this fulfillment also counts as fulfillment of the language requirement for the doctoral degree.

The language requirement may be met by: (1) passing a departmental examination, administered by a departmental faculty member approved by the Vice-Chair of Graduate Affairs; (2) passing an examination administered by an officially accredited language expert outside the department, approved by the Vice-Chair of Graduate Affairs; (3) demonstrating the equivalent of five quarters or four semesters of training in an approved foreign language, completed within the last five years before admission with a grade of B or higher average in the courses; (4) placing at level six on the Foreign Language Placement Examination; or (5) petitioning to use English as a foreign language (only for international students whose native language is not English). If the student has already fulfilled this requirement as a Master's student in this department, this fulfillment also counts as fulfillment of the language requirement for the doctoral degree.

Test of Oral Proficiency Requirement for International Students

International students applying for Teaching Assistant (TA) positions must satisfactorily pass the Test of Oral Proficiency (TOP) to prove English-language proficiency prior to beginning TA appointments in any department on campus. This exam must be officially completed by the quarter before the student begins a TA-ship.

Students who received a bachelor's degree from a university located in a country where English is the primary language of everyday life may be exempt from taking the TOP. The TOP Team within UCLA Writing Programs approves exemptions from students who received a bachelor's degree from universities in the United Kingdom, Ireland, United States of America, Canada (*except Quebec and other provinces and territories where the population speaks French primarily*), Australia and New Zealand. For more information on who needs to take the TOP exam, FAQs, and more, please visit: <https://wp.ucla.edu/placement-exams/top/>

Course Requirements

All doctoral students must successfully complete a total of 48 units (normally 12 courses) taken for a letter grade (unless only offered S/U), and with a minimum 3.0 grade point average. Of the 48 units, at least 32 must be completed at the graduate level. These courses are chosen in consultation with the student's Faculty Adviser. No more than eight units of 500-series independent study courses may be applied toward the graduate course requirement. World Arts and Cultures 495 and 496 (courses required for teaching assistants) cannot be counted towards the course requirements.

The required courses are distributed as follows:

1. Four core courses (at 4 units each; 16 units in total), taken during the first year of study; World Arts and Cultures 200, 201, 202, and 204. Students must earn a "B" or higher in each core course for them to count toward their degree requirements.

2. A minimum of four courses adding up 16 units in the designated major field, chosen in consultation with the student's faculty adviser.
3. A minimum of four elective courses adding up to 16 units.

Of the combined four Major Field and four elective courses, at least four of the eight courses must be graduate-level courses taken within the department.

Doctoral students can take undergraduate upper-division courses towards fulfilling their Major Field or elective requirements. They can also take studio classes with a graduate-level designation. These courses should be approved for Major Field or elective units, by the student's Faculty Adviser.

Students who enter the doctoral program from the department's own Master's degree program are not required to repeat courses. Having completed the four core courses (World Arts and Cultures 200, 201, 202, and 204), if these students continue in the same Major Field, they will need to complete one additional Major Field course (4 units) and two elective courses (8 units), chosen in consultation with their Faculty Adviser. If these students choose a new Major Field, they will need to complete four Major Field courses (16 units) and two elective courses (8 units), in consultation with their Faculty Adviser.

Teaching Experience

Teaching experience is encouraged but not required.

Forming the Doctoral Committee

All Doctoral Committee nominations and reconstitutions must adhere to the [*Minimum Standards for Doctoral Committee Constitution*](#). It is recommended that students constitute their Doctoral Committee in Year 2 of the doctoral program; it is required they do so by Year 3, no later than one quarter prior to taking their written and oral examinations. Students are subject to academic disqualification if they are not able to formulate a Doctoral Committee within the specified timeframe.

The Nomination of Doctoral Committee form and instructions can be found on Division of Graduate Education's Website: <https://grad.ucla.edu/academics/doctoral-studies/nomination-of-doctoral-committee/>. The regulations below are from the Graduate Council's [*Minimum Standards for Doctoral Committee Constitution*](#). Once your committee has been formed and approved, the Chair of your Doctoral Committee will serve as your Faculty Adviser.

Minimum Standards for Doctoral Committee Constitution:

1. All doctoral committees require a minimum of four members among whom a minimum of three members must hold current UCLA Academic Senate faculty appointments limited to Professor (any rank), Professor or Associate Professor Emeritus, Professor in Residence (any rank), or Acting Professor or Acting Associate Professor.
2. Two of the three doctoral committee members from UCLA must hold the rank of professor or associate professor (regular or in-residence series).
3. If certified and approved by the Committee on Degree Programs (CDP), one Adjunct Professor (any rank) or Professor of Clinical X (any rank) may serve in place of the required three UCLA Senate faculty members listed in #1 above. Only one such substitution is allowed per doctoral committee. (GC Am. 12/15/2017).
4. The Chair always must hold a current UCLA Academic Senate faculty appointment per #1 above in the same department or IDP as the graduate student. If a committee has co-chairs, at least one must be from the student's major department or IDP at UCLA. Faculty with Associate Professor Emeritus or

- Professor Emeritus rank may serve as Chair or Co-Chair, provided they meet the eligibility criteria and hold a current UCLA Academic Senate appointment.
5. Additional members (above the minimum number of four) who have subject matter expertise may be nominated and, if appointed, have the same voting rights and responsibilities as the other committee members.
 6. Only one committee member with an Academic Senate faculty appointment per #1 or its academic equivalent at an accredited university or college (UC or non-UC) may serve without need of an exception from the Division of Graduate Education.
 7. All committee members read, approve, and certify the dissertation.
 8. Each program or department may set additional requirements above the UCLA minimum standards in their Program Requirements regarding:
 - UCLA members (e.g., all three must hail from the home department, two out of three from the same discipline as the student, etc.)
 - Parameters for service as a Co-Chair
 - Minimum academic credentials of an additional member
 9. Under unusual circumstances, a department or interdepartmental program may petition the Committee on Degree Programs via the Division of Graduate Education for an exception that would allow three committee members (including the Chair and at least one other UCLA member) to serve as certifying members in lieu of the full committee. An approved exception would apply to all doctoral committees of graduate students in that department or interdepartmental program for a period of up to ten years.
 10. Remote participation for oral qualifying examinations or final defenses **are** permitted with the approval of the committee chair or co-chairs. If the student requests it or agrees to a request from the committee chair or co-chairs, oral qualifying examinations or final oral examinations (defense of dissertation) may be held fully or partially remote with the approval of the committee chair or co-chairs.

In addition to UCLA's minimum standards for Doctoral Committee, the departmental also requires:
The Chair, and one other committee member, always must hold a current Academic Senate faculty appointment at UCLA in the same department or interdepartmental program as the student.

Written and Oral Qualifying Examinations

Academic Senate regulations require all doctoral students to complete and pass University written and oral qualifying examinations prior to doctoral advancement to candidacy. Also, under Senate regulations, the University Oral Qualifying Examination is open only to the student and appointed members of the Doctoral Committee. In addition to university requirements, some graduate programs have other pre-candidacy examination requirements. What follows in this section is how students are required to fulfill all of these requirements for this doctoral program. All committee nominations and reconstitutions adhere to the [*Minimum Standards for Doctoral Committee Constitution*](#).

The doctoral qualifying examinations are composed of a written and an oral examination. The timing of these examinations is determined in consultation with the Chair of the Doctoral Committee. Students must successfully complete all required coursework and foreign language requirement before scheduling their examination, and must be registered and enrolled during the quarter in which the examination is administered. Students who fail the written or oral examinations are allowed to retake them once, upon the approval of their Doctoral Committee, but no later than in the following quarter. A second failure leads to a recommendation to the Division of Graduate Education for academic disqualification from the doctoral program. Barring exceptional circumstances*, students who do not retake the written examination by the following quarter will be recommended for academic disqualification from the doctoral program.

The timing of these examinations is determined in consultation with the Chair of the Doctoral Committee. Students should also check their eligibility to take the exams with the SAO; they should also notify the SAO of the exam dates, once they have been confirmed. Students typically take the written qualifying exams in advance of submitting the dissertation proposal to their committee members at the beginning of a given quarter, completing their orals by the end of that same quarter. In some cases, students may prepare the prospectus in advance of or concurrently with scheduling the written exams. Alternatively, students may schedule their written exams during one quarter and the orals during the quarter immediately following it. In either case, the student is considered for Advancement to Candidacy after the written and oral qualifying exams are passed, and the dissertation proposal is approved.

The written qualifying examination is administered by the student's Doctoral Committee Chair. This examination takes the form of four essay questions (chosen from eight possible questions) developed in consultation with the student's faculty adviser and Doctoral Committee, and tailored to the theoretical and substantive interests of the student, and to the refinement of a dissertation topic. The written examination evaluates competence in three main areas relevant to the student's dissertation topic: (1) theoretical concepts and problems; (2) geo-cultural and/or historical field of specialization; and (3) expressive genre(s) or media.

Each answer will be approximately fifteen pages (typed, double-spaced), and will be accompanied by full bibliographic references. The take-home exam will be administered over ten days. Please note: students writing their exams during a quarter when they're also working as TAs or GSRs should consult with their supervising faculty well in advance of the course commencement to determine the best dates for scheduling the exams, taking into consideration the needs of the class and allowing faculty to make any necessary syllabus adjustments in a timely manner. Early notification is expected so that both parties can reasonably manage their academic and professional responsibilities.

If students have questions or need clarifications about the written exams during the ten days, they should contact the SAO. Students should sequester themselves and should not have any communications about their exams with anyone else for the duration of the exam process, including grammatical review. No late exams will be accepted, except in case of emergency; in this circumstance, the student must provide verifiable written documentation supporting their request to the SAO and WACD Chair within 48 hours of the exam due date. The WACD Chair will determine if the emergency is valid, based on the documentation.

The chair of the student's committee is responsible for collecting and then distributing the answers to all committee members, as well as providing one back-up copy to the Graduate Student Affairs Officer. Students must keep a copy of all their written exam answers, in case of any issue that arises with the exam files during the evaluation period. The committee chair will discuss the respective evaluations with the committee members and notify the student of the exam's results within ten business days, or approximately two weeks from the date of submission. Once the committee has submitted their evaluations to the committee chair, the chair will compile the results of these evaluations and inform the other committee members and Graduate Student Affairs Officer.

Examination answers are evaluated as "pass" or "fail." If students do not provide the examination answers within the specified timeframe, the exam will be considered a "fail." If two answers are evaluated as "fail," the written examination receives an overall evaluation of fail. Any examination question that originally receives a "fail" evaluation may be retaken once upon the approval of the student's Doctoral Committee, no later than the following quarter. If a student fails any single question on the written examination a second time, the student has failed the written examination. A failed written examination leads to a recommendation to the Division of Graduate Education for academic disqualification from the doctoral program. Committee members may choose to meet with the student to discuss the written exam after the exam has been graded.

Plagiarism as well as insufficient or inappropriate references to sources may result in exam failure and a student's failure to receive the degree.

If any of the above protocols are not followed, the exams will be considered void. If the student is entitled to re-write the exams, they will need to reschedule them with their PhD committee within one quarter (not permitted over Spring to Fall, across a summer) and respond to a new set of questions.

Students are also required to complete a dissertation prospectus of 25 to 30 pages in length. The prospectus puts forward an introduction to the dissertation topic, research questions, and methodology. It typically consists of an overview, literature review, statement of originality and importance, discussion of research methods and methodologies, and a dissertation outline. The student should work on the prospectus with the Committee Chair before circulating it to the Doctoral Committee. The final prospectus should be sent to committee members at least three weeks before the orals, or on a date outside these parameters, as agreed by the doctoral committee.

The University Oral Qualifying Examination is primarily a defense of the dissertation proposal and is administered by the student's Doctoral Committee, and is primarily arranged by the Committee Chair. These meetings usually last two hours and typically involve a discussion of the proposed research and the structure of the dissertation. A pass examination evaluation cannot have more than one committee member who votes fail regardless of the size of the committee. If two or more committee members vote "fail," students may retake the oral examination once within the next quarter with the approval of their Doctoral Committee. If the second oral examination results in a second fail evaluation, the student has failed the oral examination. A failed oral examination leads to a recommendation to the Division of Graduate Education for disqualification from the doctoral program.

Evaluation results of written and oral examinations are communicated to the student in writing within 14 days from the date of the completion of the examinations. However, the Doctoral Committee may choose to inform the student of the evaluation result immediately upon the completion of the oral examination.

The Report on Oral Qualifying Examination & Advancement To Candidacy Request form is completed, signed, and submitted electronically to Division of Graduate Education. The form must be initiated by the Student Affairs Officer. Please inform the Student Affairs Officer preferably at the start of the quarter when the exam is scheduled, but no later than two weeks prior to your oral exam date.

Students must take the oral and written examinations in consecutive quarters. Students wishing to delay their oral qualifying examination must petition their Doctoral Committee, copying the Student Affairs Officer, Graduate Vice Chair, and Department Chair, within the first two weeks of the quarter when the oral exam is to be held, or at the earliest possible time in that quarter if there is an unexpected emergency, specifying the reasons for the proposed exam delay. Requests to delay the oral qualifying examination are only approved in exceptional circumstances. The decision about the petition will be made by the Doctoral Committee, Graduate Vice Chair, and department Chair in a time-sensitive manner and communicated in writing to the student, with a copy sent to the Student Affairs Officer.

Institutional Review Board (IRB) Requirement

Students conducting specific types of research involving human interlocutors (for example, ethnographic research and participant-observation) will need to apply for approval from UCLA's CITI and [IRB office](#) before embarking on their plans. All UCLA Personnel involved with human subjects research must have a current and complete UCLA Human Subjects Research certification or UCLA Good Clinical Practice (GCP) certification via CITI prior to inclusion in the IRB application. The IRBs are the committees designated by UCLA to review protocols of research involving human subjects that is conducted by UCLA personnel, including faculty, staff, and students. For details, please contact the [UCLA Office of the Human Research Protection Program](#).

Doctoral Advancement to Candidacy (ATC) Requirements

Students are advanced to candidacy (ATC) upon successful completion of the written and oral qualifying examinations. Schedule a meeting with your Graduate Student Affairs Officer two weeks prior to the oral examination so the SAO can initiate the ATC form. Students must advance to candidacy no later than the Spring quarter of their third year in the doctoral program to remain within normative time. In case of exceptional circumstances, students can submit a written request to delay this timeline once, subject to the approval of the Doctoral Committee, Graduate Vice Chair, and department Chair. If students do not advance to candidacy by the specified time, they will be subject to academic disqualification.

Doctoral Dissertation

Every doctoral degree program requires the completion of an approved dissertation that demonstrates the student's ability to perform original, independent research and constitutes a distinct contribution to knowledge in the principal field of study. You will work with your Faculty Adviser throughout the dissertation writing process. **Students are required to submit the final draft of their dissertation to their Doctoral Committee one month prior to the UCLA Division of Graduate Education's filing deadlines for review and approval.** To file your dissertation, please visit the Division's website, where you can find more information about the process: <https://grad.ucla.edu/academics/graduate-study/file-your-thesis-or-dissertation/>

Final Oral Examination (Dissertation Defense)

Not required for all students in the program. The decision as to whether a defense is required is made by the Doctoral Committee and is determined during the student's oral qualifying examination.

Time-to-Degree (TTD)

For students entering the doctoral program with an approved Master's degree from an outside entity, normative time to candidacy is eight quarters from their entering date. After reaching candidacy, these students have two years to complete their doctoral degree to remain within normative time.

For students entering the doctoral program without an approved Master's degree, normative time to complete our Master's degree is two years from their entering date. After completing their Master's degree in this department, students have three years to complete their doctoral degree to remain within normative time.

Normal progress toward the doctoral degree is as follows for students with a Master's degree:

- Core course requirements: third quarter
- 48 units of course work: fifth quarter
- Completion of foreign language requirement: sixth quarter (must be completed prior to the nomination of committee and the qualifying examinations)
- Approval of Doctoral Committee: eighth quarter
- Written and oral qualifying examinations: eighth quarter
- Advancement to Candidacy: eighth quarter
- Completion of doctoral dissertation and final oral examination (if required): end of fifth year

Normal progress toward the doctoral degree is as follows for students in the department's M.A. degree program and continuing to doctoral program:

- Core course requirements: 3rd quarter
- Completion of foreign language requirement: 5th quarter (must be completed prior to the nomination of committee and the qualifying examinations)
- Approval of Master's Committee: 5th quarter
- Master's Advancement to candidacy: 6th quarter
- Completion of Master's degree: 6th quarter
- Completion of 12 to 24 units of additional coursework (depending on whether the student changes their major field): 10th quarter
- Approval of Doctoral Committee: 10th quarter
- Written and oral qualifying examinations: 12th quarter
- Advancement to Candidacy: 12th quarter
- Completion of doctoral dissertation (and dissertation defense if required): 6th year

DEGREE	NORMATIVE TIME TO ATC (Quarters)	NORMATIVE TTD	MAXIMUM TTD
Ph.D.	8	18	24

Students also have the option to consider part-time enrollment for a limited period. Students can enroll on a part-time basis for a maximum of three quarters during their graduate studies. By exception, requests for additional time on part-time status may be approved, up to 6 quarters. Part-time students will accrue time to degree under the Normative Time-to-Degree Policy at one-half the rate of full-time students for those quarters during which they are approved for part-time study. When on part-time status, graduate students are eligible for a maximum 25% appointment as TA or GSR.

Please note: The Division of Graduate Education's policy states that students who have Advanced to Candidacy are ineligible for part-time status. International students are also ineligible for part-time status if they are on F-1 or J-1 visas; however, they can apply for Reduced Course Load status in certain circumstances. Please review the full policy at: <https://grad.ucla.edu/academics/graduate-study/part-time-enrollment/>

The department guidelines on securing approval for part-time status are as follows: Students need to submit their request to SAO by the end of Week 5 of the quarter immediately prior to the start of the projected part-time term. While the Division of Graduate Education provides for submission until the end of Week 2 of the quarter in which the part-time status is sought ("Friday of the second week of the term"), the WACD deadline is earlier, with the aim of allowing sufficient time for the department to consider the request and its relevant impacts. While preparing the request, students should carefully review the eligibility requirements; prepare a part-time plan and statement of rationale; seek approval of their Faculty Adviser/PhD Committee Chair for the plan; ask the Faculty Advisor/PhD Committee Chair to prepare a memo in support of their request (please request the SAO for a template). The Faculty's memo should state how part-time status might affect the student's progress toward degree as well as funding, and outline steps to be taken to minimize any possible negative consequences of the decision. The student should then submit both their request and faculty memo to the SAO by the deadline. The Division of Graduate Education needs to review and approve student requests [effective Spring 2022].

Students can also request [In Absentia](#) status or take a [Leave of Absence](#) during their studies, provided they meet the eligibility criteria. For details, please consult the SAO and review the [Standards and Procedures for Graduate Study](#).

Independent Studies

The “596A. Directed Individual Study or Research” course option enables students to enroll for variable credit hours (2-8) in order to work directly with ladder faculty in the department. These courses provide training and advising in a faculty member’s area of specialization. Faculty welcome students inquiring about their availability and interests. Faculty ask that students inquire about their availability for independent studies with as much advanced notice as feasible.

Students are required to submit a mutually agreed Contract Of Work developed in consultation with the faculty you plan to undertake an independent study with in order to receive permission to enroll (PTE). The Contract of Work outlines work to be completed, proposed benchmarks for various goals, final submissions and deadlines. Credit hours will vary based on expected student productivity.

Some examples of productive independent studies include:

- a deeper engagement with research areas or methods other than those provided in scheduled classes and/or seminars.
- crafting an annotated bibliography within the framework of oral exam readings lists.
- drafting of sections, if not the bulk, of a dissertation prospectus.
- workshopping a conference paper and its presentation, or an essay for submission.
- developing the content of a major grant application.
- registering for credit hours that represent the labor needed for data analysis, community collaboration, or research praxis.

Please contact any faculty regarding these or other possibilities.

Note: Independent Studies are encouraged in those areas of work that build on materials covered in classes and seminars. Therefore, we do not recommend that independent studies use syllabi of existing courses unless a student is unable to attend the concerned class or seminar due to extenuating circumstances.

Across the campus, faculty understand that independent studies are an important means of developing needed skills. To learn more about how independent studies may figure into your larger course plan, please discuss them with your primary advisor.

Departmental Student Affairs Officer

The departmental Student Affairs Officer (SAO) in WACD is located in Kaufman Hall and is also available to assist and support you throughout the program. The SAO is fundamentally responsible for advising students in regard to program requirements, policies, and University regulations. Quarterly meetings with the SAO are suggested to help keep your progress on track.

You can expect the SAO to:

- help you understand WACD's academic programs, policies, and procedures
- assist you in understanding your educational rights and responsibilities as a UCLA student
- discuss ways you can define and achieve your educational goals
- help you plan your academic program and schedule appropriate courses
- maintain and audit your records for accuracy and clarity
- empower you to make informed decisions about your education
- refer you and/or reach out to other resources when appropriate
- maintain confidentiality and create a safe space
- recognize and respond to diverse student needs to foster an inclusive advising culture
- encourage you to participate in additional program opportunities
- be respectful and concerned with your overall wellbeing

The SAO will expect you to:

- take responsibility for your educational decisions
- become knowledgeable of your degree requirements, as well as University and School policies
- regularly review your degree progress and study list for accuracy and contact us when there is an inconsistency
- meet with your WACD Faculty Adviser at least once every other quarter
- contact us when you have academic concerns or questions and/or when non-academic challenges may affect your studies
- email us with short questions that require a short answer
- email to schedule an advising appointment; attend and arrive on time; call in case something unexpected comes up
- prepare for appointments by bringing a completed course planning sheet and/or listed topics for discussion, and take notes during the appointment
- provide us with accurate information about your goals, challenges, and concerns – we can help if you tell us what's going on
- enroll in courses on time
- attend departmental events
- regularly check your email
- be respectful and concerned with the wellbeing of the WACD community

Funding

Graduate funding can come from a variety of sources including federal financial aid; departmental, school, and Division of Graduate Education funding; as well as Teaching Assistantships, Graduate Student Researcher, and external scholarships. All funding is dependent upon continuous full-time enrollment and remaining in satisfactory standing in the department. In Absentia enrollment does not affect a student's continuous enrollment as students remain enrolled full time (Students on In Absentia cannot TA as they are not on campus). For rules on how [Leaves of Absence](#) and [Part-Time Enrollment](#) impact funding, please refer to the relevant policies from the Division of Graduate Education; please note the different requirements for resident versus international students.

For federal financial aid, please visit the UCLA Financial Aid and Scholarships Office for

eligibility requirements, application, and additional information: www.financialaid.ucla.edu. All federal financial aid is managed by their office. For extramural funding, the student must refer and adhere to the individual agency's guidelines on eligibility.

UCLA Division of Graduate Education provides a comprehensive handbook to acquaint you with the range of opportunities to support your graduate study at UCLA: <https://grad.ucla.edu/funding/financial-aid/funding-for-continuing-students/graduate-student-financial-support/>. The Division of Graduate Education also provides a search database for additional opportunities. UCLA GRAPES allows you to search for awards from among 625 scholarships, grants, fellowships, and postdoctoral awards: <https://grad.ucla.edu/funding/>.

Teaching Assistant positions through the department are available through an application process. The department will send out a call for applications during the Winter Quarter. Graduate students interested in searching for Teaching Assistantship vacancies outside of their home department are encouraged to subscribe to use Division of Graduate Education's TA Marketplace where open positions throughout campus are located: <https://grad.ucla.edu/funding/working-at-ucla/teaching-assistantship-positions/>.

There will be additional opportunities for scholarships throughout the academic year from WACD, The School of Arts and Architecture, and other external resources.

General University Policies, Resources, and Codes of Student Conduct

Students are expected to abide by the campus codes of conduct in all their academic and professional activities (such as their coursework, research, and engagement with staff, peers, faculty, and graduate committees). These include:

UCLA Student Code of Conduct

<https://deanofstudents.ucla.edu/student-conduct-code>

UCLA Principles of Community

<https://www.ucla.edu/pdf/principles-of-community.pdf>

Graduate Student Academic Rights and Responsibilities

<https://grad.ucla.edu/asis/library/academicrights.pdf>

Students with temporary or permanent disabilities can register with the Center for Accessible Education and should follow the protocols established by the office to manage accommodations, when relevant, as they navigate their doctoral requirements and studies. Please see: <https://cae.ucla.edu/>

International students can access a wide array of resources and support at the Dashew Center during their time at UCLA. Please see: <https://internationalcenter.ucla.edu/>

Readmission

University requirements state that unless granted a formal leave of absence, continuing graduate students who fail to register are considered to have withdrawn from the University and must compete for readmission with all other applicants. Thus, applicants who were previously registered at any time as graduate students at UCLA, whether having completed a graduate program or not, should submit an online Application for Graduate Admission with the application fee. Official transcripts of record for all college and university work completed at institutions outside UCLA, since last registration at UCLA, should be sent directly to the department. A formal application for readmission is not required for students who are returning immediately from an official

leave of absence or who will return to file during the summer sessions. Please check with the department's Student Affairs Office for any additional requirements pertaining to readmission. Responses to readmission applications may take up to 60 days. Complete information on Graduate Student Readmission can be found here: <https://registrar.ucla.edu/registration-classes/absences-and-readmission/graduate-student-readmission>.

Academic Disqualification and Appeal of Disqualification

University Policy

A student who fails to meet the above requirements may be recommended for termination of graduate study. A graduate student may be disqualified from continuing in the graduate program for a variety of reasons. The most common is failure to maintain the minimum cumulative grade point average (3.00) required by the Academic Senate to remain in good standing (some programs require a higher grade-point average). Other examples include failing examinations, lack of timely progress toward the degree, and poor performance in core courses. Probationary students (those with cumulative grade point averages below 3.00) are subject to immediate dismissal upon the recommendation of their department.

University guidelines governing academic disqualification of graduate students, including the appeal procedure, are outlined in [Standards and Procedures for Graduate Study at UCLA](#).

Special Departmental or Program Policy

A recommendation for academic disqualification is made by the Chair of the department after a vote of the department's graduate faculty. Examples of reasons for academic disqualification include failure of examinations, lack of timely progress toward the degree (being "beyond normative time"), and poor performance in courses (earning less than a "B" in any of the core courses). Before the recommendation is sent to the Division of Graduate Education, a student is notified in writing and given two weeks to respond in writing to the Chair. An appeal is reviewed by the department's graduate faculty, which makes the final departmental recommendation to the Division of Graduate Education.

WACD Graduate Affairs Bruin Learn

Students will be automatically added to the Graduate Affairs Bruin Learn, where you can find resources from the WACD Student Affairs Office.

For access, students should visit: <https://bruinlearn.ucla.edu/courses/98184> and log in with a UCLA logon ID and password.

This Bruin Learn Resource has the items listed below and includes information specific to, and commonly utilized by, the graduate students within the Department of World Arts and Cultures/Dance.

The forms can also be found online through the Division of Graduate Education's site, or by visiting the Student Affairs Officer. Please note the information provided on Bruin Learn does not include all university and non-university sources. Students are responsible for familiarizing themselves with additional campus and non-campus resources specific to their needs.

- C.A.P Requirements and Handbooks
- M.F.A. Requirements and Handbooks
- Forms
- TA Handbook
- Funding and Financial Assistance
- Additional Resources

*The Production Calendar (Timeline Template) and Budget List examples are provided on the WACD Production Bruin Learn, please contact Production Manager for access.

WACD Listservs

Students will be added to: Wacdphdannouncements@lists.ucla.edu to receive announcements shared from our communities, external scholarship or professional opportunities, or event updates.