

Visual Studies Graduate Student Handbook Policies and Guidelines for Earning the Ph.D.

Ph.D. Program in Visual Studies
School of Humanities
University of California, Irvine
Academic Year 2024-2025

Table of Contents

Directory	2
Program Overview	5
Program Requirements	5
Sample Timeline.....	7
Requirements and Policies	9
Advising.....	10
Seminars and Directed Readings	10
Language Requirement	11
Petitions	12
California Residency.....	12
Visual Studies Annual Conference	13
Master’s Paper and the MA	13
Teaching and Teaching Assistantships	14
Graduate Student Representative	16
Preliminary Examinations	16
<i>Exam Readings</i>	16
<i>Written Exams</i>	17
Prospectus and Advancement to Candidacy.....	17
<i>The Prospectus</i>	18
<i>Exam and Prospectus Committee</i>	19
<i>Oral Exams</i>	20
<i>Advancement to Candidacy</i>	22
Dissertation.....	22
<i>Filing the Dissertation</i>	22
<i>Dissertation Defense</i>	23
Academic Integrity	23
Maintaining a Safe and Inclusive Environment	25
Faculty	26
Appendix 1: VS Annual Conference Guidelines	28
Appendix 2: Graduate Student Representative Bylaws	32
Appendix 3: Degree Audit Form	

Directory

Visual Studies

Graduate Director:

Roberta Wue

rwue@uci.edu

Graduate Coordinator:

Kimmy Bao

kimmybao@uci.edu

Graduate Committee:

Roberta Wue

Abigail Lapin Dardashti

alapinda@uci.edu

Seungyeon Gabrielle Jung

seungyj2@uci.edu

Graduate Student Representative:

Melissa Depierro

mdepierr@uci.edu

Department of Art History

Chair, Art History:

James Nisbet

jnisbet@uci.edu

Department Manager, Art History:

Robert Escalante

escalanr@uci.edu

School of Humanities

Dean:

Tyrus Miller

humanitiesdean@uci.edu

Associate Dean, Office of Graduate Study:

Yong Chen

y3chen@uci.edu

Director, Office of Graduate Study:

Geneva Lopez-Sandoval

lopezg@uci.edu

Graduate Student Personnel Analyst, Office of Graduate Study:

Kimberly Pham

kimbenp1@uci.edu

Faculty Director, Humanities Center:

Judy Tzu-Chun Wu

j.wu@uci.edu

Executive Director, Humanities Center:

Amanda Swain

ajswain@uci.edu

Graduate Futures Program Director, Humanities Center:

SueJeanne Koh

sj.koh@uci.edu

Visual Arts Librarian, Langson Library:

Jenna Dufour

dufourj@uci.edu

DECADE Faculty Mentor:

Sohail Daulatzai

sdaulatz@uci.edu

Graduate Division

Vice Provost and Dean, Graduate Division:

Jaymi Lee Smith

jaymis@uci.edu

Fellowships, Graduate Division:

Long Nguyen

Long.nguyen@uci.edu

Financial Analyst and Graduate Student Employment, Graduate Division:

Elva Escobar

elvae1@uci.edu

Director of Wellness and Inclusion, Graduate Division:

Phong Luong

pbluong@uci.edu

Graduate Student Health Insurance Plan ([GSHIP](#)):

Jennifer Burdick, Student Health

jburdic1@uci.edu

Program Overview

Program Requirements

Course Requirements

Students must complete these 14 courses:

3 Visual Studies core courses: VS 290A, VS 290B, and VS 290C

10 Electives

6 within Visual Studies (VS 295 or VS 296)

2 outside Visual Studies

2 within or outside Visual Studies

1 VS 297: Writing Practicum

14 Required Courses

For electives to count towards the 10-course minimum, they must be graduate-level courses (courses numbered 200 and above). VS 295 and VS Studies 296 may be repeated for credit with different faculty and on different topics, and count towards degree requirements.

All coursework must be completed before students enroll in VS 298A: Preliminary Exam in the Spring of their second year. Although students will register for courses such as VS 298A, VS 298B: Prospectus Research, and 399: University Teaching in their second and third years, these courses do not count toward the 14 required courses.

Language Requirement

Students must demonstrate reading knowledge of one language other than English before advancing to candidacy in the Spring of the student's third year. This requirement can be satisfied in several ways, including native speaker status, passing a reading proficiency exam, or two years of college-level coursework (for Asian languages, three years of coursework are required).

Master's Paper and the MA

If the student has not already earned an MA in a related field, they will write an MA paper under the supervision of their advisor in the Fall or Winter quarter of their second year. This MA paper will be submitted to a three-person MA committee at the start of the Winter quarter who will read and comment on the MA paper. The student is typically required to submit revisions. The MA paper must be approved by the student's MA committee before the student registers for VS 298A: Preliminary Exam in the Spring of their second year.

Written Preliminary Examinations

Working with their advisor, students define two fields in which they will be examined. These fields help lay the groundwork for the student's dissertation research and prepare them to teach in specific fields.

The student will register for VS 298A: Preliminary Exam in the Spring of their second year and Fall of their third year and complete these exam readings under the direction of two faculty exam supervisors. For each exam reading, students work in close consultation with the exam supervisor to prepare a reading list of 25-40 books, journal articles, and/or book chapters. During the quarter, students meet regularly with the exam supervisor to discuss these readings. At the end of the quarter, the student will sit for the written exam. Exams generally consist of one or two essay questions and students have three hours to complete the written exam. Students take the exam in a controlled environment, on a university-owned computer with no access to books, notes, or the internet.

Dissertation Prospectus

In the Winter quarter of their third year, students enroll in VS 297: Writing Practicum. Working with their advisor, students will complete a draft of their dissertation prospectus. In the first week of Spring quarter, the student will distribute the prospectus to their prospectus committee (which is also their preliminary exam committee) and request written feedback. Students are encouraged to meet individually with their committee members. After receiving feedback on the prospectus, students will make a revision plan with their advisor and distribute the revised prospectus to their committee three weeks before the planned prospectus defense and oral preliminary exam.

Oral Preliminary Examination

In the Spring quarter of their third year, the student will convene a preliminary exam committee of three to five members and sit the oral portion of their preliminary exams. Committee members will have read the written exam responses and dissertation prospectus. The two-hour oral examination/prospectus defense will begin with a discussion of the written exams, followed by the student's brief presentation on their proposed dissertation research, and discussion of the prospectus. When the oral portion of the exam is completed, the student will be asked to leave the room while the committee deliberates on the exams and prospectus.

Advancement to Candidacy

Students advance to candidacy after completing all required courses, the language requirement, MA paper (if applicable), two written exams, and after passing their oral exams and receiving committee approval on their dissertation prospectus.

Dissertation

Students should complete the dissertation within three years of advancing to candidacy. After submitting the full dissertation to their doctoral committee, they will present an oral defense, which is open to all members of the academic community. The oral defense typically includes a brief presentation of the project followed by questions from the committee and audience, closed deliberation, and feedback.

Sample Timeline

Normative time to advancement to doctoral candidacy: 3 years

Normative time to degree: 6 years

Maximum time to degree: 7 years.

Students who are beyond maximum time to degree may be unable to register.

Year 1

Fall	Winter	Spring
VS 290A	VS 290B	VS 290C
Elective 1 (VS 295, VS 296, or courses outside VS)	Elective 3	Elective 5
Elective 2	Elective 4	Elective 6

Year 2

Fall	Winter	Spring
Elective 7	Elective 9	VS 298A: Preliminary Exam
Elective 8 <i>Write MA paper</i>	Elective 10 <i>Week 1: Submit MA paper</i>	<i>First written exam</i>
TA (Register for 399)	TA (Register for 399)	TA (Register for 399)

Year 3

Fall	Winter	Spring
VS 298A: Preliminary Exam	VS 297: Writing Practicum	VS 298B: Prospectus Research
<i>Second written exam</i>	VS 298B: Prospectus Research	<i>Submit prospectus; pass oral exam and prospectus defense, advance to candidacy</i>
TA (Register for 399) <i>Apply for fellowships</i>	TA (Register for 399)	TA (Register for 399)

Year 4

Fall	Winter	Spring
VS 299: Dissertation Research	VS 299	VS 299
TA (Register for 399) <i>Apply for fellowships</i>	TA (Register for 399)	TA (Register for 399)

Year 5

Fall	Winter	Spring
VS 299	VS 299	VS 299
TA (Register for 399) <i>Apply for fellowships</i>	TA (Register for 399)	TA (Register for 399) <i>Apply for TAship or GSR for year 6 (See below)</i>

Year 6

Fall	Winter	Spring
VS 299	VS 299	VS 299: File Dissertation
<i>TAships are not guaranteed</i>	<i>TAships are not guaranteed</i>	<i>TAships are not guaranteed</i>

Requirements and Policies

The policies and guidelines in this handbook supplement the requirements described in the UC Irvine General Catalog, Graduate Division's Academic Policies, also found in the [Graduate Policies and Procedures](#) handbook.

The Visual Studies Program requirements are published in the UCI General Catalog and are further discussed below. These requirements have been approved by the Visual Studies faculty, Dean of the School of Humanities, Office of Graduate Study, and Graduate Division. Any exceptions to these requirements can only be made by permission of the Graduate Dean. Students are governed by the requirements that were enumerated in the General Catalog in the year they first enrolled in the Visual Studies program.

The Visual Studies faculty have voted to approve the policies described below. These represent the faculty's consensus on best practices for the program. Any exceptions to these policies can only be made with the approval of the Visual Studies director and/or the Visual Studies Graduate Committee in consultation with the student's advisor/dissertation chair.

Advising

- Students typically enter the program to work with a specific advisor who shares the student's research interests. The advisor should be confirmed by the end of the first year. The student may also change advisors before undertaking preliminary exam readings. The advisor will become the student's dissertation chair.
- It is important that students and their advisors communicate regularly and clearly; they should meet at least once per quarter.
- It is important that advisors and students have a good understanding of their respective expectations, roles, and responsibilities. Advisors are responsible for guiding students through their degree requirements and deadlines, assisting them through the dissertation process and professional development, providing regular academic feedback and mentorship, as well as offering career guidance.
- Students should understand themselves as partners in the advising relationship. Students are responsible for understanding and meeting requirements and deadlines associated with their degree and program. Students should be proactive in seeking out advising, mentorship, academic resources, and opportunities.
- See also the [Graduate Mentoring and Advising Policy](#) approved by UCI's Graduate Council.

Seminars and Directed Readings

1. Course listings and descriptions can be found on the School of Humanities' Office of Graduate Study [website](#). The Registrar's [Schedule of Classes](#) includes courses offered campus-wide.
2. As Visual Studies is a small Ph.D. program, students' academic plans can be tailored to address their individual backgrounds and to enhance their specific research interests. Students will develop their programs of study in consultation with their advisor and the Director of Visual Studies.
3. VS 295 denotes elective Graduate Seminars offered by the program. Students may enroll under the number repeatedly during their period of class work, studying with different professors and on different topics.
4. VS 296 denotes a Directed Reading under the supervision of a VS faculty member. To enroll in VS 296, students should speak with the faculty member with whom they wish to work on a specific topic of study. The faculty member should help the student develop a reading list and they should meet weekly or biweekly to discuss the readings. Written assignments usually include weekly or biweekly reading responses and a seminar paper. Students should take the lead when undertaking a Directed Reading, including presenting material to the professor and initiating discussion topics, rather than vice versa.
 - Students who have not had the MA requirement waived should enroll in VS 296 during the Fall or Winter quarter of their second year, using the Directed Reading to revise a previous written paper up to the length and quality expected for a MA paper.

- If an undergraduate lecture class or seminar is being taught on a topic of interest, students may ask the faculty member teaching if they are willing to supervise a concurrent Directed Reading. This typically means the student attends the class or seminar and the faculty member will advise on additional readings and assignments. It is the responsibility of the students to initiate discussion on these additional readings and assignments.
5. A normal course load is 12 units or 3 courses per quarter. TAs enroll in 399: University Teaching, which counts as 4 units. Students are required to be fully enrolled every quarter.
 6. If a student intends to submit seminar papers on the same topic to more than one instructor, they must first obtain written permission to do so.
 7. Active participation and discussion in Seminars and Directed Readings are a crucial part of graduate education.
 8. A helpful guide to bibliographic or citation management software can be found [here](#).
 9. Faculty assign letter grades to students for graduate seminars and directed readings. At the end of the year faculty will also submit brief written comments on the performance of each student with whom they have worked in any capacity. The Graduate Coordinator will compile all comments for each student and share them with the student at the end of the academic year. All faculty comments are reviewed at year's end by the Graduate Committee to evaluate each student's progress.
 10. Students are also requested to submit their updated CV and a self-evaluation form at the end of the academic year to the Graduate Coordinator. Students should mark their progress toward degree, list their academic activities over the course of the year (lectures, conferences, academic and professionalization workshops, applications, publications, events attended, etc.), and outline goals for the next year.

Language Requirement

- 1) Students must demonstrate proficient reading knowledge in one language other than English. Students are strongly encouraged to develop competence in a second language as well. The language requirement can be satisfied in the following ways:
 - a) Completing, with a grade of "B" or better, a language course at the 2C level or equivalent, with the exceptions of Arabic, Chinese, Japanese, and Korean, which must be completed at the 3C level or equivalent.
 - b) Attaining a proficiency level of 2C on the Russian Exemption Exam or a proficiency level of 3C on the Chinese Exemption Exam offered by UCI's [Academic Testing Center](#).
 - c) Petitioning the program. Grounds for a petition include the student being a native speaker or having completed the language requirement at a different institution. Relevant transcripts should be submitted with the petition. The granting of this petition is at the discretion of the VS Director, though students dissatisfied with the determination may request the petition be considered by the full faculty.
 - d) Passing the program's language exam. The student should inform the Graduate Coordinator within the first two weeks of the quarter that they intend to take the examination for a particular language. The exam consists of a translation of two

passages, each about 250 words in length, from texts within the student's general field. In the case of European languages, one passage will be translated with the aid of a translation dictionary and one without; in the case of Asian languages, an electronic dictionary may be used for both. Students have an hour to complete their translation. Passages may be used only once. There is no oral component to the exam. Exams are conducted in a quiet, closed environment, with only the exam, paper, pencil, and a computer without laptop access available to the student. The exam will be evaluated by a faculty member appropriate to the language, who is chosen by the program. Students may only attempt the test once per quarter. Where possible, practice exams will be made available, culled from exams administered in the recent past, but without completed translations provided. Exams should be scheduled between weeks 3-8 and will be graded and results communicated to students within three weeks of the exam date.

- 2) Students are encouraged to demonstrate reading ability in one or more additional languages. Advisors may require reading knowledge in additional languages according to the demands of the student's particular fields. The student may also need proven proficiency in two languages other than English for eligibility in order to apply for certain external fellowships.
- 3) Students must satisfy their language requirement before they can earn the MA or advance to candidacy.

Petitions

- Students may petition to satisfy their language requirement if they have completed satisfactory college-level coursework at a previous institution or if they are a native speaker in a language other than English.
- If the student was previously enrolled in a graduate program in a related field, they may petition for course waivers. The student should indicate whether these waivers will replace one or more of the 6 required VS courses or the 2 required courses outside VS. The VS Graduate Committee reviews all course waiver requests and typically will approve up to 3 course waivers.
- The Graduate Coordinator can offer guidance and will initiate all petitions which are in the form of an electronic DocuSign.

California Residency

Domestic non-CA residents relocating to California from another state should establish [California residency](#) before the beginning of their second year. The program will pay the student's nonresident tuition for their first year; if the student establishes California residency, they will be exempt from future nonresident state tuition bills. For information on establishing residency and residency requirements, including for international students, see "[Understanding Residency](#)", and also "[Ten things graduate students need to know.](#)"

International students' nonresident student tuition (NRST) is covered for years 1-3 via School fellowship and [NRST Remission Initiative Program](#). International students must advance to

candidacy for the Ph.D. by the end of year 3. Following advancement to candidacy for the Ph.D., nonresident students will not be assessed NRST for a period of up to three consecutive calendar years; this includes any time on Leave of Absence or Filing Fee. Any such student who continues to be enrolled or who re-enrolls after three years will be charged the full NRST that is in effect at that time.

Questions regarding residency can be directed to the UCI Residence Officer at regres@uci.edu

Visual Studies Annual Conference

It is a VS tradition for the second-year cohort to organize a conference around a theme of their choosing. Students typically choose a theme, find a keynote speaker, issue a call for papers, apply for funding, set-up, schedule and organize a one-day conference. They can expect support from the Director and Graduate Coordinator. Please see conference guidelines in Appendix 1.

Master's Paper and the MA

- Students who have not previously completed an MA must write an MA paper, expanding on a previous seminar paper, and producing an essay of near publication quality, approximately 30 pages in length. They will take a VS 296: Directed Reading in Fall or Winter quarter of their second year with their advisor for this purpose.
- The MA paper should present a substantial and original argument that contributes to the study of visual culture, demonstrate a command of the relevant literature, present adequate evidence to support its claims, be clearly written in an appropriate academic style, formatted according to MLA or Chicago Manual of Style guidelines, and be between 6,000 and 10,000 words including notes and excluding bibliography.
- The student and their advisor will work with the VS Director to convene an MA committee of three VS faculty members. The advisor will serve as the committee chair.
- The MA paper should be submitted to the committee in the first week of Winter quarter. Within two weeks of receiving the MA paper, the MA committee will evaluate the paper, individually or as a group, and will usually require revisions. Revision requirements will be submitted to the student in writing, along with a deadline for the revised MA paper.
- If the committee requires revisions, the student should meet with their advisor to discuss how to revise the paper.
 - If the student has questions about any of the required revisions, they should discuss this with their advisor and, if appropriate, the committee members.
 - The student should be sure to understand what is expected of them, and to take the committee's feedback and requests for revisions seriously.
- After the student submits their final MA paper, the committee will deliberate on the student's work, ability to respond to feedback and make revisions, and progress in the VS program. The committee will make one of three recommendations: 1. Approve the MA paper and recommend the student continue with the Ph.D. 2. Approve the MA

paper but not recommend the student continue with the Ph.D. 3. Approve neither the MA paper nor recommend that the student continue with the Ph.D..

- The student will earn the MA once the MA paper is completed and approved, and if they have also completed language and course requirements. The student and their advisor should then request the Graduate Coordinator initiate and circulate the *Final Degree Paperwork* electronic DocuSign for completing the MA in Visual Studies.
- The MA paper should be completed and approved before the student undertakes their first VS 298A: Preliminary Exam Reading.

Completing the Advancement to Candidacy and Final Degree Paperwork DocuSigns

- All DocuSigns are initiated by the Graduate Coordinator
- Fall Quarter (Year 2): the student will request the Graduate Coordinator initiate the DocuSign for “Master Advancement (Comp Exam).”
- Winter Quarter (year 3): the student will request the Graduate Coordinator to initiate the DocuSign for Final Degree Paperwork.
 - The degree title is “M.A. in Visual Studies”;
 - The student’s required VS classes (excluding VS 297) will be listed in the left-hand column and elective courses in the right-hand column.

Teaching and Teaching Assistantships

Students are usually funded through teaching assistantships and typically begin teaching in their second year (their first year is a fellowship year). The program tries to assign students to Art History courses but because of the limited number of TAs, students are often assigned to other departments in the Humanities.

In the Spring, students who wish to teach the following year complete an application through the School of Humanities portal. Students will be asked to identify the classes and departments for which they would like to TA and to note any special circumstances or qualifications. TA assignments in Art History are made by the Chair of Art History in consultation with the Director and Department Manager.

- To qualify to TA, students must maintain satisfactory academic progress, including earning letter grades of C, S, or above, in all courses completed in the last three quarters and having no more than two Incomplete grades in the last three quarters. The student should speak to the Director if they do not meet these qualifications.
- Although TAs are part of the student’s Visual Studies financial package, they are administered by the departments in which students teach, not the Visual Studies program. Thus, questions and concerns about TAs should be directed to the Chair and Department Manager of the department for which the student is TAing.
- All Academic Student Employee (ASE) appointments are covered by a collective bargaining agreement between the University of California and the International Union, United Automobile, Aerospace and Agricultural Implement Workers of America (UAW). The contract can be viewed [here](#).

Most graduate students are eligible to receive up to nine quarters of teaching as TAs before advancement to candidacy and eighteen quarters of total support; any TAsip guarantees are to be found in their letters of acceptance. Students with poor academic records and poor teaching records may lose support. Students who have incompletes from more than 12 months ago may not be eligible for a teaching assistantship. Students who are more than 12 quarters past advancement to candidacy (Doc 2A status) are not guaranteed TAsips and may be ineligible for SOH fellowships.

All graduate students are required to demonstrate oral English proficiency before they are appointed to Teaching Assistant or Teaching Associate titles. For more information on English proficiency standards and exemptions, please refer to: <https://grad.uci.edu/funding/teaching-assistantships/>.

TAs, like faculty, are considered mandatory reporters under UC's Title IX provisions, which means they are required to report all incidents and disclosures of sex offenses and harassment to the Title IX Office/[Office of Equal Opportunity and Diversity](#). If an undergraduate student informs their TA that they have been abused or assaulted, the TA should consult with the Instructor of Record for the course and get their support in handling the situation. TAs should inform students who confide in them that the TA is obligated to report. There is a Sexual Harassment Hotline at (949) 824-7037.

Confidential resources are also available to those considering making a report, where they can learn about procedures and possible outcomes while remaining anonymous:

- Campus Assault Resources and Educations ([CARE](#)), located at Suite G320 at the UCI Student Center, can also be reached at (949) 824-7273.
- [Office of Campus Social Work](#), (949) 824-0101. Students must be referred by the TA or Instructor of Record who must contact the OCSW directly.
- [Campus Counseling Center](#) has walk-in Urgent Care on weekdays, 8:00-4:30 PM, or can be reached at (949) 824-6457. The Center is located upstairs in Student Services 1.
- Individuals may make a report to the UCI Police Department and request to be treated as a "confidential victim."

If the TA is the recipient of hostility or harassment in their capacity as an instructor, they should consult with the Instructor of Record. It is entirely appropriate for the TA to remove a student from their class for inappropriate behavior for the remainder of the class period and the following class period. TAs should report such incidents to the [Office of Academic Integrity and Student Conduct](#) at (949) 824-1479. For more information on dealing with disruptive or threatening students, see [here](#).

If the behavior of a student is threatening or if a TA is harassed based on gender, race, sexual identity, or disability, they can call the UCI Police at (949) 824-5223.

Graduate Student Representative

Every Spring, the graduate students elect a new student representative for a two-year term, with two representatives serving simultaneously. The representatives' responsibilities include assisting in communications between the VS graduate students and the Art History/Visual Studies faculty and staff, advocating for, and representing the graduate students. See the bylaws in Appendix 2.

Preliminary Examinations

By the end of the first year, students will work with their advisor to plan completion of their program requirements and choose the faculty who will supervise examination fields. The students and advisor define two fields, one major and one minor, to be examined by the faculty. Each field should combine historical breadth and some variety in media.

After completing all required coursework, students complete two exam readings: one with their advisor and one with another faculty member who will serve as the second exam supervisor and on their Prospectus Committee. These two exam readings typically take place at the end of their second year and start of their third. Students will prepare reading lists for each of these two fields in close consultation with their advisor and exam supervisor. Students normally enroll in eight to twelve units per quarter of VS 298A: Preliminary Exam during which time they complete the agreed-upon readings list. The examination takes place at the end of those quarters of study.

Except in extraordinary circumstances, no student will be given more than two chances to pass any section of the examination.

Exam Readings

- Students must earn the MA before beginning preliminary exam readings.
- Exam readings typically take place in the Spring of the second year and Fall of the third year in the form of two VS 298A courses.
- The student should ensure that they have a clear understanding of how their reading list for each VS 298A will be developed. Before they start each VS 298A, the student should work with the faculty members directing each exam to develop a reading list, whether by the student building a draft bibliography, or the faculty member providing a reading list upon which to build.
- Reading lists should be of a reasonable length, of approximately 25-40 sources, including a mix of books, journal articles, and book chapters.
- Reading lists should be finalized before the start of the quarter. If readings are added during the quarter, the list must be adjusted to remain within a reasonable length of 25-40 items.
- Typically, the student will be asked to submit a written response to each of the readings, which will be discussed during weekly or biweekly meetings. It is important that students meet deadlines for these written responses.

- Faculty are discouraged from supervising more than two VS 298As per quarter.

Written Exams

The first part of the Preliminary Examination is a written component, for which the student writes essay responses to questions posed in their two examination fields. The student will complete the oral portion of the exam in the Spring of their third year, in conjunction with their prospectus defense.

- Students usually sit the first written exam at the end of Spring quarter, and the second at the end of Fall quarter.
- The written portion for each of the two exam readings consists of three hours of writing in a controlled environment, without access to books, notes, or the internet.
- The faculty have not recommended a page length for exam responses. The student should discuss expectations for the exam with each exam supervisor well before the exam, including length, format, as well as standards of quality and content.
- Students are responsible for scheduling the dates and times of their written exams with the Graduate Coordinator. The Graduate Coordinator will reserve a suitable room and contact the student's exam supervisor for the exam questions.
- Tests are conducted in a quiet, closed environment. Students leave their belongings with the Graduate Coordinator. A paper, pencil, and laptop computer with a word processor only will be provided to the student. The exam will be typed.
- The exam supervisor's questions will be provided to the student at the beginning of the exam and collected at the end of three hours, with no extra time allocated for breaks, spell-checking, etc. Students should budget time as needed for drafting, writing, revising, and proofreading within the three-hour limit.
- The Graduate Coordinator will submit the student's completed exam to the student and faculty member who supervised the reading.
- Typically within two weeks, the faculty member who supervised the exam reading will notify the student, Graduate Coordinator, and Director as to whether the student has passed this portion of the exam. The advisor will notify the student and members of the Prospectus Committee when the student has completed and passed the written portion of the exam.
- If a student has a disability that requires accommodation, they should register with the Disability Services Center. VS cannot make accommodations independently of the DSC.

Prospectus and Advancement to Candidacy

In their third year, students undertake and draft a prospectus which defines the scope, approach, and rationale for their proposed dissertation and begin research. At the end of their third year, students will defend the written exams and prospectus with their exam and prospectus committee. Based on the student's written exam results, prospectus, oral defense, and overall progress, the committee will determine whether the student has successfully advanced to candidacy. Except in extraordinary circumstances, no student will be given more than two chances to pass any given section of the examination.

The normative time for advancement to candidacy is three years.

- Ideally, the student will have a dissertation topic in mind by the end of their second year.
 - *The Craft of Research* by Booth, Colomb, and Williams is a classic guide to developing a research project. It is written with the social sciences in mind, but much of the advice is applicable to humanities scholarship.
 - The summer is a good time for students to familiarize themselves with dissertations within their subject area. Students can search for dissertations on [ProQuest](#).
 - When reading dissertations, students should pay attention to dissertation conventions, and use bibliographies and footnotes to find resources, archives, and existing scholarship related to their topic.
- Students should research their object(s) of study and available resources, local archives, secondary sources, and databases before beginning work on the prospectus.
- The Winter quarter after students take their exams, they typically take the required VS 297, a writing practicum in which they finalize a prospectus that defines the scope, approach, and rationale for a proposed dissertation and begin research on the dissertation. Before enrolling in VS 297, students should carefully review the guidelines for the dissertation prospectus and gain a clear idea of expectations. A complete prospectus draft should be completed by the end of Winter quarter.
- Once the student has completed VS 297, they should share their prospectus draft with the Prospectus Committee for comments and suggested revisions. After discussion with their advisor and committee members, students should make the revisions and give the revised prospectus draft to the Graduate Coordinator to circulate to the Exam and Prospectus Committee 3 weeks before the oral exams and defense.

The Prospectus

The prospectus is a document in which the student articulates their dissertation project, situating it in relation to the existing scholarship, while mapping out a research plan. The prospectus provides a structure for the student to think through and formulate their project, as well as a plan to begin writing. As the student researches and writes, the dissertation will likely evolve over time — for example, in the number of chapters or specific case studies— but the prospectus gives the student a foundation from which to work.

The length of prospectuses varies, but these are the six basic elements of a prospectus:

1. The Project Overview introduces the dissertation topic, articulates the guiding research questions, advances a preliminary thesis, and explains the stakes or intervention of the project.
2. The Literature Review offers a synthetic survey of the relevant topical scholarly fields upon which the student is building their project or putting into dialogue. The review should give a sense of the major and most pertinent discourses and debates. The review positions the student's work in relation to the existing scholarship.

3. Methodology explains the theoretical frameworks and disciplinary methods which the student will use in their analysis. This is distinct from the literature review.
4. The Chapter Breakdown explains the subjects of each chapter, typically written with one paragraph per chapter, and the structural logic of the dissertation as a whole. The student should describe the conceptual project of each chapter, justifying how their selection of objects and texts builds a project that is a cogent whole and not a collection of arbitrary parts.
5. The Research Plan provides an overview of how the student will accomplish the dissertation. The plan includes a schedule for researching and completing chapter drafts, revisions, and delivering the completed dissertation to their committee. It also identifies archives where the student plans to conduct research, as well as fellowships and grants to which the student intends to apply for further research support. Few students meet the deadlines they set for themselves, but it is helpful to approach writing the dissertation as a series of smaller component parts, rather than being intimidated by taking on the project as a whole. It is important for the student to figure out an effective personal working and writing rhythm.
6. The Bibliography includes the scholarship that the student anticipates citing. Students may find it useful to organize their bibliography by subject rather than solely alphabetically.

The fully-drafted prospectus should be circulated to the student’s prospectus committee at the beginning of the Spring quarter for written feedback. After receiving feedback, students should make a revision plan with their advisor and committee members, where appropriate. Students should make every effort to take their committee feedback seriously. The revised prospectus should be circulated to their committee three weeks before the planned prospectus defense and oral preliminary exam.

Exam and Prospectus Committee

Before the student begins their exam readings, they should work with their advisor to establish a three-person Preliminary Exam/Prospectus Committee to conduct the preliminary exam. Members of the Exam/Prospectus Committee can also serve on the student’s Dissertation Committee. These committees must be chaired by VS faculty and no fewer than 51% of either committee must be VS faculty. The Exam/Prospectus committee can include an outside member who is not VS faculty.

Chair, Dissertation and Exam/Prospectus Committees	VS faculty only
Exam/Prospectus Committee	3-5 members, including the chair, and consisting of at least 51% VS faculty

Doctoral Committee	3-5 members, including the chair, and consisting of at least 51% VS faculty
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- Only members of the VS Faculty can chair Exam/Prospectus and Doctoral Committees.
- The Exam/Prospectus Committee may consist of three to five faculty members. It will include the two faculty members with whom the student conducted exam readings.
- The Exam/Prospectus Committee members may also serve on the student’s Doctoral Committee.
 - The majority or at least 51% of either committee must be VS faculty, e.g. if a student has two non-VS faculty on a committee, three members must be VS faculty.
- Students may invite any faculty member from any college or university to serve on their Exam/Prospectus and/or Doctoral Committee
 - In order to do so, the student will need to submit the outside member’s CV, an e-mail from the potential member to the Director in which they agree to serve on the student’s exam/prospectus and/or doctoral committee, and a memo from the student’s advisor or Director addressed to the Graduate Dean explaining why this outside member is a good fit for the committee.
- If the student wishes to have a faculty member who has an MFA rather than a Ph.D. serve on their Doctoral Committee, they will need to submit the person’s CV and a memo from the student’s advisor or Director addressed to the Graduate Dean explaining why this faculty member is qualified and a good fit for the committee.

Oral Exams

The oral portion of the Preliminary Exam will take place in conjunction with the Prospectus Defense before the Exam/Prospectus Committee. Except in extraordinary circumstances, it must take place during the regularly scheduled academic year; faculty members are not expected to participate in examinations over the summer or during any other inter-term breaks.

Only after the student has completed all their course requirements, language requirement, their MA, and written exams will they sit the Oral Exam/Prospectus Defense.

The combined Oral Exam and Prospectus Defense will be two hours long. The exam portion will consist of questions prompted by the student's reading lists and their written examinations. Students are allowed to bring notes to this exam. The prospectus committee must unanimously approve the prospectus before the student proceeds with the dissertation.

Students should ask the Graduate Coordinator to assist in scheduling the Exam/Defense and in reserving a room. They should also request the Graduate Coordinator to circulate the written exams, exam questions, and revised prospectus to all members of the committee several weeks prior to the Exam/Defense.

- Students should ask their chair how they plan to conduct the exam.

- Students will typically be asked to leave the room at the beginning of the exam while the committee shares preliminary comments on the written exams and prospectus. The student will be asked to leave the room again at the end of the exam while the committee deliberates on the oral exam and prospectus defense.
- Generally, the first part of the two-hour meeting focuses on the student's oral exam, and the final portion focuses on the prospectus defense.
- Students typically give a brief presentation on the prospectus and planned dissertation research before receiving questions.
- Preparing for the Oral Exam
 - The student should read through their written exams to identify any errors or omissions, and prepare comments to present during the exam, if applicable.
 - The student should review their notes from the exam readings and be prepared to discuss all the readings, not only the ones addressed in the written portion of the exam. The student should re-familiarize themselves with the central arguments of each individual reading and consider major points of tension or convergence.
 - The student should be prepared to respond to questions left unanswered in the written portion of the exam if they had been given a choice of questions.
- Suggestions for the Oral Exam
 - The exam committee wants the student to succeed. The purpose of the oral exam is to allow the student to further demonstrate their understanding of and ability to synthesize the readings.
 - The student may take notes when the examiners are speaking and may ask for clarification. They should not rush their responses, and for complex answers, may make notes or an outline for their own reference.
- Suggestions for the Prospectus Defense
 - The purpose of this discussion is to ensure that the student has a viable dissertation project before advancing to candidacy.
 - The student should prepare a brief presentation on their dissertation project to explain the nature of their research, their contribution or interventions, and the significance of their project.
 - Committee members are likely to suggest books and articles to read, methods to use, and/or objects to consider. It may seem as if they are being critical of the student or asking them to move in too many different directions. It is helpful to consider the prospectus defense as a brainstorming session. Unless the committee explicitly requires changes, it is up to the student to decide which ideas to pursue in the dissertation.
 - The student should meet with their chair after the Defense to discuss next steps.
- The student and their advisor should ask members of the Prospectus Committee before the exam/defense if they will serve on the student's Doctoral Committee. This information will be included on the electronic DocuSign.
- If the student does not pass this portion of the exam, the committee will give the student a deadline by which they must distribute a revised prospectus and/or re-take

the oral exam(s). No student will be given more than two chances to pass any given section of the examination.

Advancement to Candidacy

Advancement to candidacy for the Ph.D. degree is contingent upon successful completion of the written and oral Preliminary Exams and subsequent unanimous approval of the prospectus by the prospectus committee. Before that, the student should have completed course and language requirements, and earned the MA. The normative time for advancement to candidacy is three years.

After a successful oral exam/prospectus defense, the student and their advisor should ask the Graduate Coordinator to initiate and circulate the appropriate DocuSign. The completed DocuSign must be submitted to Graduate Division by 5:00pm of the [Advancement deadline](#) in order for the student to formally advance to candidacy.

Dissertation

Dissertation work begins once the student has been formally advanced to candidacy with the university. The student and their advisor will have already consulted to determine a doctoral committee of three to five members (including the advisor). Research and writing goals are communicated on an individual basis between the advisor and the student. The student also works with their committee members who, under the direction of the advisor, supervise the student's research process, advise and guide the student, and will ultimately approve the dissertation.

The recommended length for a dissertation is 200-250 pages of text and notes, not including bibliography.

After submitting a completed dissertation to their committee, students are required to pass an oral dissertation defense with their doctoral committee prior to filing their dissertation and graduating. The examination will be open to all members of the academic community.

The normative time for completion of the Ph.D. program is six years, and the maximum permitted is seven years.

Filing the Dissertation

Information on filing the dissertation can be found on the Graduate Division website under [Thesis and Dissertation Submission](#), including the *UCI Thesis and Dissertation Formatting Manual*, deadlines, checklist, and guide to forms. Electronic submission is the easiest method and highly encouraged. The UCI Libraries provide formatting and submission support with more information [here](#). Make sure to follow the requirements of the checklist provided. Remember the Ph.D. II Form requires many signatures and may take some time to complete, so be sure to plan in advance.

Dissertation Defense

After submitting a full dissertation to their committee members, students will be required to pass an oral dissertation defense with their doctoral committee prior to filing their dissertation and graduating.

- The student must circulate the completed dissertation to committee members at least three weeks prior to the scheduled Defense, and the Defense should take place approximately three weeks before the filing deadline so that the student has time to make any revisions based on recommendations made during the defense. Committee members may have already previously commented on drafts of individual chapters or of the complete dissertation at their discretion. Once approved, the student is required to create a poster that includes their name, dissertation title, an image, and details about the time and place of the defense. The student should then email the poster to the Graduate Programs Coordinator, who will circulate it within the Visual Studies community. The Defense is open to all members of the academic community. Faculty and graduate students, and the Dean of the School of Humanities must be given at least five days' advance notice of the date, time, and place of the Defense. This notice is usually done in the form of a poster made by the student and can be circulated via e-mail by the Graduate Coordinator.
- It is recommended that students make scheduling arrangements with committee members and Graduate Coordinator far enough in advance to ensure faculty and room availability. The date of the defense should allow sufficient time (approximately two or three weeks) for minor revisions prior to filing deadlines and graduation. Students can anticipate minor revision requests to emerge from the discussion.
- The student should ask their advisor what to expect during the Defense. Typically, a defense begins with the student's brief presentation on their dissertation project, followed by questions from the committee and audience. After this portion of the defense, the committee will engage in closed deliberation in order to provide the student with feedback.
- The purpose of the dissertation defense is to provide a forum for conversation among committee members with the goal of communicating substantive final feedback to the student. The defense also offers closure to the student's training in the program and an important transitional discussion for advice on revising the dissertation for potential publication and post-graduate professional development.

Academic Integrity

Graduate students are expected to be familiar with standards of [academic integrity](#) generally and as articulated by the [UCI Academic Senate Policy on Academic Integrity](#). The [Office of Academic Integrity and Student Conduct](#) provides further information and resources.

Students are expected to strictly uphold these standards of academic honesty in their teaching and in their own work. They should be especially attentive to one category of academic misconduct described by the Office of Academic Integrity and Student Conduct:

“Submitting substantial portions of the same work for credit in more than one course without consulting all instructors involved” is an example of [Dishonest Conduct](#):

- This includes reusing your own work from a previous quarter, unless the instructor has explicitly permitted you to do so”
- If a student plans to submit seminar papers on the same topic to more than one instructor, they must first obtain written permission to do so.

Maintaining a Safe and Inclusive Environment

The Visual Studies program is committed to creating and maintaining an environment in which faculty, staff, and students can thrive. Discrimination, harassment, and exclusionary practices are antithetical to this goal.

If a student encounters any instances of discrimination, harassment, or exclusion, they should speak with the Director of Graduate Studies and/or the DECADE advisor as soon as possible so that the issue can be addressed.

If a student has ideas about how the program can develop better practices for fostering an atmosphere in which all students can thrive, they should speak with the Visual Studies DECADE advisor and/or DECADE student representative. Students are encouraged to join the [DECADE](#) listserv in order to find out more about DECADE events, programs, and initiatives, including travel awards.

If a student has a problem that cannot be resolved within Visual Studies, the student can speak to the Director of the Humanities Office of Graduate Studies, Geneva Lopez-Sandoval, and/or the Director of Wellness and Inclusion, Phong B. Luong. They may also seek external mediation through the [Office of the Ombuds](#) or the [Office of Equal Opportunity and Diversity](#).

If a student has been sexually harassed or assaulted on campus, it is important that they know that faculty and staff are mandatory reporters 'under UC's Title 9 provisions, which means they are required to report all incidents and disclosures of sex offenses to UCI's Office of Equal Opportunity & Diversity ([OEOD](#)).

Students who do not want their disclosure to be reported may draw on the following resources to learn about procedures and potential outcomes while remaining anonymous:

- Campus Assault Resources and Educations ([CARE](#)), located at Suite G320 at the UCI Student Center, can also be reached at (949) 824-7273.
- [Office of Campus Social Work](#), (949) 824-0101. Students must be referred by the TA or Instructor of Record who must contact the OCSW directly.
- [The Campus Counseling Center](#) has walk-in Urgent Care on weekdays, 8:00-4:30 PM, or can be reached at (949) 824-6457. The Center is located upstairs in Student Services 1.
- Individuals may make a report to the UCI Police Department and request to be treated as a "confidential victim."
- Additionally, individuals may make a report to UCI police and request to be treated as a "confidential victim."

Faculty

Camille Reiko Acosta: Assistant Professor of Art History, Archeology, and Visual Studies
Greek art and archeology, migration and colonialism, Greek-Egyptian interactions, ceramics, craft production, history of archeological theory and practice

Roland Betancourt: Chancellor's Fellow and Professor of Art History and Visual Studies
Byzantine and medieval art, critical and queer theory; histories of race, gender, and sexuality

Matthew Canepa: Elahé Omidyar Mir-Djalali Presidential Chair in Art History and Archaeology of Ancient Iran, Professor of Visual Studies
Achaemenid, Seleucid, Parthian, and Sasanian art and archaeology, Iranian visual cultures and Afro-Eurasian exchange; critical approaches to space, place, landscape, urbanism, and memory

Bridget R. Cooks: Professor of African American Studies, Art History, Culture and Theory, and Visual Studies
African American art, museum studies, feminist and post-colonial theory

Abigail Lapin Dardashti: Assistant Professor of Art History and Visual Studies
Modern and contemporary Latin American and Latino/a/x art and architecture, history of African diasporic art in Latin America, transnationalism, migration, racial formation, activism, critical race theory, postcolonial theory, decolonial theory

Seungyeon Gabrielle Jung: Assistant Professor of Art History and Visual Studies
Modern and contemporary Korean art and design, global design history, economic development and globalization, critical and media theory

Lyle Massey: Associate Professor of Art History and Visual Studies
Italian Renaissance and early modern European art, gender theory, science studies, medical humanities

Tyrus Miller: Dean of the School of Humanities, Professor of English, Art History, and Visual Studies
Modernist and avant-garde studies in literature and visual arts, critical theory and aesthetics, modern architecture and urbanism, East-Central European studies, culture of socialism and post-socialism, Frankfurt School theory

James Nisbet: Chair and Associate Professor of Art History and Visual Studies

Modern and contemporary art, theory, and historiography, ecocriticism, environmental history, history of modern science, history of photography

Alka Patel: Professor of Art History, History, Religious Studies, and Visual Studies
South Asian and Islamic art and architecture, eleventh-eighteenth centuries, early modern Islamicate diasporas in Cuba, modern historiographies

Luiza Osorio G. Silva: Assistant Professor of Art History, Archeology, and Visual Studies
Ancient Egyptian material culture, materiality, kingship, intersections of space and power, contexts and audiences for art and architecture, the writing of historical narratives

Bert Winther-Tamaki: Professor of Art History, Asian American Studies, and Visual Studies
Modern and contemporary Japanese art and visual culture, Asian American art, ecocriticism

Roberta Wue: Associate Professor of Art History and Visual Studies
Modern Chinese art and visual culture, global Chinas, history of photography, print culture, intermediality, audiences

Appendix 1: VS Annual Conference Guidelines

It is a VS tradition for the second-year cohort to organize a conference on a theme of their choosing. Attached please find guidelines and best practices to assist you in your planning. These guidelines are suggestions not requirements, however, university policies and rules are quite strict on the use and disbursement of funds, so please keep this in mind when planning your budget. The timeline indicated here is based on a conference scheduled for spring quarter; if you plan to hold yours at a different time, please adjust the timeline accordingly.

Fall Quarter planning:

Students should organize themselves as a planning committee as early in the quarter as possible; it is helpful to assign roles and tasks. Choose an academic theme that is of interest to your cohort and consider the form your conference will take, start planning a rough schedule, events, and budget. Keep an eye out for grad student conference calls from other universities and departments for ideas.

The VS director can serve as a conference advisor: you can set up a meeting in the early planning stages. Be sure to consult with the VS graduate coordinator on your budget as you plan, especially on what kinds of costs, honoraria, and reimbursements are allowed.

Once you have a sense of your objectives and budget, write up a proposal and preliminary budget. The VS director may approve your proposal and put \$500 towards your conference which will allow you to apply for a Building Intellectual Community grant from the Humanities Center for up to \$2000. Please check the Humanities Center page for up-to-date information and deadlines (usually in mid- to late November); it also helps to consult early with the Humanities Center and ask them for their recommendations. Be sure to have a well-defined theme, abstract, and preliminary budget ready. Other centers on campus are also possible sources for funding if your conference theme is relevant to their mission. You may ask the previous year's cohort for a sample of their application.

Once you know how much money is available for the conference, create a final budget that includes an honorarium and projected travel expenses for your keynote speaker; flyers and conference programs; breakfast, lunch, snacks, and alcohol for the day of the conference; dinner with the keynote speaker and a handful of guests following the conference. Is there enough in your budget to offer graduate student speakers a small allowable honorarium or travel money? Again, consult regularly with the graduate coordinator and work closely with them on your budget, as there are strict rules on allowed costs and fund disbursements.

Invite a keynote speaker relevant to your conference theme. Do this as soon as you have secured funding. Your first choice may well decline, so be sure you have several back-up choices. The keynote speaker will serve as a draw for conference participants and a well-chosen speaker will generate a larger pool of paper proposals so it would be good to include the

keynote speaker's name in the call for papers if possible. Again, UCI's financial system KFS has strict policies limiting honoraria amounts and how this money is disbursed. VS cannot honor any promises you make regarding payment to invited speakers unless the honorarium has been approved by the VS graduate coordinator.

Set a date for the conference in consultation with the VS director and graduate coordinator. Weekends are a bad choice as attendance will be low. The conference also should not overlap with events that will limit faculty and graduate student attendance, including during national meetings (e.g. CAA), or crunch times of the quarter. Notify the VS community as soon as you have settled on a date.

Book a room for the conference as early as possible (the graduate coordinator will help with this). HG 1030 is ideal in terms of size and should be reserved as soon as you have set up your dates as it is the most popular room for School of Humanities events. Will your conference be hybrid, or have a remote component?

Once the room is booked, if you intend to serve alcohol, request an alcohol permit. Ask the graduate coordinator to help sort out the current rules on this.

Create a gmail account for external relations. Set up a website that will serve as a CFP and submission portal and that can be updated to include the conference program once it has been finalized.

Set up account-based spreadsheets for contact information, presenters, schedule of tasks, etc.

Write a CFP and consult with the VS director. Keep in mind what other CFPs for other graduate conferences have: it should include a theme, deadline for applications, conference date, and the keynote speaker's name if you have it. Choose a deadline that will give you ample time to read proposals, organize panels, and that will give presenters plenty of time to prepare for the conference.

Circulate the CFP as widely and as early as possible. Again, the sooner the better. Consider ahead of time where and to whom to send your CFP: departments at other institutions (students in 2023-24 contacted thirty other institutions), academic organizations, UCI Humanities, etc. Ask them to circulate as well.

Winter quarter planning

Evaluate the paper submissions and organize accepted paper into panels. Once you have a clear idea for your various panel themes, invite appropriate faculty or other grad students to serve as discussants (be sure to invite them at least two months prior to the conference). Usually a one-day conference will include three to four panels. Panels may consist of three 20-minute presentations or two 30-minute presentations plus a respondent for each panel, but consider what format works for you, and how you want to organize discussion.

Send acceptance and rejection notices.

Have a detailed plan for the day of the conference. Provide the keynote speaker with a draft program and schedule for the day of the conference (when will you pick them up from the hotel?, etc.). Finalize travel plans for the keynote speaker. Consult with the graduate coordinator well ahead of time about reserving a hotel room and flight so these can be paid for with university funds.

The graduate coordinator will need to onboard the keynote speaker as a vendor at KFS for travel reimbursement and honoraria prior to the conference.

Finalize the conference schedule. Give the schedule some breathing room so that panels don't run over time or get behind schedule. Allow time for mixing and discussion. Include a light breakfast (e.g. coffee, pastries, fruit), lunch, and alcohol and hors d'oeuvres for the reception. Consider your options and budget here: UCI catering is good because they will set up and take down, clean up, etc., but they are comparatively expensive. Do outside caterers and your own legwork make more sense? Plan a dinner after the conference and invite the keynote speaker and conference committee, and any faculty and students you feel should be there.

Suggested schedule:

Breakfast 8:30-9:00

Panel 1: 9:00-10:20

Panel 2: 10:30-12:00

Lunch: 12:00-1:00

Panel 3: 1:00-2:20

Panel 4: 2:30-4:00

Keynote: 4:15-5:00

Reception: 5:00

Dinner with keynote speaker

Design flyers and a conference program. Students last year prepared a vector pdf for print circulation and a high-res JPG for email and the conference website. Consider preparing a poster with general information and a schedule with more detailed information (double check grammar and for typos!). Circulate widely. If your budget allows, also print up conference programs and distribute widely (Imageworks on campus is a reasonable option but requires some lead time). Be sure to arrange deadlines with panelists for submitting their talks ahead of time so discussants can prepare their comments; talk to your discussants on your expectations for their comments, leading discussion, and inviting questions.

Spring quarter planning: right before and on the day of conference:

Remind the discussants on what role you expect them to play, and to enforce time limits on papers. Make a plan for who serves which functions as hosts: who introduces the keynote speaker, makes opening and/or closing remarks, invites participants to lunch for hors d'oeuvres

after panels. Having a plan of who talks when and making sure all bases are covered in terms of ensuring the flow of the conference will pay dividends during the event.

Check the room and technology the day before the conference begins and make sure everything is working.

Organize a sign-in table and prepare name tags and a sign-in registration form.
Enjoy the fruits of your labor!

Appendix 2: Graduate Student Representative Bylaws

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA: IRVINE
Department of Art History
Visual Studies Graduate Student Representative
Bylaws 01/22/2024

Section I: Purpose

- 1.1 The Visual Studies Student Representative (VSSR) is an academic-based position is intended to serve several functions:
- a) To serve as a mechanism for the open communication between the Visual Studies graduate student population and the Art History/Visual Studies faculty and staff.
 - b) To offer guidance and to connect Visual Studies graduate student population to campus and community resources, in situations including but not limited to:
 - i. Prospective student recruitment events
 - ii. New Student welcome events
 - iii. As needed on a case-by-case basis
 - c) To advocate with the faculty for Visual Studies graduate student needs as they are made evident to the VSSR. The communication of these needs to the faculty will be deemed necessary, provided that
 - i. There is not already a campus mechanism/resource/organization existing for the purpose of meeting that need
 - ii. These needs are accurate to the extent that they are claimed of the Visual Studies student body (i.e. one student or a small portion of students saying “everyone feels this way” merits further investigation, not immediate communication)
 - iii. These needs do not compromise the well-being, safety, academic success, or otherwise infringe upon the individual rights of fellow Visual Studies graduate students
 - iv. These needs are issues directly related to academic success
 - d) To build relationships with Visual Studies graduate students in activities such as:
 - i. organizing or participating in social events
 - ii. attending departmental events
 - iii. participating in VS student outreach events
 - iv. initiating professional/academic development events, as need for them within the student body becomes apparent
 - v. conduct accessible and equitable surveys of the VS student population for the purpose of determining student body needs that have been brought to the attention of the VSSR
 - e) To provide accurate representation to VS Faculty of the state of the VS Student Body to the best of their ability.

- i. To this end, the VSSR is to attend AH/VS Faculty Meetings, especially when explicitly requested by VS Faculty
- ii. The VSSR may also be solicited for their knowledge and understanding of the student body by VS/AH faculty. VSSR must maintain transparency of the extent of their knowledge and means of knowledge collection (word of mouth, survey, meeting)
- iii. If the VSSR is found to have knowingly or negligently misrepresented the needs of the VS Student Body, that is grounds for removal. See below for Discipline

Section II: Eligibility

2.1 The VSSR position is open to and inclusive of all graduate students in the Visual Studies program regardless of race, color, ethnicity, national origin, age, gender, ability, religion, sexual orientation, or veteran's status.

2.2 In order to be eligible for the VSSR position, individual must

- a) Be a current Visual Studies graduate student (Art History 4+1 students are not eligible)
- b) have a 3.0 or above accumulative GPA
- c) While in office the VSSR must maintain a 3.0 GPA and must not have below 3.0 for more than one quarter
- d) They must be in good standing (academic and disciplinary) with the university, and making normative academic progress toward their degree as determined by the university
- e) Have not been removed or have not resigned from the VSSR position previously
- f) may not hold a position whose purpose and responsibilities could conflict with the academic-based advocacy of the VSSR, including but not limited to Union Steward positions
- g) must be physically present at the UCI campus for the year they are serving (students who are researching out-of-town or globally abroad for longer than five consecutive weeks or for longer than ten non-consecutive weeks, on sabbatical, in absentia, or otherwise not able to access campus will not be eligible)

Section III: Election Procedures and Term

3.1 There will be two VSSRs, a Senior VSSR and a Junior VSSR

3.2 While most of the responsibilities of Senior and Junior VSSRs are the same, the Senior VSSR is also responsible for mentoring the Junior VSSR throughout their terms working together. This mentorship model is intended to preserve a means of passing on experiential knowledge and accrued documentation from term to term

3.3 Their election years will be staggered: every year only one VSSR is elected. This elected VSSR becomes the in-coming junior VSSR, and the current Junior VSSR becomes the in-coming Senior VSSR. The current Senior VSSR is then out-going.

3.4 Each VSSR will serve for a term of TWO (2) academic years or until their successor shall be duly elected and qualified

3.5 During the month of May, Senior VSSR and/or VS program coordinator will solicit interest via email notification for position of next Junior VSSR from the VS body of students

3.6 Individuals may be nominated by VS Faculty or VS students, but these individuals must then confirm interest before they will be considered a candidate

- 3.7** During the candidacy confirmation process, student eligibility for the position will be ascertained and confirmed
- 3.8** During the month of June, an election will be held by anonymous ballot
- 3.9** The incoming Junior VSSR shall be elected by a simple majority vote of those persons casting ballots
- 3.10** In the case of a tie, the position will go to whoever of the two winning candidates is farther along in their studies, as the other is assumed to have more opportunity to serve in the position during their time in the VS program
- 3.11** Only current VS graduate students may vote
- 3.12** Those persons casting ballots will be advised of the VSSR position's responsibilities and requirements, informed of the time commitment (2 years), and requested to vote for the candidate they believe will best fulfill those responsibilities
- 3.13** Candidates may not engage in "campaign" activities for the VSSR position, other than formally expressing their interest in the position to the Faculty/VS Coordinator. If evidence is found indicating that a candidate has attempted to unduly influence the VSSR vote of the VS student body, they will immediately be removed from the running
- 3.14** It is the responsibility of the outgoing Senior VSSR, as one of their final activities holding the position, to facilitate the transfer access of group email permissions, provide them with resource documentation, and, if necessary, notify the VS program coordinator of the change
- 3.14** The incoming Junior VSSR will assume full role at the start of Fall Quarter, Week 0, and the outgoing Junior VSSR will at that time become the incoming Senior VSSR.
- 3.15** If either VSSR, during the term of his/her/their office, fails to maintain his/her/their status as a matriculating graduate student maintaining a 3.0 GPA, in good academic and disciplinary standing with the university, they shall be removed from his/her/their office and a replacement shall be elected.
- 3.16** If a position is vacated during the academic year, after written notification to the VS graduate student body, the VS student body shall vote upon a replacement for the vacated office within forty-five (45) days of the onset of the initial vacancy. The remaining VSSR is to facilitate this election process

SECTION IV - VSSR Budget Allowance

- 3.1** The VSSR is allocated a budget of funds intended for the use of facilitating the VSSR's fulfillment of their purpose (See Section 1)
- 3.2** This budget will operate under a reimbursement system, in that VSSR will make a purchase and then submit the receipt to the VS coordinator for reimbursement
- 3.3** This budget may only be used for purchases related to Visual Studies graduate academic activities. Budget may not be used to facilitate activities external to the university, university labor-related activities, undergraduate activities, or activities supporting other departments/schools, or entities of UCI/University of California system. The VSSR is recommended to consult with the VS coordinator before making purchases to ensure appropriate use of funds and permitted reimbursement

SECTION V - DISCIPLINE

5.1 A VSSR found not be acting in accordance with the stated guideline of the bylaws and purpose of the position and against whom such charges are sustained after due and proper hearing before the Art History faculty, may be expelled from the position by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the Art History faculty present at the hearing

SECTION VI – IMPEACHMENT

ANY STUDENT MAY INITIATE VSSR REMOVAL BY THE FOLLOWING PROCEDURE.

6.1 Petition the Art History Chair with signatures of 1/3 of all VS students and 2/3 of all cohorts represented and petition should state reason for removal

6.2 Art History Chair shall then notify VSSR and call for removal vote within fourteen days of the filing of the petition

6.3 Students shall be notified at least one week prior to removal vote meeting

6.4 At the meeting for removal, the petition's stated grievances shall be made public and the VSSR charged shall be allowed to respond to the charges of the petition

6.5 Removal from office shall require a vote of 2/3 of all voting students

SECTION VII- VACANCY OF OFFICE

7.1 In case of resignation or removal of VSSR, an interim acting VSSR may be appointed by the VS Director

7.2 Election shall be conducted as stated in the bylaws

VISUAL STUDIES DEGREE AUDIT FORM (for students entering fall 2024 and later)

NAME _____ **ADVISOR** _____

START QUARTER _____ **MA/MFA:** Y N

COURSEWORK: 14 courses required (10 must be from within VS)

Core: VS290A _____ VS290B _____ VS290C _____ (mark quarter of completion)

Electives: 6 VS 295/296s (title and quarter of completion)

Other electives: 4 courses: 2 must be from outside VS, 2 may be from VS

Students entering with MA/MFA degrees may petition to waive up to 5 courses (3 is standard); course waivers count toward these electives. (I=Inside VS; O=Outside VS; W=Waived)

_____	_____	I	O	W
_____	_____	I	O	W
_____	_____	I	O	W
_____	_____	I	O	W

Writing Practicum 297 _____

EMPHASES (optional): _____

Admitted _____ Completed _____

M.A. PAPER (for students entering without MA)

Quarter submitted _____ Accepted _____

Faculty Advisor _____ VS296 Quarter _____

M.A. Paper Committee Members _____

LANGUAGE REQUIREMENT

Language _____ Reading Exam _____ Coursework Completed _____ Waived _____ Date _____

Additional language (optional)

Language _____ Reading Exam _____ Coursework Completed _____ Waived _____ Date _____

EXAM READINGS

VS298A Field _____ Exam Supervisor _____

Quarter _____ Exam Passed on _____

VS298A Field _____ Exam Supervisor _____

Quarter _____ Exam Passed on _____

DISSERTATION PROSPECTUS

VS297 quarter _____

Draft Submitted to Committee on _____

ORAL DEFENSE PROSPECTUS COMMITTEE

Prospectus committee consists of 3-5 members (including the advisor and the 2nd exam supervisor); 51% of whom must be VS faculty.

It is recommended that the student's ultimate 3-5-person dissertation committee be among the exam committee members; 51% of whom must be VS faculty.

Chair/Advisor _____

2nd exam supervisor _____

Member _____

Member _____

Member _____

Date of Advancement _____

DISSERTATION

The dissertation committee consists of 3-5 members; 51% of whom must be VS faculty.

Chair/Advisor _____

Committee member _____

Member _____

Member _____

Member _____

Intended Filing Quarter _____