

# **Graduate Student Handbook**

**English Department  
2020-2021**

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## ENGLISH DEPARTMENT GRADUATE HANDBOOK

Welcome to the English Department at Johns Hopkins. You have some sense of the way the Department works from having consulted the departmental website and from your visit as a prospective student. We hope that this handbook will make it easy for you to navigate the Department in the coming weeks—and in the coming years.

### Homewood Graduate Student Handbook

The Graduate Board (the equivalent of what is called the Graduate Division at some universities) produces the **Homewood Graduate Student Handbook**. This online handbook is the primary guide for all graduate students in both the Krieger School of Arts and Sciences and the Whiting School of Engineering. It contains details regarding School-wide and University policies, procedures, and graduate student program requirements at Hopkins, as well as valuable information about making one's way around Baltimore.

The Graduate Board website can be found at:

<http://homewoodgrad.jhu.edu/>

The **Homewood Graduate Student Handbook** can be found on the web at:

<http://homewoodgrad.jhu.edu/academics/policies/>

### English Department Graduate Student Handbook

The information we're including in this handbook will give you a sense of how the general Graduate Board regulations play out in terms of specific English Department policies and what you'll encounter as you're earning your Ph.D. in the Department.

We've tried to provide information that follows the sequence of the program as you encounter each component. Thus, we've included information about taking courses before any remarks about the teaching you'll do. You'll want, however, to read through the entire document so as to be alert to possibilities that you might use at any time (such as the funding for travel to conferences or research libraries) and so as to plan your future progress through the program.

## Faculty Administrators

(The faculty and staff job descriptions below reflect only those parts of the positions that relate to the graduate program.)

Department Chair  
 Mark Thompson  
 Mthomp59@jhu.edu

Oversees, in consultation with the Director of Graduate Studies, all policies pertaining to the graduate program. Decides, in consultation with the Director of Graduate Studies and the Director of Undergraduate Studies, about departmental recommendations of students to teach courses in Intersession and Summer Session, the Dean's Teaching Fellowship, and departmental teaching opportunities for students past the fifth year.

Director of Graduate Studies (DGS)  
 Andrew Miller  
 ahm@jhu.edu

Oversees, in consultation with the Chair and Department faculty, all policies pertaining to the graduate program. Serves as the primary advisor for all graduate students in their first two years in the Ph.D. program, conferring with them about their course selections and, later, their assignments as teaching assistants and their plans for oral examinations;

Decides, in consultation with Chair and Director of Undergraduate Studies, about departmental recommendations of students to teach courses in intersession and summer session, the Dean's Teaching Fellowship, and departmental teaching opportunities for students past the fifth year;

Prepares the official departmental recommendation of candidates for the Dean's Teaching Fellowships and sends it to the Dean's Office;

Serves as the chair of graduate admissions;

Approves requests for reimbursement for attending conferences.

Director of Undergraduate Studies (DUS)  
 Jeanne-Marie Jackson  
 Jjacks98@jhu.edu

Decides, in consultation with Chair and Director of Graduate Studies, about departmental recommendations of students to teach courses in intersession and summer session, the Dean's Teaching Fellowship, and departmental teaching opportunities for students past the fifth year.

## Departmental Staff

### Administrative Manager

Sally Hauf  
shauf@jhu.edu  
410-516-4313

Processes all departmental payroll; resolves payroll issues;

Processes graduate student tuition and fees so that student accounts are up-to-date; resolves issues;

Processes approved reimbursements;

Handles facilities issues (including distributing keys, supplies for graduate student lounge, etc);

Updates Department website;

Works with Tudor and Stuart curator on room scheduling, AV needs, contacting speakers for honorarium and reimbursement information, and making lodging reservations;

Works with third-year graduate students on scheduling ELH talks, contacting speakers for honorarium and reimbursement information, and making lodging reservations;

Makes and oversees arrangements with caterers for departmental events.

### Senior Academic Program Coordinator

Tracy Glink  
Tglink1@jhu.edu  
410-516-4311

Coordinates meetings of graduate students and DGS;

Schedules departmental oral examinations and dissertation defenses;

Schedules graduate and undergraduate courses;

Returns teaching evaluations to graduate students;

Maintains student files and completes necessary forms for the awarding of degrees;

Coordinates prospective students' visits.

IT Specialist  
Timothy Giglitto  
timothy@jhu.edu  
410-516-3362

Advises the Department about departmental computer equipment;  
Assists graduate students with IT questions.

Research Librarian  
Heidi Herr, Eisenhower Library  
hherr1@jhu.edu  
410-516-8540

Consults with graduate students about library research tools.

### **Affiliated Program Director**

Expository Writing Program  
Jean McGarry, Interim Director  
mcgarry@jhu.edu  
website: <http://sites.jhu.edu/ewp/index.html>

Conducts workshops in the spring and summer for students teaching in EWP;  
Supervises and evaluates the work of students teaching in EWP;  
Selects students past the fifth year to teach in EWP.

### **Orientation and meetings with DGS and Chair**

During graduate orientation, the DGS meets with all of the first-year students as a group, and meets with each of the first-year students individually to answer questions about particular courses and requirements.

Once a year, usually in the early part of the spring semester, the DGS and Chair meet with the assembled graduate students of the Department to discuss issues of general concern (which have, in the past, included questions about things such as the Department's hiring priorities and fellowship stipends).

### **Funding**

All graduate students in the PhD program are fully funded for five years. This funding is provided through a combination of teaching and fellowship awards; for the year-by-year breakdown into teaching and fellowship support, see the "Teaching" section below, as well as the sections titled "Teaching: additional opportunities" and "Additional opportunities: non-teaching."

After the fifth year, funding is not guaranteed. Advanced funding, from the Department, will depend on students writing a short application, including a timeline for completion of the dissertation. This application must be supported by a letter of progress from their dissertation director.

Participation in summer EWP workshops is required of all students scheduled to teach EWP in the coming year. This applies to rising third year students. It also applies to rising fifth year students who will teach EWP and those with advanced funding who will teach EWP. In addition, advanced students (in fifth and sixth years) can apply for work-study positions in which they earn money for providing research assistance to individual faculty members.

### **Course loads**

By the end of the third year, students should have completed twelve courses. They are free to adjust the course load from semester to semester, and to take courses in English or in other departments, provided that the twelve course target is reached by the spring of their third year. At least eight courses out of the required total are to be taken within the Department (courses listed as AS.060.xxx). Exceptions can only be made with DGS approval.

All graduate courses in the Department are seminars, and enrollments are capped at eight. Once that cap is reached, students must secure the permission of the instructor to be admitted to a course.

Faculty teaching graduate seminars may take either of two approaches to written work: the pro-seminar and the regular seminar approach. If the student is taking the course as a regular seminar, the student prepares a final seminar paper of roughly twenty-five to thirty-five pages in length. If taking the course as a pro-seminar, the student submits shorter papers at regular intervals. Students' choices of seminar format depend on the approval of the faculty member teaching the course.

Out of the total of 12 courses students should write a minimum of seven final seminar papers within the English department. This is separate from the option of combining two seminar papers (i.e. a combined paper can be counted twice). Instructors should offer a range of possible written assignments, totaling roughly 20-25 pages, as a substitute for a single final seminar paper. These could include: the production of syllabi, book reviews, critical bibliographies, conference papers, a summary report and critical response to an outside lecturer, a digital humanities project of data analysis, etc.

Faculty in the Department typically ask each student enrolled in a course (and any auditor) to do at least one class presentation in the course of the semester, though assignments will vary by instructor. Presentations give students a chance to develop thinking about the course materials under discussion in a particular week and to launch class discussion with fellow seminar participants.

Students must have satisfactorily completed twelve courses and fulfilled their language requirements before being cleared to take their oral examinations.

### **Language requirements**

Students are required to demonstrate that they have fluent knowledge of one foreign language or competence in two foreign languages. The ideal is for students to develop the capacity to read both primary and secondary literature in a foreign language and to acquaint themselves with relevant scholarship in their area of specialization. At least twice a year (at the beginning of each semester and by request), the Department offers translation exams. Faculty select a passage for the exam. Students are allowed free use of a dictionary during the exam, and are given two hours for the completion of the translation.

Students may also satisfy the language requirement by achieving a grade of A in a semester-long reading course for graduate students (regularly provided by the Department of German and Romance Languages and Literatures) or by completing other course work that the DGS deems suitable.

### **Public lectures and colloquia**

The Department sponsors public lectures and colloquia as a central part of the program. Students are required to attend these events. Each lecture is followed by a question-and-answer session, and there is a reception after Tudor and Stuart Club lectures.

There are two main speaker series in the Department, The Tudor and Stuart Club series and the *ELH* talk series.

The Tudor and Stuart Club sponsors lectures by prominent faculty from other universities around the country. Everyone in the Department is invited to attend the reception that follows.

Under the auspices of *ELH*, the scholarly journal associated with the Department, the members of the third-year class issue invitations to speakers to present pre-circulated papers. For each event, one member of the third-year class is responsible for introducing the visitor. Members of the third-year class have the opportunity to join the visitor for dinner after the *ELH* colloquium.

Departments and programs other than English also offer lectures and colloquia. The departments of Anthropology, History, German and Romance Languages and Literatures, and the Humanities Center host events that may be of particular interest to English Department students, as do Africana Studies, Jewish Studies, the Political Theory group in Political Science, and the Program for the Study of Women, Gender, and Sexuality. Students can consult the events calendars for these departments online.

### **Travel to conferences and for research**



Any student can request as much as \$350 each year from the Ballman Fund, a departmental fund that underwrites the expenses that students incur in traveling to conferences or going to libraries to conduct research. Students should submit a brief statement of plans to the DGS, who will forward approved proposals to the Administrative Manager, who will in turn arrange for a student to be reimbursed once she/he submits receipts for travel expenses.

In addition, the Krieger School of Arts and Sciences funds some research through the J. Brien Key Award and the Graduate Representative Organization awards some travel monies through its competitions. Consult the Graduate Board and GRO websites for further information.

In addition to regular conference and research travel, graduate students expecting job interviews are eligible for up to \$650 for expenses incurred during travel to the annual MLA conference.

The Department will attempt to supplement both regular and MLA interview travel with additional funds when possible.

### **Oral examinations**

Continuation beyond each of the first three years depends on satisfactory performance in the graduate seminars, passing two foreign language examinations, and successful completion of the third-year Oral Exams.

In the spring of their second year in the program, graduate students meet with the DGS to confer about the areas in which they plan to take their oral examinations. Each student should select two areas in and around his/her proposed scholarly concentration. Usually, a field defined chronologically—e.g., Modernism—will be the cornerstone of a student's plan and will make up the first field. The second field can be defined in terms of genre or chronology, or it can focus on literary theory. In extraordinary circumstances a graduate student may request one major field and two minor fields, with DGS approval.

The DGS will review all student requests and will assign students to individual faculty examiners in the late spring of the students' second year. Students should plan to consult the reading lists that the Department has on file for various chronologically defined fields and literary theory, and to confer with their individual examiners about alterations to those lists.

The oral examinations are usually given at the beginning of the spring semester. Each portion of the examination will take about forty-five minutes. Students may elect to take a short break between the two sections of the exam. Faculty may choose to ask questions at the end of the exam.

After a student has successfully passed the oral examination, she/he is advanced to candidacy for the Ph.D. Once a student has advanced to candidacy, the remaining requirements are 1) participation in a dissertation prospectus workshop in the Spring semester of their third year; 2) the completion of a dissertation that the students' first and second readers approve; 3) the defense of that dissertation at the Graduate Board oral examination (see "Dissertation" below); 4) the presentation of a Journal Club talk; and 5) the completion of teaching responsibilities.

Should a student not pass one or both sections of the oral examination, she/he will be asked to take the exam again within eight weeks of the date of the original exam. A student may retake the exam only once.

### **Reading groups and writing groups**

The Department does not formally organize reading groups and writing groups. It does, however, support student initiatives, and some Department faculty direct reading groups that include their dissertation students and other interested students.

The Counseling Center runs a dissertation-writing support group that draws together students from a variety of different departments.

### **Teaching**

Students in the first year are not expected to take on any teaching responsibilities.

In the second year, each student will serve as a teaching assistant in a lecture course conducted by a faculty member. Teaching assistants attend the lectures, grade papers and exams, confer with students about their papers, and hold one section meeting each week for discussion of course materials. Enrollment in the sections is usually capped at twenty. When conferring with the DGS in the spring of their first year and in the fall of their second year, students will be asked to indicate their preferred teaching assignments; the DGS will accommodate those preferences as much as possible.

In the fall term, the Director of Undergraduate Studies conducts an orientation session for all first-time teaching assistants in the English Department. Individual faculty members teaching lecture courses regularly confer with TAs to discuss appropriate grading practices, writing assignments, discussion prompts, and other questions about teaching and policy.

In the third year, each student is expected to teach in the Expository Writing Program (EWP). This is the academic writing program that principally serves freshmen but whose courses are open to other undergraduate students as well. For more information about the Expository Writing Program, visit the website at:

<http://krieger.jhu.edu/ewp/>

The fourth year is free from teaching. In this year, students are expected to concentrate exclusively on her/his dissertation research and writing. If a student would prefer to delay the dissertation year until the fifth year, however, she/he can do so with the permission of the DGS in consultation with the Director of Expository Writing.

In the fifth year, each student is expected to teach in the Expository Writing Program.

Students admitted Fall 2014 or earlier may apply for funding in the sixth and seventh years for funding from the Department. If available, it will provide for an EWP course, a Department course, or a TA-ship for one or two semesters. Students apply for advanced funding in late January of the preceding year.

Students admitted after Fall 2014 may apply in the sixth year for advanced funding from the Department. If available, it will provide for an EWP course, a Department course, or a TA-ship for one or two semesters. Students apply for advanced funding in late January of the preceding year.

### **Teaching: Additional opportunities**

The Dean's Teaching Fellowship:

The Dean's Teaching Fellowship (DTF) offers students a chance to develop proposals for seminars that will be listed as courses in the Department. Graduate students who have completed all their course work are eligible to apply. The DTF award is for one semester. An application consists of a course proposal and a letter of recommendation from a faculty member (generally a student's first reader for the dissertation), with the faculty member agreeing to act as a sponsor to the student's teaching and to observe one class meeting if the course should be chosen as a Dean's Teaching Fellowship course. The DGS, the DUS, and the Chair will review all the proposals submitted and forward all approved proposals to the Dean's Office. (Typically, the Department has approved all the proposals submitted.) The DGS sends a letter of endorsement to the Dean's Office in which he/she details the strengths of the various proposals and highlights their contribution to the Department's course offerings. The selection committee for the Dean's Teaching Fellowship (which consists of faculty from a number of different Departments) then reviews all the proposals, selects proposers for interviews, and makes decisions about awards. The Dean's Office announces the deadline for the DTF each fall. Typically, however, proposals have been due to the DGS in the middle of October, a week before they must be submitted to the Dean's Office.

Graduate students are permitted to look at prior successful DTF applications, which are kept in the Department office.

There are, moreover, teaching opportunities available through special application to various programs, including the Africana Studies Program, the Jewish Studies Program, and the Program for the Study of Women, Gender, and Sexuality. Students applying for

teaching fellowships in those programs should consult with the DGS before submitting applications.

Finally, graduate students may apply to tutor in the Writing Center, or for the Directorship of the Center. The Director is responsible for the management of the Writing Center, hiring and training staff, and representing the Writing Center to the University as a whole.

### **Additional opportunities: Non-teaching**

Tudor and Stuart Curator:

Each year one student from the third-year class works as Tudor and Stuart Curator. The Curator makes contact with the speakers who have accepted the Chair's invitations to speak in the Tudor and Stuart lecture series, and makes sure that all travel and hotel arrangements are in order. She/he also sends out regular announcements of the lectures, works with the Administrative Manager and caterers to make arrangements for the reception after the lecture, and handles invitations to faculty for dinner with the speaker (there is a Tudor and Stuart Curator checklist which will guide the curator through the different responsibilities). This position carries a modest stipend.

The T&S Curator is appointed for one year. In the spring, the DGS circulates a message to all members of the second-year class to determine how many students are interested in applying for the position, and (in consultation with the Chair) selects from among the self-declared candidates. Service in this position does not replace any program requirements.

*ELH* associate editorships:

*ELH* (formerly *English Literary History*) employs two associate editors, who each have two-year terms. The associate editors do copy-editing and work with authors of accepted essays. The senior editor of *ELH*, a member of the English Department faculty, circulates a message to all members of the third-year class to determine how many students are interested in applying for the position, and selects from among the self-declared candidates. The associate editors have staggered terms, so that there is always one associate editor who has had at least one year's experience. One associate editor is selected each year.

Service as an associate editor for *ELH* spans two years, and takes the place of teaching in the fourth and fifth years. *ELH* associate editors are, however, eligible to apply for summer and intersession teaching. *ELH* associate editors typically defer their dissertation year until the end of their *ELH* service.

*ELH* assistant:

In addition, *ELH* has in recent years employed a student who handles the circulation of submitted manuscripts to individual faculty members who serve on the editorial board of the journal. This support position is a work-study position, and it becomes available at irregular intervals. The senior editor of *ELH* will announce a vacancy when it occurs, and select from among the students who express interest in the position.

### **Annual evaluation of student progress**

Faculty members confer twice a year about the progress of students in the program. Suggestions are conveyed directly by the DGS to the individual student as needed.

Students meet once per year with their faculty advisor and discuss their progress in the program, defining goals for their future preparation and research. A form which articulates these goals and tracks productivity is signed by the student and the advisor, and submitted to the department.

Students may arrange with individual professors for extensions on work for seminars, but they should plan to resolve any incompletes on their records in a timely manner. The Graduate Board requires that a student complete all the work for a course within a year of the end of the semester in which the student received a grade of incomplete. The Department encourages students to resolve incompletes more rapidly.

### **Academic Probation**

Failure to complete successfully any requirement of the program may result in probation potentially leading to dismissal. For KSAS rules and regulations regarding probation and dismissal, see the Homewood Graduate Student Handbook, found at:

<http://homewoodgrad.jhu.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/35/2014/08/Graduate-Student-Probation-Funding-Withdrawal-and-Dissmissal-Policy.pdf>

### **Dissertation**

Each third-year student should identify a faculty member who will agree to serve as her/his primary director for dissertation work. In consultation with that director, the student should also select a second reader (typically another member of the English faculty, but sometimes a faculty member from another Department). The English Department will offer a series of prospectus-writing workshop events in the spring semester; third year student attendance at these workshops is required. By the end of April of spring semester, each third year student must submit a brief (2500-3000 word)

prospectus to their intended director which defines their dissertation's chosen subject, frames its research questions and methodological commitments, and outlines a possible chapter structure.

As part of the application for advanced funding and the Department's regular reviews, directors report to the DGS on their advisees' progress.

Once the first and second readers have approved the dissertation, a Graduate Board Oral Examination is scheduled. The Examination needs to be scheduled 6-8 weeks in advance. Three weeks before the Examination, students must provide five copies of the dissertation to the Senior Academic Coordinator, for distribution to the Examination committee members. These should be in hard copy and not forwarded as email attachments.

The first and second readers serve on the Graduate Board oral examining committee, as do three faculty members from other Departments.

The website for the Graduate Board has full instructions on the format and deadline for submitting dissertations to the library once they have been accepted and successfully defended. (Students usually discover a few typographical errors between the time they provide their dissertations to the examiners for the Board Oral exam and the time they submit them to the library. The Graduate Board allows a short interval in which to make appropriate corrections.)

### **Journal Club**

The Department hosts a lecture series in which advanced graduate students present portions of their dissertation as formal public lectures to the faculty and students of the Department. These lectures are typically scheduled for the fall semester, so that a student who is a job candidate will have the opportunity to test out a particular lecture before delivering it on a campus visit. Presentation of a Journal Club talk is, however, a requirement for the Ph.D. degree in English at Johns Hopkins, and students should plan to fulfill it even if they have already taken up teaching positions.

### **Job Placement**

Each student who expects to look for a job should develop a portfolio of materials in consultation with his or her director and the Placement Officer. This portfolio should include a letter of application (in which the candidate describes his/her dissertation, teaching experience, and teaching and research interests); a curriculum vitae; a dissertation abstract; and two chapters of the dissertation. Students may wish to consult examples of application materials that the Program Coordinator has on file.

Each year, one member of the faculty serves as Job Placement Officer. The Job Placement Officer helps prepare students for the job market by reading their materials, scheduling Journal Club talks, and arranging practice job interviews.

Students should submit copies of their job materials to the faculty members from whom they solicit letters of recommendation. The Department funds an Interfolio account for each graduate student on the job market. Interfolio maintains an electronic dossier for each student, and dispatches them on request. (When students realize that there are insufficient funds in their Interfolio accounts, they may petition the DGS to ask for a supplement.) The Department will fund an Interfolio account for each Ph.D recipient seeking college or university teaching positions until the recipient gains a tenure-track post.

The Job Information List of the Modern Language Association (to which the Department subscribes) usually becomes available in late September.

### **Prospectives' Visits**

Newly admitted students are invited each spring to visit campus; speak with faculty and current graduate students; and engage in departmental activities, including a lecture by a distinguished scholar invited specifically for this occasion. All current graduate students are expected to attend departmental events scheduled during prospectives' visit. The DGS and the Graduate Administrator ask current students to contact individual prospective students in advance of their visits and to meet with those students at various points during their visits.

### **Graduate student representatives**

Graduate students regularly identify two representatives—one from the first- or second-year class and one from more advanced classes—whom they designate as their spokespersons. They convey information about issues of concern to the Department Chair and the DGS, and let the Department know if there are any questions that students would like to see addressed. They receive opinions about job candidates from their fellow students, and pass these along to the Chair and DGS.

### **Graduate Representative Organization**

The Graduate Representative Organization addresses questions of concern to graduate students from across the Departments.

## **SUMMARY CALENDAR AND RESEARCH TIMELINE**

### **First year:**

Course work in fall and spring  
No teaching

Language Translation exams (early in term)

**Second Year:**

TA-ships

Course work in fall and spring

Conferences with DGS about possible oral exam areas of concentration (Spring)

Call for Tudor & Stuart Club Curator

Rising third-year class invites speakers for *ELH* talks for following year (Spring)

By the end of the second year, the student should have identified orals examiners.

**Third Year:**

EWP teaching

Course work in fall and spring (if twelve course total has not been reached)

Eligibility begins for Dean's Teaching Fellowship

Call for *ELH* Associate Editorships (Spring)

Oral examinations (early Spring)

By the end of the third year, the student should have submitted an abstract to a major conference in her field. The student should also begin attending conferences at a rate of at least one per year, either as a participant or auditor (funds permitting).

During the spring semester the third student should attend prospectus workshop events and identify a faculty member to serve as their dissertation advisor. By the end of April the student should have submitted a 2500-3000 word prospectus to that advisor.

**Fourth Year:**

No teaching: dissertation year

By the end of year 4, the student should have written a dissertation abstract, at least one dissertation chapter, and should have submitted one article for publication. By no later date than this, the student and dissertation director should establish a timeline for regular chapter submission and dissertation completion.

**Fifth Year:**

EWP teaching

**Sixth Year:**

Students should be ready by year 6, and in any case no later than year 7, to enter the job market, which will normally entail having completed at least two (and preferably three)



chapters of the dissertation. In addition, the student should aim to have submitted at least one more article for publication.