

Department of History

Mentoring and Advising Guidelines

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Yashima Gakutei, ca. 1786–ca. 1855
Scholar's Alcove with a Portrait of Hitomaro
Yale University Art Gallery

Welcome to Yale's Department of History. The Department has created these guidelines for best practices in mentoring and advising with the goal of helping students interact positively and productively with faculty, and particularly with advisers, over the course of their career. It is not to be treated as a rulebook or regulatory manual. For the rules governing graduate education in the Department of History see the latest iteration of [Yale's Policies and Procedures online](#).

1. Field Subdivisions

The History Department is a single and unified community that works together to explore the past and create new knowledge about history using shared methods and questions. Its very essence is inclusion in the sense that it strives to treat the entire globe in all periods with equal respect and attention, even while recognizing the boundaries imposed by our individual and collective resources and the way these set limits on the degree to which we can realize our ambitions. Expertise in the techniques of history is shared by all members of our community, but the cultural, linguistic, and empirical knowledge necessary for understanding the varied times, places, and problems we aspire to cover necessitates sub-division by field specialty.

At present the department, while remaining one, works with the following sub-divisions for purposes of graduate admissions and advising: Africa, Ancient, Early Modern Europe, East Asia, Global, Jewish, Latin America, Medieval, Middle East, Modern Europe, Renaissance, Russia and East Europe, South and Southeast Asia, United States. The Program in the History of Science and History of Medicine represents a cognate unit with its own administration and admissions, but many of its faculty are conjoint with the Department of History.

These groupings are not closed or bounded, for we often work between and across the sub-divisions. But these subdivisions provide essential frameworks of engagement and allow for the creation of small communities that foster inclusion, belonging, and intellectual exchange. Students should thus consider their subfield faculty and peers as sources of advice, support, and direction throughout their career. This is equally true for those who work across two or more subfields.

2. Early Years Mentorship

During the first two years of the program, students will have the Director of Graduate Studies (DGS) assigned to them as the official adviser. The DGS should meet with students in these early-years at the start of each semester at least until they have completed coursework requirements. As stated in the Program Requirements, these include the completion of 10 courses, at least 6 of these in History, 2 of which must be outside the primary time period of specialty and 2 research seminars; and HIST 500 must be among them. During the first year of study, students normally take six term courses, including HIST 500. During the second year of study, they may opt to take four to six term courses, with the approval of their advisor and the DGS. The 10 courses taken during the first two years should normally include at least 6 chosen from those offered by the department. Students must achieve Honors in at least 2 courses in the first year, and Honors in at least 4 courses by the end of the second year, with a High Pass average overall. Courses graded in the

Satisfactory/Unsatisfactory mode count toward the course work requirement but do not count toward the Honors requirement.

If students arrived in the PhD program with prior graduate work, they may petition for course waivers after they have completed two terms at Yale. A maximum of three courses from previous graduate training may be used toward the 10-course requirement. If the previous graduate degree was awarded by Yale, up to six courses can be counted toward PhD coursework. All course waiver requests must be approved by the Deans of the Graduate School.

If students have been admitted to one of the combined programs (with AFAM, CLSS, RNST), they will be required to satisfy a different set of requirements, depending upon their program. Such students should consult with the DGS of the cognate department or program regularly to confirm they are meeting all requirements.

In addition to meeting regularly with the DGS of History as adviser of record, students should begin immediately consulting regularly with faculty with whom they can share research interests. Mentorship from faculty with research expertise in a student's areas of study is an essential part of their development and will help them to build the relationships with future research advisers. They should consult with faculty in their subfield(s) about all aspects of the program, including course planning, language preparation, research resources, and opportunities to enrich their education. Early conversations about research, including research papers undertaken as part of coursework, are especially important.

Many entering students have already in the application process identified advisers with whom they wish to work from their early years and continuing through the dissertation. If a student has done so, they should be in regular contact with these potential research advisers already from the time they arrive. Even in the early years when they are assigned the DGS as the adviser of record, it is important that they look to these research advisers for direction in all aspects of their study.

The DGS will help students determine whether they are meeting coursework requirements and should also help them consider the broader arc of their intellectual development. In addition, the DGS should offer advice and counsel on the logistics of graduate school and a clearer understanding of resources available for academic and personal wellbeing and development. Above all, the DGS should help students focus on the selection of their research advisers since these will ultimately play the most important role in shaping their development.

Students normally complete their coursework by the end of their fourth semester, although some students in combined programs have remaining coursework to complete in the fifth semester. Many students are able to complete coursework by the end of their third and sometimes even their second semester, usually because they have been able to count courses from previous graduate degrees toward their Yale coursework requirements. The advantage to completing coursework early is that it allows students to approach comprehensive examinations and prospectus writing with full attention in the second year. Once coursework is completed, a student may also apply to teach, which can begin already in the fourth semester (and in very rare cases, the third). This early beginning preserves fellowship funding for non-teaching semesters for use in later semesters and can thus increase the amount of time available for un-interrupted research later in the six-year funding window. This accelerated

approach to examinations and teaching is not, however, a requirement, nor is it the norm. The majority of students do coursework and begin comprehensive exam preparation in the first two years without taking examinations early or initiating their teaching. One measure open to all students to accelerate the advancement to candidacy is to build HIST 994 Oral Exam Tutorial or HIST 995 Prospectus Tutorial into their coursework years, although the DGS will only rarely approve more than one iteration of each per student. These can count as regular courses toward the 10-course requirement but are focused around meeting the comps and prospectus requirements.

All graduate students in History must demonstrate proficiency in one or more foreign languages. The purpose of the foreign language proficiency requirement is to ensure that those holding the Yale PhD in History are versed in the language or languages necessary to conduct high-level research in their field. [The precise requirements vary by subfield and are enumerated here](#). Any questions about the requirement should be referred to the DGS and the primary adviser.

3. Comprehensive Examinations

All students must complete comprehensive examinations (hereafter, “comps” – sometimes called “qualifying examinations”) by the end of their sixth semester. This is foundational to their research and teaching preparation. The comps comprise one major field and two or three minor fields. Only one major field is permitted. One minor field must concentrate at least 50% on a region of the world other than the major field.

The choice of two or three minor fields depends on their interests, research needs, and professional goals. The majority of students choose one major and two minor fields, but a significant number choose three minor fields. Each field is supervised by one faculty member. Generally the prospective research adviser will supervise the major comps field. Students should approach faculty about supervising field exams 9 to 12 months before they plan to take comps. Those who choose four fields tend to do so because they have particularly broad-ranging interests, because they wish to work across subfields or in fields ancillary to the History department (students may have an examiner from outside of History), or because they have already identified four potential dissertation advisers and wish to work with all of them at the comps stage. The choice of comps field advisers should be made in consultation with the DGS and with all the members of the examination committee but particularly the likely dissertation adviser or (if there is to be more than one dissertation adviser) co-advisers. In preparation for writing the historiographic essay and the syllabi for minor fields, some exam field supervisors may require students to meet with them for discussions of literature, to write short essays, or to hone their expertise in other ways.

The exams involve a written and oral component. For the major field, students must write a historiographic essay of about 8,000 words. The object of this document is to present trends in scholarship as reflected in their reading list for the major field. The essay should be more than just an annotated catalog of books and ideas. Rather, it should present the salient trends in the field and show how they have developed over time and resulted in the current state of scholarly opinions and approaches. Critique of the field is also possible, as are analyses of the deep structures and assumptions, some of which may need reframing. For each minor field, students must submit a syllabus of a sort that could be used to teach an undergraduate lecture course in that field. The syllabus should be c. 4-5 pages and should include a general

synopsis of the course, information about books and bibliography, weekly schedules of topics, titles of lectures or discussion topics in week-by-week format, and corresponding readings. Students should work closely with their comps field supervisors on the preparation of these written components. This syllabus exercise is intended to serve two aims: 1) demonstrating mastery and synthesis of the field's main topics; and 2) producing substantive materials for applications to academic jobs.

Students should begin to plan their comps in the second year and no later than the end of their fourth semester. Comps may be scheduled at any time between the fourth and sixth semesters. A common pattern is for students to set up comps field advisers in April of the fourth semester in anticipation of taking the exams at the end of the fifth semester.

Students are responsible for reaching out to their potential comps advisers on their own. In most cases, the primary field adviser should also be the person with whom they hope to work as their dissertation adviser. Their comps field advisers will work with them to formulate reading lists. The length of these lists varies considerably depending on the subfield and advisers. Most fields require 30-50 books, some of which students will already have read before formulating their lists, especially in the context of coursework. Remember that a student will also be teaching and fulfilling other responsibilities for much of this time and that they must prepare an essay and syllabi and review their list in anticipation of the exam.

Once students have communicated with their comps advisers and confirmed their willingness to work with them, they should complete a [Comprehensive Examinations Statement of Intention Form](#) and submit it to the Registrar, Marcy Kaufman. During the semester(s) when the student will be most intensively devoted to orals preparation, they are encouraged to register for a tutorial with the primary comps field adviser, HIST 994 Orals Tutorial. This formalizes the student's relationship and encourages regular meetings (often bi-weekly) with their primary field adviser to discuss their readings. Some faculty offer regularly scheduled 'Readings' courses which they prefer that a student take to prepare for orals rather than using HIST 994.

Students are responsible for scheduling the oral exam with their comps field advisers. The examination may be either in person or remote depending on the preferences of the student and the committee members. Students should remember to begin the scheduling process at least one month before they intend to take the exams. All written components (historiographic essay for major field, syllabi for all minor fields, final reading lists for all fields) must be completed at the latest two weeks prior to the oral exam and submitted to the Graduate Registrar, Marcy Kaufman. Marcy Kaufman will then distribute these to the comps examiners. For those who choose three fields, the major field will be examined for 60 minutes and the minor fields for 30 minutes each. For students who choose four fields, each field will be examined for 30 minutes. Examination discussions typically focus on trajectories in the field and critical assessments of the literature rather than on specific points of information, although it is also important to demonstrate command of substantive content as well. The results of the comps exam must be reported to Marcy Kaufman on the [Comprehensive Examination Form](#).

Students who do not pass their comps are given a second chance to prepare and retake the exams. Examiners should provide such students with detailed feedback and advice about preparation for a retake. Students who do not pass comps on a second attempt will not be continued in the program.

Successful completion of seven courses at Yale and fulfilment of the foreign language requirement allows a student to petition for the *Magister Artis* (MA) degree from Yale and participate in the annual commencement ceremony. If students do not petition on their own, the *en route* MA will be petitioned automatically upon advancement to candidacy. Marcy Kaufman will remind students of this possibility when the time comes. Note that students do not advance to candidacy (ABD) until after completing both the comprehensive examinations and the Prospectus Colloquium (as well as the coursework and language requirements), whereupon they are entitled to a second masters designation, the *Magister Philosophiae* (MPhil). Students are eligible to participate in the commencement ceremony immediately following conferral of their degree.

Both the Comprehensive Examinations and Prospectus Colloquium must be completed by the end of the sixth semester (third academic year).

4. Teaching

Teaching is an important part of a student's formation as a doctoral candidate and will constitute the bedrock of an academic career. If students pursue a career beyond the academy, they will also benefit from their teaching experience, whether they continue as an instructor in secondary schools or offer seminars, presentations, and mentoring in a non-teaching profession

The supervision of teaching by Yale History graduates is managed by the Associate Director Graduate Studies (ADGS). The ADGS will meet with those in their first year of teaching at least once in each of their first two teaching semesters. The ADGS will also be available for consultation about teaching-related questions or problems.

Most student teaching involves leading discussion sections as a Teaching Fellow (TF). This entails teaching two discussion sections for lecture classes. Lecture classes are assigned one TF if they reach enrolment of at least 20. Sections are capped at 18 students. Additional TFs are added incrementally depending on enrolments. Some TFs are assigned to writing intensive (WR) or Language sections. These are capped at 15 students and TFs are required to lead only one WR or language section per semester. Lecture courses generally meet twice weekly. As a TF, students are required to attend the lectures. The instructor of record should also arrange weekly meetings with their TFs to discuss course materials and formulate strategies for in-class discussion and activities. TFs generally do all the grading and evaluation for students in their sections, in consultation with the instructor of record. The instructor of record should also visit at least one section meeting for each TF each semester and should offer a verbal or written consultation about their observation. Some instructors will also offer TFs the opportunity to deliver one lecture for the course in order to help them begin their training as lecturers. As a TF students are not obliged to deliver a lecture, and if they choose to do so, this should be limited to one lecture per TF over the course of the semester. It is at the discretion of instructor of record whether they will permit TFs to deliver lectures, but if they do so and TFs take advantage of the opportunity, the instructor should consult with them about the preparation of the lecture and expectations for its content and delivery.

Most students begin teaching in their fifth semester. Teaching may begin once coursework requirements are complete, so some students are able to start in their fourth semester (and in rare cases their third). As part of a student's financial aid package, they must teach four semesters and are granted two additional semesters of guaranteed teaching if they wish. Some students who are able to find other sources of funding choose to teach fewer semesters, but most teach for six. Seventh year students are also eligible to teach, but they will only be assigned teaching if there are still available positions after all interested teaching-priority students (those who have not yet taught six semesters in their first six years) have been placed.

Teaching is assigned through the ADGS in collaboration with the Registrar. In any given semester, teaching eligible students will be notified by the Registrar of what lecture courses are on offer the following semester and will be asked to rank their preferences. Once students receive this notification, they should notify the Registrar whether they wish to teach in the coming semester, and if they do, they should report their ranked preferences to the Registrar. The ADGS, the Registrar, and the Teaching Fellow Committee will then work to assign students a TF position using an algorithm that accounts for their ranked preferences, their previous course assignments, where those assignments fit into the student's previous rankings, their field(s) of expertise, and course demand. Students may not get their top choices for any given semester, and students are often given sections outside their primary field – which can have the advantage of increasing a student's breadth of knowledge and their prospects on the job market. Much depends on supply and demand, but the ADGS and Registrar do their best to ensure that over time a student's teaching fits their profile. If possible, the TF Committee will assign students to teach for their primary research adviser at least once in the course of their teaching years, provided this person is offering lecture courses that generate sufficient enrolment.

[The Poorvu Center for Teaching and Learning \(CTL\)](#) offers excellent resources for improving pedagogy. As students initiate their teaching, they are required by the GSAS to participate in the CTL's semi-annual 'Teaching at Yale Day', hosted in August and January, as well as the ADGS's separate mandatory seminar on diversity, equity and inclusion in the classroom. Students may also participate in the events scheduled regularly by the CTL on various matters of pedagogy. The CTL offers a supplemental [Certificate of College Teaching Preparation \(CCTP\)](#), which students can obtain by attending a specified number of events and creating a portfolio. This training will greatly improve their understanding of pedagogy and can offer a tremendous advantage as they pursue jobs in teaching.

A few students are able to take advantage of Yale's Associates in Teaching (AT) and Part Time Acting Instructor (PTAI) programs. [The AT program is managed through the CTL](#) and allows advanced (usually sixth-year) students to design a course in conjunction with their adviser with the aim of co-creating and teaching a lecture class alongside the adviser. An AT course lasts one semester and can be offered in spring or fall, but applications for both semesters are due to the CTL in February. Evaluation and awards are governed entirely by the CTL. The PTAI program is run from within the department and allows advanced (usually sixth-year) students to teach a seminar in their area of specialization. The Department will announce in early spring the number of PTAI positions available in the coming academic year and call for proposals. The DUS will evaluate applications on the basis of quality as well as course demand and faculty leaves for the following year. Awards are usually announced in March. Both programs offer advanced students the chance to undertake course development with a high degree of autonomy and thus to further hone their pedagogical craft. Both are

competitive and can be valuable for building a student's resume toward the pursuit of academic employment.

5. Choosing a Dissertation Adviser and Developing a Prospectus

Doctoral students typically have one primary adviser, but they may also have two co-advisers. Their adviser(s) will guide and support them through all stages of their dissertation research and writing. They serve as advocates and letter-writers, offer guidance on the job market, and offer important mentorship in the early stages of a student's career.

As noted above, students often apply to and enter the doctoral program with a particular adviser in mind, but they are not required to do so, and many only determine their adviser(s) during the coursework years. This is especially the case in larger subfields such as US. If a student enters the program with an adviser, they should begin consulting with them regularly and should consider them a resource throughout their studies. Students should keep in mind that they retain the option of identifying a different faculty member to serve as primary research adviser (or co-adviser) if they wish. If a student did not enter the program with a research adviser (or advisers) already identified, they should seek out faculty in their research field(s) for coursework, conversation, and informal mentoring, with the goal of identifying a faculty member to serve as primary research adviser or co-adviser within the first two years of study.

If students do not have a specific adviser identified upon entry into the program, criteria to consider when they choose a dissertation adviser include:

- **Expertise and active areas of publication:** This is paramount. Students will benefit most from an adviser with requisite expertise, and a potential adviser may, understandably, decline to supervise a topic which would be too far outside their expertise and interests.
- **Rapport:** Effective mentoring requires many conversations over many years. Students should seek to work with faculty with whom they find communications open and effective. Students sometimes develop good working relationships with research advisers in seminars, especially if their feedback on research and writing has been valuable. It is also important that students find it easy to approach their adviser and to talk to them.
- **Career stage:** History has not generally permitted pre-tenured faculty to supervise a dissertation alone, although pre-tenured faculty have served as co-supervisors. Pre-tenured faculty may always serve as readers on a dissertation committee.
- **Advising style:** Some faculty are more hands-on than others as dissertation advisers. Students should consider whether they wish to work with someone who is very involved in overseeing research and writing, for example by assisting with sources, setting deadlines, or critiquing writing, or whether they prefer to work more independently.

Steps students might take in selecting an adviser include:

- Talking to existing and former advisees of a potential adviser to get a sense of their experience.
- Setting up a meeting with the potential adviser(s) to seek advice and input in shaping the dissertation topic or any other research project on which a student is working. Use this

meeting to ask (a) potential adviser(s) about their advising style and what they expect from their doctoral students.

- If students hope to work with two co-advisers, setting up a three-way meeting so that they can discuss how the advising relationship will work.
- Being open about career plans and ambitions so that advisers can give appropriate mentoring from the outset.
- Consulting the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences ‘[Advising Processes for Faculty and Students](#)’.

Once students have selected their adviser(s), they should begin developing the prospectus. Some students arrive with a firm idea of their research area and begin working on the prospectus while doing coursework. Most students, however, do not have a firmly delimited project before completing coursework. Students in early years may be able to take advantage of competitive MacMillan funding or departmental Research Travel Grants to begin exploring archives as they narrow down their research subject. The prospectus writing process typically takes as long as six months and entails extensive investigation in primary source archives and mastery of secondary arguments around them. Their adviser should be in close consultation the whole way. Candidates in European subfields are required to register for HIST 995 Prospectus Tutorial, often in their third or fourth semester, to help them develop a prospectus. All other students are encouraged to take HIST 995 in preparation for the prospectus. This course is generally a one-on-one tutorial with their dissertation adviser. Successful completion of HIST 995 should result in a draft of the dissertation prospectus.

The prospectus varies widely depending on subfield. A student’s adviser is the best source of guidance for expectations concerning the shape and content of the prospectus. Students may find it helpful to consult with fellow students in their subfield who have successfully defended a prospectus. Some are likely willing to share their prospectus with them. The prospectus typically ranges from 20-35 double-spaced pages of prose, plus bibliography and a list of archives or sources that have been consulted and those are yet to be consulted. The prose typically involves a description of the research questions and their significance for the field, a literature review, a discussion of primary sources or archive(s), a chapter-by-chapter outline, and a timeline for the composition of these proposed chapters.

As students compose their prospectus, they should begin working with their adviser(s) to develop a complete committee. This must consist of at least three members and no more than five. At least two of these must hold an appointment in Yale History. The others may be internal or external to Yale but must hold the PhD. Committee members who are not advisers are typically designated as Readers and will play an important but less hands-on role in guiding the research and writing. In addition to applying the same criteria used in selecting a primary research adviser, students should discuss the selection of their dissertation committee members with the primary research adviser(s).

Once the committee is identified and the prospectus is completed, a student should share drafts with all members of the committee and ultimately set a colloquium date at which the entire committee can meet. It is the student’s responsibility to coordinate this scheduling. The prospectus colloquium typically lasts 60 – 120 minutes, depending on the size of the committee and their preferences for length. The committee members should be given a copy of the complete prospectus at least two weeks in advance of the meeting. The discussion is likely to be serious and conversational. The advisers can choose either to pass the prospectus, to call for minor revisions, or to fail it. If a student is required to revise, the committee will

set terms for the submission of the revised prospectus and its approval. If the prospectus fails, the committee will provide feedback and offer advice on how to improve it. Students have one more chance to rewrite, resubmit, and defend the prospectus. Students who do not pass the prospectus colloquium on a second attempt will not be continued in the program. Once a student has passed the colloquium, the committee must sign off on the [Prospectus Approval Form](#) and submit this to Marcy Kaufman. The committee identified on that form is now the dissertation committee – in fact, this form offers the first formal constitution of the dissertation committee. The members can, however, change. New readers may be added, and a reader may drop off the original committee (often due to retirements or departures). Only under extremely limited circumstances can students change primary advisers after this point – usually because a faculty member departs or retires and is unwilling to continue supervising.

There is no requirement about the order in which students complete Comprehensive Examinations versus defending the Prospectus. Some students take comps first, then defend the prospectus. This order allows students to use their preparation for comps as a means to read basic works in the research field and thus to help lay the groundwork for a prospectus. But many subfield advisers prefer an earlier prospectus colloquium, which encourages students to complete the prospectus in the second year in order to position themselves to apply for external grants and fellowships in the fifth semester.

Once again – a student does not advance to candidacy until they have successfully completed Comprehensive Examinations *and* written and defended a dissertation prospectus as well as completed the coursework and language requirements.

6. Changing a Principal Dissertation Adviser

Generally speaking, if the principal dissertation adviser leaves Yale, it is understood that the principal adviser has a continuing academic responsibility to the doctoral students whom they are advising, and that they will continue to advise and mentor existing students, provided that the advising relationship is going well from the perspective of both the student and the adviser. In consultation with the departing adviser and the DGS, the student must find a new principal dissertation adviser who is a current member of Yale's faculty and holds an appointment in the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences in order to ensure that the student has an engaged advocate in the department to convene dissertation committee meetings, etc. This is required by Yale's Graduate School. Under normal circumstances, the departing adviser is expected to continue to play an active role in the intellectual advising of the dissertation, attending chapter colloquia, mentoring, writing letters of recommendation, and support for professional development. In all cases, before the adviser leaves Yale, there should be a conversation with their student(s) to arrange continuing contact. When a faculty member retires, they have no obligation to continue serving as dissertation advisers or committee members, and it is conventional for faculty who are anticipating retirement to gradually wind down advising obligations in advance.

Occasionally students may feel that they are not receiving adequate academic advising and mentoring, or that the fit with their adviser is poor. When this happens, students should contact the DGS (or the Chair if the DGS is the adviser in question) for help in trying to improve the advising relationship or to identify a suitable new adviser. In rare cases, a faculty

member may request a change in the advising relationship. In these cases, a similar procedure should be followed.

7. Chapter Conference

A chapter of the dissertation (not necessarily the first chapter) is to be submitted to the committee no later than the end of the ninth semester (midway through year 5) and a chapter conference is to be scheduled as soon as feasible after that. It is the student's responsibility to schedule this with the committee. The exam may be either in person or remote depending on the preferences of the student and the committee members. The student should provide them with a [Chapter Conference Approval Form](#) which they then submit after successful completion of the conference. The chapter conference usually lasts 90-120 minutes and should involve in-depth discussion of the work with the aim of helping steer the dissertation around potential pitfalls and toward successful completion and significant impact. The committee need only approve the chapter – even if revisions are determined to be in order, the conference need not be repeated. The advice offered in the context of the chapter conference should be taken into account as the student continues to write and revise the dissertation for final submission.

8. Dissertation Writing

Dissertation writing is the most demanding and rewarding part of graduate education. Ideally it will represent a period of intellectual growth and awakening that will represent the culmination of a student's educational experience. It is also taxing, both mentally and physically, and can be frustrating and at times discouraging. The keys to success number at least five.

- 1) Regular and steady work.** The dissertation is a multiyear project that can only be completed by regular and steady self-application. Students should set a schedule that allows them to use profitably their best working hours each day and be consistent about following it.
- 2) Organization.** The amount of information students are expected to manage is immense. It is important that they develop plans to store, preserve, and organize their research materials efficiently using computer files, databases (such as Zotero), digital writing tools (such as Scrivener), digital analysis tools (graphics, GIS), and efficient and safe filing or storage for physical materials (such as DropBox). Familiarity with many of these resources is available through the [Yale Digital Humanities Lab](#).
- 3) Frequent Consultation.** Students should consult with advisers regularly. It is important to keep channels of communication open and also to pursue conversation and contact with other committee members and fellow students. It may also be helpful to consult with subject librarians and with the [Graduate Writing Laboratory](#) about resources, techniques, applications, trends, bibliography, etc.
- 4) Advance planning and time management.** Students should map out a schedule for work at the prospectus stage and follow it, or if need be make adjustments as they proceed in such a way that they can complete the dissertation within the period of funding (by the end of the twelfth semester). The dissertation production period normally lasts 3-4 years, during which 1-2 should be spent on research and 1-2 on writing and revising. The latter is likely to take longer, so a student should not wait to begin writing. The first chapter will be the most difficult to complete but should exist

in draft form by the end of the tenth semester (end of year 5) at the latest. Subsequent chapters should progress more quickly. Ideally, students can have a draft of all chapters by the start of the final funding year so that they can use this year to revise and reserve time for teaching and applying for jobs. If the dissertation must be completed after the funding period, students should be sure to apply for continuing student status and continue to work regularly. They are likely close and need only keep a steady pace to reach completion.

5) Self Care. Students should never forget that mind and body are one. They should take care of their health, physical and mental, even in the most intensive periods of writing. They should also know that academic life and writing do not change appreciably between graduate school and faculty employment. While in graduate school, it is best to cultivate a well-rounded life, including good sleep, healthy eating, regular exercise, and non-academic pursuits (hobbies, reading, relationships, family). This will help them carry these good habits forward into their career, whether that is in the academy or in other professions. This is not to downplay the heavy demands of graduate school, which are very real, but to encourage everyone never to lose track of the importance of their whole person at any stage in life.

9. Dissertation Defense

The final requirement after completion of the entire dissertation is the defense. Students are responsible for scheduling the defense with all the members of the committee at least one month prior to submission. The defense may be either in person or remote depending on the preferences of the student and the committee members. They should consign the complete draft to their committee at least two months prior to submission. This should be a polished draft of the complete dissertation. Discussion should last one to two hours. For submission in fall, the defense must take place no later than September 1 to allow for any necessary revisions and submission to the GSAS no later than the October 1 fall submission deadline. For submission in spring, the defense must take place no later than February 15 for necessary revisions and submission to the GSAS no later than the March 15 spring submission deadline. After completion of the defense, the committee members should submit a [Dissertation Defense Form](#) to the Registrar, Marcy Kaufman.

10. Remediation Policy

In most cases, conflicts and disagreements between students and their advisers, mentors, or instructors within the department can and should be resolved amicably by the parties involved. If, for any reason, an issue cannot readily be resolved between the student and faculty member (whether the faculty member is their primary adviser or not) the student should in the first instance approach the DGS, unless the issue is with the DGS, in which case the student should refer the matter to the department Chair. The DGS/Chair will then take prompt action with the aim of resolving the issue with the student and the faculty member in question. If the student concludes that the issue has not been resolved within the department, the student should contact the Associate Dean of the Graduate School.

11. Advising responsibilities of the DGS include:

- Meeting with all graduate students in their coursework years during the two weeks before and after the start of each semester to discuss progress on program requirements, course selections, and plans for the upcoming semester.
- Emphasizing the importance of regular contact with potential or designated research advisers.
- Scheduling additional meetings (upon a student's request) with all graduate students.
- Organizing and implementing the departmental Historians in Practice series.
- Organizing the Graduate Student Advisory Committee and meeting with its membership at least once monthly during the academic year.

12. Advising responsibilities of the ADGS include:

- Working with the Registrar, Marcy Kaufman, to assign teaching to graduate student TFs in each semester.
- Chairing the Departmental Committee on Diversity, Equity and Inclusion.
- Ensuring faculty observe and provide feedback about students' teaching.
- Meeting with first-time teachers each term in their first year of teaching.

13. Advising Responsibilities of the Departmental Placement Officer

- Advising concerning the job market and career paths including participation in conferences and professional meetings, job application strategies, and job interview preparedness. This will typically be done through workshops organized throughout the year.
- Participating in mock interviews and attending mock job talks.
- Offering guidance and feedback on application materials: CV, letter, research statement, etc.

14. Responsibilities of dissertation advisers include:

- Meeting with students on a mutually agreed regular basis (no less than twice per semester) and reading materials ahead of the meeting.
- Promptly responding to students' emails.
- Providing timely and appropriate written and oral feedback on written work (usually within one month) and oral presentations (usually within two weeks).
- Providing guidance on and involvement with medium-term career planning.
- Providing clear guidance in goal setting, time management, and practical advice on balancing teaching and writing.
- Providing letters of recommendation for advisees throughout their Yale career and beyond.
- Reading job application materials and providing constructive feedback. Students should give their adviser plenty of notice (a minimum of two weeks) in order to get judicious feedback.
- Keeping students apprised of potential conflicts and periods when the adviser will not be able to respond to e-mail, read work, etc. (e.g. dates of travel, outside commitments and obligations).
- Assistance in professional networking.

15. Responsibilities of dissertation committees include:

- Meeting with students when requested (at least once a year) to discuss progress.
- Reading and providing oral and written feedback on materials shared ahead of chapter colloquia and on dissertation chapters as they are produced.

16. Responsibilities of Students

- During the coursework years, students should keep track of the course requirements and fulfil them by the relevant deadlines in consultation with the DGS; they should pursue regular contact with potential research advisers and undertake research relevant to possible dissertation topics.
- Students should submit work by relevant deadlines. In the dissertation years, they should practice timely communication and submission of work to advisers; share material with their advisers well in advance of meetings; give plenty of notice when letters of recommendation are needed, and share work with recommenders.
- Students in teaching years should respond to emails from the Registrar soliciting course preferences, should attend all lectures in the courses to which they are assigned, should attend all their discussion sections (or confer with the instructor of record if this might not be possible in a specific instance), should provide prompt and helpful feedback to their students, and should remain in close touch with the instructor of record and the ADGS.
- At the beginning of candidacy, students should discuss research expectations with their adviser. At the same time, it is appropriate to discuss issues such as career goals, and make clear limitations to one's schedule, e.g. religious observance or family obligations.
- It is the responsibility of both students and faculty to respond to emails in a timely fashion. If either party does not respond, it is reasonable for the other to follow up with reminders. Students should take the initiative if crucial information is not being received and necessary meetings are being missed. They should turn to the DGS as a resource.
- Students should endeavour as far as possible to attend departmental talks and events on a regular basis, and to be active participants in Yale's intellectual community. They do not have to go to all events, but it is important to learn to balance work, teaching and participation in the life of the department.
- Students should keep the Graduate Registrar informed about significant changes to their academic program: adviser changes, subfield changes, life events that will impact study, etc.

In addition to making sure they satisfy their formal responsibilities, students will benefit from being self-motivated and organized, planning deadlines appropriately, practicing effective time management, and taking initiative. They should be open to critical feedback – it is important to accept criticism and learn to respond to it even if one disagrees with it. Imagination, risk-taking, and willingness to explore outside one's comfort zone are also assets.

17. Additional Campus Resources

Graduate School of Arts & Sciences Dean's Office, 1 Hillhouse Avenue; (203) 432-2733.
<http://gsas.yale.edu/office-directory>

GSAS's Guide to Advising Processes for Faculty and Students.
https://gsas.yale.edu/sites/default/files/page-files/gsas_advising_processes_guide_0.pdf

Office for Graduate Student Development & Diversity, 1 Hillhouse Avenue; (203) 436-1301.
<http://gsas.yale.edu/diversity/office-graduate-student-development-diversity>

University-Wide Committee on Sexual Misconduct, 55 Whitney Avenue; (203) 432-4449.
<https://uwc.yale.edu/>

Office of Institutional Equity and Access; 221 Whitney Avenue, 4th Floor; (203) 432-0849.
<https://oiea.yale.edu/>

Sexual Harassment and Assault Response & Education (SHARE); 55 Lock Street, Lower Level; (203) 432-2000. <http://sharecenter.yale.edu/>

Mental Health & Counseling, 55 Lock Street, 3rd Floor; 203-432-0290.
<http://yalehealth.yale.edu/mentalhealth>

National Center for Faculty Development and Diversity.
<https://www.facultydiversity.org/institutions/yale-university>

Resources for Students to Address Discrimination and Harassment Concerns. <https://student-dhr.yale.edu/>

Poorvu Center for Teaching and Learning, 301 York Street; (203) 432-4765.
<http://poorvucenter.yale.edu/>

Poorvu Center Graduate Writing Laboratory. <https://poorvucenter.yale.edu/writing/graduate>

Office of Career Strategy, 55 Whitney; (203) 432- 0800. <https://ocs.yale.edu/>