

# **FILM AND VISUAL STUDIES**

## **Guide**

### **for**

## **Graduate Students**

**\*\*This guide is intended for general information and orientation. Updated information about program requirements is available on the Film and Visual Studies website, as well as from the Program Administrator, Emily Amendola, or the Director of Graduate Studies, Professor David Joselit.\*\***

## **COLLOQUIA, LECTURES AND SPECIAL SEMINARS**

Throughout the year, the Carpenter Center for the Visual Arts, the Film and Visual Studies Colloquium, and the Harvard Film Archive host distinguished guests who speak at colloquia, lectures, and special seminars. *All graduate students are expected to attend these events and to participate fully in the intellectual life of the program.* Information regarding these events can be found on the Art, Film, and Visual Studies website at <http://www.afvs.fas.harvard.edu/>. Please note due to remote campus all events will be held virtually.

## **IMPORTANT CONTACTS**

Chair, Art, Film, and Visual Studies	Robb Moss	n/a	n/a
Director of Graduate Studies	David Joselit (Fall), Eric Rentschler (Spring)	<a href="mailto:djoselit@fas.harvard.edu">djoseleit@fas.harvard.edu</a> <a href="mailto:erentsch@fas.harvard.edu">erentsch@fas.harvard.edu</a>	n/a
Director of Administration	Denise Oberdan	<a href="mailto:oberdan@fas.harvard.edu">oberdan@fas.harvard.edu</a>	496-8420
Financial Administrator	Mary Park	<a href="mailto:mpark@fas.harvard.edu">mpark@fas.harvard.edu</a>	495-3252
Graduate Studies Programs Administrator	Emily Amendola	<a href="mailto:amendola@fas.harvard.edu">amendola@fas.harvard.edu</a>	495-9720
Program Manager for Undergraduate Students	Paula Soares	<a href="mailto:soares@fas.harvard.edu">soares@fas.harvard.edu</a>	496-4469

## **BUILDING ACCESS**

Currently restricted due to remote campus. Please contact Denise Oberdan if you need of building access.

## **E-MAIL**

Prior to the start of the school year, the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences will email you about establishing your Harvard email account. Please be sure to set it up as soon as possible and begin checking it regularly.

## **FILM STUDIES LIBRARY**

Access is currently restricted due to remote campus.

Key card access will grant you entrance to the Film Studies Library on the 4<sup>th</sup> floor of Sever Hall. Please contact the Film Studies Librarian (617)495-3254 for more information as well as for an orientation of the library.

<https://afvs.fas.harvard.edu/film-studies-library>

## **ADVISING**

In the first year of graduate study, students will be advised primarily by the Director of Graduate Studies (DGS). After the first year, working with the DGS, the student will identify a faculty member as their advisor. The student will then consult that faculty member and the graduate

programs administrator to confirm this agreement. If a student is unable to identify an advisor by the end of the first year, the DGS will remain their default advisor. By the end of their second year, however, students will be expected to have found an advisor. When considering an advisor, students should select a faculty member who would be a likely dissertation director. The dissertation director will take primary charge of advising the thesis, with a second and third reader involved to a greater or lesser degree according to the wishes of the student and the primary advisor. The dissertation director and advisers will also help students choose and prepare field topics for the general examination.

### **GENERAL EXAM**

General exams normally take place after spring break in the third year of study. There are two components, a written and an oral exam. The written exam is tentatively slated to take place the week after spring break and the oral exam takes place one week after the written exam.

Prior to the general exam students must fulfill the following requirements:

- Residence and academic standing requirement (completion of two years of enrollment for full-time study, with a minimum of at least fourteen courses completed with no grade lower than B).
- Language requirement.
- Successful completion and submission of qualifying paper.

More information regarding the exam will be given to students during the spring semester of their second year of study.

### **FILM AND VISUAL STUDIES PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT FUNDING**

Film and Visual Studies (FVS) PhD Professional Development Policy will be reviewed early in fall semester and revised policy will be distributed to students.

### **GRANTS AND FELLOWSHIPS**

GSAS provides resources for graduate students seeking funding for research support, language study, multiple-year general support and dissertation-writing support.

Information can be found on the GSAS Fellowships website:

<https://gsas.harvard.edu/financial-support/fellowships>

In addition, Emily Amendola compiles a list of financial aid opportunities. If you have not received a copy of this list, please contact her.

### **GSAS POLICIES**

Consult the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences Policies regarding GSAS regulations and requirements. The GSAS Policies can be found here - <https://gsas.harvard.edu/policies>.

### **HEALTH INSURANCE**

The Graduate School of Arts and Sciences requires students to have health insurance. Unless you choose another source of insurance (for example the National Association of Graduate and Professional Students <http://www.nagps.org>), Harvard University Student Health Plan is available for most graduate students in the doctoral program.

## **HEALTH SERVICES**

Harvard University Health Services, located in Smith Campus Center, will serve most of your health needs. You should choose a primary care team if one has not already been assigned to you. Information about individual clinicians is available online <http://huhs.harvard.edu/Home.aspx>. For more information about HUHS, please call Member Services at (617)495-2008.

Harvard University Health Services also provides mental health services. Information about these services can be found directly on their website: <http://huhs.harvard.edu/HealthServices/MentalHealthServices.aspx>.

Danielle Farrell, Director of Student Services at the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences, serves as the resource person for GSAS students. She serves in an advisory role, provides ongoing support, and makes referrals to other sources of assistance, as necessary. Conversations are confidential. Danielle can be reached at (617)495-5005 or [farrell@fas.harvard.edu](mailto:farrell@fas.harvard.edu).

## **INCOMPLETES**

Incomplete grades (INC) are granted to graduate students only at the discretion of the instructor. If a student receives an INC, the student must complete coursework during the term that immediately follows the INC term by submitting work prior to the first day of classes of that term. For example, if a student receives an INC during the fall term, the student must complete the coursework during the spring term by submitting work prior to the first day of classes of the following fall term. Even if the student's registration status during the term is leave of absence, the student must complete coursework during this time frame. However, the only exception is if the student is given an earlier deadline by the instructor.

If the work is not submitted within the required time frame, the INC becomes a permanent grade, unless the student has petitioned successfully for an extension.

INC grades incurred in cross-registered courses in another school are subject to GSAS rules and deadlines unless the other school's deadlines are earlier.

Extensions must be approved both by GSAS and by the other school.

Incomplete grades cannot be changed once a final degree has been awarded.

Students who receive an E or a permanent incomplete (INC) or absent (ABS) may retake the class for credit, however, both grades will appear on the transcript.

Delay in completing the required fourteen courses will necessitate the postponement of the student's general examination until the following year. A student who is still unprepared to take the examination at that time will not be allowed to continue the program.

Students may not take an Incomplete in any course in the second term of the second year.

Students taking incompletes are considered making unsatisfactory progress toward their degree program, which may affect their eligibility for financial aid. If you are considering taking an incomplete, you need to meet with the director of graduate studies, as well as to contact the graduate programs administrator.

## **LANGUAGE REQUIREMENTS AND COURSES**

Advanced reading knowledge of one foreign language is required. This language must be relevant to the student's program of study. Students must provide evidence of language skills comparable to two full years of university study in one of two ways: (1) a grade of B or better on a proficiency examination administered by the relevant language department or (2) successful completion (a grade of B or better) of a full second-year or higher course of study taught in a foreign language. Please note that first- and second-year language courses do not count towards the FVS course requirements. Incoming students should discuss their language background with the Director of Graduate Studies in the fall semester of their first year of study and determine a plan and timeline to complete the language requirement prior to the spring semester of their third year of study.

## **LIBRARY RESOURCES**

**Please note – physical access to libraries are currently restricted due to COVID-19.**

### **Film Studies Library (FSL) at Sever Hall**

The Film Studies Library, located on the fourth floor of Sever Hall, has viewing facilities and a large, non-circulating collection of videos and DVDs, including many rare titles. Although the collection's holdings are not listed in HOLLIS (the Harvard Libraries catalogue), a catalogue can be accessed at the FSL.

### **Harvard Film Archive**

Carpenter Center for the Visual Arts  
24 Quincy Street  
Harvard University  
Cambridge, MA 02138  
Fax: (617) 496-6750

<http://hcl.harvard.edu/hfa/>

The Harvard Film Archive presents films Friday through Monday nights year-round. Open to the public, all screenings are held in the Archive's 220-seat theater featuring state-of-the-art film and digital projection located in the Carpenter Center for the Arts.

### **Morse Music & Media Library**

Located on the second floor of Lamont Library, Morse houses a large circulating collection of videos and DVDs with state-of-the-art viewing equipment. The collection is catalogued in HOLLIS. Harvard College Libraries Film and Visual Studies Contact:

Reed Lowrie, [lowrie@fas.harvard.edu](mailto:lowrie@fas.harvard.edu), (617) 496-2252

**Fine Arts Library**  
Littauer Center  
1805 Cambridge Street  
Harvard University North Yard  
Cambridge, MA 02138

Jessica Evans Brady, [jevansbrady@fas.harvard.edu](mailto:jevansbrady@fas.harvard.edu), 617-496-1503

Shalimar Abigail Fojas White, [shalimar\\_white@harvard.edu](mailto:shalimar_white@harvard.edu), 617-495-0678

### **NON-RESIDENT STATUS**

Information on non-resident status can be found on the GSAS website:

<https://gsas.harvard.edu/registration/non-resident-students>

### **PHOTOCOPYING**

Photocopy and scanner services are available through the Harvard College Library. Copy service stores are also located in the Cambridge area.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

Guidelines for Requests for Letters of Recommendation

Every academic year faculty in the FAS write upwards of 30,000 letters for students and former students. Harvard professors take considerable time to write in detail and make every effort to present a candidate in the best possible light. Here are some suggestions to facilitate this process.

Be sure to provide at least three (preferable four or more) weeks' notice for any request. Even if you know that the instructor already has a letter on file, do not assume that it can easily be tweaked and sent out.

Letters may well require significant revision to fit a particular purpose. **Never** assume that a letter can be written at the last minute. This is not only impolite; it puts undue pressure on the person writing on your behalf.

Include a written statement of the due date and indicate whether it is a postmark or a receipt date.

Describe the purpose of the letter and/or provide a copy of instructions intended for the person writing. If you need multiple letters for different purposes, provide a description of each (e.g., a fellowship, a summer grant, an application for an academic job). Be sure to include the due dates and a description of how letters are to be passed forward. In many cases, institutions and dossier services will send your recommenders email messages to facilitate electronic transmission. In others, recommenders will be required to submit letters by regular mail. In this latter case, please provide an addressed and stamped envelope for each recommendation.

Provide copies of class papers and of any other directly relevant papers, with instructor's original comments if possible. It is advisable to provide a copy of your transcript (an unofficial one will suffice) and a CV.

Fill out any forms as completely as you can. Do not expect the person writing for you to provide information you yourself know.

Offer to have an individual conference about your application(s). At the very least, explain your requests with either a written statement or a draft of your project or statement of purpose to be submitted with your application.

Make certain to fill out any waiver request, either yes or no. Please know that confidential letters will carry more weight.

### **RESEARCH AND TRAVEL FUNDS**

In addition to FVS Professional Development Funding, the Graduate Student Council (GSC) provides funding opportunities. For more information, please see the GSC web site <http://www.hcs.harvard.edu/~gsc/>.

### **RESEARCH AND WORKING GROUPS**

#### **AFVS 301 Film and Visual Studies Workshop**

The Film and Visual Studies Workshop, in existence for more than fifteen years, is the site of monthly discussions about vanguard scholarship, theory, and criticism, presentations of student work in progress, and meetings with prominent scholars, filmmakers, and artists. Its faculty advisor is Professor Eric Rentschler; the student coordinator for 2020-2021 is to be determined.

### **SCREEN STUDIES**

This workshop explores new interdisciplinary analyses and theorizations of the moving image in an expanded field. Screen cultures encompass a range of contexts in which the moving image is framed, distributed, received and interpreted. These range from the traditionally conceived sites of cinema, video and television to increasingly dispersed new media platforms. While Film Studies, in particular film theory, has historically privileged text-based approaches to the study of the moving image, this workshop aims to explore emerging scholarly practices that resituate these “texts” within visual culture at large. From locative media to public projections, new screen contexts require a varied set of methodologies for understanding the cultural, theoretical and historical implications of emergent moving image practices. The workshop will thus devote much attention to the study of different spatial practices relating to screens; from the proto-cinematic (e.g. magic lanterns) to contemporary forms (e.g. locative media, public projections), we are interested in tracing new genealogies of screen cultures and their relations to public life.

For more information regarding Screen Studies please contact the student coordinators:

Carolyn Bailey, Film and Visual Studies

[cabailey@g.harvard.edu](mailto:cabailey@g.harvard.edu)

Javier Nueno, Film and Visual Studies

[nueno@g.harvard.edu](mailto:nueno@g.harvard.edu)

### **Society for Cinema & Media Studies**

The Society for Cinema and Media Studies is the leading scholarly organization in the United States dedicated to promoting a broad understanding of film, television, and related media through research and teaching grounded in the contemporary humanities tradition.

SCMS encourages excellence in scholarship and pedagogy and fosters critical inquiry into the global, national, and local circulation of cinema, television, and other related media. SCMS scholars situate these media in various contexts, including historical, theoretical, cultural, industrial, social, artistic, and psychological.

SCMS seeks to further media study within higher education and the wider cultural sphere, and to serve as a resource for scholars, teachers, administrators, and the public. SCMS works to maintain productive relationships with organizations in other nations, disciplines, and areas of media study; to foster dialogue between media industries and scholars; and to promote the preservation of our film, television, and media heritage. We encourage membership and participation of scholars and those in related positions not only in the US but around the world. <https://www.cmstudies.org/>

Other relevant professional organizations include the College Art Association ([www.collegeart.org](http://www.collegeart.org)), as well as the American Studies Association ([www.theasa.net](http://www.theasa.net)) and other area studies organizations.

### **TEACHING FELLOWSHIPS**

Information about teaching is available from Emily Amendola, 617-495-9720, [amendola@fas.harvard.edu](mailto:amendola@fas.harvard.edu). Before a student begins teaching (normally in the third year), they must be eligible to take the general examination and all course work must be completed and graded (no “incomplete” grades). Please note that while students are encouraged to discuss ideas and preferences for teaching with the DGS, offers of teaching are made by the Chair and the DGS in consultation with the AFVS Administration based on enrollment figures for undergraduate courses in film studies and AFVS.

### **FVS PROSPECTUS REQUIREMENT**

#### The Dissertation Prospectus

Students should have discussions about potential topics with several faculty members in the fall of the G3 year, if not sooner. A committee of three readers should be constituted and formalized no later than January in the third year of study (keeping in mind that it is possible the committee members may change as the project develops).

- After successful completion of the general examinations, a topic for the dissertation will be decided in consultation with the student's dissertation director and advisers. Once a student has a topic and an advisor, they will prepare a dissertation proposal.
- The dissertation proposal elaborates the topic, initial approach and serves as a student's working outline for researching and writing the dissertation; the proposal also serves as the basis for fellowship applications. Not including the bibliography, the proposal document should be about six and no more than seven pages (1,800 words).
- The proposal, depending on the project and the advisor's recommendations, typically includes the following sections: introduction; contribution of the dissertation; review of existing scholarship; chapter outlines; and a timeline.



- In order to maintain satisfactory standing, students are expected to have their prospectus approved by November 1<sup>st</sup> of their 4th year of study. In mid- or late November, they will also present a 15-minute description of their prospectus to program students and faculty in a public colloquium.

### **THESIS WRITER'S POLICY**

The Film and Visual Studies program wishes to make certain that your progress toward the doctoral degree moves smoothly and steadily. To that end, Satisfactory Progress for dissertation writers will be at least one chapter each year. The chapter must be completed by April 15 starting no later than the G5 year. It is the program's hope that most students in the program will apply for a Dissertation Completion Fellowship (DCF) in the January/February application cycle of the 5th year. In order to do so, you will need to have completed two chapters.

More information on the application process and requirements for this fellowship can be found on the GSAS website:

<https://gsas.harvard.edu/financial-support/fellowships>

If you plan on applying for the DCF in your 6th year, please be sure to meet with your chief advisor as well as the DGS.

### **Film and Visual Studies Dissertation Defense Policy – August 2020**

The Film and Visual Studies PhD program requires a public dissertation defense. Students should consult the timeline below for the pertinent dates and deadlines. After reviewing an unbound copy of the completed thesis, the dissertation committee will notify the student as to whether any revisions are required prior to the defense. If the required revisions are substantial, the student will be asked to submit the dissertation in the next graduation degree cycle.

Dissertation defenses will be scheduled for the last week of the month on which the committee approves the dissertation. (For May 2021 graduates, defenses will be scheduled for the last week of April.) The dissertation defense is an opportunity for the student to discuss and reflect on the project as whole as well as to receive feedback about how to transform the thesis into a book manuscript. To this end students should prepare a 20-minute presentation. It should address the following: what are the central questions that the dissertation addresses? What is at stake? What are the study's key contributions and chief arguments? After the presentation the dissertation committee will have 30 minutes for questions and comments. The audience will then have an additional 30 minutes for responses. Students will be asked to provide an electronic copy of the approved dissertation at least one week before the defense so that it can be made available to audience members.

### **Film and Visual Studies PH.D DISSERTATION INFORMATION**

GSAS requires that each PhD student submit a dissertation through the online submission tool, which can be found at <https://www.etdadmin.com/main/home?siteId=1059>

Details regarding submitting your dissertation can be found on the GSAS website:

<https://gsas.harvard.edu/degree-requirements/dissertations/submitting-your-dissertation>

Please review these details carefully and be sure to understand everything you need to submit when submitting your dissertation including formatting and the Dissertation Acceptance

Certificate (DAC) as well as embargo information.

Ordinarily the dissertation advisor and possibly members of the dissertation committee will have had the opportunity to review the dissertation in its middle stage. In any case, the review must be completed no later than three months prior to the Department deadline for submission of the final unbound copy (see timetables below). The dissertation committee must return the full draft within three weeks after it has been received.

Students who have received the doctorate have found it immensely helpful to meet with the members of the committee all together during their completion year. Programs Administrator for Graduate Studies (Emily Amendola) is available to assist in scheduling a meeting with the committee at any time during the writing process.

The dissertation should be an original contribution to knowledge. It must conform to the Supplement to the GSAS Policies found on the following website:

<https://gsas.harvard.edu/academics/dissertations>.

Other helpful links from GSAS can be found here:

<https://gsas.harvard.edu/degree-requirements/dissertations>

<https://gsas.harvard.edu/degree-calendar-2020-2021>

Before the degree is granted, a candidate is expected to publicly defend the dissertation.

Dissertation Defenses are scheduled by the Programs Administrator for Graduate Studies (Emily Amendola).

	<u>November 2020 Degree</u>	<u>March 2021 Degree</u>	<u>May 2021 Degree</u>
Full draft due to the dissertation advisor	May 1, 2020	September 1, 2020	January 1st of the Graduation Year
Full draft returned by dissertation advisor	June 1, 2020	October 9, 2020	January 30 <sup>th</sup> of the Graduation Year
Degree Application due the Registrar	August 14, 2020	December 1, 2020	April 1, 2021
Final unbound copy due the dissertation committee	August 1, 2020	December 9, 2020	March 30 <sup>th</sup> of the Graduation Year
Dissertation Committee will notify student of dissertation approval and/or additional revisions	August 20, 2020	December 30, 2020	April 20 <sup>th</sup> of the Graduation Year
GSAS Dissertation Submission Deadline	<b>September 8, 2020 or September 9 – October 9, 2020*</b>	<b>January 19, 2021</b>	<b>May 13, 2021</b>

\*Students who wish to retain health coverage for the fall 2020 term (through January 31, 2021) and who would like to be charged accordingly should submit the dissertation from September 9, 2020 - October 9, 2020.

### **TRANSFER CREDIT**

- Students entering the Graduate School who have done graduate work elsewhere may apply for transfer of credit at the end of one full term of satisfactory work.
- The amount and kind of credit shall be decided by the DGS with the advice and consent of the FVS Graduate Committee, but in no case will it exceed six half-courses (24 credits). The decision will be partially based on the nature of students' work done elsewhere and on their record in their first year at Harvard.