

Northwestern

Department of Art History

Graduate Student Handbook 2026-27

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Revised: August 2026

Disclaimer: Northwestern University reserves the right to change without notice any statement in this publication concerning, but not limited to, rules, policies, tuition, fees, curricula, and courses.

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Faculty and Service Roles

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Department Leadership

Department Chair: Christina Kiaer

Committee on Undergraduate Affairs (CUA)

Director of Undergraduate Studies: Jesús Escobar

Advisor to Northwestern Art Review: Yuthika Sharma (on leave Fall quarter)

At Large: Antawan Byrd (on leave Winter quarter)

Graduate Student Member: TBD

Committee on Graduate Affairs (CGA)

Director of Graduate Studies: Rebecca Zorach

Admissions & Recruitment Coordinator, and Diversity and Equity

Officer: Christina Normore (on leave Spring quarter)

Placement Officer & Practicum Organizer: Alicia Caticha (on leave Spring quarter)

At Large: Bihter Esener

Committee on Curriculum

Department Chair

Director of Undergraduate Studies

Director of Graduate Studies

At Large: Christina Normore (on leave Spring quarter)

Committee on Departmental Events & Planning

Department Chair

Warnock Lecture Series Coordinator: Jesús Escobar

Graduate Representatives: Sojourner Hunt and Kay Bobb

Committee on Practicum & Pedagogy

Placement Officer & Practicum Organizer

Yuthika Sharma

Bihter Esener

Graduate Student Member: TBD

Search Committee

Chair: Krista Thompson

Antawan Byrd

Christina Kiaer

Lane Relyea (Art, Theory & Practice)

Liaison to the Block Museum of Art

Thadeus Dowad

Graduate Representatives

Sojourner Hunt

Kay Bobb

Department Graduate Union Organizers

Amanda Alvarez

Graduate Social Chair

Malaika Shuck

Department Staff

Business Administrator (BA): Mel Keiser

Graduate Student Coordinator and Program Assistant (G-PA): Caroline Stevens

Undergraduate Coordinator and Event Management Program Assistant (U-PA): Erin Elmore

PhD Art History Program Guide

Program requirements were revised Summer 2024 and Spring 2026. You may follow the guidelines in force when you matriculated or as they are listed here. If you matriculated in 2026 and beyond you will adhere to guidelines as listed here.

The following handbook describes departmental policies and resources. Please consult The Graduate School (TGS) [website](#) for more general information and resources.

Advising

Director of Graduate Studies

First-year students are advised by the Director of Graduate Studies (DGS). The DGS orients and advises all first-year students in advance of registration each quarter. The DGS remains a resource for you throughout your time in the program and may always be consulted on any questions that may arise, as well as any conflicts or other concerns. The DGS is the liaison between you, faculty, Weinberg, and TGS. The DGS oversees final approval of all exceptions, progress to degree, work assignments, etc.

Primary Advisor

You are required to have an advisor. Typically, this advisor becomes the chair of your Qualifying Exam (QE) and dissertation committees. In certain cases, after discussion with relevant faculty and the DGS, students may elect two co-advisors, which will be indicated on GSP, or be required to choose a co-advisor for administrative purposes. Once you have selected your advisor, they oversee your course of study, with support from the DGS. The primary advisor has many roles to play, including overseeing registration, course selection and distribution requirements, advising you on your graduate student worker assignments, degree progress, and grant/internship applications. You will meet with your advisor quarterly to discuss your progress and plan for the next steps in the program.

You will need to select and register your primary advisor by the last day of Spring quarter exam week in your first year. To do so, confer with the DGS and your planned advisor. After they have approved your plans, indicate your choice on the Committee tab in the Graduate Student Tracking System ([GSP](#)). The system will route your suggestion to the advisor for their approval, and the department staff will mark this requirement completed in your milestones.

To change your primary advisor, for any number of reasons, please contact the Chair and DGS. Should faculty wish to terminate either their role as primary advisor or committee member, they will contact the Chair and DGS. Any advisory concerns should be brought to the DGS, Department Chair, or Associate Dean of Student Services in The Graduate School.

Course of Study

Awarded Degrees

The Department of Art History at Northwestern is designed as a PhD program. The average time to degree is five to seven years, although funding is only guaranteed for five years (see Funding). TGS caps time to degree at nine years, after which point you need to petition to maintain good standing. The MA can be applied for in the course of advancement towards the PhD but is not expected to be a terminal degree.

Petitioning for MA (Optional)

Our MA is not designed as a terminal degree but can be awarded to students who successfully complete twelve course credits in good standing, complete the language requirement, and complete all requirements for the First Year Spring meeting. Since it is not a requirement for the PhD, you must petition for an MA degree by completing the corresponding TGS Form through GSP (see below); it will not be awarded automatically. Application deadlines are on the academic calendar and more information on the petition process can be found on the [TGS website](#).

Please note that you must complete a) Masters in Primary PhD form to activate MA options on your student record, b) Application for Degree form to signal your intent to file for your MA, and c) Master's Degree Completion for official awarding of MA degree.

Curriculum

The art history PhD is based on a balance of breadth (distribution requirements) and depth (your Major or Teaching Field, and eventually your dissertation fields, or areas of specialization within the Teaching Field). We encourage and promote interdisciplinarity by way of coursework outside of the department in related fields and programs.

You will be enrolled in full-time coursework or the equivalent for the first three years of matriculation, during which time a minimum of 18 graded courses at the 400-level are completed (certain 300-level courses may count towards this requirement, usually with the expectation of additional work, such as a longer final paper; confirm with the DGS and the course instructor on a case-by-case basis). Full-time enrollment is at least three credits.

The curriculum is as follows:

Major or Teaching Field

You are required to take seven courses in the major field, six of which must be Northwestern 400-level seminars or those offered by the Traveling Scholar Program of the Big Ten Academic Alliance (this program also includes the University of Chicago). *Please note that the Traveling Scholar Program will be discontinued after the 2026–27 academic year and the last chance to apply for it is October 19, 2026. After that year, students wishing to take classes at the University of Chicago or University of Illinois should discuss options with the DGS or their advisor.*

You and your advisor determine what counts towards the Major or Teaching Field regardless of the department in which the course was taken. At least five of your major field classes will typically be departmental offerings, although we know this is not possible in all fields or applicable to all individual scholarly needs. Up to two of the eight required courses may include Independent Studies or MA transfer credits.

The Major or Teaching Field typically corresponds with the temporal and/or

geographic categories used as hiring descriptors, i.e., Modern, Early Modern, Latin American, and so forth. In the first year, the DGS can help you determine your major field, but after you declare an advisor, you will work with them to define the parameters of that field.

Breadth Requirement

You are required to take four courses in three major teaching fields outside your Major or Teaching Field, in order to diversify your exposure to different temporal, geographical, and faculty teaching areas in Northwestern 400-level art history seminars, and to build community in the department. Your advisor determines what satisfies the breadth requirement.

With your advisor's approval, you may petition the DGS for previous graduate coursework to count toward this requirement, but it is not recommended as standard practice. (See "Credit for Courses Taken at Other Graduate Institutions.") In exceptional cases, you may petition your advisor and the DGS to use an AH 499 or non-art history course to satisfy this requirement.

Required Courses in Critical Practices

A four-part critical practice sequence aims to develop your capacity for art-historical research and analysis while simultaneously cultivating writing skills across a range of professional practices. The four-course sequence consists of:

AH 401: Methods is taken during the Fall of your first year. This course offers an introduction to various methods used in analyzing art and visual-spatial culture. It is expected that the course will survey a broad spectrum of issues that inform current work in the field, and that it will cultivate analytical and expository writing skills while introducing you to art historical work at the graduate level.

AH 403: Objects and Material Seminar is taken the Winter of your first or second year, as offered, and is meant to introduce you to the complexities of doing object-based research. The course includes close engagement with art objects in Chicago collections, where the class occasionally meets.

AH 405: Summer Seminar Abroad is taken the Summer of your first or second year and involves traveling with your cohort and a professor for two weeks to learn about on-site research in a particular place related to the professor's area of expertise. It is meant to introduce you to the

complexities of archival, museological, and other on-site research, as well as introduce you to a specific area of study. When applying for other summer programs, first-year students should confirm the programs don't conflict with the travel dates for that year's summer seminar.

AH 406: Dissertation Prospectus Seminar is taken during Spring of your third year. It provides advanced students an opportunity to draft a dissertation prospectus, introducing them to the mechanics of that genre of writing and the long-format expectations of the dissertation.

Independent Study (AH 499)

Enrolling in an AH 499 requires prior consultation with the advisor and relevant faculty member. Each faculty leads AH 499 differently, but the reading and writing load should correspond to that of a seminar, with short writing assignments and at least biweekly meetings.

In your first year, you are discouraged from registering for Independent Studies except under unusual circumstances to be discussed with the DGS and your prospective advisor.

In your second year, you may enroll in no more than one AH 499 a quarter (you should only enroll in more in exceptional circumstances with both DGS and advisor approval). Specifically, in consultation with your advisor (especially if you arrive without an MA), you might wish to enroll in an AH 499 with your advisor before Spring of your second year, to begin preparing for the exam and dissertation focus of the second year.

During your third year, you are expected to register quarterly for one to three credits of AH 499 with your advisor in preparation for the Qualifying Exam and Dissertation Prospectus. During the year you should also register for two additional AH 499 with other members of your examination committee; this allows you to dedicate time for guided study and preparation for your Major or Teaching Field examination.

Research Course Credits for Full-time Status (AH 590, TGS 500, TGS 512)

There are three different course numbers you can use to achieve full-time status without being in coursework: AH 590, TGS 500, and TGS 512. These courses confer credit for your ongoing dissertation research and fill up your registration. Please note that you are encouraged to use one of these numbers to reduce your course

load while serving as TA.

Of these courses, first- and second-year students should only use AH 590, and primarily during the summer months. Second-year students may elect to take one AH 590 during each quarter (up to two quarters) they are serving as a graduate student worker. Otherwise, only in the rarest occasions and with prior approval by the DGS should a first-year or second-year student use this credit during the academic year. You will need a permission number from department staff to enroll in this course.

Third-year students and beyond should use either TGS 500 or TGS 512. Please use the Registration Decision Tree in the appendix to assess which is the correct enrollment. You can confirm the correct enrollment with the G-PA, if needed. Additional information on TGS's continuous registration policy can be found [here](#).

Language Courses

Beginning and intermediate language classes do not count as part of your required 18 course credits but do count toward full-time status. For coursework in language and literature departments, the same understanding applies as elsewhere: 400-level classes can count toward the 18 classes and 300-level classes may count on a case by-case basis. (With approval from the advisor and DGS, the second and third quarters of the 200-level sequence in ancient languages that involve reading alone may also fall into this category.)

Registration

Registration is required from your quarter of entry until your final quarter of completion of the degree, including summers. The only exception is if you are unfunded in the Summer quarter, in which case you do not need to register for TGS 512 or any other course, unless you are an international student advised to do so by the Office of International Student and Scholar Services. A provisional list of annual course offerings is provided on the department website. Before finalizing registration on CAESAR, the course registration site, meet with your advisor or the DGS to sign off on your course of study. Please plan accordingly. Registration typically takes place three weeks to ten days before the first day of a quarter. Dates are listed on [Northwestern's academic calendar](#), and we strongly advise you add these dates to your own calendar.

To enroll in Art History courses requiring department permission, obtain a permission number from department staff to enter when registering. Each department administers their own permission numbers, so classes in other departments may require numbers from their corresponding staff.

It is your responsibility to ensure that you are registered correctly and on time in advance of each quarter. Your quarterly stipends and health insurance are dependent on full-time status, therefore, if you do not register properly and with at least three credits you may have severe financial implications including loss of health insurance, charges for quarterly tuition, even violation of your visa status. Failure to register by the correct date will at minimum require a petition for late registration, which can be [accessed here](#) and requires the signature of the DGS and your advisor. Changes cannot be made after a quarter is completed.

Due to the serious consequences of registration errors, we recommend you a) monitor your Student Account information monthly for fees or charges that might indicate a problem with enrollment, and b) check CAESAR once mid-quarter and once prior to the end of quarter to make sure your enrollment matches your activities. Any questions or concerns should be directed to the G-PA.

For more information about CAESAR, registration, and university policies not detailed here, visit the [TGS website](#). Additional guidance can be found through [TGS Student Services](#).

Typical Course of Study

The specifics of registration according to year in the program are as follows:

First Year			
<u>Fall</u>	<u>Winter</u>	<u>Spring</u>	<u>Summer</u>
AH 401: Proseminar 2-3 additional units of coursework	AH 403: COSI or AH 402: Writing Seminar 2-3 additional units of coursework	3-4 units of coursework	AH 405 if offered & up to 3 units of AH 590 (or coursework)

- Coursework includes language study as necessary (bringing the total number of units to 4 when undergraduate language classes are taken).

Second Year

<u>Fall</u>	<u>Winter</u>	<u>Spring</u>	<u>Summer</u>
3-4 units of coursework	AH 403: COSI or AH 402: Writing Seminar 2-3 additional units of coursework	3-4 units of coursework	AH 405 if offered & up to 3 units of AH 590 (or coursework)

- Second-year students may wish to take an AH 499 with your advisor during the year (see above).
- Up to two AH 590s may be used over the course of the second year during the quarters you serve as a graduate student worker.
- Coursework includes language study as necessary.

Third Year

<u>Fall</u>	<u>Winter</u>	<u>Spring</u>	<u>Summer</u>
At least 2 AH 499 credits and 1 TGS 500	At least 2 AH 499 credits and 1 TGS 500	AH 406 Dissertation Prospectus Writing 2 units of TGS 500	3 units of TGS 500 (or coursework)

- Third-year students should take multiple AH 499s with your advisor and committee members during the year.
- TGS 500 can be used as necessary so that you have at least three credits each quarter.
- Coursework includes language study as necessary.

Fourth–Ninth Year

3 units of either TGS 500 or TGS 512 each quarter (see below)

Registration for TGS 500 or 512

In your fourth year and beyond, you may receive fellowship funding from non-departmental Northwestern sources (Block, Franke, Buffet, Paris Program, etc.) or from non-Northwestern sources (Met Lauder, Schiff, The Center, etc.). In these cases, you should be enrolled using TGS 500. If you are not funded by internal or external fellowship, you are considered “unfunded,” and you should enroll in TGS 512, which incurs a \$100 registration fee per quarter. Please see the “Registration

Decision Tree” in the appendix to determine which enrollment fits your situation. Questions can be directed to the G-PA.

Transfer Credit for Graduate Level Courses

After completing four quarters in good standing, you may petition your advisor to transfer up to three course credits of graduate coursework conducted at another university towards your PhD. After DGS approval, your advisor will determine which degree requirements these credits satisfy, if any. Transfer credits may not be used for any course within the four-part Critical Practices sequence.

To record any courses approved by your advisor and DGS, please forward an email of approval detailing the approved courses to the G-PA, who will add it to your GSP file under the Documents tab.

Graduate Interdisciplinary Cluster and Certificate Program

You are encouraged to participate in the Interdisciplinary Cluster Initiative, a program designed to foster connections between you and those in other programs with whom you might have natural intellectual affinities. Interdisciplinary clusters in different areas of intellectual inquiry have been developed by faculty across schools and programs and will provide a second intellectual home for incoming and current graduate students. Clusters offer their own discrete courses as well as sponsor corresponding programming. Students may apply to a cluster during admission to Northwestern, but you may affiliate with a cluster at any point during your study. More information can be found [here](#).

Pathway to the PhD Degree

The following section outlines the timeline of milestones designed to bring you successfully along the path to the PhD and prepare you for academic research and teaching, work in museums, and other careers in the visual arts.

Please note that Art History Department guidelines and qualifications may diverge from TGS. Please assume ours are correct unless TGS's regulations are more stringent. Our course of study and requirements are approved by TGS and set the standard for what is expected as you move to the PhD in Art History. To see the TGS requirements, see the TGS policy guide.

If, for any reason, you need to delay any of the following milestones, please petition the DGS in writing before the deadline.

Graduate Student Progress (GSP)

The department uses [GSP](#) to document your progress through the program. This is where you, your advisors, DGS, and department staff can monitor progress toward your degree. Usage guides can be found [here](#), if needed. Entering your milestones in GSP is required.

Milestones Timeline

First Year	Required Action	Deadlines
Selection of Primary Advisor	Enter in GSP on Advisers tab	By end of Spring
Demonstrate Foreign Language Proficiency	Provide DGS and G-PA with evidence of coursework or pass exam; G-PA enters into GSP	By end of Spring
End of Year Progress Report	Complete Smartsheet sent by staff	By end of Spring
First Year Meeting	Schedule with advisor (and DGS if desired); advisor will integrate comments in their response to your End of Year Progress Report	By end of Spring
Second Year		
Select Qualifying Exam Committee	Consult with advisor, update GSP on Committee tab	By end of Spring
Petition for MA (optional)	Consult with advisor; complete TGS Form on GSP	After Winter if in good standing
End of Year Progress Report	Complete Smartsheet sent by staff	By end of Spring
Second Year Meeting	Schedule with advisor; advisor will integrate comments in their response to your End of Year Progress Report	By end of Spring
Third Year		
Exam lists	Consult your advisor and exam committee to agree on draft lists	By first week of the related AH 499 or end fourth week of Fall

Qualifying Exam	Arrange date with advisor and committee: find exam room and communicate schedule; submit the Qualifying Exam petition in GSP on the Forms tab	By end of Winter
Select Dissertation Committee	Update in GSP on Committee tab	Fifth week of Winter
AH 406 Dissertation Prospectus Seminar	Register/Pass	Start of Spring
Dissertation Prospectus and Colloquium	Arrange date with advisor and committee: find exam room and communicate schedule; submit the PhD Prospectus petition in GSP on the Forms tab	By end of Spring
End of Year Progress Report	Complete Smartsheet sent by staff	By end of Spring
PhD Candidates		
Fifth Year Chapter	Submit to committee, notify G-PA	Before the end of Spring, fifth year
Submit dissertation to committee	Send dissertation to advisor and committee	No less than 4 weeks before defense date
Dissertation Defense	Submit PhD Application for Degree form in GSP; arrange defense date with advisor and committee; find exam room; submit the PhD Final Exam Form in GSP following defense; upload dissertation to ProQuest	At least one month before degree conferral—see more about form dates below

PhD Application for Degree form due through GSP Forms tab (please look for the “Application for Degree due...” on the [university academic calendar](#))...

...for Fall degree	Late October
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...for Winter degree	Late January
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...for Spring degree	Late February
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...for Summer degree	Early July
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Submission of Dissertation to TGS (Look for “Dissertation, PhD Final Exam, and change of grade forms due...” on the [university academic calendar](#))...

...for Fall degree	Mid November
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...for Winter degree	Late February
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...for Spring degree	Early May
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...for Summer degree	Mid August
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Milestone Requirements

Selecting the Primary Advisor

Typically, you will matriculate with an idea of who your advisor will be, as they are usually the expert in your field of study. After conversation with that individual and the DGS, declare your primary advisor through the Committee tab in GSP. This should be completed by the end of Spring during your first year.

First Year Spring Meeting

In late Spring of your first year, schedule a meeting with your advisor. You may include the DGS if you wish. In advance of this meeting, complete the department’s End of Year Annual Progress Survey which is typically circulated in April (see In-Program Feedback and Review section below for more information). In addition to the typical questions, you will be asked to provide:

- A polished seminar paper that you feel represents your best art history work in your first year.
- A set of questions you have about that paper, your writing, and how it might be improved.
- A one-page self-evaluation based on your learning experience in the first year that addresses your perceived strengths (this can include faculty comments you received on your papers) and areas for future development.

In your meeting, either remotely or in-person, you will discuss these materials and your future direction at Northwestern. If necessary, time is dedicated to discussing areas for improvement expected and specific steps to be undertaken during your second year to achieve such improvement. Your advisor will complete a brief report of the meeting through Smartsheet, which will be reviewed by the DGS. When complete, all this paperwork will be uploaded as a single document into GSP. You may enter comments about this summary in GSP after it's entered if you choose. The corresponding milestone is then marked "completed" in GSP.

Language Requirement

Languages in which you are to demonstrate proficiency are selected by you and your advisor in relation to your plan of study. Besides traditional languages, if related to your research, computer programming languages may also count. You must demonstrate proficiency in at least one foreign language relevant to your research project by the end of Spring in your first year. For some students, proficiency in a second language is also required and must be completed by the end of Spring in your third year. In some circumstances, such as in Medieval Studies, additional language competency may be required after the third year. A discussion of any additional required language training beyond the departmental requirement is a required component of the first-year meeting.

In some cases, with justification, you may petition the DGS for permission to postpone demonstration of foreign language proficiency until September of the following year.

Language proficiency can be demonstrated in the following ways (and in all cases email approval from the DGS must be sent to the G-PA to be recorded in GSP):

1. You may submit evidence to the DGS that you have passed a language examination while in a graduate program at another institution within two years prior to admission to the graduate program at Northwestern.
2. You may submit evidence to the DGS that you have taken the equivalent of two years of college credit in a foreign language at the undergraduate level, with a grade of B or better, within two years prior to entrance into the graduate program at Northwestern.
3. During your matriculation in the program, you may enroll in standard college-

- level language classes at Northwestern or other institutions (including summer programs) until you complete or test out of a second year of study at Northwestern (see number five below). In all cases, you must earn an average grade of B or better in these courses across two years, and your advisors must agree that their language skills are sufficient for dissertation research.
4. With the consent of the advisor, if your native language is not English, you may petition the DGS for permission to use your native language to pass out of the language requirement, but only in cases where that language will be a primary research language for the dissertation.
 5. In cases where you enter the program with prior experience in a language that does not conform to any of the above requirements, but that you believe is the equivalent of two years of college study or better, or in cases where you take graduate-level translation courses or summer language programs that do not conform to standard US college level equivalents, you should take the online [Northwestern language placement exam](#) to assess your level. This online exam can be taken at any time as coordinated by the relevant language department. You must perform sufficiently well on this exam to test out of the Weinberg undergraduate foreign language requirement (equivalent to two years of study). If you do, the online exam may be followed up by a short translation or interview exam administered by the language department. Procedures vary by [department](#).
 6. In some very rare cases, as, for example, when a language is not taught at Northwestern, but a faculty member is proficient or when a specific translation skill is necessary (perhaps paleography), a departmental foreign language examination can be administered. This is a supervised, written exam in which you are required to translate and/or summarize two passages. The passages used for the examinations are passages of an art historical, literary, or critical nature, and represent a level of difficulty expected in most languages by the end of a second year of study of the language. Dictionaries may be used. If you don't pass an exam, you may retake it. If this path is desired, please confirm with your advisor and the DGS about scheduling. Occasionally it may be possible to arrange for a translation exam by a colleague in another department or institution.

Qualifying Examination (QE)

Exam Committee

The QE is administered by a three-person committee chosen by you in consultation with your advisor and agreed to by relevant faculty. Two members of the committee must be full-time Northwestern art history faculty (or TGS faculty, as may happen if a faculty member leaves Northwestern) and at least one member must be tenured. Normally, exam committees are composed exclusively of Northwestern faculty members, but in exceptional circumstances related to field-specific needs and with approval from the advisor, you may petition the DGS to include an outside member as your third examiner. By the end of Spring in the second year, all selected committee members should agree to serve on your committee, and you will submit their names through the Committee tab on GSP.

Exam Fields

Each member of your exam committee oversees one field of the exam according to the following categories:

- The Major or Teaching Field, developed in consultation with you and your advisor (see Curriculum for more information about this Field). This list is usually more or less consistent within the field.
- The Concentration or Research Field, which is within the Major or Teaching Field. Normally, this is the area of the dissertation and is developed by you in consultation with your advisor and examiner. It may therefore be a theoretical model, a precise historical moment, a genre of production, or even an individual artist. Since this is the area from which the dissertation develops, the reading list is constructed with an eye to the formulation of a viable prospectus.
- The Secondary field is complementary to the Major field or a method or theory topic of use to the dissertation. This field is developed by you in consultation with your examiner and advisor.

Exam lists must be established and approved, at least in draft, by the examiner no later than the fourth week of Fall in your third year or the first week of the related AH 499.

The length of the exam lists varies by field, but generally, bibliographies for the Major or Teaching Field include around 50 titles (a combination of books and

articles). Lists for the Concentration or Research Field and the Secondary or Thematic Field are subject to more variation depending on individual needs, but on average include about 25 titles each.

If helpful, exam lists might also be thought of as potential bibliographies for teaching a class, the first an introductory, comprehensive survey course and the latter two smaller, focused seminars. Examples of exam lists from the department can be made available to you by your examiner, pending permission from the examinee whose list they share.

Exam Formats

The department offers two tracks for the PhD Qualifying Exam, both of which include written and oral components. The exams shall be completed by the end of Winter quarter in the third year. The format of the exam is flexible to meet the needs of different students and fields. A successful exam demonstrates your familiarity and ability to think with, and sometimes against, key texts in your fields. For both tracks preparation will include regular meetings with the examiner in independent studies and, typically, an extensive amount of writing in the form of précis of each text on the bibliographies.

Track 1: Oral Exam

You may choose to take a traditional three-hour oral qualifying exam, which takes place at the end of Winter quarter. For oral exams, each faculty member administers their exam section differently, but usually, it is a slide- and conversation-based, question-and-answer exam related to the readings you have done prior to the exam. The exam is meant to demonstrate your deep understanding of the field bibliography and familiarity with the visual/textual materials at hand. Although some faculty may show you images you have not previously seen, you should not expect to be examined on things you have not read for the exam. Most examiners offer a practice exam before the official qualifying exam or at the end of the relevant independent study. For oral exams, the Major or Teaching Field exam is allocated 45 minutes, and the other two fields are allocated 30 minutes each.

In the rare event that you fail all or a portion of your oral exam, you will take a written make-up exam in the specified field(s), following the format of written exams outlined below under Track 2. All three examiners will read and evaluate any written retake exams and will determine whether a follow-up oral conversation is necessary.

Track 2: Written Exams with Follow-up Oral Conversation

In this track, you can schedule your written field exams either all at once toward the end of Winter quarter or you have the flexibility to choose to schedule them at separate points over the Fall and Winter quarters. Either way, written field exams must all be completed two weeks before the end of Winter quarter. This will allow for the required follow-up oral conversation with all three examiners (80 minutes) to occur by the end of the Winter quarter. All three examiners will read all three written exams in order to foster a synthetic discussion of the combined fields and give you the opportunity to answer to your written work. This also offers you an opportunity to redress any deficiencies in the written exams. Examiners will offer you an evaluation of the written exam in a timely manner and in advance of the follow-up conversation. The discussion will likely include slides.

The written portion of each exam field might include different writing formats, such as an essay, short answers, or a practical exercise (syllabus, conference proposal, etc.). All writing formats will require discussion of examples of specific objects or works. The combined written components for each field exam should total around 3500-4500 words (approximately 12-15 pages, 12-pt font, double-spaced). Each section is a take-home, open-book exam, emailed by the field examiner (cc'd to the DGS) at an appointed time and date, to be returned three days (72 hours) later (also cc'd to the DGS). If an exam is not submitted by the deadline, it may be disqualified and the student risks failing the field exam.

In the rare event that you fail all or a portion of their written exam, you may be presented with three options, depending on the recommendation of the qualifying exam committee: 1) Compensate for the quality of the written portion in the follow-up oral conversation. If the committee determines that the oral component makes up for the deficiencies in the written component, the committee may pass you. 2) Rewrite a portion of the exam. The committee, in consultation with the advisor and the DGS, will specify which portion of the exam is to be rewritten, how much time you have to rewrite the exam, and how the rewrite will be evaluated. 3) Rewrite the entire exam. In instances in which you fail the written component, and the follow-up oral component does not compensate for the deficiencies of the written component, the committee may ask you to rewrite the entire exam. If this happens, the committee, in consultation with the advisor and the DGS, will specify the timetable for the rewrite.

Both Track 1 and Track 2

You are responsible for scheduling the oral component of your qualifying exams with your advisor and committee, which may include coordinating a room or remote meeting. If you have any questions about this, you can reach out to department staff. After oral parts of the exam are administered, you are excused

from the exam while the committee deliberates. You then rejoin the committee and discuss the results of the exam, including strengths and areas for future development. You may pass the exam with honors or without. Following your successful exam, please complete the PhD Qualifying Exam form on the Forms Tab in GSP.

In the event that a student fails parts of the oral or written portions of exams in either Track 1 or 2, they must complete any required rewrites and pass the qualifying exam before the conclusion of the next term. In the very rare circumstance that required rewrites are deemed unsatisfactory and the qualifying exam is ultimately not passed, then the student is found to be making unsatisfactory progress and is excluded from the program. Appeals of exclusion decisions may be directed to the Graduate School.

Dissertation Prospectus

The dissertation is the final requirement for the PhD and is intended to represent a substantive contribution to the field based on your original research and analysis. It is supervised by your advisor with input from the other members of your dissertation committee. Your Dissertation Prospectus puts forth your dissertation project for committee approval.

Dissertation Committee

The dissertation is administered by a three-person (or occasionally a four- or five-person) committee chosen by you, confirmed by your advisor, and entered into GSP on the Committee tab no later than the fifth week of Fall in your third year. The Dissertation Committee is not necessarily the same as the Exam Committee, although that is most often the case.

Two members of the committee must be full-time Northwestern art history faculty (or TGS faculty, as may happen if a faculty member leaves Northwestern) and at least two members must be tenured. Normally, exam committees are composed exclusively of Northwestern faculty members, but in certain circumstances external expertise is necessary and, with approval from your advisor, you may petition the DGS to include a non-Northwestern faculty as your third or fourth committee member.

Dissertation Prospectus Format

In Spring of your third year, after passing your qualifying exam and confirming your dissertation committee, you will write a Dissertation Prospectus of about ten pages (and no more than fifteen) plus bibliography and illustrations. The

Prospectus is written in close consultation with your advisor, usually during a Spring independent study, and is refined in AH 406 Dissertation Prospectus. The prospectus should include:

- An overview of the project and primary objects/historical context, the principal questions that motivate the project, a clear statement of the project's argument, and the stakes thereof
- Brief chapter outlines or principal components of the argument including methodology/ies
- A purposeful account of the "state of the field" (often called the "lit review")
- A research plan
- A substantial bibliography indicating the primary and secondary sources necessary for conducting research on the topic

It is not expected that your Prospectus will be finalized for the Prospectus Colloquium; rather it should represent a coherent and well-articulated dissertation project that satisfies the above criteria. Examples of the Prospectus may be available through your advisor or can be requested through the G-PA.

Dissertation Prospectus Colloquium

Normally the Dissertation Prospectus Colloquium will take place at the end of your third year. You will present your Prospectus in a colloquium with all committee members present. The circa ten-page document must be distributed at least one week prior to the colloquium to give the committee enough time to read it carefully.

At the conclusion of your Prospectus Colloquium, your committee will let you know if your Prospectus is approved, along with required emendations or suggestions for future iterations. If you have met all other degree requirements up to this point, you will be considered ABD and advanced to candidacy.

You are responsible for scheduling your Prospectus Colloquium with your advisor and committee, which may include coordinating a room or remote meeting. If you have any questions about this, you can reach out to department staff. Following your successful colloquium, please complete the PhD Prospectus form on the Forms Tab in GSP.

In exceptional cases, when requested in advance of this milestone deadline, you may ask your advisor and DGS to postpone your Prospectus Colloquium until your fourth year. If approved, this does not postpone TGS requirements, which stipulate that you be ABD by the end of the fourth year or dismissed. Please be aware that if you somehow neglect to secure written approval for an extension, and if you do not complete and pass this milestone and your qualifying exam by the end of Spring quarter in your third year, you will be placed on probation, which must be remedied within two quarters as per the rules on good standing below.

Fifth Year Chapter

Before the end of Spring in your fifth year, you are expected to complete and circulate to your committee a draft chapter of your dissertation (some advisors ask to review the chapter in advance). The chapter should not be an introduction to the dissertation project as a whole. Although it should be tightly argued and include proper citations, it is not immutable: after further research and writing, the vetted version is likely to change within the context of the final dissertation. The provisional chapter draft is intended to facilitate a check-in with the committee so that its members can assess progress toward the degree and write strong letters of recommendation for fellowships. It also ensures that written feedback is not left to the final stages of the dissertation.

The chapter is not awarded a pass/not pass grade, nor does it need to be “defended” in a meeting with the committee. Instead, the chapter is vetted by your committee members who give written feedback no later than eight weeks after submission. Should you not receive feedback in this timeframe, you are encouraged to consult the DGS or, if necessary, the Chair.

Once you have submitted your Fifth Year Chapter to your committee, alert the G-PA to update your milestones in GSP.

Dissertation Defense and Awarding of PhD

The dissertation must be, at minimum, 50,000 words and 3 chapters, not including an introduction and, typically, a conclusion. When you and your advisor agree that the dissertation is ready, it is presented and discussed with your committee at an open oral defense. Typically, this is before the end of the seventh year; TGS requires defense before the ninth year. If you do not meet TGS’s limit on time to degree, you are placed on probation for two quarters, after which, if you have not submitted your dissertation or applied for an extension of the probationary period, you are

dismissed by TGS.

In preparation for the defense and eventual deposit of your dissertation, you must complete the following:

- Circulate the complete and carefully proofread dissertation to the entire dissertation committee at least three to four weeks before the defense is scheduled. Be sure to confirm this timeline with your committee, as faculty members have their own expectations. You must review TGS degree/deposit timelines and work with your advisor to ensure you have planned enough time to defend and revise as necessary to graduate in the quarter of your choosing. This may also take several weeks: minor to moderate revisions are a very common result of a successful dissertation defense and may require approval by the full committee or your advisor before final upload.
- Coordinate a defense time with your committee, allowing two hours minimum, and either reserve a room or set up a remote meeting for that time. Questions can be directed to G-PA. Discuss with your advisor whether a brief presentation will be expected at the beginning of the defense.
- Faculty from outside your committee can elect to join your defense as members of the audience, although they do not normally ask questions unless invited to do so. Therefore, three weeks prior to your defense, you must alert the G-PA to share your defense date and location. You may also choose to hold an open defense where other graduate students, friends, or faculty are invited to join the audience.
- Complete the Application for Degree form on the Forms tab in GSP. Deadlines change by year and quarter and can be found on the [academic calendar](#). More information can be found [here](#).
- Double-check your unofficial transcript in GSP to make sure you don't have any incomplete grades. Work with TGS Student Services to resolve any unreported grades.
- At least one day prior to your defense, execute a tech or Zoom check with remote participants.
- At least 30 minutes prior to your defense, arrive and execute a second tech check.
- After your successful defense and/or final approval from your advisor for any revisions, submit the PhD Final Exam Form under the Forms tab in GSP.
- Deposit your dissertation in ProQuest, following the [TGS preparation guidelines](#), or apply for an embargo as outlined [here](#).

Finishing Guidelines

After you graduate, you have the option to retain your @u.northwestern.edu email account indefinitely or replace it with an alumni account, but your NetID will expire approximately 148 days after graduation. You will receive an email from NUIT when your NetID is nearing expiration. More information about using your @u.northwestern.edu email after graduation can be found [here](#).

If you need access to tax forms and/or paystubs after your NetID expires, email askhr@northwestern.edu for assistance.

In-Program Feedback and Reviews

Seminar Feedback

Seminars are the bulwark of your PhD study, and arguably the most important work you do other than your dissertation. In seminars, you read assigned texts related to a specific subject and discuss them, in depth and with precision, in a three-hour format. Best results come when you are prepared, having carefully read the assigned materials, and when you participate in class discussion. Ideally, you are also learning to model pedagogy from your professors. Each faculty member should assign course and learning objectives in their syllabus, and you should make sure to understand what the expectations of you are in each case. Workload varies across classes, but it is not unheard of for a professor to expect anywhere from five to ten hours of reading a week. Most seminars conclude with research papers, which you should be sure to consider as the course develops rather than waiting for the end. Seminars are meant to help familiarize you with specific materials, but also to teach you the skills of critical reading and analysis, as well as confident speaking and dialogue. Other professional skills (conference papers, abstract writing) are sometimes also addressed.

In 2021, the Department updated its graduate student seminar review process. This is an outline of “best practice” and what you might expect:

- 1) Each class should begin with an “intake” survey during the first week of class. This is usually in written form and means to ascertain your interests, learning goals, strengths, and weaknesses relevant for you and your faculty instructor to know.
- 2) Syllabi should include clear learning objectives that faculty will discuss during the first week(s) of the quarter (i.e., if it is expected that the final paper refers to course materials, that should be stated).
- 3) Each faculty should set up meetings for a mid-term check-in with you about your progress relative to your original intake surveys and to discuss any final paper requirements.
- 4) Faculty are expected to provide extensive written feedback on written work, especially the final paper (or presentation), before the start of the following quarter (i.e., within two weeks). If this timeline is not met, the DGS can advocate on your behalf.
- 5) This feedback should include a holistic explanation of the grade that ideally responds to original intake information, including self-learning goals and/or stated learning objectives of the course.
- 6) If there is a concern about the comments/grade, you are encouraged to speak with the faculty instructor and advisor. In all cases, the DGS is also available, and advisors should be sure to let the DGS know if there are any problems.

Teaching Feedback

Whenever you serve as a TA, it is expected that the faculty of record sit in on your section or read a selection of your paper comments in order to give you written or oral feedback regarding areas of strength and areas of potential growth and development. Normally, faculty instructors hold weekly TA meetings to talk about teaching expectations and grading, and faculty working with Readers should have detailed instructions and rubrics about grading. For additional information, expectations, guidelines, and resources, please see the department's [Graduate Student Teaching Guide](#), which is online. Concerns should be brought to the DGS and/or Chair.

End of the Year Progress Survey and Report

TGS mandates that the DGS review all student progress at the end of the year, and

submit that review in GSP, where it can be consulted by the DGS, Chair, your advisor, and, as necessary, the department staff. To do this, each year in mid-May department staff will send out the End of the Year Progress Survey, which you are asked to fill out in its entirety. Questions include a self-evaluation including your progress to degree, plan for the following year, and comments you received on your papers; reporting on the year's activities includes secured external fellowships and grants, publications, and participation in conferences and performances. ABD students will be prompted to complete additional questions about dissertation progress in the survey. First- and second-year students will meet with their advisors and present a representative piece of writing (see First Year Spring Meeting, outlined above).

After you complete the survey, it is reviewed by the DGS and your advisor, who may add comments. Then it is uploaded to GSP, typically in mid-August, where you can add any additional comments if you choose. If progress has not been satisfactory, the DGS will note this and detail the timeline required to remediate.

Good Standing

Continued advancement in the program is based on maintaining “good standing.” With proper consultation with your advisor, the DGS, and timely completion of your milestones you will retain good standing. In your first three years, please meet quarterly with your advisor to review your curricular progress. Please come prepared for those meetings with the “DGS_Advising_Report,” available online under Resources for Current Students and the end of this handbook. This document helps assure that you are meeting your curricular requirements and milestones. Students in their fourth year and beyond are similarly expected to meet at least annually with their advisor (see “Advising” above).

Good Standing in the Department

Good standing in the department requires:

- Both a cumulative and quarterly GPA of 3.5 (between a B+ and an A-), excluding undergraduate language courses (cumulative GPA including language courses must be 3.0 or higher).
- Timely and successful completion of all milestones or properly requested extensions.
- No more than one incomplete grade (Y or NR) on your record per quarter.

- Each incomplete grade resolved by the end of the following quarter including Summer (leave quarters are an exception) or properly requested exception.
- Evidence of incorporating feedback and suggestions for improvement.

ABD candidates maintain good standing by continuing to meet requirements like the Fifth Year Chapter and making steady dissertation progress, as determined by your advisor and DGS.

If, at any point, you are not in good standing, you will be put on academic probation. You will receive notification from the department and meet with the DGS and your advisor to determine remedies. The DGS will notify you through GSP that you are not in good standing and inform TGS. You must re-establish good standing within two quarters (not including Summer) in order not to be dismissed from the program. Your progress toward remediation will be reviewed by the DGS quarterly. Failure to make satisfactory progress may result in a second quarter of probation or, after that, dismissal.

Probation

Although our program and milestones have been established to encourage the best possible outcomes, in rare cases students may find themselves facing academic probation, which can be determined by either the department or TGS. Department guidelines and qualifications may diverge from TGS, but in most cases the department guidelines are more stringent. However, should you request postponement of a department milestone, department permission does not excuse you from TGS requirements. Should you not meet TGS requirements, you will be placed on academic probation by TGS, which the department cannot override. Consult [here](#) should you have any questions. Failure to make satisfactory progress may result in probation or, ultimately, dismissal.

Grounds for Dismissal

Students who cannot re-establish good academic standing during the two probationary quarters will become ineligible to receive funding and be dismissed from the department and TGS. Grounds for dismissal include, but are not limited to:

- Being on academic probation for more than two consecutive quarters.
- Failing to pass required departmental milestones within two quarters of their due date.
- Failing the QE and subsequent written version.
- Failure to make satisfactory progress toward completion of the dissertation,

including submission of the Fifth Year Chapter.

- Failing to adhere to TGS policies including those about registration, necessary medical qualifications, working off-campus without approval of a TGS Permission to Work form, academic integrity, or equitable behavior.

Following TGS regulations, within five business days of the determination of dismissal, you will be informed in writing through GSP, including the effective date of the exclusion and a clear statement of the reasons for dismissal. For more information, see the TGS webpage [here](#).

Appeal Process

If you have been dismissed or excluded from the program, you may appeal by writing to the Dean of TGS within ten days of the dismissal or exclusion date. Any supporting materials must be provided with the written appeal.

While the department makes its own rules about academic standing, milestones, and other expectations, we defer to TGS with regards to matters and procedures of exclusion.

Teaching and Other Professional Development

Graduate Student Workers

Every graduate student admitted to the department on a full funding package is required to serve time as a graduate student worker for the department.

WCAS Graduate Student Workers (GSWs) on TGS funding normally teach or TA a minimum of 6 quarters during their first five years, typically in years 2, 3 and 4. GSWs may also serve as a Research Assistant (RA) or a Graduate Assistant (GA), but this is rare in the Art History Department. After your first year, as needed by the Department, you will be expected to serve as a TA for two out of three quarters per year when you are on university funding, including advanced student quarters (see “Your Funding Package” below). TA assignments are dependent upon departmental resources and commitments to undergraduate teaching. In rare circumstances, you may petition the DGS to be released from your TA role; such releases require advisor approval and substantive scholarly reasons, and ultimately

depends on department needs and resources.

For a more thorough overview of these positions, their assignment, expectations, guidelines, and related resources, please see the “Graduate Student Worker Guide.” The guide, which is always “in progress” and subject to revision is available on the department website at Graduate>Resources for Current Students>Teaching and Writing Resources.

TA Matrix

At the end of Winter quarter, the G-PA will issue a survey regarding your teaching and funding schedule for the following year. The form asks you to rank your teaching and other TA priorities for the entirety of the following year. You must do this in consultation with your advisor, who is required to sign off on your selections, which should correspond to your individual pedagogical and professional development needs.

Steered by the DGS, the Curriculum Committee assigns teaching responsibilities based on your preferences. Barring any delays, your teaching assignments will be shared by the G-PA by late June, though they remain subject to change. Please note that TA sections are typically held Friday mornings and that you are expected to be available to lead sections at that time.

TAs and Taxes

You will be taxed differently each quarter depending on whether you are a TA or not. In the quarters where you are not a TA, GA, or RA, you are considered on university fellowship. Information about how this affects the amount that is withheld from your stipend payment can be found [here](#).

In the August prior to each academic year, the G-PA enters your funding quarter-by-quarter, based on the results of the TA Matrix. Therefore, if there are any changes to the quarter in which you will be a TA after the academic year starts, you must alert the G-PA as soon as possible.

TA Training

At the beginning of every academic school year, the Department holds a TA orientation, led by advanced graduate students. This is required for all first-time TAs and strongly recommended for all others.

TGS and the [Searle Center for Advanced Teaching and Learning](#) offer teaching training, certificate programs, fellowships, and other learning opportunities for graduate student educators.

Other Northwestern Teaching Opportunities

Graduate Student Primary Instructors

Stand-alone teaching opportunities where you serve as instructor of record for a class of your own design are available to advanced students by application in response to a Department call for application, through the Kaplan Humanities Institute Franke Fellowship, and a number of other initiatives. These are great opportunities, and you are encouraged to apply.

Since these opportunities impact department course offerings and resources, your application needs advisor approval. With approval, please notify the DGS and the G-PA of your application by the end of February. Since the announcement of these fellowships comes after university course planning is due to the administration, this communication is essential for the department to have contingencies in place, should you receive one of these fellowships in late Spring.

If you receive one of these fellowships, you must alert the DGS and G-PA immediately. Again, this is so the department can make appropriate accommodations, such as adjusting the annual course schedule, TA assignments, and other related administrative work. Courses offered through these fellowships can be cross listed with the department, but we may ask for seat restrictions in consideration of department enrollments (i.e. we may ask that a certain number of seats are retained for art history students).

Under regular funding or advanced student quarters (or on rare occasions outside of this funding structure), advanced students may also be able to apply to teach a standalone class in lieu of serving as a TA. These opportunities will be offered in a call for proposals sent out in Winter quarter. Based on department needs, additional opportunities may arise after the course-planning period, in which case the department may make direct offers to ABD or recent PhD recipients based on a consideration of factors such as current funding/employment, content which needs covering, whether the teaching opportunity would interfere with the student's timeline to degree, and previously secured department teaching/fellowship opportunities.

Work Outside the Department

If you wish to work for pay while on university funding, you must seek the approval of your advisor, the DGS, and TGS. See the TGS [website](#) for forms and procedures. Please note that TGS limits the amount of work you can do to 20 hours a week including your departmental TA requirements. Failure to comply with TGS procedure risks losing your funding, placing you on probation or, if you are found willfully negligent, eligible for program dismissal.

Permission to Work Form

As outlined on the TGS website linked above, if you plan to work in addition to your departmental TA duties, and your work meets at least one of these qualifications, you need to complete a [Permission to Work form](#) before you take on the work:

1. Your service exceeds 10 hours/week.
2. Your period of service exceeds one month.
3. Your total compensation will be greater than or equal to \$600.

This includes extra research assistant work within the Department and without, teaching at other institutions, serving as the graduate student representatives or social chair, employment at the Writing Center or other NU programs, and any other service that meets the qualifications above. Your work will be considered in total, so that all your work combined cannot exceed 20 hours per week.

It is important you follow these guidelines when completing the form:

- In all cases, where the form asks for “Program/department contact (person responsible for submitting for payment)” please enter the G-PA’s name and email address.
- Where the form asks for the Chair or DGS approval, please enter the DGS unless your advisor is currently the DGS. In this case, please add the Chair.

When you receive an email confirming your work has been approved, please make sure that the G-PA adds a copy of the form to your GSP file under the Documents tab. As a reminder, failure to comply with TGS procedure about additional risks losing your funding, placing you on probation or, if you are found willfully negligent, eligible for program dismissal.

Department Professional Development Programs

As a part of your professional training as an art historian, you are expected to attend department-organized conferences, lectures, and job talks; participate in graduate professional development workshops organized by the Practica Organizer; and attend the few required training workshops led by department staff (for things like GSP, submitting an expense report, etc.).

TGS Professional Development Programs

TGS offers research support services, international programs, fellowships, and grants to current graduate students. More information can be found [here](#).

Outside Professional Development Programs

You are encouraged to develop a scholarly profile by attending and/or speaking at conferences and by publishing your work. Most students join the College Art Association and/or subfield associations, as suggested by their advisor (this is a good use of department grant monies). Around the time you become ABD, it's recommended that you discuss with your advisor what timing makes sense for you to explore publishing in scholarly journals.

Department Graduate Student Representatives

Two graduate students serve as department graduate student representatives (grad reps). Typically, one second-year student is elected by their peers each year. Terms are two years so that at any given time there is a grad rep with a year of experience serving as graduate representative.

Both grad reps are responsible for attending all department meetings. Time is set aside each meeting for a report from the grad reps where they can raise concerns, share news, or make other announcements to the faculty. Reps take notes on the meeting's proceedings and share these notes monthly with their fellow graduate students. Similarly, they organize monthly graduate-student-only town halls and share notes from those meetings with the DGS and during monthly department meetings. Grad reps are given admin access to the graduate student listserv to assist in this communication. Reps also serve on the Committee on Lectures and Events, which meets monthly, to ensure graduate student interests are represented

in department events. Each year, they either assist in coordinating the graduate student lecture series, where local scholars are invited to campus to present their work, or the Myers Graduate Student Symposium. Other duties include occasionally soliciting feedback on particular topics from their fellow graduate students and presenting this feedback to faculty and assisting department staff in finding event dates that work for graduate schedules.

Graduate student representatives are paid a \$1200 annual stipend for this labor.

Department Graduate Social Chair

The social chair position was instated in Spring 2024 and is intended to increase comradery among students and build community within the program.

The social chair's responsibilities are as follows:

- Organize three to four on- and off-campus events to support graduate student relations within the department.
- Collaborate with various department social chairs at Northwestern and organizations in Chicago.
- Produce a calendar of events for graduate students in art history each quarter and circulate knowledge of informal and impromptu off-campus events and opportunities for students to engage with peers.
- Attend faculty meetings at the beginning and end of each quarter to share updates on upcoming and past events.
- Obligatory attendance at planned events.
- Producing documentation of events after execution.
- Maintaining connections with ABD candidates when possible.
- Attend bi-weekly meetings to plan events.

The social chair is paid a \$100 stipend per quarter for this labor, pending availability in the budget.

Tuition and Stipend Funding

Your Funding Package

The terms of your funding package, currently twenty quarters (typically five years

and five summers), are outlaid in your offer of admission. You are not guaranteed any funding beyond your original five-year package. For more information about TGS funding, see [here](#) and [here](#).

Banking Quarters

In your first five years, non-department Northwestern fellowships (i.e. COSI, Paris Program, Block, Franke) and external fellowships may be used in lieu of your allotted twenty quarters of funding. This allows you to bank quarters for use in your sixth year to the number of quarters your fellowship covered (typically this is three to four quarters). You are not allowed to bank more than four quarters. Banked quarters come with full benefits.

Advanced Student Quarters (ASQs)

When possible, the university makes additional quarters of funding available for advanced students, called ASQs. The allocation of these quarters is determined by the DGS and G-PA with an eye to equity and individual needs/circumstances but is ultimately approved by TGS. The DGS along with the G-PA oversees this process to ensure transparency, equity, and the proper communication across university channels. The availability and competitiveness of these quarters cannot be predicted from year to year, and students are advised not to count on receiving them. Currently, these can only be given to students through their sixth year.

Leaves of Absence

Northwestern subsidizes several varieties of paid graduate student leaves, including family leave and sick leave. These are determined by TGS and not by the department. Students are required to submit for a leave by completing the Petition for Absence form on the Forms tab in GSP. More information about the procedure can be found [here](#) for family leave and parental accommodations, or [here](#) for all other leaves.

All leaves of absence are subject to privacy regulations, and your leave status is not shared broadly. You are responsible, however, for letting the Department and/or your funding provider know that you are taking leave. Please see the DGS or the G-PA if you have questions.

Northwestern Community Resources

Conflict Resolution

The Graduate School provides guidance for avoiding faculty-student conflicts on their webpage [Dealing with Student-Faculty Conflict](#), which provides guidance for avoiding and resolving conflicts, with potential courses of action open to faculty and students within TGS and Weinberg. Grievances that cannot be resolved between individual members of the department should be brought to the DGS or Chair. You are also encouraged to reach out to the [Associate Dean of Student Affairs in TGS](#)

In 2021, Northwestern hired its first [Ombudsperson](#), who is a legally impartial and confidential resource for conflict resolution and enquiry available to students and faculty.

Graduate Student Advocacy

Northwestern University Graduate Workers (NUGW), UE Local 1122

In 2023, Northwestern graduate students voted in favor of union representation by the United Electrical, Radio and Machine Workers of America (UE). Accordingly, the University and NUGW-UE engaged in negotiations from Spring 2023 to Spring 2024 over the terms of an initial collective bargaining agreement (CBA). The CBA was ratified by NUGW-UE membership on March 15th, 2024, and is in effect until March 31, 2027. More information about the union can be found [here](#).

When providing research or instructional services for the University as defined in the CBA, you will be considered part of the bargaining unit and covered by the terms and protections of any applicable CBA. When you are in the bargaining unit, the payment of either union membership dues or agency fees is a condition of employment. Membership information can be found on the [NUGW-UE Local 1122's website](#). For answers to frequently asked questions regarding Northwestern's

graduate student union, you may refer to [NUGW-UE Local 1122's website](#) where you can find general information and contact information for your local union stewards. You can also refer to the University's Graduate Student Unionization [website](#). The department graduate union organizers can connect workers with a local steward.

Support Services

TGS Support Services

TGS offers [innumerable resources](#) to support your graduate experience, ranging from family to legal support, local transport fee waivers, and so forth. In particular, TGS offers [health and wellness support](#) which includes access to urgent care, patient advocacy coordinators, counseling and mental health resources.

Nondiscrimination Statement by Northwestern

Northwestern University's non-discrimination statement can be found [here](#).

Appendix

Registration Decision Making

which course do I use to top up to full-time status?

ART HISTORY

