Theory and Criticism Graduate Program

Contact

Director: Associate Professor Doug Collins (dcollins@u.washington.edu)

Introduction

This is a joint-doctoral program with ten participating doctoral programs (Asian Languages and Literature; Classics; Comparative Literature; Drama; English; Germanics; Romance Languages and Literature; Scandinavian Languages and Literature; Slavic Languages and Literature; and Communication). The Program combines the doctoral program in one of the participating departments with an additional set of courses in theory and criticism in an integrated course of study. The purpose is to broaden a student's perspective and to increase awareness of different critical approaches to literary and cultural studies. Study in this program leads to a Ph.D. in the respective field and Theory and Criticism.

Application

Before being eligible for the Program in Theory and Criticism, applicants must have been admitted to one of the participating departments and have received a Master's degree in a subject represented by these departments or in a related field.

Students applying from outside the university to a participating department must be in residence for two quarters at the University of Washington before admission to the program. However, they should make their intention known to the director upon arrival or earlier.

The minimum grade point requirement for entrance is 3.7. The applicant should submit a letter of recommendation from a faculty member acquainted with his or her work in a course in theory, unofficial transcripts, and a one-page statement of purpose.

Degree Requirements

- Continued satisfactory work in the student's home department
- Maintenance of satisfactory progress toward the degree with a minimum GPA of 3.7
- Completion of 7 graduate courses from the Program in Theory and Criticism, including at least one course on 20th century theory and criticism and one course on pre-20th century theory and criticism. Courses taken may count both towards program requirements and towards requirements of the student's home department
- Reading knowledge of two languages other than English, ancient or modern
- Passage of the written and oral Ph.D. examinations in the student's home department. The examining committee should have 2 faculty members from the Program in Theory and Criticism
- Acceptance of the dissertation prospectus by the dissertation committee, which should have 2 faculty members from the Program in Theory and Criticism
- Submission of a Ph.D. dissertation to the dissertation committee and passage of an oral defense of the dissertation

Transfer Credit
Courses in theory and criticism from other UW departments and from other institutions will be evaluated by the director and program faculty to determine whether they may be accepted towards program coursework requirements.

Dissertation Prospectuses

The prospectus for a dissertation in theory and criticism should follow the guidelines set forth by the student’s home department. The prospectus is either a chapter-by-chapter proposal or a general statement setting forth the questions to be addressed in the dissertation. A bibliography of works to be consulted is usually appended. Prospectuses range from 10 to 20 pages in length. The prospectus should emphasize the orientation to theory and criticism of the dissertation. The term “theory and criticism” is employed here in the broad sense of inquiry into the grounds of practices in literary and related humanistic studies.

The prospectus should be presented to the student’s dissertation committee shortly after completion of the oral examination. The committee chair may call a meeting of the committee and the candidate to discuss the prospectus.

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Source URL: https://complit.washington.edu/theory-and-criticism-graduate-program