

Graduate Student Handbook (for students in German)
Department of Germanic Languages
Columbia University
July 2023

1. Coursework

Students must complete a total of 54 credit points, (at least) 36 for E credit (= full participation) and (up to) 18 for R credit (= active participation but usually no written work is required). The regular coursework expectation is that students take four courses per semester in their first year (not counting any language study, but including the rewrite colloquium, see below), and three courses per semester in their second year (while teaching). This should allow for a significantly reduced course load in year three, during which students prepare for the M.Phil. exam. [The Graduate Student Progress Form can be found here.](#)

a. Courses to be taken for the M.A. exam

To qualify for the M.A. exam, students must complete 30 credit points, (at least) 18 for E credit and (up to) 12 for R credit. At least 18 credit points must be taken within the department. (In exceptional circumstances, substitutions of courses from other departments or from the Inter-University Doctoral Consortium may be approved by the DGS or advisor.) Depending on the student's previous preparation in German Studies and interests, the DGS may recommend a higher number of courses within the department. The department intends to offer a survey course on the 4000 level, which will help students prepare for the M.A. exam. Students have to write seminar papers (in German or English) for three of the courses taken for E credit. Two papers should be written in the student's non-native language. The remaining E-credit requirements can be met through various shorter paper formats (including conference-style papers or mock grant applications) or take-home exams (per course syllabi or instructor permission). Students must also rewrite one seminar paper for the M.A. (see below).

b. Courses to be taken for the M.Phil. exam

To qualify for the M.Phil. exam, students must complete 24 additional credit points, (at least) 15 for E credit and (up to) 9 for R credit. All courses taken after the 30 credit points for the M.A. count toward the M.Phil. At least 15 of these points have to be taken in the Department of Germanic Languages. Any substitutions are to be approved by the DGS or advisor under exceptional circumstances only. At least 9 of the E credits must be acquired through seminar papers written either in German or in English. At least one of these papers must be in the non-native language. The remaining requirements can be met through shorter paper formats or take-home exams. [The Graduate Student Progress Form can be found here.](#)

c. Required courses

Two courses are required: the Proseminar in German Literature and the pedagogy class (the latter unless an equivalent class from elsewhere is accepted as transfer credit). The Proseminar is usually taken in year one and can be repeated with a different topic. The pedagogy class (R-credit only) is taken in years one, two, or three.

d. Interdisciplinary study

While this handbook focuses on requirements for graduate study in German, students are encouraged to take advantage of pertinent courses in cognate fields such as comparative literature (ICLS), comparative media (CCM), gender and sexuality studies (IGS), film studies, history, architecture, philosophy, and political science.

2. Independent study in lieu of coursework

Independent studies are usually intended for the M.A. rewrite colloquium and to prepare the reading lists for the MPhil exam under the direction of a faculty member. Both can be counted with 3 points each towards the 30+24 required credits; R credit only). Otherwise, independent studies will be reserved for those special cases in which a student needs directed reading in an area not covered regularly in coursework. In such a case, students should get the approval of the DGS before making definitive arrangements with an individual professor. Students may not take more than one independent study per semester, never in the first year. The total number of independent studies throughout a student's graduate career normally should not exceed two. Independent Study is not eligible for E-credit.

3. Transfer Credit

Transfer Credit denotes relevant coursework completed before a student enrolls in the graduate program at Columbia. Students entering the program with significant previous graduate work in German literature may request a credit transfer. Please note that all coursework submitted for Transfer Credit must be at the graduate level and worth three or more points each and must not have been used to fulfill requirements for any other degree previously awarded at Columbia. The total number of credits may not exceed four courses (3 points/course). Credit transfer has to be approved by the DGS and the Dean of the Graduate School.

4. Curriculum planning and Progress Meetings

New and continuing students should meet with the DGS at the beginning of each academic year to discuss their academic progress. New students meet with the DGS during orientation in late August. Students are also encouraged to meet with the DGS prior to registering for the next semester, especially in year one (but also beyond as needed/desired). Anticipated dates of registration are listed in [the GSAS registration schedule](#). To view course information, visit the GSAS [Schedule of Classes](#).

5. Incompletes

The mark of IN is given to a student who has satisfactorily met all the requirements of a course except for the completion of assigned papers, reports, or the final examination, which the student has been compelled to postpone for reasons that are 1) beyond his or her control and 2) satisfactory to the instructor. The official deadline for students to submit their outstanding work is December 31 (for Incompletes earned in the spring semester and the summer session) and June 30 (for Incompletes earned in the fall semester); e.g., a student who receives an Incomplete in the Fall 2015 semester will have until June 30, 2016, to submit the outstanding work. Extensions will not be granted. If the student does not submit the outstanding work by the end of the grace period, the mark of IN will be changed to an F, which will be not subject to change at a later date. You can have only one incomplete at any given time to remain in good standing. Per departmental policy, you are expected to turn in any outstanding written work for an incomplete

before the start of the next semester (= mid-January for a December incomplete; August for a May incomplete). No exceptions.

6. Language requirements

In addition to German and English, students must demonstrate reading ability in one foreign language appropriate to their prospective field of specialization; an additional foreign language is strongly recommended. The choice of language will be made upon consultation with the DGS. The requirement is typically satisfied by passing a reading proficiency examination administered by the relevant department. In case the relevant department does not facilitate proficiency exams, consult with the DGS. The language requirement may also be fulfilled by passing a one-semester literature or culture course in the target language (level: Intermedium II or higher) with a minimum grade of B+. The foreign language exam must be completed by the time of the M.A. conferral. Reading ability in a second foreign language is strongly advised.

The links below show proficiency exam dates and registration information for some departments:

- [Department of French](#)
- [Department of Italian](#)
- [Department of Slavic Languages](#)
- [Department of Latin American and Iberian Cultures](#)
- [Department of Classics](#)
- [Department of Middle Eastern, South Asian, and African Studies](#)
- [Department of East Asian <http://ealac.columbia.edu/program/language-programs/Languages>](http://ealac.columbia.edu/program/language-programs/Languages)

It is essential that all graduates of the department have a strong command of both German and English. Native speakers of one language who need to improve their skills in the other are expected to do so speedily and professionally. The university sponsors free courses in English, and there are departmental funds available to allow students to perfect their command of German, usually during the summer months in Germany. The department covers the tuition for one course per student, up to 1500 dollars. Please present your course selection for approval to the Director of the language program and the DGS. All incoming students should be certain that their German and English skills are satisfactory by the beginning of their second year in the program. The faculty may recommend that students seek directed assistance in academic writing in English within the university and, conversely, encourage students to improve their German language skills abroad.

7. M.A. Exam

In the spring of their first year, students will choose two faculty members to serve as M.A. examiners; in consultation with them, students prepare their own version of the Departmental M.A. Resource List. The lists should be finalized by the end of the spring semester; the summer is for reading. The function of the M.A. exam is to test a student's broad exposure to German literary, philosophical, and theoretical texts, genres, and movements. The department intends to offer a 4000-level survey course that will help students prepare for the exam. In addition, it is suggested that students work with some History of German Literature (Metzler; Hanser; Beck; Wellbery et.al.) and consult reference works on poetic and aesthetic terms such as *Metzler Lexikon Literatur: Begriffe und Definitionen*, *Metzler Lexikon Literatur- und Kulturtheorie*,

Sachwörterbuch der Literatur (Kröner Verlag), *Literaturwissenschaftliche Grundbegriffe, Ästhetische Grundbegriffe Online*: <http://www.li-go.de/definitionsansicht/ligostart.html>.

The M.A. Exam must be taken before the start of the third semester of study, ideally before orientation week to facilitate uninhibited focus on teaching preparation. The exam consists of a written and an oral exam. The written part includes five questions that test a student's knowledge of the terminology of literary history and criticism and one question that requires a close analysis of a selected passage. The exam takes five hours. Students can choose which language (German or English) to write in, but the oral examination will be conducted in the other language. It takes place on a separate day after the written exam and lasts one hour. It is intended to test how students, in a more spontaneous setting, engage with more specific questions concerning literary history, interpretation, and criticism.

A further component of the exam is the rewrite of a seminar paper. The function of the rewrite is not for students to write a Master's thesis, but to learn how to isolate key questions, introduce original arguments and research, and situate an argument within existing discussions of literary scholarship. Students are expected to have a thorough bibliography and familiarity with the critical literature on their topic. The process is supported via the M.A. writing colloquium (independent study credit as outlined above), to be taken in the spring semester of your second year. This colloquium also offers room for some collective exam preparation through the discussion of selected texts and groups of texts

Once all three parts of the exam have been successfully completed, the student will be informed that he or she has passed the evaluation and is invited to continue studies toward the M.Phil. If all GSAS and departmental requirements have been met, the student will be awarded a Master's degree at the end of the second year. In rare cases, a student may pass the exam but is not allowed to continue on to the M.Phil. The student would then be eligible for a terminal Master's degree. A student who is judged eligible for a terminal Master's degree will need to complete all coursework successfully and prove proficiency in one language, after which he or she will be recommended to the GSAS to receive a terminal Master's degree at the next possible date.

Students must complete an "Application for Degree" and submit it to the Registrar's Office in order to receive their M.A. degree. The form can be found at the following link: <https://registrar.columbia.edu/content/application-degree-or-certificate>.

[Further guidelines for the exam can be found here.](#)

8. M.Phil. Exam

The M.Phil. exam consists of two parts: a written examination on the student's field of specialization and a 90-minute oral examination. It is typically taken at the end of the student's third year in the program (April/May). The exam is based on the works included in two reading lists prepared by the student in consultation with two faculty members to be chosen after the first year of post-MA study.

The written and oral examinations

The function of the M. Phil. exam is to assess students' ability to isolate an area of research. The exam is intended to help students bridge the transition to the dissertation stage by identifying a set of research interests and a dissertation topic. In preparation for the exam, students are expected to develop two reading lists, integrating primary, critical, and theoretical works. Students are expected to be able to define the boundaries of their project and argue why they have made those distinctions. They are expected to be able to articulate the theoretical positions that inform their methodology. Students must not only be able to defend why they have made certain choices but also why they have excluded others. Finally, students are expected to situate their project within both the historical context of their field of interest and the body of relevant scholarship that surrounds it.

For the first list, the student will choose a broad period or area of interest and will compose a comprehensive list of primary, critical, and theoretical works in consultation with two members of the department's faculty. Examples of possible areas and periods are Enlightenment and the age of Goethe, Romantic traditions, Austrian and German modernisms, literature and media, post-World War II German culture, contemporary literature and culture, the German novel/drama/poetry, literature and intellectual history of a given period, literature and scientific discourses, etc. The intention of this list is to allow students to read widely in the chosen period or area in order to acquire a sense of its critical boundaries, main problematics, and the critical discourse on it in order to contextualize their future work. The first list should consist of no fewer than 30 items.

The second list will be a more focused list of primary, critical, and theoretical works. Ideally, for the second list, students will have narrowed their interest to the broad outline of their dissertation topic. Some recent examples: Book culture in the Romantic period, Realism in the Weimar avant-gardes, Radio and Realism, the generational novel in the late 20th century, German drama and the problem of sovereignty from Kleist to Müller, feminism and intermediality in post-dramatic theater, sound in film, radio, and literature, etc. [For a full list go to the departmental website> programs>graduate.] The second list should consist of no fewer than 30 items and be introduced by a concise prospectus of questions to be raised and topics to be explored (2-3 pages).

The written examination and oral examinations are based on the works included in the two lists, and will adhere to the following guidelines:

1. written in German or English and on a computer over three days;
2. sent via email by the DAAF on a Friday morning at 9:00 a.m. and emailed to the DAAF and DGS by 12:00 p.m. the following Monday;
3. a student may consult whatever sources he or she may deem necessary;
4. exams will consist of four questions, from which students will choose two. The questions will be prepared by the two faculty members chosen by the student;
5. answers should be comprehensive yet concise—between 15 and 20 pages in length each.

Copies of the completed exams will be distributed to the two faculty examiners.

The 90-minute oral examination will be taken a week after the written. It will be based on follow-up questions to the written examination as well as on the two reading lists.

Usually, the two faculty members will go on to serve on the student's dissertation reading committee. At the end of the oral examination, the student will step outside, and the members of the committee will determine the overall outcome of the examination, which should reflect the student's performance in both the written and oral exams and the oral defense of the prospectus. The members of the defense committee will vote formally on 1) whether to recommend the student for receipt of the M.Phil. degree and 2) whether the student may continue toward the PhD. The examination committee may also decide to grant the M.Phil. as a terminal degree. In this case, the student may not continue toward the PhD.

[Further guidelines for the exam can be found here.](#)

9. The Dissertation Prospectus and Prospectus Defense

Upon successful completion of the M.Phil. with the invitation to continue toward the PhD, the student will choose a dissertation sponsor and designate a second reader if he or she has not done so previously. The dissertation sponsor functions as the student's advisor from here on. That is: they serve as the primary contact point and feedback provider in all matters related to the dissertation and professionalization. Per GSAS guidelines, however, the second (and potentially a third) reader will also be actively involved throughout the writing process. The student should approach a member of the graduate faculty with a tentative topic for the dissertation. The faculty member approached has the option of deciding whether to supervise the project. Once a sponsor has been secured, the student will proceed to draft the dissertation prospectus. The prospectus is a 10-12 page document with an appended bibliography. It begins with a narrative section that explains in detail the proposed thesis topic, the critical and theoretical instruments used to approach it, and the existing scholarship on the subject, followed by an overarching plan for its development in the form of a chapter-by-chapter organization. Students should consult with the DGS if in doubt about the formal aspects of the prospectus. [Further guidelines can be found here.](#)

The prospectus is prepared in consultation with the sponsor who, in turn, determines when the document is ready to proceed to its defense. The sponsor becomes a member of the M.Phil. prospectus examination committee. It is recommended that students have a committee with three faculty members, two faculty members are required. Students are encouraged to seek advice and guidance from all members of the examination committee while preparing the dissertation prospectus.

The oral examination of the prospectus consists of a one-hour oral exercise in which the student defends the prospectus before the prospectus defense committee. The date of the oral examination is determined in consultation with committee members. The student will distribute copies of the prospectus to the members of the examination committee at least two weeks before the scheduled date of the oral defense. The prospectus defense should be conducted no later than three months after the M.Phil. exam, at the latest at the end of the fall semester of year four in the

program (successful completion is a GSAS requirement for the dissertation fellowship funding in year five).

10. Annual evaluation of students

Every year, the faculty reviews the progress of the graduate students. Among the items covered during these reviews are the following: quality of written material, performance in class, grades, language ability, teaching performance, and due progress toward the degree. Because the faculty does not wish to encourage any student who may not be able to complete the degree, any student who has performed below expectations may be placed on departmental probation or be asked to withdraw from the program.

Students should speak to the DGS if they encounter difficulties with any aspect of their graduate career or have problems of a personal nature that may impact their academic performance.

At the beginning of each academic year, each pre-M.Phil. student submits an updated progress report to the DGS (departmental template available from DGS). The DGS reviews the student's report, determines whether the student is making satisfactory progress, and reports this evaluation of progress to the faculty. Post-M.Phil., progress reports are tied to regular meetings with the dissertation committee, as mandated and administered by GSAS. Students are still expected to meet with the DGS at least once per year.

11. The Residence Unit (RU) and other registration categories

Residence Unit (RU): The Residence Unit is a full-time registration category for one semester (whether or not the student is taking courses), which provides the basis for tuition charges. Six Residence Units—including the two for the M.A. degree—are required for the M.Phil. and Ph.D. degrees.

Extended Residence (ER): After completing six Residence Units, students are required to register for Extended Residence in any term in which they hold a university teaching appointment, take a class, or complete a degree requirement other than the dissertation defense.

Matriculation and Facilities (M&F): Advanced students who neither hold a university teaching appointment nor complete a degree requirement can satisfy the continuous registration requirement (see Continuous Registration) by registering for "Matriculation and Facilities" (M&F), which allows them to make use of various university facilities. M&F is the correct registration status for a student writing or defending the dissertation. Students may not register part-time; Continuous Registration must be maintained until all requirements for the degree are satisfied. Students are exempted from the requirement to register continuously only when granted a leave of absence.

Students who are not on a teaching appointment at Columbia and who are finished with their M.Phil. degree requirements (for instance, while holding a Dissertation Writing Fellowship) should register for M&F status. Post 8-year students who have not finished their dissertation register for M&F status. Students will not be allowed to register beyond the 9th year unless there are special circumstances.

12. Teaching opportunities and responsibilities:

Teaching is a crucial aspect of graduate student training and professionalization. Germanic Languages and Literatures PhD students usually teach in their second, third, and fourth years. Further teaching opportunities (years six and seven) are available on a competitive basis (beyond the department) or based on departmental needs. Teaching assignments are determined by the department with a view to these needs and the goal of giving students wide pedagogical experience.

Preparation for Teaching & Ongoing Mentorship:

I. Spring Semester of first year:

Required:

- a. first meeting with program director,
- b. individual visit to an Elementary I (1101) course,
- c. visit of an Elementary I class as a group (observation and interaction) followed by a post-visit debrief.

Recommended:

- a. weekly discussion groups to discuss topics and practice German,
- b. attend *Kaffeestunde* to practice German and practice interacting with students of different proficiency levels,
- c. attend event(s) organized by the Language Resource Center (LRC) and the Center for Teaching and Learning (CTL).

II. Week before the beginning of the Fall semester:

All students who start teaching that fall are required to attend the events listed for this week:

1. Orientation for all Foreign Language Teaching Fellows (2 days)
2. GSAS—Orientation for all TFs (1 day)
3. Orientation for German TFs only (1 day)

III. During the Teaching Semester

1. Weekly section meetings with section coordinator
2. Classroom visits by section coordinator and/or program director (1-2), followed by post-observation discussion.

IV. Pedagogy seminar (elective credit) in first or second year of teaching.

- Held in German with a focus on teaching in our department.
- Provides an introduction into the field of German as a foreign language.
- Has concrete applications and is reflective in nature (philosophy of teaching, portfolio of teaching).

V. Subsequent Semesters

1. Required:

- a. Continuation of section meetings (weekly/bi-weekly) and observations.
- b. Discussion of courses and evaluations.

2. Recommended:

- a. Professional Development through Department, LRC, and TLC

General expectations: Students are expected to perform their teaching responsibilities and related tasks professionally and judiciously, including attendance at meetings and following directions from the language or section coordinator. A student's professional development as a teacher is part of the annual evaluation of the graduate cohort. Any student who experiences difficulties related to teaching should seek help immediately from the appropriate source, that is the section coordinator and/or program director.

Before the beginning of the semester: Last-minute changes in scheduling can occur when a class is low or high enrolled. As a consequence, a section may have to be canceled or split, which may result in a change of staffing. Students are encouraged to be proactive and keep an eye on the enrollments of their classes and reach out if they have concerns. During the week prior to the start of class, it is imperative that you are available at least via email should changes become necessary so they can be addressed immediately.

Sickness or absence due to conference participation, etc.: If you cannot teach your class, inform your section coordinator/program director along with your colleagues to see if someone can teach for you. Canceling a class should be the last resort. Always inform the section coordinator/program director if someone else is teaching for you.

Final exams and grading. All instructors must be present for the final exam given in their course (which usually takes place on Friday and Monday of finals week for the elementary level) and the collective grading of exams (usually on the Tuesday of finals week).

All students are encouraged to create a **teaching portfolio** from the beginning of their teaching career, as described in the GSAS document 'Preparation for an Academic Career'. Creating an initial version of the portfolio is part of the requirements of the Pedagogy Seminar.

For year six (and seven as needed), students are encouraged to apply **for teaching opportunities beyond the department** (<https://gsas.columbia.edu/student-guide/teaching/teaching-opportunities-outside-department>). For the application to become Columbia College Core Preceptors, the department requires that students have written one chapter and a draft of a second chapter of their dissertation. The second chapter should be written by the time they begin teaching in the core.

For more information on teaching responsibilities see the GSAS Graduate Student Teaching Guidelines. The GSAS Teaching Center offers an extensive list of resources.

13. Dissertation

Upon approval of the prospectus, the student will embark on the preparation of the dissertation. Students will regularly consult and share their work with the sponsor and co-sponsor as they advance toward completion of the dissertation (see GSAS guidelines for mandated procedures). The GSAS requires that all dissertations be written in English. Students who wish to write the dissertation in German must request permission to do so from the GSAS. (See applicable regulations on the GSAS site.)

Typically, the student will be on Dissertation Writing Fellowship (DWF) for the next year, his or her fifth in the program.

Some suggested guidelines for the dissertation:

Dissertation chapters should not exceed 50-60 double-spaced pages max. Dissertations usually have five to seven chapters. Avoid packing too much into a single chapter. As a thesis develops, some things may fall by the wayside, and others may be added. [Further guidelines can be found here.](#)

14. Dissertation defense application and registration

Dissertation defense application

Once the final draft of the dissertation is completed and approved by both the sponsor and co-sponsor, the student will submit an Application for Dissertation Defense form to the department chair at least eight weeks in advance of the anticipated date of defense. The sponsor and co-sponsor will choose the two outside members of the defense committee as well as a third member of the departmental faculty (See the GSAS Degree Calendar for application and distribution deadlines associated with a particular conferral date.) The DAAF is responsible for scheduling dissertation defenses; students do not schedule their own defenses. Scheduling of the defense takes place soon after the proposed defense committee has been approved by the Dean of the GSAS and after copies of the dissertation have been distributed to members of the defense committee. The student is responsible for distributing copies of the dissertation at least four weeks before the defense is to take place and for notifying the DAAF when all members have received their copies. Notification of distribution is critical to the scheduling of the defense date. The candidate will be given all materials necessary to complete the deposit of the dissertation with the GSAS at the defense. The Dissertation Office website has more information about this step.

Present at the defense will be: the student, the sponsor, the two other internal members of the dissertation committee, and the two external readers. The chair of the defense committee, previously appointed by the Dean of the GSAS, will serve as moderator for the proceedings. The defense will begin with a short (5-10 minute) presentation by the student. Afterward, the members of the committee may direct questions or comments to the candidate in turn. At the end of the exercise, the student will step outside, and the five members of the defense committee will vote formally on whether to recommend the dissertation to the GSAS for approval and for any

other award in the manner described by the GSAS. Distinction is awarded by the Department alone. If the vote is positive, the student will proceed to prepare the final version for deposit with the GSAS Dissertation Office, making sure to incorporate any emendations suggested by the members of the defense committee during the proceedings. If the vote is negative, the student will not be recommended to the Graduate School for receipt of the doctoral degree.

Dissertation registration

All students must be registered during the term (including summer) in which they distribute the defense copies of the dissertation. Filing early in the semester is recommended to ensure approval of the defense committee before the deadlines. Provided that all required Residence Units are paid, students who are distributing and/or defending must register for either M&F or ER. Students who are defending while on teaching or research appointments or who are also completing pre-dissertation degree requirements register for ER; all others should register for M&F. These rules apply to the summer as well as to the fall and spring semesters.

If students who are U.S. citizens distribute any time between the first day of the fall semester and the day before the start of the spring semester, their final registration is in the fall. If students who are U.S. citizens distribute any time between the start of the spring semester and the day before the start of the summer session, their final registration is in the spring.

If students who are U.S. citizens distribute any time between the start of the summer session and the day before the start of the fall semester, their final registration is in the summer.

International students in F-1 or J-1 status must consult with the International Students and Scholars Office regarding their registration requirements.

For more information, see the [Registration and Application for Ph.D. Defense](#) site.

15. Graduation

The deposit, and not the defense, is the final requirement for the Ph.D. and professional degrees. After the successful defense and complete deposit of the dissertation, the degree is awarded on the next subsequent conferral date, in October, February, or May of each year. Students must clear all outstanding accounts in order to receive their degree. See the GSAS site for more information on the [Award of the Degree](#).

16. General expectations

Awareness of requirements: All students must be familiar with the [GSAS rules and guidelines](#) as explained on [the GSAS website](#) and in the [GSAS handbook](#). Students should pay special attention to information regarding registration and the submission of material for degree-granting dates. It is not the responsibility of the DGS, the Chair of the department, the student's dissertation sponsor, or the departmental staff to ensure a student's compliance with official GSAS regulations. Exceptions and/or exemptions from any of the department or the GSAS requirements or schedules are granted, if at all, with reluctance and after consultation with and/or

written request to the appropriate officer. Students should consult with the DGS as early as possible with any questions concerning requirements, overall progress toward the degree, deadlines, etc.

Good Standing: To be considered in good academic standing, students must make satisfactory academic progress, including the following: Acquiring advisors (= M.A. and M.Phil. committees); meeting time-to-degree requirements for the M.A. and the M.Phil. degrees; fulfilling the dissertation prospectus requirement; completing degree requirements and maintaining superior quality of work; maintaining a cumulative grade point average (GPA)* of at least 3.0; fulfilling GSAS pedagogical requirements and responsibilities

Colloquium: The department offers a colloquium in which students are expected to present chapters or chapter drafts of their research. Participation is mandatory for all students who have fulfilled their M.Phil. requirements; exempt are only students who spend the academic year abroad. The DGS schedules the presentations by the beginning of the academic year.

Deutsches Haus: Students are expected to actively participate in departmental life, including attendance at scheduled lectures at Deutsches Haus (and we mean it). They may also suggest one speaker a year to address key issues in the discipline. Deutsches Haus is also open for a student-organized film series or other cultural events.

Graduate Student Conferences: Students who have passed their M.A. exams are encouraged to organize a conference or workshop. The DGS will support them in writing a three-page proposal that outlines the conference topic, the format of the event, potential speakers, and budgets. The entire faculty will then advise on the proposal. The conference organizers will discuss further steps with the DGS and the department administrator. Preparing for such an event and securing financial funds takes time; students should begin with their planning a year in advance of the conference.

Graduate Student Representatives: Each year, students elect one graduate student representative (=faculty liaison). The representative is expected to meet regularly with the DGS.

Time to degree: The GSAS will not allow a department to fund a student for an eighth year in the program. Dissertations must be defended within ten years of the student's first matriculation in the GSAS. Please note that GSAS guarantees funding for five years only.

Updating personal information: If a student's permanent or local address changes, he or she should notify the DAAF. Students may update their name and address information through Student Services Online (SSOL). All foreign students must be sure that the main office has a copy of their current visa on record.

Monitoring Columbia e-mail account: The University provides students with an e-mail account, and it is expected that graduate students read messages sent to their Columbia e-mail accounts. Students are free to use other e-mail accounts but be aware that communications from the Graduate School and the Department will be sent to your Columbia e-mail address.

17. Preparing to enter the job market

Preparation for the job market does not begin in the year in which you first enter it; students build their (research, teaching, service) portfolio throughout their graduate years. Students are encouraged to discuss long-term professionalization goals and techniques with their advisors and attend dossier-building and related workshops organized by the DGS well ahead of actual applications. Such workshops are generally held at the beginning of the fall semester and/or the end of the spring semester. Students are encouraged to suggest specific workshop topics as well as seek individualized support in developing documents and strategies from their dissertation sponsor/committee as well as the DGS. The pedagogy faculty are also available for consultation on teaching portfolios and for video recording of teaching samples for application purposes. There also are professional training sessions organized by GSAS which candidates may want to attend.

It is suggested that candidates begin to prepare documents in the course of the summer. Samples will be made available in a folder in the Department Office.

List of necessary documents:

1. Letter of application for a faculty position or a post-doc. Can be generic and be adjusted later for specific jobs (2 pages max.).
2. Statement of teaching philosophy. Should focus on the experience teaching language and/or in the Core Curriculum.
3. Curriculum vitae
4. Potential syllabi of undergraduate courses. Often requested during job interviews. Samples of Columbia taught undergrad syllabi on file in the dep. Office
5. Diversity Statement (increasingly required).
6. In case of a post-doc application, applicants should prepare a project statement on the research planned for the post-doc. Usually it involves plans to turn the dissertation into a book and the beginnings of a new research project.
7. Again, students' sponsors and co-sponsors, the DGS and pedagogy faculty will advise on drafts.

Once the job lists or post-doc announcements are published, candidates should keep sponsors, co-sponsors, and DGS informed about their applications.

Letters of recommendation should be requested in a timely fashion, at least three weeks before the deadline. Usually, such letters are filed with **Interfolio**.

Once students have received requests for writing samples and an invitation for an interview, they should arrange with sponsor/co-sponsor for a mock interview.

Once students are invited to give a job talk, they should consult with their sponsor/co-sponsor (and with pedagogy faculty regarding any teaching demos).

Once candidates receive an offer, further consultation with the DGS and the sponsors is advised. Once a contract has been signed, you're out the door. However, department faculty will stand ready to provide further recommendations if needed in future years.

1. Fellowships

Fellowships are awarded by the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences through individual departments on the basis of demonstrated academic merit, in recognition of current academic achievement, and in expectation of further scholarly success. Fellowship recipients are subject to the Graduate School's [rules and regulations](#).

Doctoral students are typically offered upon admission a six-year award that combines fellowships and teaching assistantships. The disbursement of these awards is contingent on remaining in good academic standing and, in the case of students appointed as teaching fellows, have discharged responsibly their pedagogical duties. This funding package provides on an annual basis full tuition, a 9-month stipend or equivalent combination of stipend and salary, health insurance and related fees, the University Facilities fee, and international fees when applicable. Students who are still in their guaranteed funding years also receive a summer stipend beginning in the summer after their first year. Students are responsible for all other fees and expenses themselves such as the student activity fee, a one-time document fee, course fees, late registration fees, and their rent.

The standard funding pattern in our department is for students to be awarded a Dean's fellowship in the first year, serve as a teaching fellow in years two through four, and hold a dissertation fellowship in year five. Additional information regarding these fellowship categories can be found [here](#).

2. Stipend disbursement

Awards are processed as follows for GSAS students:

- During the academic year, students without teaching responsibilities will receive half of their stipend in early September and the remainder in early January.
- Students who are appointed as Teaching Fellows will receive the same total compensation as students without teaching appointments receive the same total stipend as those without service responsibilities but the distribution of the funds is different. Teaching fellows receive two-thirds of the total award as stipend and the remaining third as salary. The stipend portion is disbursed in two equal shares in early September and early January. The salary portion is paid in 18 bi-monthly checks from September through May.
- Students who receive summer stipends as part of their guaranteed funding package will typically receive them in late April.

All students should enroll in direct deposit for both their stipends and salary payments to expedite the receipt of their funds. Please note that these are separate enrollment processes; enrolling in direct deposit for a stipend will not carry over to payroll direct deposit and the

reverse. To arrange for the deposit of stipend payments, students should follow the steps outlined [here](#). Instructions for setting up payroll direct deposit are found [here](#).

Students must be registered in order to receive their stipends. Students who are not registered at the time that a *stipend* check is processed by the GSAS Office of Financial Aid must retrieve a paper check from the Payments and Deposits Office in 205 Kent Hall. Student Financial Services will send an email notification when a stipend check is ready to be picked up. Students must be registered and are required to show a valid CUID card to do so. Students who fail to enroll in *payroll* direct deposit will have checks sent to the department office. All checks received in the department will be held at the front office.

3. Other types of financial aid

Departmental funds to sponsor participation in academic conferences: The Department awards funds competitively on an annual basis to students who have been invited or selected to deliver a paper in a scholarly conference. Only one request will be considered per student per year, and never in the first year; furthermore, a student will not receive funding more than twice in their graduate career. Funds will not usually be granted for participation in graduate student conferences.

Department deadlines: October 1 (for a fall conference) or February 15 (for a spring or summer event). The student should submit a brief request in writing to the DGS accompanied by official information about the conference (a website address or printed publicity), a copy of the abstract submitted to the conference organizers, the message indicating acceptance of the proposed paper, and a detailed budget of estimated travel expenses. The maximum amount of a departmental travel grant is \$400. If granted a departmental award, the student should apply (currently before Nov 3/March 3) for the GSAS Matching Travel Fund subvention, which grants a maximum of \$400 toward conference expenses. This award is not guaranteed, and requests are considered on a first-come, first-served basis. Upon return to campus, the student should present all original receipts to the DAAF along with the notification of the award of a travel subvention by the GSAS, if applicable. Additional funding may be available for students who attend conferences with the Director of the Language Program.

Deutsches Haus Travel Grant: The Department supports students to conduct archival research with up to \$1,500. Only one request will be considered per student per year. Students will not receive funding more than twice in their graduate career. This award is not guaranteed, and requests are considered on a first-come, first-served basis. Students must be in good standing to receive this funding.

Funds for summer study and/or research abroad: GSAS guarantees summer funding awards to Ph.D. students for up to six years for short-term research abroad, for enrollment in summer academic programs, or to advance in meeting program requirements while remaining in New York during the summer months. Funds may not be used solely for the purposes of enhancing language proficiency. Students must be in good standing to receive summer funding.

FLAS awards and other available fellowships: FLAS awards are available for students planning to study languages pertinent to their field of research. For more information about FLAS awards see the [FLAS web page](#). For available fellowships, applications, and deadlines see the [GSAS Fellowship web page](#). The GSAS maintains a [searchable database of fellowships](#) and grants available to Columbia graduate students. See also the [Graduate Fellowship Notebook](#), an extensive electronic database of national fellowships hosted and maintained by Cornell University.

Teaching during the Summer Term: There are a limited number of language courses taught on campus during the Summer Term sponsored by Columbia's School of Professional Studies (SPS). Students must be in good standing in the program to be considered as summer instructors, they must have taught the courses offered during the regular semester. Course evaluations are taken into consideration during the selection process. In addition, the handbook from the SPS states that Graduate students must have completed the requirements for the MPhil degree no later than the beginning of the year of the Summer Term in which they are teaching and must be within their first seven years of initial registration in their PhD program.

Priority for staffing these courses is determined as follows:

- Summer sections are open to faculty and graduate students and are staffed at the discretion of the departmental representative to the summer program (currently the director of the language program). The main criteria for staffing are experience and expertise in teaching an intensive language course.
- Summer teaching is not an entitlement but an additional teaching opportunity for graduate students; in other words, the student's pedagogical performance in all previous teaching opportunities during the academic year and/or summer term, as well as the student's teaching experience and sometimes seniority, are the main factors in determining teaching assignments for the summer session.
- Staffing will occur through the departmental representative based on availability and the factors mentioned above.
- No one individual will be assigned to teach more than one course unit (and this in separate sessions if at all) unless the entire priority list has been exhausted.

The Director of the Summer Program will send during the previous fall semester a general call to all faculty and students to inquire about their interest in teaching during the summer. If you are selected to teach but the course ends up not filling, you will receive partial pay for your prep work.

[Additional external funding resources can be found here.](#)

4. Taxation issues

U.S. citizens and Permanent Residents: Income tax is not withheld on fellowship stipends paid to U.S. citizens and Permanent Residents. However, all grant aid (scholarships, fellowships) that exceeds the cost of tuition and required fees, books, and related classroom expenses is subject to U.S. income tax. Also subject to tax are any amounts received representing payments for teaching and research. The Controller's Office at Columbia withholds income tax amounts earned through research or teaching appointments. W-2 forms will be issued for amounts earned and withheld for research or teaching appointments only. The student is responsible for accurately reporting stipend amounts and for making estimated tax payments if appropriate.

International students: Financial aid received by international students is subject to U.S. income tax. Income taxes for international students are withheld from university payments for teaching and research in the humanities and the social sciences. Fellowships awarded to international students are subject to taxation and 14% federal withholding on the amount in excess of tuition and fees. International students should receive the 1042-S form as tax documentation for their fellowship.

The United States has tax treaties or agreements with roughly 40 countries and territories under which their citizens *may* be exempt from all or part of U.S. income tax. Treaties are negotiated for the avoidance of double taxation and the prevention of fiscal evasion with respect to taxes on income and capital. Treaties vary from country to country, and tax exemption may vary based on an individual's status (student, professor, etc.) and the number of years that individual has been in the U.S. For more information about tax treaties see the Department Treasury's Publication #901, [United States Tax Treaties](#).

Please contact the [International Students and Scholars Office \(ISSO\)](#) for further information.

III. Facilities

1. Graduate lounge

The graduate lounge is located in 809 Hamilton. The room contains two computers and printers, a sofa and chair, as well as a refrigerator and microwave. 809 is a common space and should not be used for private meetings. Please do not use this office to hold appointments with students being tutored privately.

2. TA offices

TA offices are assigned to those teaching in the Department. If space allows those on Dissertation Fellowship may be allowed to have desk space in one of the offices, but please note that this space needs to be officially reassigned at the beginning of the academic year. There are no legacy privileges.

The TA offices are meant primarily for holding office hours according to the schedule of office hours composed at the beginning of each semester. These offices can be used as work or study space, but priority is given to holding office hours.

3. Supplies

Please ask a member of the departmental office staff if you need teaching supplies or supplies for the graduate lounge. Students applying for academic positions may also ask for a supply of departmental letterhead and envelopes for their job applications.

4. Mail

The outgoing mailbox in the main office may be used by graduate students to send off-campus mail related to their academic studies. Students should make sure to put stamps on all off-campus mail and should not use the outgoing mailbox for personal mail. Campus mail does not require postage; interoffice envelopes are available in 414 Hamilton. Students who go abroad for the academic year or who leave campus for an extended period of time should inform the office staff of their forwarding address.

5. Photocopy machine

A multi-function photocopier is located in the departmental office.

6. Telephones

There is a telephone in the graduate student lounge from which students can make local calls. The telephones in the main office are reserved for departmental use.

7. Fax machine

The fax machine in the main office may be used for local numbers and to receive faxes from any source. Please see the office staff for assistance with the fax machine. The fax machine line number is: (212) 854-5381.

8. Building access

Regular hours for the Hamilton Hall are from 7:30 a.m. until 10p.m., Monday through Friday, and from 7:30 a.m. until 5 p.m. on Saturdays. The building is closed on Sundays. If you need access at other times, let Peg know so that she can arrange for you to have swipe privileges.

9. Assignment of carrels in Butler Library

The carrel space available to graduate students in Butler Library is extremely limited; hence, only students who need to use library resources and who are sure that their work habits will adapt effectively to the carrel situation should consider applying.

The GSAS has provided a basic set of requirements for awarding carrels and has further requested that departments develop criteria for assigning them on a yearly basis. The GSAS guidelines are as follows:

- Students must have earned the M.Phil.
- The department must support the students' application.
- Students must be within six years of first date of registration in the Ph.D. program, and must have submitted an approved academic progress form to the GSAS during the current academic year through SSOL.
- Students must claim carrel space granted to them in 201 Butler Library. The space will be reassigned to another student if unclaimed after a month.

IV. Resources

1. Conferences

- MLA (early January) and regional MLA's (Northeastern MLA)
- GSA (late Sept./early Oct.)
- ACLA (American Comparative Literature Association)
- ACTFL (American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages, November)

Other conference announcements will be circulated by the DGS as they come to our attention.

- Listservs:
- German Studies Call for Papers List (run by the Department of German and Russian Studies at the University of Missouri). For details, go to:
<http://grs.missouri.edu/resources/gerlistserv.html>
- H-Germanistik
- Women in German

Fellowships:

- DAAD (usually not for German natives)
- Berlin Program for German and European Studies
- Fulbright (not for German natives in US doctoral programs)
- ACLS
- SSRC
- Whiting (at Columbia)
- Leo Baeck

2. Post-docs

There is a wide variety of post-docs advertised in the fall issue of the MLA job directory. Announcements will also be forwarded by the DGS.

3. Dossier service

As of September 4, 2007, the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences and the Center for Career Education began using a new dossier service vendor: Interfolio. All credentials and letters related to the search process will be handled by Interfolio, unless otherwise specified by the employer. You must open an account online with Interfolio; referees can either upload online or mail their letters of recommendation to the service.

To assist in learning how to use this service, the Center for Career Education has created an Interfolio “[Dossier Tip Sheet](#)” that provides both an overview of the features available through Interfolio and step-by-step instructions for using the system. This information can be found on the [Center for Career Education](#) website. [Interfolio’s website](#) contains further information.

4. Columbia resources and forms for graduate students

Columbia resources

- [Columbia Libraries](#)
- [Language Resource Center](#)
- [Center for Career Education](#)
- [Interfolio Dossier Service](#)
- [Graduate School of Arts and Sciences \(GSAS\)](#)
- [GSAS Teaching Center](#)
- [Graduate Student Advisory Council \(GSAC\)](#)
- [Health Services at Columbia](#)
- [University Apartment Housing](#)
- [Off-Campus Housing](#)

1. Columbia forms

- [GSAS Matching Travel Fund Application](#)
- [Application for Advanced Standing](#)
- [FLAS Application](#)
- [International Travel Fellowship Application](#)
- [Request for a Leave of Absence](#)
- [Application for a Whiting Foundation Fellowship](#)
- [Inter-University Doctoral Consortium Form](#)
- [Application for the Dissertation Defense](#)

6. Library research

- Main telephone for [Butler Library](#); (212) 854-7309
- [Butler Library Circulation Desk](#); (212) 854-2235
- Ian G Beilin, German holdings librarian <igb4@columbia.edu>

7. Professional resources

- [Modern Language Association \(MLA\)](#)
- [Northeast Modern Language Association \(NEMLA\)](#)
- [American Association of Teachers of German](#)
- [German Studies Association](#)
- [DAAD](#)
- [Goethe New York](#)

8. Important telephone numbers

- Main Office of the Department of Germanic Languages: (212) 854-3202
- Main Office Fax number: (212) 854-5381
- Graduate Division of Arts and Science: (212) 854-4737

- Student Medical Services: (212) 854-7426
- Student Health Insurance and Immunization: (212) 854-3286
- Counseling and Psychological Services: (212) 854-2878
- Student Financial Services: (212) 854-3808
- Registrar's Office: (212) 854-4400

Department of Public Safety:

for a security, fire or medical emergency Morningside: 4-5555; off campus: (212) 854-2797

Medical Center: on campus: 305-7979; off campus: (212) 305-8100


9. Program contacts

Since Chair, DGS, and DUS change, consult departmental website.

Director of Academic Administration and Finance

Sherene Alexander

Kh3168@columbia.edu

 (212) 854-3202

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