

## **Comparative Literature Department Assessment Plan DOCTORAL PROGRAM**

11/15/18

### **Learning Goals and Objectives**

The component parts of the doctoral program in Comparative Literature constitute an apprenticeship to a profession that requires (1) publishing as a means to establish oneself as a part of a professional community; (2) becoming conversant with the principal texts, discussions and problems in and across at least two fields of study (thus, “comparative”); and (3) proficiency in multiple languages, such that advanced research and analysis can be carried out in a chosen field or fields of study. The key benchmarks in this apprenticeship are (1) the successful completion of coursework and/or examination in languages relevant to a doctoral student’s area of research; (2) the Third-Year article; (3) the successful completion of a written exam; (4) the successful completion of a comprehensive oral exam; and (5) the successful completion and defense of a doctoral dissertation.

### **Assessment Methods**

The Comparative Literature department maintains records of student academic progress and benchmark completion on a Degree Summary form. This form is updated each year and is tracked by the Director of Graduate Studies. In addition, as set forth in our Graduate Handbook, the Comparative Literature Graduate Committee reviews the following:

- a. Approval of Coursework and Language Approval Form
- b. Approval to proceed to the Examination Process
- c. Approval of Dissertation Committees
- d. Advancement to Candidacy
- e. Petitions for Participating Faculty to serve as Institutional representative on Dissertation Committee

In addition, the Graduate Committee meets each year to review the academic progress of each graduate student in our department.

### **Assessment Processes**

The Comparative Literature department is now in the final stages of completing a review of our doctoral program. This review has resulted in a number of changes, the most important being the revised format of our comprehensive exams. The structure of the new exam, which we feel reflects the state of the discipline in the twenty-first century, is reflected in the Learning Goals and Objectives section, above. We will review our new protocols and benchmarks in three years to assess how they are working for our students and for our department, and will consider the matter again in six years, when the first cohort to have worked through the revised program will have defended or will be in the process of defending their dissertations and entering the job market.

### **Status, Outcomes and Results**

We recently held a faculty retreat, a portion of which was led by the Director of Graduate Studies and the Graduate Committee. In advance of the retreat, information on graduate student publications (outcome 1), performance on exams and any challenges regarding the preparation of exam lists and/or execution of graduate exams (outcome 2), and any challenges or opportunities in the area of developing proficiency in languages (outcome 3) was distributed to faculty. We plan to continue the practice of

holding structured discussions of the status, outcomes and results of our graduate program as part of our system of periodic faculty retreats (once every ~5 years).

The Comparative Literature Department tracks the success of our students as they seek jobs, both in academia and in related fields (jobs in editorial houses, writing programs, arts institutes, nonprofits, humanities advocacy, etc.).

**Decisions, Plans and Recommendations**

The process we have used this year appears to have worked well. We will have a better sense of what might be added or adapted as revisions to the graduate program are implemented. As noted above, we plan to continue to incorporate structured reviews of our graduate program as part of our periodic faculty retreats.