

# Art History and Archaeology, PhD

Phone: 314-935-5270  
Website: <https://arthistory.wustl.edu/>

## Degree Requirements

### Doctoral Candidacy

To earn a PhD at Washington University, a student must complete all courses required by their department; maintain satisfactory academic progress; pass certain examinations; fulfill residence and Mentored Experience Requirements; write, defend, and submit a dissertation; and apply to graduate via Workday Student. For the details of doctoral degree general requirements in Arts & Sciences, including an explanation of Satisfactory Academic Progress, students should review the Doctoral Degree Academic Information page of the Arts & Sciences *Bulletin*.

### Program Requirements

- **Total Units Required:** 21 minimum credits for students who have completed the Master's degree in Art History and Archaeology at Washington University; 39 minimum credits for students who have arrived with an MA in art history. (**Note:** Remission applies for a maximum of 72 graduate-level units.)
- **Degree Length:** 6 years
  - **Note:** Students must be enrolled in 9 graduate credits each semester to retain full-time status. As students complete their course work, if enrolled in fewer than 9 graduate credits, they must enroll in a specific Arts & Sciences graduate course that will show 0 units but does count as full-time status. Students should connect with their department to ensure proper enrollment prior to Add/Drop.
- **Grade Requirement:** Students must maintain a minimum 3.0 cumulative GPA.

Students completing their MA degree at Washington University and continuing as PhD students will have two or three more semesters of course work, normally in the form of three seminars plus the Comprehensive Exam Preparation courses (three courses) and the Dissertation Prospectus course. To be admitted to PhD candidacy, a student must also demonstrate reading proficiency in a second modern foreign language, pass the Comprehensive Exam, and successfully defend the Dissertation Prospectus. Students in ancient art and Asian art may have additional language requirements. Students entering the PhD program with a BA are expected to complete all the requirements for the MA degree before proceeding to the PhD requirements. Students must maintain a minimum 3.0 cumulative GPA.

Thus, by the end of the seventh semester of graduate study at Washington University, students will normally have achieved the following, at a minimum:

- Completed all required courses;
- Demonstrated reading proficiency in no fewer than two modern foreign languages;
- Passed the Comprehensive Exam in the major area;
- Passed the Comprehensive Exam in the minor area (or have exempted this requirement through related course work);
- Determined a three-person Research Advisory Committee for the dissertation; and
- Successfully defended the Dissertation Prospectus.

Once admitted to candidacy students will continue to enroll in ASGS 9000 Full Time Graduate Research/Study or ASGS 9001 or ASGS 9002 Full Time Graduate Research/Study in Absentia until the completion of the degree or end of program length.

Students who join the PhD program in Art History and Archaeology with an approved master's degree from another university will enroll in three semesters of course work, with at least 9 credits of graduate-level courses per semester. In the fourth semester of the program, they will then enroll in 9 credits of ARTARCH 9000 PhD Comprehensive Exam Preparation, and in the fifth semester in 3 credits of ARTARCH 9000 PhD Comprehensive Exam Preparation and in ASGS 9000 Full Time Graduate Research/Study. These students will, thus, normally complete all of the requirements for PhD candidacy listed above by the end of the fifth semester of graduate study at Washington University.

Each PhD candidate, as evidence of mastery of a specific field of knowledge and capacity for original, scholarly work, must complete a dissertation. The subject, as outlined on the Title, Scope, and Procedure Form, must be approved by a Research Advisory Committee consisting of at least three tenured or tenure-track faculty members. This committee is ordinarily led by the student's major advisor and must be approved by the Office of Graduate Studies. Often, the members of the Research Advisory Committee serve as the foundational members of the dissertation defense committee. Students should refer to the dissertation guide for more information regarding the complete composition of the dissertation defense committee. The Title, Scope, and Procedure Form for the dissertation must be signed by the committee members and by the program Chair, and then submitted to the Office of Graduate Studies, no later than the end of the student's fourth year.

Upon completing the dissertation, students must defend it before a committee of at least five faculty members. Four of the five committee members must be tenured or tenure-track Washington University faculty; one of these four may be a member of the Emeritus faculty. The fifth member must have a doctoral degree and an active research program, whether at Washington University, at another university, in government, or in industry. Additionally, three of the five committee members must come from the student's degree program; at least one of the five must not. After successful defense, students must submit an electronic version of the dissertation online to the Office of Graduate Studies.

## Required Courses

Code	Title	Units
ARTARCH 5002		3
ARTARCH 9000		3
ARTARCH 9005		3
ASGS 8005, 8010, or 8015		70
		Units

## Qualifying Examinations

Progress toward the PhD is contingent upon the student passing examinations that are variously called *preliminary*, *qualifying*, *general*, *comprehensive*, or *major field exams*. The qualifying process varies according to the program. In some programs, it consists of a series of incremental, sequential, and cumulative exams over a considerable time. In others, the exams are held during a relatively short period of time. Exams may be replaced by one or more papers. The program, which determines the structure and schedule of the required examinations, is responsible for notifying the Office of Graduate Studies, Arts & Sciences, of the student's outcome, whether successful or unsuccessful.

The PhD Comprehensive Exam is intended to test a student's general knowledge as well as mastery of their area or areas of specialization. It is designed as both preparation for and preface to conducting the rigorous, in-depth research necessary for successfully completing a dissertation, and as a means by which students can enter the discourses of professional art history they will encounter in teaching, research, curatorial, and related practices. The comprehensive exam is not intended to be a singular, definitive event in and of itself, but rather a part of a larger process of scholarly and professional development that occurs as students move from coursework to dissertation writing, and it should be structured as an open and collaborative dialogue between students and members of the exam committee. Students will prepare for and sit the comprehensive exam in the semester after the completion of coursework requirements, which will typically be the 6th semester in the program for students completing both MA and PhD degrees at Washington University and the 4th semester for PhD students who have arrived with an MA in art history. Students will be examined by a PhD Comprehensive Exam Committee, normally consisting of two or three faculty members, in a major area and a minor area. The major advisor must be a tenure-stream faculty member from within the department. Students may exempt the minor area exam through related course work. Each student will normally follow one of two formats for the PhD Comprehensive Exam: a written exam to be followed within 2 weeks by an oral defense or an oral exam to be followed by a 2-week written paper in the major area.

## Mentored Experience Requirements

Doctoral students at Washington University must complete a department-defined Mentored Experience. The Mentored Experience Requirement is a doctoral degree requirement that is notated on the student's transcript when complete. Each department has an established Mentored Experience Implementation Plan in which the number of units that a student must earn through Mentored Teaching Experience(s) and/or Mentored Professional Experience(s) is defined. The Mentored Experience Implementation Plans outline how doctoral students within the discipline will be mentored to achieve competencies in teaching at basic and advanced levels. Some departments may elect to include Mentored Professional Experiences as an avenue for completing some units of the Mentored Experience Requirement. Doctoral students will enroll in ASGS 8005, 8010, or 8015 Mentored Teaching Experience - Assistant in Instruction; ASGS 8020 Mentored Teaching Experience - Mentored Independent Teaching; or ASGS 8120 Mentored Professional Experience to signify their progression toward completing the overall Mentored Experience Requirement for the degree.

Students must complete 70 units of ASGS 8005, ASGS 8010, or ASGS 8015 Mentored Teaching Experience - Assistant in Instruction.

## The Doctoral Dissertation

A Research Advisory Committee (RAC) must be created no later than the end of the student's third year; departments may set shorter timelines (e.g., by the end of the student's second year) for this requirement. As evidence of the mastery of a specific field of knowledge and of the capacity for original scholarly work, each candidate must complete a dissertation that is approved by their RAC.

A Title, Scope & Procedure Form for the dissertation must be signed by the committee members and by the program chair. It must be submitted to the Office of Graduate Studies, Arts & Sciences, at least six months before the degree is expected to be conferred or before the beginning of the fifth year of full-time enrollment, whichever is earlier.

A Doctoral Dissertation Guide and a Dissertation Template that give instructions regarding the format of the dissertation are available on the website of the Office of Graduate Studies, Arts & Sciences. Both should be read carefully at every stage of dissertation preparation.

The Office of Graduate Studies, Arts & Sciences, requires each student to make the full text of the dissertation available to the committee members for their review at least one week before the defense. Most degree programs require two or more weeks for the review period; students should check with their faculty.

## The Dissertation Defense

Approval of the written dissertation by the Research Advisory Committee (RAC) is strongly recommended before the student can orally defend the dissertation. The Doctoral Dissertation Committee that examines the student during the defense consists of at least five members. Normally, the members of the RAC also serve on the Doctoral Dissertation Committee. The dissertation committee is then additionally augmented to ensure that the following criteria are met:

1. Three of the five members (or a similar proportion of a larger committee) must be full-time Washington University in St. Louis faculty members or, for programs involving Washington University in St. Louis-affiliated partners, full-time members of a Washington University in St. Louis-affiliated partner institution. All members must be authorized to supervise PhD students and have appropriate expertise in the proposed field of study. One of these three members must be the PhD student's primary thesis advisor, and one may be a member of the emeritus faculty.
2. All other committee members must be active in research/scholarship and have appropriate expertise in the proposed field of study whether at Washington University in St. Louis, at another university, in government, or in industry.
3. At least one of the five members must bring expertise outside of the student's field of study to the committee, as judged by the relevant department/program and approved by the Office of Graduate Studies, Arts & Sciences.

The approval processes outlined in the RAC section of the Doctoral Council bylaws also apply to the doctoral dissertation committee, including approval of each dissertation committee by the Office of Graduate Studies, Arts & Sciences.

The student is responsible for making the full text of the dissertation accessible to their committee members for their review in advance of the defense according to program rules. Washington University in St. Louis community members and guests of the student who are interested in the subject of the dissertation are normally welcome to attend all or part of the defense but may ask questions only at the discretion of the committee chair. Although there is some variation among degree programs, the defense ordinarily focuses on the dissertation itself and its relation to the student's field of expertise.

Attendance by a minimum of four members of the Doctoral Dissertation Committee, including the committee chair and an outside member, is required for the defense to take place. This provision is designed to permit the student's defense to proceed in case of a situation that unexpectedly prevents one of the five members from attending. Students should not plan in advance to only have four members in attendance. If four members cannot attend, the defense must be rescheduled. The absence of all outside members or of the committee chair also requires rescheduling the defense.

Students, with the support of their Doctoral Dissertation Committee chair, may opt to hold their dissertation defense in person or by utilizing a virtual or hybrid format.

## Submission of the Dissertation

After the defense, the student must submit an electronic copy of the dissertation online to the Office of Graduate Studies, Arts & Sciences. The submission website requires students to choose among publishing and copyrighting services offered by ProQuest's ETD Administrator. Students are asked to submit the Survey of Earned Doctorates separately. The degree program is responsible for delivering the final approval form, signed by the committee members at the defense and then by the program chair or director, to the Office of Graduate Studies, Arts & Sciences. Students who defend their dissertations successfully have not yet completed their PhD requirements; they finish earning their degree only when their electronic dissertation submission has been accepted by the Office of Graduate Studies, Arts & Sciences.