Welcome to the Romance Studies Field and the Department of Romance Studies. Graduate Students at Cornell are admitted into a Field structure, which includes the faculty in the Department of the same name but also a large number of faculty in related departments that complement and enhance our different programs in French, Italian, and Hispanic/Lusophone Studies. The hallmark of the field structure is the “Special Committee,” which will oversee much of a graduate student’s research and writing progress through the doctoral program. The committee and field structures are intended to diversify student access to different disciplines, methodologies, and approaches, while fostering intellectual dialogue between the committee and the student.

This handbook is provided to support graduate students throughout the program with easily accessible information, from admission to completion, and must be consulted in conjunction with the Graduate School’s Code of Legislation, and in conversation with the student’s Special Committee. You can use this handbook to learn about requirements, funding, and resources as you plan your studies and your research.

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1. Program Overview
The Field of Romance Studies includes faculty members from the Departments of Romance Studies, Comparative Literature, English, History, Music, and Near Eastern Studies. It offers interdisciplinary programs in Romance languages – French, Italian, Spanish, and Portuguese – and their literatures and cultures. The Department of Romance Studies at Cornell University is home to a vibrant and distinguished faculty with a longstanding tradition of excellence in research and scholarship.

Our program brings together a dynamic group of nationally and internationally recognized faculty and graduate students. In recent years, our faculty have received awards and fellowships from the National Endowment for the Humanities, the Mellon Foundation, the Fulbright Program, the Society for the Humanities at Cornell University, and the John Simon Guggenheim Foundation. Our graduate students have been awarded fellowships from the Provost, the Society for the Humanities at Cornell, the Ford Foundation, the Mellon Foundation, Fulbright, as well as Tinker, Manon-Sicca, and FLAC grants.

The high reputation and visibility of the Romance Studies Field at Cornell is sustained by the active participation of both faculty and graduate students in a wide range of national and international conferences and symposia, and in its exceptional output of academic books, articles, fiction, translations, interviews and essays in specialized journals, newspapers and other media. Students in Romance Studies select a major in an area of literature (French, Italian, or Hispanic/Lusophone literatures and cultures) and choose a minor in one or two other areas from any field.

The field offers a full complement of courses in French, Hispanic, or Italian literatures. It seeks to incorporate current, speculative, theoretical views of literature and culture, in interdisciplinary fashion and in dialogue with multiple methodologies and perspectives.

Students choose one literary/cultural tradition as their major concentration. They are expected to acquire a working knowledge of the general history of that literature/culture, both early and contemporary periods, to become conversant with their social and intellectual histories, and to speak and write their major language fluently. Students are trained in methodological, linguistic, and analytical skills essential to teaching and research in the interpretation of those literatures and cultures.

Students are encouraged to study foreign languages other than the language of the major concentration, especially when special linguistic competence is necessary for the student's research. Such need is determined by the student's Special Committee. Students are encouraged to spend a term or year abroad to improve their language skills and/or advance their research. The Department currently has an exchange program in France and there are many other opportunities students can apply for during the academic year or over the summer.

Students teach a mix of language and literature and culture courses as part of their professional training; numerous teaching assistantships are available.

Cornell's excellent research library has renowned special collections, such as the Witchcraft collection, and the finest Dante and Petrarch collections outside Italy, in addition to a partnership with peer institutions that brings their resources to campus via BorrowDirect, numbering around 70 million volumes. The university is home to Cornell Cinema, cited as one of the best campus film exhibition programs in the country, screening close to 400 different films/videos each year, seven nights a week. Students will find a vibrant intellectual life on campus through any number of venues, including
lecture series, keynote presentations, workshops, seminars, reading groups, colloquia and symposia on campus. In particular, the Society for the Humanities is home to many of these. Founded in 1966 to support research and imaginative teaching in the humanities, the Society for the Humanities encourages serious and sustained discussion on topics of compelling interest to our Field. Graduate students may engage in the activities organized around the Society for the Humanities (SHC) annual theme and are encouraged to apply for SHC fellowships in the last years of their dissertation work. Students may also choose to apply for participation in Cornell’s prestigious School for Criticism and Theory, which takes place every year during the summer.

The field also benefits from the interdisciplinary Medieval Studies Program, the Global Early Modern Studies Colloquium, the Latin American Studies Program, the Latinx Studies Program, the Feminist Gender and Sexuality Studies Program, the Atkinson Center for Sustainability, and the Institute for European Studies, which provide a wealth of financial and logistical support for a number of activities, events, fellowships, and training opportunities, including conferences, pre-dissertation workshops, and international research travel grants to encourage and support graduate student research.

The Romance Studies Annual Lecture is a department-wide event that invites especially exceptional scholars to campus. Additionally, the department is home to the Romance Studies Colloquium, an intellectual forum where graduate students and faculty discuss their work. Graduate students can take advantage of countless opportunities available in the department and throughout the university including workshops, conferences, and talks.

Students may also apply to be on the editorial board of Diacritics, which selects two to three highly qualified graduate students to participate in the life of the journal each year. Diacritics, overseen by the faculty in the Department of Romance Studies, became one of the first American academic journals to draw serious attention to the intellectual ferment occurring in France in the wake of the structuralist movement, and to translate its works into English. In particular, it was among the very first to translate and explicate the works of Jacques Lacan and Jacques Derrida, with whom it has long been identified; it was also one of the earliest journals to devote special issues to the influential field of French feminism and Contemporary Italian Thought; and relevant for the most recent developments in theory, it published the article by Hortense Spillers, “Mama’s Baby, Papa’s Maybe: An American Grammar Book,” a foundational text for contemporary race studies. Over the years, diacritics has become one of the principal academic resources, here and abroad, for the study of theoretical writing.

**General advice from students**

- Joining clubs is a fun way to meet new people.
- Getting to know my cohort helped me acclimate to being a new grad student at Cornell, since they were going through the same struggle at the same time.
- Craigslist is actually pretty handy when it comes to apartment hunting.
- It may be a good idea to ask your landlord to check on your housing condition a week or so before you arrive to make sure everything is in working order (especially house utilities and appliances, such as water heating and refrigerator).
- Since I am a super slow reader and writer, I always try to simplify my life. If you happen to have the same style, consider living in a managed housing community and buying meal plans from Cornell Dining.
• Make sure you have a winter coat, a warm hat, clothes that are easy to layer, waterproof snow boots, and wool socks. Mittens are better than gloves because they keep your fingers warm.
• Take advantage of all of the nature in and surrounding Ithaca—take breaks from your books and screens.
• I wish I’d known how gray and long the winters can be. SAD is too real [note from DGS: get a sun therapy lamp! They work!]
• Honestly, Ithaca is the most friendly and safe place I have ever been in my life (all past living experiences happened in metropolises). Just be here and enjoy the wonderful nature that would deeply impress on you! Run, walk, paint, write poems!
• Prioritize your mental health and take advantage of your health care.
• Print your health insurance card and make sure you know how to access health services in case you need them.
• Keep offline versions of important documents you may need (in your phone or in paper), including addresses and contact information. When you arrive your access to internet may be limited, unreliable or expensive (if it is through international roaming).
• International students: make sure your credit/debit cards are international; many online stores and apps in the US will require a US card. If possible, travel with an international credit card with enough funds for 2 weeks, even if you count on getting a US debit/credit card. A new card may take a week or more to be delivered (check with your prospect bank or credit card company). Mine took 10 business days.
• The app store of your phone may be region locked, stopping you from downloading or using certain US specific apps, even if you are geographically in the US. Keep in mind that you may have to input a US payment method to change your app store country, and that some restrictions may apply to how frequently you can make this change.
• Telephone: US websites will not allow an international phone number as input. Also, address fields usually require state and/or zip code. Sometimes, if you cannot provide a valid US phone number and/or address the request will not be accepted by the system.
• One aspect of being an international student that nobody warned me about was perhaps one of the thorniest: taxes. I advise any international student to reach out to your older peers regarding this matter as soon as possible. The more you know about the process, required documents, and differences in processing them, the less anxious you will be when your time-sensitive turn arrives. It is important also to be mindful that each tax process is different, even if students come from the same regions of the world (ex. Latin America). For instance, some countries have signed bilateral agreements with the US that will allow a person to claim back more money from tax returns than a student from a country that has not negotiated such benefits. That is the reality of the matter, so do not compare yourself with your colleagues, but do ask around to build yourself a better picture of what to expect.
• If in need do reach out to peers that you may have met, faculty or staff members. Moving to a new country may be a challenging experience, knowing someone is there for you helps a lot.

2. Student learning outcomes

Outcome 1: Demonstrate Advanced Research and Theoretical/Critical Skills
Through coursework, papers, conference presentations, and dissertation writing, students will gain and demonstrate the ability to recognize, synthesize, and evaluate research problems, findings, and new
research opportunities. They will also gain and be able to put to work a broad knowledge of subfields and methodologies (e.g., period-specific literature, film, and other artistic forms when applicable, literary theory, literary history, and literary genres), through the interdisciplinary research that is encouraged by the field structure, individually guided by the Special Committee.

Outcome 2: Make an Original and Substantial Contribution to the Discipline
With the mentoring and advice of the Special Committee, students will undertake and complete original, publishable research in a chosen field of inquiry, developing intellectual independence in scholarship. Faculty usually encourage students whose work they are supervising to submit specific materials, and workshops both in and outside the Department encourage and help students prepare materials for publication.

Outcome 3: Demonstrate Commitment to Advancing the Values of Scholarship
Students are encouraged through their courses and in the many opportunities offered, both at Cornell and in different national colloquia and symposia, to keep abreast of advances in the field and related areas. Engagement in professional societies, publications, editorial boards is encouraged throughout the program in both in-house venues (such as the annual Latin American Studies Program Conference and the Medieval Studies Graduate Conference, in addition to specific events and symposia, in journals such as *diacritics*) and in disciplinary-specific ones (ACLA, MLA, LASA, RSA, Newberry Multidisciplinary Graduate Conference, etc.). A supportive, collaborative environment for learning, teaching, and mentoring is sustained by a number of workshops, reading and writing groups, beginning with the Romance Studies Colloquium, obligatory for first-year students, in which they read and discuss the work of both invited faculty and advanced students in the field, and in College-sponsored ones, such as those supported by the Society of the Humanities, the Institute for Comparative Modernities, etc.

Outcome 4: Demonstrate Professional Skills
Through the Special Committee structure, students are mentored to write and effectively present conference papers. The DGS also offers workshops on the conception and completion of course syllabi; on grant and fellowship writing; and leads job preparation workshops in collaboration with other faculty. Different language-teaching workshops are organized by the Associate Chair for language instruction at the beginning of every academic year, many of them student-led, and students are informed of and encouraged to use the resources in all of these areas organized by the Center for Teaching Excellence, the office of Careers Beyond Academia, and the Graduate School.

3. Special Committees, Major & Minor Fields

*Special committees*
Upon arrival at Cornell, each student is assigned a provisional advisor whose research interests overlap with the student’s, to help with navigating the first months at Cornell and to advise in course selection; the DGS is assigned as a provisional Chair of the Special Committee and also assists in course selection and identifying potential faculty of interest to the student. By the end of the first semester, graduate students are expected to select their own chair of the Special Committee. The chair must be a member of the Romance Studies Graduate Field, but need not be a member of the department. By the end of the third semester, a three-member special committee consisting of a chair and two (or more) additional faculty members must have been selected by the student. Students may consult with the DGS about selecting members of the Special Committee, with their provisional advisors, or with faculty they take courses with. Typically, students talk with different faculty members and ask if they
agree to serve on committees; these conversations should include communicating research projects and plans for mentorship, expectations, availability, upcoming leaves, potential conflicts, etc.

Students should feel free to reconstitute their committee as their interests evolve and as their contact with faculty members increases and develops. A student can change the chair and/or the other members of their special committee at any time up until the “A” exam. After that time, committees can still be changed through special petition to the Graduate School. It is recommended that the student meet regularly with their Special Committee as needed; it is the student’s responsibility to convene the members of the special committee at least once a year to discuss courses, teaching preferences, preparation of exams, and the general direction of their academic program. We recommend this annual meeting occur at the time of the SPR (Student Progress Review), typically in the middle of the fall semester every year. If there is a conflict with a member of the special committee, the student should ask the DGS to facilitate a conversation or a change in the composition of the committee.

Appointing an Advisor/Committee Member via Student Center
Each graduate student is required to formally appoint an advisor by the end of their first semester and have a full committee (chair plus two minor members) by the end of the third semester of their PhD program. Until the A exam, students are able to go online to input their committee members. Once a faculty member has agreed to advise a student or sit on a student’s committee, the student should go to their Student Center. On the righthand side of the main page is a box titled Advisor. Under the box is a blue link titled Graduate Committee Selection. Students should click on the link and follow the directions to add their advisor and/or committee members. If a student wishes to change the role of a faculty member who is already on their committee, they’ll need to delete that member and add them again in their new role.

Every committee should have only one chair. The term co-chair is only to be used if one of a student’s chairs is no longer at Cornell and unable to legally function as the sole advisor. If a student wishes to have co-chairs and both chairs are active Cornell graduate field members, the student will need to designate one as the chair and the second as a minor member. Please discuss the situation with both chairs before going this route. Only the faculty member who is designated as the chair will receive communications from the Graduate School about the student and be able to sign forms as their chair.

Minor Fields
Students are encouraged to take seminars in other fields to complement their coursework and training in the department. Indeed, the Cornell Graduate School requires that all graduate students declare a minor field outside their major field of specialization. Students are welcome to declare minors in closely related fields, but in theory a student can minor in any field of study that complements their research program. Student are usually not required to complete a specific number of courses in their declared minor field—but there are some minor fields which do require such courses. Please consult with the DGS in the minor field of interest. At minimum, the minor field must be represented by at least one member of their special committee. Most students choose only one minor subject, though graduate school regulations allow election of two.

4. List of Field and Department Faculty

All of the professorial faculty in the Department of Romance Studies are faculty in the Graduate Field of Romance Studies. Additionally, many faculty members from other departments are also in the
Graduate Field of Romance Studies. All faculty in the Graduate Field may chair a Special Committee in Romance Studies. Faculty are also members of many fields; as a student composes their Special Committee, these different memberships represent their minor fields.

**French Literature, French Studies**
Members of the Graduate Field in from the Department of Romance Studies:
- Gerard Aching (also Africana Studies, Latin American Studies minor)
- Ti Alkire (minor membership)
- Laurent Dubreuil (also Comparative Literature and Cognitive Science)
- Mitchell Greenberg (also Comparative Literature and Performing and Media Arts)
- Cary Howie (also FGSS minor, LGBTS minor, and Medieval Studies)
- Kathleen Long (also FGSS minor)
- Tracy McNulty (also Comparative Literature)
- Karen Pinkus (also Comparative Literature and Art)
- Imane Terhmima
- Enzo Traverso (also History)
- Marie-Claire Vallois (also Comparative Literature and FGSS minor)

Members of the Graduate Field from Other Departments:
- Naminata Diabate, Department of Comparative Literature
- Paul Friedland, Department of History
- Natalie Melas, Department of Comparative Literature
- Jonathan Monroe, Department of Comparative Literature
- Timothy Murray, Departments of English and Comparative Literature

**Italian Literature, Italian Studies**
Members of the Graduate Field from the Department of Romance Studies:
- Ti Alkire (minor membership)
- Timothy Campbell (also Comparative Literature and Performing and Media Arts)
- Cary Howie (also FGSS minor, LGBTS minor, and Medieval Studies)
- Marilyn Migiel (also FGSS minor and Medieval Studies)
- Karen Pinkus (also Comparative Literature and Art)
- Enzo Traverso (also History)

Members of the Graduate Field from Other Departments:
- Kevin Attell, Department of English
- D. Medina Lasansky, Department of Architecture

**Spanish and Portuguese Literatures, Spanish and Portuguese Studies**
Members of the Graduate Field from the Department of Romance Studies:
- Gerard Aching (also Africana Studies, Latin American Studies minor)
- Julia Chang (also FGSS minor)
- Liliana Colanzi
- María Antonia García (emerita)
- Patricia Keller (also Comparative Literature, Art, and Performing and Media Arts)
- Edmundo Paz-Soldán (also Latin American Studies minor)
- Simone Pinet (also Medieval Studies)
- Enzo Traverso (also History)
- Irina Troconis

Members of the Graduate Field from Other Departments
5. Courses

The Graduate Field of Romance Studies extends beyond the confines of the department and its composition reflects the commitment to interdisciplinarity that characterizes the humanities at Cornell. Drawing on this field structure, students design a program of study that is comparatist and interdisciplinary in approach, and are encouraged to develop a high degree of theoretical and methodological awareness. The structure of the program allows students to focus on an area of specialization while completing a concentration in a minor field. Typical concentrations have included feminist, gender and sexuality studies; performing and media arts (whether in the film and video concentration, or theatre); art history; medieval studies; and comparative literature.

Students fulfill their graduate requirements by taking coursework in the Department of Romance Studies and in other departments at Cornell. During the first two years, students plan a full load of courses in their major and minor fields and are expected to take a minimum of 14 courses over a three-year period. The normal load is four courses per semester while on first-year fellowship, and three courses per semester for those holding teaching assistantships in the second year, with any remaining coursework in the third year.

**Required courses**

All incoming students are required to take the Romance Studies Colloquium (ROMS 6100) during their first semester. In the second semester of their first year, students must take Language Methodology (ROMS 5070) in preparation for their teaching assignments as TAs. Both of these are S/U grade option and they both count towards the 14-course requirement. These courses may not be substituted by any previous coursework.

In the Spanish and Portuguese concentration, students are required to take one obligatory 6000-level seminar in Hispanic and/or Lusophone studies every semester up until their Q exam (4 semesters), though they may of course continue to choose these seminars after their Q exam. This course must be taken for a letter grade (it may not be taken pass/fail or audited when taken as a requirement). This seminar is intended to allow students to explore different periods, themes, methodologies, and theories of the entire field in preparation for the Q exam, and to help students develop a sense of community with each other and with faculty in the program.

**Incomplete (INC) grades**

A grade of incomplete (INC) may only be granted by the instructor of record, it is not automatic and the instructor may deny it. Students must request this in a timely manner from the instructor and, if granted, agree with the instructor on a submission date, which may not exceed a year after the end of the course. If the outstanding work is not submitted by the established date, the grade becomes permanent. Students may not have a grade of INC for required courses.
Audits
Many students choose to take courses beyond the required 14 courses. These may be taken for an audit grade—but note that not all instructors allow audits, and many still expect work from students. Check with your instructor first. No course taken for an audit grade may count towards the required 14 courses.

Independent studies
Graduate students who wish to pursue specific research otherwise unavailable through normal coursework under the guidance of individual faculty, may ask a faculty member for an independent study. Please be aware that these require the faculty member to allocate time equivalent to another course, on top of their usual teaching, research, and service loads, and thus may be unable to accept your request.

S/U grades
The Field requires that you take no more than one S/U course per semester, other than the required Colloquium (fall of your first year), and the Methodology class (spring of your first year). Courses that are taken S/U beyond these limits may not count toward the course requirements.

Be aware that not all courses allow a S/U option, and that the requirements from different instructors for an S grade will vary. Since both the colloquium and the methodology course are S/U, if you take the remaining 12 courses within the first 2 years, you would be able to take up to 4 courses S/U out of the remaining 12; if you take all three years pre-A for coursework, you could take up to 6 courses S/U out of the remaining 12.

Tips from students on coursework:

“I can never stress enough how important it is to complete the majority of your course load before the year of your A exam. Since we seldom encounter direct affinity with our own interests, you will need the entire year of your A exam to adjust your scope. This is the time to check out reading lists, take directed Independent Studies with members of your committee, annotate your bibliography, and, of course, think about your prospectus.”

“Resist the pressures to take more than 3 graduate-level seminars per semester.”

“If you are a first or second year, I wholeheartedly recommend enrolling in the Olin Library Immersion Program offered in January. This is an intensive workshop that will facilitate the ways in which you do research, and it covers all the essentials. Doing the program after your second year might not come in as handy, because by that time, most likely you will have learnt these things the hard way, by trial and error.”

Course Enrollment Process
The Cornell University Registrar opens enrollment four times a year: pre-enrollment for the fall semester the preceding April, regular fall enrollment in August and September, pre-enrollment for the spring semester in November, and regular spring enrollment in January. Graduate students are urged to register during the pre-enrollment period. Exact enrollment dates are available on the university Registrar’s calendar (https://registrar.cornell.edu/calendar) and will be announced via email by the GFA.
To register for classes, go to your Student Center homepage and find the Enrollment section. For more information on enrolling, see https://registrar.cornell.edu/classes-enrollment. Please keep in mind that due to the interdisciplinary nature of the program, Romance Studies students can take classes in other departments such as English, History of Art, German Studies, Philosophy, etc. Discuss your plans with your advisor and/or committee to make sure that all chosen classes will count towards your 14-class requirement.

Graduate students in Romance Studies can enroll in language classes, but must do so for full credit. Due to their participatory nature, language courses cannot be audited.

As detailed above, graduate students may enroll in an independent study with a faculty member with the instructor’s permission. Please contact Cal Hile (clh2@cornell.edu or K165 Klarman) to process the approval.

6. Field Exams

All concentrations in the Romance Studies Field must complete a Q (Qualifying) exam before the end of their second year in the program. The different concentrations in the program have different structures for their Q exam; these are detailed below.

All doctoral programs are required by the Graduate Faculty Code of Legislation to have an A Exam, which can be completed after two semesters of registration and must be completed before the start of the 7th semester (Code F.1.c.). Since both faculty and graduate students spend the summer months doing research, students should plan to take their A exams before the end of their 6th semester (spring semester of their 3rd year), unless exceptional circumstances prevent them from doing so. Some fields require its completion sooner. The different concentrations in the program have different structures for their A exam; these are detailed below.

Also, doctoral students take a Final Examination (the B Exam, which is the oral defense of the dissertation) upon completion of all requirements for the degree, no earlier than one month before completion of the minimum registration requirement (Code F.1.d.). All concentrations in the Romance Studies Field have the same structure for the B exam.

Tips from students on preparing for exams:

“Some of us begin the program with a rough sketch of where we want our studies at Cornell to take us. If we are lucky, some of our work during the first 4 semesters as graduate students will align or touch upon our interests; oftentimes, they will not. And this is a good thing as long as you embrace the fact that an exposure to different subjects, literatures, and even entirely different fields of study will contribute on the formation of something that no class in the curriculum will cover: methodology. While we invest our time and focus in classes, essay-writing, and readings to prepare the Q exam, many of us become oblivious to the steps beyond that preliminary qualification, and it becomes incredibly challenging to identify the fruits of such labour, as it is not immediately related to our dissertation. However, if you think of methodology as the scaffolding to your future work, you might discover incredibly advantageous ways to approach all pre-A undertakings.”
“Q exam: I worked by myself (I have no cohort in my language), but my committee gave me extensive feedback for revisions. Originally my Q exam was a 12-page final paper for a summer program, but I reworked it into a 30-page paper. During the exam, my committee members gave me constructive criticism that was intended to help me use parts of the paper for a journal article and eventually my dissertation. They knew about my interests and wanted the time and energy I'd spent writing and revising to produce work that could one day become concrete.”

“Consider what your strengths and weaknesses are as a researcher and propose to your committee what kind of Q exam or A exam would benefit your project, your needs.”

“I had expected more help than I received. I still hope to have more feedback from my advisor but at the same time I am aware of my own slow progress in the past year. I learned two lessons here: 1) Always ask yourself first what kind of help you really need. Instead of saying I hope to get more "feedback/guidance" from my committee members, be more specific. 2) Adapt yourself from being a student to a scholar, which means you cannot follow professors' syllabus for reading or writing but create your own research and try to engage them with your questions and discoveries.”

“A exam: I'm working by myself, but all of my committee members gave me helpful advice for constructing my reading/film lists and even helped me add/remove works as necessary, based on my interests. We met beforehand to determine exactly how I should construct my reading/film lists, and we ended up deciding it would be most helpful for me to organize them geographically since I already have a theme on which I want to work.”

“When preparing for the Q Exam, I got help from faculty members of our department and worked with my cohorts. As for the A Exam, I only got help from one committee member. I think part of the reason is that I didn't really know how to ask for help and engage my advisor. Before my A, I discussed with my advisor no more than five times, and twice with the committee member from whom I got real help. I did attend the Graduate School's Writing Bootcamp organized by Jan Allen, which was helpful. I wrote an article of about 33 pages and a prospectus for my A Exam. Although I still feel confused about my dissertation, the A Exam was absolutely helpful in the sense that it pushed me to advance; it was the first step to embrace the uncertainty that is internal to the process of dissertation writing.”

“A prospectus should be a ‘pocket-size’ map, as it were, to help your committee (and yourself) navigate your project; it is not a Faustian pact, and you can always modify it later, by adding or removing a chapter, changing course in your research and topics, etc. It is advisable, however, that your prospectus be submitted alongside a conscientious piece of writing which will hopefully be a proto-chapter of your dissertation.”

**French**

**Q Exam**

The purpose of the “Q” (“Qualifying”) exam is to evaluate the quality of the student’s written work and skill at detailed textual analysis. After completing the first year of the program, the student selects—from among the seminar papers they have written—the essay that best reflects their scholarly interests and abilities. The student will then discuss the paper with the committee in order to determine how the paper might best be revised and reworked to develop its argument and scholarly
apparatus. These revisions will normally be undertaken during the summer after the first year of graduate study, during which time the student is encouraged to solicit feedback on the essay from members of the faculty.

No later than the third semester in the program, the student submits the final version of the essay to the members of the committee and schedules a one-hour exam. During the exam, the committee members will ask questions about the paper, identify its strengths and weaknesses, and discuss possible directions the student’s work might take in the future. If the committee is satisfied with the quality of the student’s work, they can begin preparing for the “A” exam. But if the committee finds that the paper does not meet the standard for graduate work, the student may be asked to further revise the paper or, if the work is especially poor, advised to seek a terminal M.A. degree rather than continue in the doctoral program.

All decisions about the Q exam in French are made by the Special Committee.

A Exam
Prior to taking the “A” (“Admission to Candidacy”) exam, the student must complete all required coursework (and any outstanding incompletes) as well as fulfill the second foreign language requirement.

In consultation with the members of the special committee, each student devises three different exam topics, each with its own problematic and reading list. Students are free to compose lists based on their interests; however, the reading list as a whole must demonstrate both historical breadth and attention to different genres. Each topic will include a substantial list of primary works (which may include literary or historical texts, works of criticism, theory, or philosophy, or films and other media) in addition to relevant secondary criticism. The objective of the “A” exam is to test the student’s knowledge of the scope and genealogy of each problem, and their conceptual understanding of—and skill at reading—the selected texts. It is expected that at least one of these topics will represent a preliminary exploration of the student’s dissertation topic.

About a month prior to the beginning of the examination period, the student will distribute to the committee a final reading list for each of the topics, preceded by a brief (1/2 to 1 page) description of the problematic for that topic and some of the questions or problems the student proposes to explore. In general, one committee member is responsible for each topic; however, the student and the committee may decide to apportion this responsibility differently depending on the circumstances.

The exam has two components: three timed essay examinations, and an oral examination (lasting no more than two hours) to discuss the results of the written exams. Although the schedule for the written exams may be determined by the student in consultation with the committee, all three exams must be completed within a two-week period. Each exam period lasts 24 hours, beginning at the time the student picks up the question.

The exam can have one of three outcomes: pass, fail, or conditional pass. In the case of a conditional pass, the student may be asked to do some additional work to satisfy the committee’s concerns. In the case of failure, the student may be asked to re-take the exam at a later time or, if the quality of the work is especially poor, advised to seek a terminal M.A.

All decisions about the A exam in French are made by the Special Committee.
Dissertation Prospectus
Within three months of completing the “A” exam, the student will submit to the committee a brief (7-15 page) prospectus of the dissertation, outlining the problems or questions they propose to explore in the dissertation, how they will be approached, and a preliminary outline of the contents of individual chapters. If approved, a copy of the prospectus will be filed with the department.

Italian
Q Exam
The main purpose of the “Q” or “Qualifying” Exam is to evaluate each student’s ability to do the kind of original research work and analysis required of a successful Ph.D. candidate. Additionally, the Q exam may be used to assess the student’s pedagogical and linguistic skills. Ideally, the Q exam will provide an opportunity for the student and the special committee to discuss possible directions the student’s work might take in the future.

Students must take the Q exam by the end of the fourth semester in the program. This exam consists of a longer essay (possibly developed from course work) and short answer questions, followed by an oral discussion. Because the Q exam depends on directives provided by the members of the special committee, the student would be well advised to constitute a three-person committee as early as possible, and no later than the end of the student’s third semester.

If the committee is satisfied with the quality of the student’s Q exam, the student can begin preparing for the A exam. If the committee finds that the Q exam does not meet the standard for graduate work, the committee will ask the student to complete further portions of the exam or the committee will recommend a terminal M.A. degree.

All decisions about the Q exam in Italian are made by the Special Committee.

A Exam
The “A” exam is an oral exam that usually does not exceed two hours. Based on an extended piece of written work presented to the special committee—usually a paper designed to serve as the introduction or first chapter of the dissertation—the “A” exam tests the student’s competence in their area of specialization.

Students should plan to spend a significant amount of their time during, at least, one semester in preparation for this paper, consulting frequently with their committee chair as they define a topic of research, prepare an outline and begin the writing process. The paper presented for the A exam should not be a first draft, but rather a finished piece of writing, scholarly in scope and complete with appropriate bibliography (most such papers are twenty to fifty pages long). The completed paper should be made available to all members of the special committee at least one week (preferably two) prior to the date agreed upon for the examination.

During the examination, members of the special committee question the candidate on the worth and coherence of their topic and on their understanding of the texts and problems of interpretation that the topic raises. Students who pass the A exam receive recommendations from committee members for further work on the dissertation. In the event of failure, the student repeats the examination on the basis of a new or revised paper.

All decisions about the A exam in Italian are made by the Special Committee.
**Spanish and Portuguese**

**Q Exam**

Students will take their Qualifying (“Q”) Examinations at the end of their fourth semester in the program. The Q exams are based on lists of major works in four areas, these lists are available from the DGS or the GFA as soon as students enter the program. Depending on their areas of research and interest, students have a choice between presenting written exams at the end of the fourth semester or formulating a syllabus/lesson plan at the graduate and undergraduate level for these areas.

Students are able to begin work as early as their first year to prepare for these. Students will all take exams in two areas and present syllabi/lesson plans in the remaining two. After passing the Q exams, students are no longer required to take the obligatory 6000-level seminar in Hispanic and/or Lusophone studies, though they may of course choose to do so. Students pass (or fail) the exams in one/all of the separate four areas. They may retake the Q exam in areas they failed within a semester of the first Q exam; if they fail a second time, students will be asked to leave the program with a terminal master’s degree awarded on the basis of coursework, if all coursework has been submitted and received a passing grade.

**All decisions on the Q exam in Spanish/Portuguese are made by the Exam Committee (appointed by the DGS from the field faculty in Hispanic literatures and cultures/studies at the beginning of each academic year).**

**A Exam**

After their Q exams, students typically dedicate one semester to the preparation of their Admission to Candidacy (“A”) Examination. The A exam can be taken anytime during a student’s third year in the program, but must be taken by the end of the sixth semester (before the summer term).

Prior to taking the “A” exam, the student must also demonstrate proficiency in a second foreign language that complements the student’s course of study. Proficiency can be demonstrated through coursework or by written examination.

The A exam consists of a meeting with the student’s special committee, in which a combination of a draft chapter/paper and a draft of a prospectus of the dissertation are presented to the committee and discussed. The result of the A exam can be pass, conditional pass, or fail. A conditional pass and a fail’s consequences are determined by the Special Committee, who will detail the work and deadline for such work that is to be submitted, to not exceed six months after the date of the first A exam. In the case of failure to meet these deadlines or turn in the work, a second fail will occur, and the student will be asked to leave the program.

**All decisions on the A exam in Spanish/Portuguese are made by the Special Committee.**

**All programs**

**B Exam**

All concentrations have the same structure for the B exam.

The “B” exam is the defense of the dissertation. Each member of the special committee usually presents to the candidate a brief written judgment and critique of the dissertation along with a checklist of errors to be corrected. The major aims of the exam are to assure the candidate that the dissertation has been carefully read and considered and to allow the student to engage in a serious discussion of the work.

**All decisions on the B exam are made by the Special Committee.**
Graduate School Requirements:
* appoint a Special Committee Chair by end of the first semester
* set up Special Committee by end of 3rd semester (Chair+2 or more minor members)
* complete A exam by end of 6th semester
* complete PhD by 7th year

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Romance Studies Requirements</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>FRENCH</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Second language req.</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>(before A exam)</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Minor field</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Usually via Special Committee member (but some minor fields do have course requirements)</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Coursework</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>over 3 years or 6 semesters (before A exam)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Q exam</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>FRENCH</strong>: 3rd semester</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>ITALIAN</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>SPANISH/PORTUGUESE</strong> by end of 2nd year (or 4th semester)</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>A exam</strong>: by end of 6th semester</td>
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be related to dissertation work)
• 3 timed, written examinations over 2-week period (24 hours for each exam), and oral exam at end (2 hours max)
• **PROSPECTUS**: within 3 months of A exam, students submit a 7-15 page dissertation prospectus to SC
• in consultation with Special Committee

| B exam | Thesis defense (oral), 2 hours max with Special Committee |

**Scheduling Q, A, and B exams, reporting results, degree conferrals**

**Scheduling exams**
Q exams are internal department exams. Students in French and Italian should discuss the timing with their committees. Agreement between a student and their committee is all that is needed to schedule the exam. Once the exam has occurred, the chair of the committee will report the results of the exam to the GFA and DGS. The Spanish Q exam takes place during late April or May of a student's second year. The actual date for writing the two essays will be decided by the GFA in consultation with that year's cohort. The GFA will proctor the essay portion of the Spanish Q exam, send the completed essays to the Spanish exam committee, and record the results of the exam.

A and B exams are overseen by the Graduate School. Students should decide on a date, time, and location in consultation with their committees and then go to [https://gradschool.cornell.edu/forms/](https://gradschool.cornell.edu/forms/) to fill out the online A or B exam schedule form. Once a student has submitted the first portion of the form, emails will be sent to the student’s committee, the DGS, and the GFA to approve the schedule. All schedule forms must be submitted and approved at least seven days before the date of the exam. Students will receive an email from the Graduate School on the morning of their scheduled exam containing a link to the exam results form. Once the exam is completed, students should fill out their portion of the results form and submit it. The committee members, DGS, and GFA will then receive emails asking them to approve the exam decision. The results form must be completed and approved within three working days of the exam.

**MA Degree Conferral Timing**
Students receive a non-thesis Master’s degree after successfully passing their A exam. The MA degree is conferred three times a year: December, May, and August. Students will receive their MA degree on the next conferral date following their exam.

**Dissertation Submission Deadlines**
The Graduate School confers PhD degrees three times a year: December, May, and August. B exams for specific graduation date should be held after the previous degree conferral date has passed (e.g., students should take the B exam for a May conferral date no earlier than January 1). Below is a general timeline for completing your doctoral dissertation requirements. Please check the Graduate School's
planning timeline for the specific dates of the current year (https://gradschool.cornell.edu/academic-progress/thesis-dissertation/writing-your-thesis-dissertation/understanding-deadlines-and-requirements/).

December Conferral Deadlines

- **Submit complete draft to Committee:** 1st week in October
- **Schedule exam:** 1st week in November
- **Take exam:** Mid November
- **Complete revisions:** End of November
- **Submission deadline:** December 1
- **Degree conferred:** December 31

May Conferral Deadlines

- **Submit complete draft to Committee:** 1st week in March
- **Schedule exam:** 1st week in April
- **Take exam:** Mid April
- **Complete revisions:** End of April
- **Submission deadline:** May 1
- **Degree conferred:** May 30

August Conferral Deadlines

- **Submit complete draft to Committee:** 1st week in June
- **Schedule exam:** 1st week in July
- **Take exam:** Mid July
- **Complete revisions:** End of July
- **Submission deadline:** August 1
- **Degree conferred:** August 16

Once the B exam has been passed, the Graduate School takes charge of a student’s progress and dissertation submission. Students have 60 days after their B exam to submit the completed and approved dissertation via ProQuest. All questions regarding formatting and submitting dissertations should be directed to Janine Brace, the dissertation supervisor at the Graduate School. She can be reached at jmb20@cornell.edu. For more information on submitting dissertations, please go to: https://gradschool.cornell.edu/academic-progress/thesis-dissertation/submitting-your-thesis-dissertation/

7. **Research and dissertation writing**

Students are expected to produce original writing based on research conducted both for seminars, and in the devising and writing of a doctoral dissertation. The dissertation is the final product of the PhD and as a single, coherently argued and organized document, is the capstone of the degree, and is defended in the B exam. In preparation for the dissertation, in some cases as part of the A exam, students will prepare a prospectus.
The prospectus is a plan of the dissertation research, and is generally from 20-40 pages long. In general terms, a prospectus will present:

- A question or problem (or series of interrelated questions or problems) to be examined in the dissertation
- overview of the importance of the question or problem to the discipline/field
- what is known as a literature review, which may include: an overview of the major critical history of the problem/set of texts being discussed; notes on potential gaps or openings for further research and interpretation; reflection on potential for reorienting criticism/field/approaches
- discussion of orientations/theories/methodologies to be used
- outline of chapters
- timetable for submission of drafts of each chapter
- bibliography

Cornell has superb research facilities, and the collection, enhanced by its partnerships with BorrowDirect, brings its resources to over 70 million volumes and multiple databases. In addition, the specialized collections offer possibilities for research in several areas, languages, and periods of study.

The Cornell Library offers workshops and individualized consultations for research in all areas, both for courses and for dissertation work. Training in the use of bibliographic software is also available.

The Knight Center offers a number of programs for graduate students, from courses to tutoring, including for non-native speakers of English (ELSO, English Language Support Office). Additionally, the Graduate School offers numerous writing boot camps, workshops, and listservs, complemented by dissertation writing groups initiated by students and supported by different programs on campus (Society for the Humanities, for example).

Romance Studies may offer workshops on article writing, dissertation writing, and/or publishing in general throughout the academic year. Planning for writing throughout the doctoral program, whether for seminars or for the dissertation, is an important responsibility of the student. Seeking feedback from faculty, and in the case of dissertation writing, from the special committee, and integrating it into the different revisions a polished piece will require in a timely and regular manner is another component of writing that requires careful planning and initiative on the part of the student.

Between the A and the B exam there are three years of independent research and writing that must be carefully managed by the student and balanced with teaching responsibilities. Writing, seeking feedback, and incorporating comments and suggestions are the responsibility of the student. One of these years of independent research and writing, the fourth or fifth year in the program, is a SAGE fellowship year without teaching responsibilities, which students must plan to use for archival or field research and/or for intensive writing. Good academic standing in this entire period depends on evidence of progress on the dissertation and good performance in teaching. These are assessed through reports on teaching, the SPR, and graduate student progress meetings conducted the second half of every fall semester.

For guidance, we offer here a template of what is expected of graduate students to be in good standing in terms of coursework and dissertation research and writing at every semester—teaching
responsibilities are not detailed here. Professionalization guidelines are in blue. Academic plans and reports on research that the Graduate School (GS) requires are in italics. Remember that other than the GS’s, these are not strict deadlines that must be met, but flexible guidelines meant to support student planning and which will require individual supplementation. They do not consider situations such as specific language training needed or external fellowships. Summer periods may be used to complete work, or to supplement with additional specialized training (palaeography, digital humanities, pedagogy, etc.), summer courses (School for Criticism and Theory, etc.), language training (suggested: first and second-year summer period), and other research activities, including travel and field work (suggested: second and third summer period).

RESEARCH AND WRITING GUIDELINES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year 1</th>
<th>Fall</th>
<th>Spring</th>
<th>Summer</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sage fellowship</td>
<td>Research and write four seminar papers (25 pages each, 100 pages)</td>
<td>Research and write three seminar papers + Methodology course (25 pages each, 75 pages)</td>
<td>Language or other specialized training.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year 2</td>
<td>TA</td>
<td>Research and write two or three seminar papers (50-75 pages) Identify and send abstracts for conferences Polish seminar paper for publishing Submit a proposal for external grant/fellowship</td>
<td>Research and write two or three seminar papers (50-75 pages) Identify and send abstracts for conferences Polish seminar paper for publishing File an academic plan with the GS by May 1 to receive summer funding Submit a proposal for external grant/fellowship</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year 3</td>
<td>TA</td>
<td>If necessary, finish coursework. Prepare A exam (which entails research and writing for the dissertation, whether lists, introduction, a chapter, prospectus, etc.) (50-75 pages) Submit a proposal for external grant/fellowship</td>
<td>Research and complete first chapter/draft of introduction (50-75 pages) Participate in a conference A exam File an academic plan with the GS by May 1 to receive summer funding Submit a proposal for external grant/fellowship</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year 4</td>
<td>TA or Sage fellowship NB: No summer funding</td>
<td>Research and turn in a draft of second chapter of dissertation (40-50 pages) Polish seminar paper for publishing Submit a proposal for external grant/fellowship</td>
<td>Incorporate feedback, turn in polished second chapter (40-50 pages) ---progress: 30-40% of dissertation Participate in a conference File an academic plan with the GS by May 1 to receive summer funding with achievements from previous summer Submit a proposal for external grant/fellowship</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Tips from students on research, conferences:**

“Get involved with reading groups early. Interdisciplinary possibilities are Cornell's strength.”

“The one most important thing for PhD students: establish good writing habits (always summarize reading materials and write regularly) ASAP!”

“I often use h-net.org and UPenn's websites for humanities call for papers' posts, grants, and workshops, etc. (with a focus on CFPs and grants): https://call-for-papers.sas.upenn.edu/; https://networks.h-net.org/tags/cfp”

“I use the LASA and other language/area/ethnic studies organizations websites to search for grants, workshops, and conferences. It definitely helps having a good committee chair who can have a letter of recommendation on file and/or have one ready to be modified for more specific applications. Clarifying to your committee chair in advance what you want to apply for ahead of time can also destress the process so that no one is pressured; reminders help.”

### 8. Required training

Per the Code of Legislation, the Graduate Faculty requires all research degree students, both master’s and doctoral, to complete training in responsible conduct of research, including authorship, peer review, and avoidance and consequences of research misconduct. This training is through the Cornell Office of Research Integrity and Assurance (ORIA) and must be completed before the end of the second semester (Code E.2.a.).

If teaching for the Department of Romance Studies, students are required to take a course, Language Methodology (ROMS 5070) in preparation for their teaching assignments as TAs, as detailed above.

All graduate students teaching First-Year Writing Seminars are required to take Writing 7100: Teaching Writing, offered in the summer (for those teaching in the fall) or fall (for those teaching in the spring). Writing 7100 meets for two and a half hours a week for six weeks and requires the completion of some 300 pages of reading and six written assignments. This does not count towards the 14-course requirement.
9. Academic Plans and Student Progress Review

Every October, all Romance Studies graduate students are required to complete both a departmentally distributed academic plan for the next academic year and the annual Student Progress Review required by the Graduate School (please see https://gradschool.cornell.edu/academic-progress/requirements-milestones/student-progress-review/ for more information of the Review’s content).

These documents help the department get a general sense of students’ progress and plan the teaching assignments for the next year, highlighting any issues or successes that students are experiencing. Students should begin preparing for report season in September by making an appointment with their advisor and/or committee to discuss their accomplishments of the previous year and plans for the next. On the academic plan, students announce whether they wish to teach during the next year or take the second year of their Sage/Dean’s Excellence fellowships so the discussion with a student’s advisor and/or committee is essential for proper planning purposes.

French Exchange Program

On the departmental academic plan, French students are asked if they wish to participate in the French Exchange program, which every year allows one Cornell graduate student to spend a year in Paris, France teaching English courses at the U. de Paris VIII. Students must have completed their A exam to be eligible and they must be native speakers of English.

In absentia and Leaves of Absence

Students may want to apply for in absentia (IA) status or to take a leave of absence during their graduate program. To decide between the two, read the descriptions below.

In absentia

IA is for students not on fellowship or teaching assistantships who are doing research or other academic work outside of Ithaca. To be eligible, students must prove that they are living at least 100 miles from Ithaca and are still academically active. Students on IA are technically full-time and remain registered, but only are charged for SHP and IA tuition ($200 a semester). Deadlines for IA are April 15 for the fall semester or full academic year and November 15 for the spring semester. For more information, go to https://gradschool.cornell.edu/policies/in-absentia/.

Leave of Absence

There are two types of leave: personal and medical. Students can take a personal or medical leave of absence at any time. Doing so will inactivate their full-time registered status (NB: visa status may be affected by this for international students). For more information on leaves and which might be the best for your situation, go to https://gradschool.cornell.edu/policies/personal-leave-of-absence/ for personal leaves of absence and https://gradschool.cornell.edu/policies/health-leave/ for health leaves of absence. Both personal and health leaves stop the clock on a student’s time to degree. Students may renew leaves for up to four years without it affecting their ability to return to full-time study.

10. Funding

Sage/Dean’s Excellence Fellowship Financial Information

All accepted Romance Studies graduate students are guaranteed funding for six years, two academic years and four summers of Sage/Dean’s Excellence Fellowships, and four years of Teaching Assistantships. The stipend amounts for fellowship years and Teaching Assistant salaries are identical.
In academic year 2021-22, students on fellowship will receive a stipend of $28,654. The stipend for summer 2022 is $6,037. Stipend amounts normally increase yearly. The next year's amounts are determined by the Cornell Board of Trustees every February.

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<th>Year</th>
<th>Fall</th>
<th>Spring</th>
<th>Summer</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Sage Fellowship</td>
<td>Sage Fellowship</td>
<td>Fellowship</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>TA</td>
<td>TA</td>
<td>Fellowship</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>TA</td>
<td>TA</td>
<td>Fellowship</td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>TA or Sage Fellowship</td>
<td>TA or Sage Fellowship</td>
<td>Fellowship</td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>TA or Sage Fellowship</td>
<td>TA or Sage Fellowship</td>
<td>No Summer Funding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>TA</td>
<td>TA</td>
<td>No Summer Funding</td>
</tr>
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Students on academic year fellowships will receive two stipend disbursements of ½ the academic year total: the first in August a few days before the start of fall courses ($14,327 for Fall 2021), the second in January a few days before the start of spring courses ($14,327 for Spring 2022). Summer stipends are disbursed at the end of May. Fellowship stipends are disbursed through the Cornell Bursar system and the university requests that all students with a US bank account sign up for direct deposit (go to https://www.dfa.cornell.edu/bursar/students-parents/deposit-refunds to enter your bank information into the Bursar system). Students without a US bank account will be mailed paper checks to the home address listed in Student Center about 10-12 days after the direct deposit disbursement date. Please make sure your home address in Student Center is the address to which you wish the checks mailed. For other international payments, such as wire transfers, please contact the Bursar at bursar@cornell.edu. Student health insurance and tuition is paid by the Cornell Graduate School during fellowship years. Note: Students on fellowship are not technically employees of Cornell and will not receive a W-2 form for the semesters of fellowship. Fellowships are considered income, however, and tax forms, both federal and NY state, will need to be filed declaring fellowship stipends.

Graduate School statistics, as well as different studies conducted among the IVY+ Graduate Schools, show that students taking longer than 6 years to finish their doctoral degrees are much less likely to be in candidate pools for academic jobs. It is in the students’ best interest to plan to obtain their degree before or within their guaranteed funding package of 6 years.

**Teaching Assistant Financial Information**
Romance Studies guarantees four years of teaching assistant employment to all accepted students. Students begin teaching in the second year of their program, teach during their third year, and take their second year of their Sage/Dean’s Excellence Fellowship either their fourth or fifth year, and teach the remaining two years. Under no circumstances will students be allowed to postpone their second Sage year beyond the fifth year of guaranteed funding.

**Teaching Assistant Letters and Contracts**
In late February or early March, each student assigned teaching for the entire next academic year or one semester of the next academic year will receive a letter from the DGS confirming their next year’s TA appointment. Students taking their Sage/Dean’s Excellence Fellowship will not receive a funding letter. Their fellowship is guaranteed and therefore no letter is necessary. In the letter, TAs will be informed of their responsibilities and the scheduling of TA orientation in both August and January of
the next academic year, if applicable, and will be asked to email the GFA a signed copy of the letter accepting their TAship offer. If no response is received by the deadline requested, the department reserves the right to rescind the offer and find a replacement TA.

Specific teaching assignments will not be listed in the winter funding notification letter. Students will be notified of their specific teaching assignments by email before the end of the spring semester in which the letter is sent. Please note that even after the initial teaching notifications, specific teaching assignments may be changed dependent upon the needs of the department. Students will be notified of any course assignment changes as soon as they are known.

Formal TA contracts are created and released through the Workday system once TA appointments are processed in the summer preceding teaching. Students will receive an email from Workday when the contract is available for review and acceptance. Students should click on the link in the Workday email to legally accept their Teaching Assistantship for the next academic year and/or semester.

Teaching Assistants receive a salary for their duties: $28,654 in 2021-22.

TAs are paid semi-monthly, on the 15th and last day of every month of employment. TA salaries are disbursed through the Cornell HR payroll system, a separate system from the Bursar's system used for fellowship disbursements. The university strongly urges TAs to sign up for direct deposit, which is done at https://www.dfa.cornell.edu/payroll/employees/directdeposit.

Student health insurance and tuition are paid by the Department of Romance Studies during TA years. Note: TAs are technically employees of Cornell and will receive W-2s for income earned during teaching periods. Income taxes, both federal and NY state, will need to be filed annually declaring both fellowship and TA earnings.

TA appointments run from August 21 to January 5 for Fall appointments and January 6 to May 20 for Spring appointments. Due to the start and end appointment dates, semi-monthly paychecks may be pro-rated, e.g., the August 31 paycheck will cover only the period from August 21 to 31 and the May 31 paycheck will cover only the period from May 16 to 20. Because pay is based on days worked per semester, TAs may receive a different semi-monthly salary than others in their department depending on if they are teaching one semester only or the entire academic year.

Teaching Assignments
Teaching assignments follow a process that involves everyone in the Department. Depending on availability in the Department and what the Knight Institute allocates that year, on the language track you teach in, and on the very different curricula of the three concentrations, and knowing that there are always last-minute changes, the process that we follow for assignments is this:

After consulting with advisors and the committee in preparation of SPR’s due in the second half of each fall semester, students specify in their academic plans which courses they would prefer to teach. The DGS holds meetings, after SPR’s and academic plans have been turned in, with all faculty in each language concentration, both lecturer and professorial, to discuss graduate student progress, which informs our assignments.

These discussions take into account performance in courses, in teaching (when applicable), academic milestones to be completed, and progress in research/dissertation. If teaching skills or research
progress is considered insufficient for advancement, the recommendation might be for the student to teach at a particular level to hone skills, or to protect the student’s time necessary for research by assigning a lower-level language course instead of a more time-consuming FWS, for example. We all understand these recommendations and eventual assignments as protecting of students’ time, as opportunities for learning and perfecting skills, and being in their best interest as they prepare for teaching and for their academic work. These discussions and recommendations are the result of collective consensus among all colleagues present.

Once students have taught a lit/culture class, or a FWS, they cede priority over other students who have not yet had this opportunity. More advanced students have priority over less advanced ones if on equal circumstances regarding teaching. NB: For all lit/culture classes and FWS, we depend on availability and on what the Knight Institute allocates. Italian, French, and Spanish/Portuguese have very different opportunities, so we can make assignments only as those specific curricula allow.

**I9s and Social Security Numbers**

I9s are required for all students employed at Cornell, regardless of citizenship. This form confirms that a student is legally eligible to work in the United States. Students in their first year are not required to file an I9 because their fellowship is technically not employment. Students will need to file an I9 in their second year before they begin teaching. The I9 process is tied to the Workday TA appointment process outlined in the formal TA contract paragraph above. Once a student is appointed in Workday, the student will receive an email from the Workday system directing the student to enter Workday and fill out the first portion of the I9 form. International students attending Cornell are considered “aliens” for the purpose of the I9. Once the student portion of the I9 is completed and submitted, the student will then bring their supporting documentation to their GFA or a campus I9 processing hub (Google for locations) for review and filing. The I9 must be processed within 5 days of a student’s appointment date or a hold will be implemented banning the student from employment. For example, fall TAs must complete their I9 no later than August 26 (appointment start date August 21).

**Social Security Numbers**

International students on first-year fellowships who have never worked in the United States before and therefore do not have a Social Security number are advised to file for a delay on their first-year's tax returns. Once employed as a TA in their second year, students will be eligible to apply for a SS number in order to file their taxes. To apply, students should wait until they receive their first paycheck on August 31 of their second year, go into the Workday system and print out a copy of their payslip from August 31, and take that payslip to a Social Security office. The local Ithaca Social Security office is located at 127 W State Street (telephone (866) 706-8289).

**Student Health Insurance**

Funded Romance Studies graduate students are covered by the Cornell SHP. As of Spring 2022, coverage for continuing students begins on July 1 every year and runs through June 30 of the following year, for incoming the coverage term is August 1 to June 30. The premiums for funded students are paid by the department (for TAs) or the Cornell Graduate School (for fellowship recipients) twice a year, at the start of each semester.

**Post-Graduation Coverage Extension:**

Students who are changing status with the University due to graduation are eligible for a one-time 3-month extension (there are no variations of time available). The option to extend insurance is new
starting with the 2020 – 2021 plan year. Graduating students who request this option will have coverage that begins immediately after the end of their current coverage term. Please contact SHP to discuss your options.

**SHP for Students on Leave:**
Students who have an approved LOA between July 1 and March 31 will have the option to keep the coverage through June 30. SHB will notify each student of the option to cancel the plan or continue coverage. SHB makes this option known to students once the student status has changed in the University Registrar system.

Students who take a LOA after April 1 will be able to keep the coverage through July 31 and be able to extend their coverage for 3 months (with application and payment) so that they have equitable time on the plan as those who went on leave earlier in the year.

**Graduate School Conference Funds**
The Cornell Graduate School offers each graduate student one conference travel grant per fiscal year (July 1–June 30). The amount offered is dependent on the geographical location of the conference up to a maximum of $675. If you plan to attend more than one conference in a fiscal year, you may want to use this grant for the one most geographically distant. Berkowitz funds can be used to help you pay for the other trips. For more information on the Graduate School Conference grant, please go to https://gradschool.cornell.edu/financial-support/travel-funding-opportunities/.

**Berkowitz Funds**
Romance Studies graduate students have the unique opportunity to access funds from the Department of Romance Studies Berkowitz Endowment. If you have additional questions, please contact Katy Kempf or the Administrative Manager.

1. Berkowitz Graduate Student Conference/Professional/Flex Funds
Romance Studies graduate students are eligible to receive up to $3,550 total during their time in the doctoral program as travel reimbursements for participation at a conference (A), to attend interviews at the MLA (B), to assist with research-related travel (C), to participate in professional growth classes or workshops (D), or to supplement the second-language funds allocated in #2 below (E).

A. Conference Funds: You may elect to use these funds for one or more different trips. Please note that the Department requires that you first apply to the Graduate School for their funding support to participate in a conference. You may apply for one Graduate School Conference Grant each fiscal year (July 1 to June 30). For more information and the application form on the Graduate School website, click here.
If you have been turned down or have not received sufficient funds from the Graduate School to cover your conference travel—and you have not used up your department allotment—please submit a budget request, using this form, to Katy Kempf in advance of your travel. She will review the request and submit it to our department chairperson for approval.

Please attach the following items to your request form:
• a copy of your invitation to present at the conference
• a copy of the page of the conference program showing the session at which you will present
• a copy of the conference travel application you submitted to the Graduate School
• a copy of the Graduate School’s reply to your request

In order to receive the requested funds, you should submit a Cornell University Travel Reimbursement Request to the ROMS staff Accounts Rep upon your return. Copies of this form are available in the copier room. Your request must be accompanied by original receipts for all authorized expenses.

B. MLA Interview Travel: When on the job market, a Romance Studies graduate student can receive funds to attend interviews at the MLA. This will be handled as a travel reimbursement for expenses requested (airfare, ground transportation, hotel room, conference registration, etc.). Please make your requests before the conference to Katy Kempf. The department does not pay for meals.

C. Research Travel: Romance Studies graduate students are eligible to use these funds towards research-related travel. Research travel is defined by the use of location-specific resources (such as archives, museum collections, etc.). To apply for research funding, please attach the following items to your research travel reimbursement request form, signed by your committee chair, and give to Katy Kempf before you depart:
• a statement describing how this trip supports your dissertation research;
• an itinerary and proposed budget; and
• the receipts of expenses already purchased for your trip.

Receipts for any additional items to be reimbursed should be given to Marcus May upon your return.

Please note that the Graduate School also offers competitive travel research grants. For more information, see https://gradschool.cornell.edu/wp-content/uploads/2018/07/Research-Travel-Grant-F7-012616.pdf.

D. Professional Classes and Workshops: Romance Studies graduate students, with the support of their advisors, are eligible to use funds towards taking professional classes and workshops that will enhance their portfolio for the job market or teach them skills not available in the department. To apply for funds for this purpose, please write a statement describing your request, including a proposed budget and a letter of support signed by your committee chair.

E. Flex Funds: These funds can also be used to supplement the departmental funding for language-related research (#2 below).

2. Language-Related Research

Once during your time as a Romance Studies graduate student you are eligible to receive up to $1,500 for language-related research. The request must be made in advance and must include a statement in support of the requested expense signed by your committee chair. Please bring the completed request to Katy Kempf in K173 Klarman Hall. She will verify your eligibility and submit the request to the department chairperson for approval. The items being purchased must be allowable according to university policy. Katy Kempf can answer your questions concerning “allowability.”

External Fellowship Supplementation (Top-Off) Policy

The Cornell Graduate School offers students who receive external fellowships a top-off that increases the external fellowship financial award to the minimum amount a Sage recipient receives during the
period covered by the external fellowship. To qualify, the external fellowship offer must amount to at least half of the stipend and SHP premium for the period covered by the award (e.g., a $10,000 fellowship in Fall 2021 would be eligible for supplementation because it is greater than half of the Sage stipend and SHP for that semester [$14,327 stipend + $1,700 SHP = $16,027]). If you are unsure whether your external fellowship is eligible for a top-off, please go to https://gradschool.cornell.edu/financial-support/fellowships/external-fellowships/supplementation-of-external-fellowships/ or contact the GFA or grad_funding@cornell.edu.

11. Graduate student associations

RSGSA (and GPSA)
Every spring, the Romance Studies graduate students hold an election moderated by the GFA to select the governing board of the Romance Studies Graduate Student Association (RSGSA) for the next academic year. The board consists of five members: a representative to attend university Graduate/Professional Student Association (GPSA) meetings and report on the GPSA’s activities to their fellow graduate students, a faculty representative who attends departmental faculty meetings and reports on them to their fellow graduate students, and the steering committee--three students (one in each language track of French, Italian, and Spanish) who organize visiting speakers and other events for the department’s graduate students.

12. General administration

Office Assignments
Students teaching for the department will be assigned a desk in one of the TA offices on the ground floor of Klarman Hall. Students will be notified of their office assignment during the summer before they begin teaching. Office assignments will not be changed year to year as long as a student continues teaching, but students who leave for their fellowship years will lose their office assignment and will be placed wherever there is availability upon their return to teaching duties. Office keys can be picked up from Cal Hile in K165 Klarman at the beginning of the semester and should be returned to her before leaving for fellowship or graduation. Desk/cabinet keys should be left in the fixture to which they belong. If you are remaining in Ithaca during your dissertation writing fellowship year and would like to use a desk in the TA offices, please let Katy know. Desks can be offered to fellowship students only if there is availability.

The department has left a lecturer office, K148 Klarman, empty for the use of our graduate students. The room is kept unlocked and functions as a private location to talk to undergrad students or to get some work done. Availability is on a first come, first served basis. Please do not lock the room when you leave.

Computer and printer access
Students have access to department-provided desktops and a printer in KG52 Klarman. They also can use the copiers/printers/scanners/fax machine in the K169 Klarman copy room. Each student will be assigned a code for copier access. Please contact a staff member to request your individualized code. If you wish to have network access to the departmental copiers and printers from your personal laptop/tablet, email Klarman-IT@cornell.edu to set up an appointment with one of our IT staff members.
If you are in need of a loaner laptop, DVD player, cord, or adapter for teaching, the department keeps a selection of items in the K161 Klarman cabinet. Availability of these items is on a first come, first served basis. To access the cabinet, please ask a staff member.

**Mailroom**

Students are assigned a mailbox in K161 Klarman. If you want mail to be sent to you at the department, the street address is

<Your Name>
Department of Romance Studies
K161 Klarman Hall
Cornell University
Ithaca, NY 14853

**The Lounge and Kitchen**

K164 Klarman functions as the departmental gathering space and kitchen. Please feel free to use the room at any time unless there is a function underway. The kitchen houses a refrigerator, coffee maker, and microwave as well as dishes, silverware, and mugs available for use by department members. Use what you need, but please return items so that others can use them as well. **Note:** It is the responsibility of every member of the department who uses the kitchen to keep it clean. The janitors and departmental staff are not responsible for cleaning up after you. If you make a mess, please clean up after yourself. There are cleaning items under the kitchen sink to assist with this task.

13. **Department Staff**

There are five staff members in the Department of Romance Studies. Here is a synopsis of their duties. Please be mindful of these as you make a request.

**Cal Hile** ([clh2@cornell.edu](mailto:clh2@cornell.edu), K165 Klarman): Undergraduate coordinator and course enrollment specialist
- Oversees course catalog and roster
- Processes and files course teaching evaluations
- Schedules departmental courses
- Key holder for department
- Building coordinator contact
- Reserves rooms for classes, talks, and events
- Enrollment and registration coordinator for both undergraduates and graduates
- Majors and minors coordinator

**Carolyn Keller** ([cak277@cornell.edu](mailto:cak277@cornell.edu), K170 Klarman): Assistant to the Chair, Human Resources, and Web and Social Media Communications
- Assists Chair with administrative activities
- Oversees faculty searches, appointments, reviews, and promotions
- Advertises departmental accomplishments, courses, and events on social media
- Updates departmental website
- Oversees faculty listservs
Katy Kempf (elk36@cornell.edu; K173 Klarman): Graduate Field Assistant and Events Coordinator
- Administrative contact for all current graduate students
- Processes graduate applications and oversees all graduate recruiting events
- Reserves rooms for events
- Runs events: advertising (poster creations, events listings, email announcements); orders food; makes hotel and restaurant reservations for guest speakers; sets up for and breaks down events
- Updates departmental website, especially graduate pages
- Updates departmental directory and photo boards
- Oversees graduate student and graduate TA listservs

Mary Beth Martini-Lyons (mm524@cornell.edu; K172 Klarman): Administrative Manager
- Oversees department facilities and budget
- Supervises staff members
- Responsible for deciding departmental co-sponsoring of events
- Takes care of departmental technology, including cords, adapters, laptops, etc.
- Reserves rooms for events

Marcus May (mmm493@cornell.edu, K167 Klarman): Accounts Coordinator
- Oversees department accounts
- Processes payments and reimbursements for all department members, including Berkowitz funds and visitor hotel reservations, honoraria, and travel expenses
- Orders departmental supplies and takes care of copiers in K169 Klarman
- Coordinates end of the year party

14. Graduate School Resources

The Office of Academic and Student Affairs works with graduate faculty and graduate students on academic policy and programs, academic integrity and misconduct, responsible conduct of research, petitions requesting exceptions to graduate school policy as outlines in the Graduate Faculty’s Code of Legislation, and academic progress and students status. The office also offers academic, writing and professional development programs, including proposal/thesis/dissertation writing boot camp, the Productive Writer email (Sign Up), Graduate Write-Ins, Productive Writing workshops, Fellowship Application Writing Workshops and Fellowship Listserv Tips, Productive Fellowship Writer Mailing List, Writing and Publishing Workshop Series, Three Minute Thesis Competition, and the Advising Guide for Research Students.

The Office of Inclusion and Student Engagement (OISE) supports an inclusive and welcoming environment for all graduate and postdoctoral scholars, but especially for those from marginalized communities and/or backgrounds historically excluded from and underrepresented in the academy. OISE supports systemic change and promotes a climate of diversity, belonging, equity, engagement, and achievement, which are integral components of graduate and postdoctoral education. OISE supports scholar success through recruitment, diversity fellowships, mentoring, professional, leadership, and community development programming, and ongoing support.
Recognizing that health and academic performance are intimately linked, the Office of Graduate Student Life is a source of information, support, and advocacy that creates a more student-centered graduate student life experience. In addition to being a first-point of contact for students who are struggling or experiencing any form of distress, the Office of Graduate Student Life serves as a coordinating hub with campus-partners that focus on promoting a healthy and holistic student experience. More information on available support is available: https://gradschool.cornell.edu/student-experience/help-and-support/

Jan Allen, Associate Dean for Academic and Student Affairs
jan.allen@cornell.edu, 607-255-4603

Sara Xayarath Hernández, Associate Dean for Inclusion and Student Engagement
Sh267@cornell.edu, 607-255-3030

Jason Kahabka, Associate Dean for Administration
Jek15@cornell.edu, 607-254-3324

Janna Lamey, Senior Assistant Dean for Graduate Student Life
janna.lamey@cornell.edu, 607-255-5184