# African & African Diaspora Studies Department
## The University of Texas at Austin
### Graduate Student Handbook
#### 2018-2019

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1. **Program Overview**

1.1 **Description of AADS Graduate Program**

The graduate program in African and African Diaspora Studies (AADS) at UT Austin is designed to provide students with the skills and perspectives necessary to engage in an interdisciplinary scholarly approach to examining the lives of people of African descent throughout Africa and the African Diaspora, to publish scholarly work, to engage in public and scholarly discourse on race and issues pertinent to the African Diaspora, and to gain academic and professional employment. Students will explore the political, cultural, social, economic, artistic, and intellectual processes of people of African descent, and the personal and public forces that shape their experiences. The curriculum offered is methodologically pluralistic, with a thematic and comparative approach that allows for a multi-layered understanding of Black experiences.

The program’s objective is to provide students with the specialized knowledge in African and African Diaspora Studies (also commonly known as Africana, Black, African and African American, African and/or Black Diaspora Studies) necessary to pursue an academic career, conduct and publish scholarly research in this area or related fields outside of the academy, or gain employment in higher education administration and other related professional careers.

1.2 **Graduate Studies Committee**

The AADS Graduate Studies Committee (GSC) is responsible for oversight and implementation of the AADS graduate program. The GSC also serves as a court of appeals for decisions regarding individual students.

The GSC comprises all tenured, tenure-track, and affiliated Black Studies faculty who hold 100% or 50% appointments in AADS, and who 1) advise graduate students, and 2) teach graduate courses in AADS.

1.3 **Graduate Program Committee**

The AADS Graduate Program Committee (GPC) is a subset of the Graduate Studies Committee (GSC). It comprises three faculty members and a committee chair. The GPC is responsible for making specific recommendations regarding the implementation and administration of the AADS graduate program, including degree requirements and departmental policies/procedures. This committee represents the GSC and is formerly known as the Graduate Steering Committee.

1.4 **Graduate Advisor, Graduate Studies, and Graduate Program Committee Chair Duties and Responsibilities**

The AADS Graduate Advisor serves as the GSC committee chair and GPC chair, and is appointed by the Department Chair to serve a 3-year term. The Graduate Advisor relays
recommendations to the Department Chair, the GSC, and subsequently, the Vice Provost and Dean of Graduate Studies.

The Graduate Advisor administers the graduate program and ensure its success. The Graduate Advisor advises students in matters pertaining to graduate study, including:

- Course registration, including adds and drops
- Admission and degree requirements
- Fellowships, teaching assistantships, and research assistantships
- Degree progress

The Graduate Advisor is also responsible for maintaining graduate student records, certifying degree requirements for graduation, and serving as a liaison and principal point of contact to the Office of Graduate Studies.

GPC Chair Duties include:

- Presiding over GSC meetings and proceedings
- Recommending members for GPC
- Creating new graduate courses and changes to graduate course inventory
- Defining annual admissions and enrollment goals
- Defining degree plan (program of work) requirements
- Recommending students for admission to candidacy
- Designing comprehensive examination and graduation requirements

1.5 Graduate Admissions Committee Duties and Responsibilities

The Graduate Admissions Committee (GAC), a subcommittee of the Graduate Program Committee (GPC), is responsible for the admission of new students to the AADS graduate program. The GAC consists of a chair appointed by the Department Chair, the Graduate Advisor, and three faculty members.

1.6 Graduate Admissions Committee Chair Duties and Responsibilities

The Graduate Admissions Committee Chair is appointed by the AADS Department Chair and provides leadership to the Graduate Admissions Committee (GAC).

1.7 Faculty Advisor/Dissertation Chair

The Faculty Advisor/Dissertation Chair will serve as the student’s qualifying exam advisor while the student is working towards candidacy and the dissertation committee chair when the student is in the dissertation phase of the program. They advise the student on selecting the qualifying exam and dissertation committee(s). The Faculty Advisor/Dissertation Chair also completes all paperwork required for candidacy, the dissertation defense, and graduation.
All AADS faculty are expected to help towards the maintenance of a vibrant academic community that supports and develops AADS graduate students. Faculty advisors perform additional duties to directly support specific MA and/or Ph.D. students assigned to them.

Serving as a faculty advisor is an incredible opportunity to help shape the intellectual and professional development of a rising scholar. It is also a responsibility that is crucial to the growth and viability of the department.

All AADS faculty are expected to:

1. Make themselves available to graduate students by holding regular office hours each semester. This is defined in the AADS department as at least two hours per week plus hours by appointment. Faculty who are on leave are not required to meet this expectation.
2. Respond to student emails within a professional timeframe.
3. Make a reasonable effort to support students in grant-writing and basic academic inquiries about the faculty member’s field of study.
4. Attend faculty/student social events (these are offered at least once every semester).

In addition to these shared tasks of all faculty, the Faculty Advisor/Dissertation Chair is expected to:

5. Meet with their students regularly throughout the semester.
6. Respond to their students’ emails within a professional timeframe, including those regarding students’ academic projects or exams.
7. Become familiar with the funding package of their students (terminal MA, three-year Ph.D., or five-year Ph.D.)
8. Become familiar with the associated basic tenets of academic advising, including course selection and registration processes. (Note: degree plan information is available from the AADS Graduate Coordinator and on the AADS website)
9. Be able to reference program deadlines and procedures for successful completion of the MA and/or Ph.D.
10. Be aware of their students’ graduate course performance, including ones not taken with their faculty advisor.
11. Contribute to the professionalization of their students, including reviewing and suggesting grant and/or fellowship opportunities and processes.
12. Chair their students’ Master’s and/or Ph.D. committees. In this role, the Faculty Advisor/Dissertation Chair is expected to help guide students through the steps leading up to their exams and dissertation, including but not limited to:
   ▪ Consulting on their student’s initial project topic.
   ▪ Directing the development of their student’s Master’s Report (literature review as well as, most notably, the publishable article) by giving feedback and suggestions throughout the process. (MA student)
   ▪ Discussing their student’s three areas of specialization.
   ▪ Guiding their student through the development of their bibliography.
1.8 Graduate Coordinator Duties and Responsibilities

The Graduate Coordinator is a staff member who assists the Graduate Advisor, Graduate Studies Committee (including the Graduate Program Committee Chair), and Graduate Admissions Committee in the daily operations of the graduate program. The Graduate Coordinator also serves as a point of contact for graduate students, the Office of Graduate Studies, other university departments, and external stakeholders.

2. Student Administration

2.1 The Graduate Catalog and the Office of Graduate Studies Website

All AADS graduate students should become familiar with the Graduate Catalog and the Office of Graduate Studies website. The Graduate Catalog is published every two years and contains university-wide policies and procedures. The Catalog is available on-line at http://registrar.utexas.edu/catalogs/graduate.

The Office of Graduate Studies website contains the most current information regarding graduate study at UT. AADS students should always reference this site for assistance with administrative matters: https://gradschool.utexas.edu/academics/policies.

2.2 Initial and Ongoing Advising

The AADS Graduate Advisor works with students (in consultation with their faculty advisors) to ensure registration in the appropriate courses and timely completion of doctoral milestones. The Graduate Advisor must be consulted for registration issues such as late registration, adding and dropping outside of the established add/drop period, leaves of absences, and course load reductions. For more information regarding the Graduate School’s policies and procedures for these issues please see the Graduate Catalog and the Office of Graduate Studies website, https://gradschool.utexas.edu/academics/policies.

2.3 Course Registration

After consultation with their faculty advisor, students register each semester through the Registrar’s online system, https://registrar.utexas.edu/students/registration.

Students must register during designated access periods, indicated in a student’s Registration Information Sheet (RIS). Students who register outside of these designated periods are held to
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the policies associated with late registration. For more information see https://gradschool.utexas.edu/academics/policies/late-registration.

The AADS Graduate Coordinator is available to assist students with special registration needs or problems. Students should include their UT EID in all correspondences concerning registration.

2.4 Adding/Dropping Courses

Students may add/drop courses via the Registrar’s on-line system through the first four class days of the long semester or the first two class days of the summer semester.

Beyond the 5th class day and up until the 12th class day, students may add courses with the permission of the course’s instructor and home academic department and/or drop courses. Any changes to registration should be done in consultation with the Graduate Advisor with the approval of the Graduate Advisor.

2.5 Continuous Registration

All graduate students must maintain continuous registration during the fall and spring semesters, including during the dissertation phase. For regulations requiring continuous registration please see https://gradschool.utexas.edu/academics/policies/continuous-registration.

2.6 Full-Time Course Loads

AADS students are required to maintain a full-time student status during long semesters (registration in at least nine hours). This requirement is necessary for eligibility to receive fellowships, student employment, and international student visas and to reside in university housing. For more information see https://gradschool.utexas.edu/academics/policies/full-time-graduate-student-status.

Conference Courses: Students are allowed to take one conference course in lieu of an elective during their time in the Ph.D. program. Unofficial conference courses with advisors or other faculty are permissible and encouraged but will not count as credits toward a degree.

2.7 Timely Completion of Degree

While the AADS doctoral program is a rigorous and challenging course of study, all AADS doctoral students are expected to complete the doctorate in a timely fashion. This timeline, according to the College of Liberal Arts, requires students to enter candidacy in their third or fourth year and for all work to be completed no later than the sixth year of a student’s program. For more information regarding this policy, please see https://liberalarts.utexas.edu/research/news/8030.
2.8 The 99 Hour Rule

In addition to time limits, students are penalized for accumulating more than 99 doctoral hours. For more information regarding the 99 Hour rule see https://gradschool.utexas.edu/academics/policies/99-hour-rule.

2.9 Grading Policies

Graduate students should not receive a grade lower than a “B-.” Grades of “C” or lower are considered failing grades at the graduate level.

At the end of the student’s first academic semester and then academic year, the GPC will review each student’s grades. If a student has fewer than 4 out of 6 possible “A” grades, the student and his/her adviser will meet with the GPC to determine the best strategies for moving forward.

Students may only have one grade of Incomplete per year. Two incompletes in the same academic year will not be permitted. For more information regarding grading policies, see https://gradschool.utexas.edu/academics/policies/grades-and-credit.

2.10 Annual Review of Student Progress

All students will receive a formal assessment of their academic progress after the completion of the first academic year. The assessments will include evaluations of the student’s academic ability, class participation, professional development, and general acclimatization into graduate study. The Graduate Advisor will conduct interviews with each student to review assessments completed by the student’s first year instructors, faculty advisors, and the student’s self-assessment. The Graduate Advisor and the student’s advisor will address identifiable concerns revealed or discussed during the assessment review. Students may also receive an assessment at the end of subsequent academic years.

3. Terminal Master’s Program and Requirements

3.1 Coursework

The Master of Arts in African and African Diaspora Studies is a 36-hour program consisting of the following:

- 6 hours – Core Coursework (AFR 390: Black Studies Theory 1 and AFR 391: Black Studies Methods)
- 12 hours – AADS Supporting Coursework (one class each in the following areas: Humanities, Social Sciences, Fine Arts, and the African Diaspora)
- 12 hours – electives
- 6 hours – Master’s Report courses (AFR 397R and AFR 398R, taken in appropriate semesters)
3.2 Terminal Master of Arts in African and African Diaspora Studies Program of Work

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year in Program</th>
<th>Fall Semester</th>
<th>Spring Semester</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>- AFR 390 Theory I</td>
<td>- AFR 391 Black Studies Methods</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Supporting AADS course</td>
<td>- Supporting AADS course</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Supporting course</td>
<td>- Supporting course</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>- Supporting AADS course</td>
<td>- Supporting AADS courses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Supporting course</td>
<td>- Supporting course</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Supporting course</td>
<td>- AFR 398R Master’s Report</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3.3 The Master’s Report

The Master's report consists of two thematically linked documents taken in two successive semesters. This work should represent the interdisciplinary nature of Black Studies and demonstrate how the field has helped shape the student's theoretical and methodological development.

Content of Report

The topic of the report is selected in consultation with your faculty advisor. You will complete the following thematically-linked assignments as your report:

1. Literature Review (due at the end of the fall semester)

Your work over both semesters will be synthesized and submitted together to the Graduate School. Students should consult the Graduate School website for the deadline for the spring submission of the complete Master’s Report. For Spring 2018, for example, the date is currently listed as May 8, 2018.

Readers

You need to identify two readers for your Master’s Report: your advisor and a second reader chosen in consultation with your advisor. Both readers need to be a part of the AADS GSC.
1. Literature Review

Students will create a literature review that will serve as the foundation for the publishable article that will be written in the spring. The specific format for the literature review will be determined through consultation between the student and the student’s advisor.

The literature review will be divided into three or four theoretical/topical areas that are central to the development of the publishable essay. For each area, the student must develop a bibliography of 30-40 texts. The student will meet regularly with her/his advisor to review and discuss the texts to be included in the literature review.

The student must submit a draft of the literature review to the second reader within a timeframe that allows ample opportunity for the reader to review the literature review, and for the student to make appropriate revisions.

The completed literature review should be a minimum of 30 pages.

2. Publishable Essay (register for ‘AFR 398R: Master’s Report’*)

*Note: you must register in AFR 398R the semester you are planning to graduate. Registration in this course is limited to the final semester of the student’s enrollment in the MA program.*

Students will produce an article of at least 28-32 pages (8,000-12,000 words) with the intention of submitting the work to a peer-reviewed journal. The Master’s Report is a scholarly essay, and creative works (short stories, collection of poetry, plays, visual art, musical compositions, etc.) are not acceptable. Students wishing to use creative work for their Master’s Report must, in consultation with the student’s advisor, petition the GPC for an exception to this rule. The faculty advisor, who should also work in the creative arts, must provide the GPC with the criteria they will use for assessing creative work.

In consultation with the student’s advisor, the student will identify an appropriate peer-reviewed journal for the submission of the publishable essay (AADS maintains a list of appropriate journals, though the list is not exhaustive). The student will prepare their essay in accordance with the guidelines set forth by the chosen journal.

The student’s advisor will determine whether or not the essay is ready for submission to journal or requires additional revision. If the essay is passable as part of the Master’s Report but not ready for submission to the journal, the student will continue to revise in preparation for submission. Note: As part of the AADS doctoral milestones, students must submit one article for publication.

*CR/No CR is given as a grade for this course – enroll in this course as pass/fail. Although highly discouraged, this course may be repeated if necessary. AFR 398R must always be taken the final semester of enrollment in the Master’s program. A grade for this course is only counted
the final semester of enrollment – if repeated, previous iterations of the course will be recorded as a permanent incomplete.

**Master’s Report Submission**

Through an online system, students will submit both the Literature Review and the Publishable Essay in one document as their Master’s Report. The deadline is published each semester on the Office of Graduate Studies website. This submission will be overseen by the Office of the Graduate School.

In addition to filling out an online application to graduate, students must also upload a PDF file of their report to the Texas Digital Library (TDL) by a set date and time. Your report will be made available to the public through this database. You must also submit a paper version of certain pages in your report (outlined at the link below) to the grad school by the submission deadline. Students will follow all submission guidelines and deadlines stipulated by the Graduate School, found on the OGS website: [https://gradschool.utexas.edu](https://gradschool.utexas.edu).

**For Students Completing the M.A. on the way to the Ph.D.:**

Upon completion of the Master's report, the Graduate Program Committee reviews each student's progress during the fourth semester of study, making one of the following recommendations: 1) proceed to doctoral degree requirements upon satisfactory completion of master's degree requirements; or 2) exit the program receiving an M.A.

4. **Ph.D. Program and Requirements**

4.1 **Ph.D. Coursework**

Students must take a minimum of 60 hours of coursework, but a student's plan of study varies based on their advisor’s guidance and preparation in Black Studies upon entry to the program.

Students without a Master’s degree from another institution must complete the core curriculum, the interdisciplinary coursework, the Master's Report courses (described above), and language requirements (as determined by the student's advisor) before taking qualifying exams.

Students with a master's degree from another institution must fulfill these same requirements, with the exception of the Master's report, before taking the qualifying exams.

All African and African Diaspora Studies doctoral students enroll in core required courses that explore the theoretical and methodological foundations of Black Studies. These core courses are:

- AFR 390 Black Studies Theory I
- AFR 391 Black Studies Methods
- AFR 392 Black Studies Theory II
- AFR 395P Subjects in Professionalization in AFR
Supporting methods course: This course is chosen in consultation with the student's advisor and may be taken from another department at UT. Lists are provided every semester from the Graduate Advisor.

Supporting AADS courses: Because of the interdisciplinary nature of AADS, students must take:

- **one course** on the African Diaspora: courses that feature a broad spectrum of scholarship in which two or more national contexts constitute the focus of analysis.

In consultation with the faculty advisor, doctoral students will work in two areas of study, taking course in those tracks:

- Humanities and Fine Arts
- Fine Arts and Social Sciences
- Social Sciences and Humanities

**Fine Arts:** courses that create and/or analyze art such as, but not limited to: performance, film, music, visual art.

**Humanities:** courses that are primarily concerned with critical theory, cultural analysis, historical research, and the analysis of political and judicial systems.

**Social Sciences:** courses that interrogate or employ quantitative and/or qualitative methods as a primary frame of analysis.

Remaining hours are made up of courses for supplemental electives, qualifying exams, and dissertation reading and writing. Students are encouraged to take two (but no more than two) of their supplemental courses outside the department. Requests to change degree sequence or exceptions to course requirements must be made by a petition to the Graduate Advisor. Any further action should be presented to the GPC.
4.2 AADS Ph.D. Program of Work: Entering without a Master’s degree (5-year plan)

Students without a MA must complete coursework to receive the AADS MA on the way to the Ph.D. (i.e. the Master’s report courses and 12 additional hours of electives). Please note: an on-track student will accumulate 90 hours with the plan below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year in Program</th>
<th>Fall</th>
<th>Spring</th>
<th>Summer</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>- AFR 390 Theory I</td>
<td>- AFR 392 Theory II</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- AFR 395P Subjects in Professionalization</td>
<td>- AFR 391 Black Studies Methods</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Supporting course</td>
<td>- Supporting course</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Preparation for Qualifying Exams</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>- Supporting course</td>
<td>- AFR 398R Master’s Report</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Supporting course</td>
<td>- Elective course</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Supporting methods</td>
<td></td>
<td>Research for dissertation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>- AFR 395Q Qualifying Exam Prep</td>
<td>AFR 399R/699R/999R Dissertation (Research/Write)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- AFR 398T Supervised Teaching in AADS</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Elective course</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>AFR 399R/699R/999R Dissertation (Research/Write)</td>
<td>AFR 399W/699W/999W Dissertation (Research/Write)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>AFR 399W/699W/999W Dissertation (Research/Write)</td>
<td>AFR 399W/699W/999W Dissertation (Research/Write)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
4.3 Sample AADS PhD Program of Work: Entering with a Master's degree (3-year plan)

*Note:* your advisor and the AADS Graduate Advisor should work to waive as many supporting AADS courses and electives as possible so that you do not have to take classroom courses during your dissertation semesters. Assuming a robust interdisciplinary course of study would include, like the five-year plan, the ideal number of waived credits would be 15 hours (leaving nine hours of non-core coursework taken at UT-Austin, shown with blanks below):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year in Program</th>
<th>Fall</th>
<th>Spring</th>
<th>Summer</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 1               | - AFR 390 Theory I  
                 - AFR 395P Subjects in Professionalization  
                 - Supporting course  
|                  | - AFR 392 Theory II  
                 - AFR 391 Black Studies Methods  
                 - Supporting course  
|                  | Preparation for Qualifying Exams |
| 2               | - AFR 395Q Qualifying Exam Prep  
                 - AFR 398T Supervised Teaching in AADS  
                 - Supporting methods  
|                  | - AFR 399R/699R/999R Dissertation (Research/Write)  
|                  | Research for dissertation |
| 3               | - AFR 399W/699W Dissertation (Research/Write)  
|                  | - AFR 399W/699W/999W Dissertation (Research/Write) |

Any variations to the degree plan must be submitted in writing to the Graduate Advisor for consideration.

4.4 Qualifying Exams

In order to advance to candidacy and therefore eligible to begin writing their dissertation, students must successfully complete their qualifying exams (QE).

**Timeline**

- For students who enter *without a Master’s Degree* (5-year plan), the deadline to defend their prospectus is the last day the Graduate School allows for filing dissertation hours in the Spring of their 3rd year in the program (which is usually close to the end of March).
- For students who enter *with a Master’s Degree* (3-year plan), the deadline for defending their prospectus is by the last day of classes in the Fall of their 2nd year in the program.
As an incentive to finish exams in a timely manner, students will be granted a stipend the summer before the QEs. Graduate students who do not meet these deadlines are at risk for the loss of their departmental incentive funding.

**Committee**
A student’s QE committee will be at least three (3) faculty members on the AADS Graduate Studies Committee. Any faculty members outside of AADS will be in addition to the three core faculty.

**Content of Qualifying Examinations (QEs)**
The QE is a two-part process: a sample class lecture (based on created syllabi) and a defense of the student’s prospectus.

1. **Sample Class Lecture: Bibliographies and Syllabi**

   In consultation with the student’s advisor, the student will develop syllabi for three distinct courses which reflect research areas in support of her/his dissertation. Each syllabus will include:
   - a bibliography of course readings and supporting texts
   - a course description
   - a schedule of daily activities in the course

   Each syllabi will be accompanied by a 5-10-page narrative that discusses why specific readings were selected and relevance to the student’s field. The written narrative serves to demonstrate not only the student’s writing competency, but their grasp of the field, its major questions, problematics, methods, formation and development over time.

   The dissertation committee will choose one of the syllabi on which to base an introductory lecture. The lecture, which should be 20-30 minutes in length, serves to demonstrate the student’s oral competency. The student will present their lecture in front of their committee: it is a closed presentation.

2. **Dissertation Proposal (Prospectus)**

   As part of the requirements to advance to PhD candidacy, graduate students must pass their Prospectus Exam by producing a dissertation proposal. The exercise in creating a proposal is an important part of professionalization in the doctoral program. Graduate students will plan their prospectus defense in consultation with their advisor and exam committee members. The dissertation proposal is divided into five parts (title page, introduction, literature review, methodology, and bibliography), and should be between 25-40 pages in length. The proposal outlines the research and writing to be undertaken to complete the future dissertation.
Foreign Language Requirement

Ph.D. students must demonstrate proficiency in a non-English language if it is necessary for his/her scholarly research before advancing to candidacy. The language will be determined by the student and her/his advisor, and should reflect the student’s research interests.

The language requirement will be fulfilled with a translation exam administered and evaluated by AADS faculty members. The student’s advisor will determine whether or not the student should also demonstrate speaking proficiency in the chosen language.

4.5 Advancing to Candidacy

Upon completion of all Ph.D. coursework, the qualifying exams, and meeting the qualifications of candidacy, students apply to advance to candidacy through the Graduate School.

In consultation with the Graduate Advisor and/or the student’s faculty advisor/dissertation chair, the student will need to identify at least 4 additional faculty members to serve on the dissertation committee, totaling at least five committee members. The committee chair and at least two other members must be AADS GSC members. At least one member must be a non-AADS faculty member.

The Degree Candidacy Application must be completed and submitted to the Graduate School electronically. This form will list the proposed chair and committee members of the student’s dissertation committee along with the title and a brief description of the proposed dissertation. For more information on candidacy policies and access to the application see https://gradschool.utexas.edu/academics/theses-and-dissertations/doctoral-candidacy.

Once advanced, students may register for dissertation courses (AFR *99R Dissertation Research and AFR *99W Dissertation Writing). Dissertation courses are taken for CR/NC. All students must maintain continuous registration after admission to candidacy.

4.6 Dissertation

Upon successful admission to candidacy, students may register for dissertation hours (AFR 399R/699R/999R and AFR 399W/699W/999W). The dissertation serves as a culminating original body of scholarly, independent research demonstrating the candidate's expertise in their selected area of concentration.

When the candidate has completed the research and writing phase of her or his dissertation, the candidate then prepares for an oral defense before faculty and other interested members of the academy. The Request for Final Oral must be signed by all committee members and submitted to the Graduate Dean's Office at least two weeks before the examination is to be held. The defense consists of an oral examination on the dissertation and the student's future research plans. At least
four members of the committee must participate. For more details on the oral defense process see https://gradschool.utexas.edu/academics/theses-and-dissertations/doctoral-candidacy/oral-examinations.

Candidates are encouraged to complete the Ph.D. in a timely manner. Candidacy is automatically subject to review three years after admission to candidacy, and annually thereafter. This review is conducted by the supervisory committee for the dissertation, which makes specific recommendations to the Graduate Advisor and the Graduate Studies Committee Chair, who, in turn, make a recommendation to the Dean of Graduate Studies.

For more information on dissertation requirements, guidelines and timelines, visit https://gradschool.utexas.edu/academics/theses-and-dissertations.

4.7 Doctoral Milestones

All doctoral students at The University of Texas at Austin are required to adhere to university-wide and departmental milestones. These milestones serve as benchmarks for progression through programs of study at a satisfactory rate for timely degree completion.

The Office of Graduate Studies has adopted ten (10) general milestones to be completed during various phase of the doctoral study. AADS has adopted five (5) supplementary milestones. The AADS Graduate Advisor and AADS Graduate Coordinator will assist students with completion and documentation of both sets of milestones.

OGS Doctoral Milestones (mandated for all UT doctoral programs)
1. Review degree requirements, milestones form with adviser.
2. Complete exams needed to advance to candidacy.
3. Complete all required organized coursework.
4. Advancement to candidacy.
5. Human research (IRB) form submitted.
6. IACUC (animal) approvals (if needed).
8. Student completes, files all paperwork required for graduation.
10. Exit interview completed and submitted to SED if submitted.
11. Other program-specific requirements.

AADS Doctoral Milestones
The following must be completed before degree completion:
1. Complete foreign language requirement
2. Submit one article for publication
3. Attend two job talks
4. Present at two conferences
5. Submit two fellowship applications
5. AADS Graduate Student Responsibilities

In addition to completion of designated degree plans AADS graduate students are also responsible for the following benchmarks:

5.1 Required Professional Development Activities

AADS doctoral students are required to participate in professional development activities including the following:

- Submission of an article to a scholarly journal
- Attendance of two job talks
- Participation in a minimum of two AADS/WCAAAS/IUPRA activities each year enrolled in the AADS graduate program
- Presentation of a paper at a minimum of two professional conferences while matriculating in the AADS graduate program; one conference must be a Black Studies conference.
- Submission of two fellowship applications prior to graduation.

6. Scholastic Performance

6.1 Sources of Information for Academic Performance Criteria

Information about a student’s academic performance criteria in the African and African Diaspora Studies program may include, but is not limited to, the following:

- Feedback or reference letters from faculty
- Observation of classroom, volunteer, or field behaviors
- Performance in oral and written assignment, examinations, or other appropriate coursework
- Student personal statements or self-assessments
- Interviews with faculty or other professionals
- Feedback from faculty in other programs that students may have attended

The Graduate Advisor (in conjunction with the chair of the GPC) will consider feedback from these sources during their annual review of students conducted near the end of the Spring semester. Student performance will be assessed in all aspects of the program including:

- Academics (performance in classes for credit),
- Professional Commitment (attendance at department events), and
- Collegiality (relationships with faculty and students)

Each of these areas will be discussed for each student every year. The program standard is excellence and the starting assumption is that students will routinely live up to that standard. For more information, see https://gradschool.utexas.edu/academics/policies/warning-status-academic-dismissal.
6.2 Performance that May Result in a Review, Academic Probation, and/or Possible Dismissal from the African and African Diaspora Studies Program

Student reviews (other than the annual student review) can occur under any of the following circumstances:

- Failure to meet or maintain academic requirements as stated under Scholastic performance;
- Scholastic dishonesty, including cheating, lying, plagiarism, collusion, falsifying academic records, or any act designed to give unfair academic advantage to the student (Faculty must adhere to university guidelines. For complete University policy and procedures, see General Information Bulletin, Appendix C, Section 11-802.);
- Behavior judged to be in violation of the current codes of ethics;
- Any threat or attempt to harm oneself or someone else;
- Commission of a criminal act that is contrary to professional practice, occurring during the course of study or occurring prior to admission to the program and becoming known after admission;
- Consistent pattern of unprofessional behavior.

6.3 Corrective Action

Whenever indications of concerns or need for improved performance are encountered students will be given corrective feedback. Corrective feedback will come in the form of a Letter of Instruction. Additional action may include Academic Probation and eventual program dismissal.

Corrective action will be automatically taken under the following conditions:

- A student received fewer than 4 out of 6 possible “A” grades (i.e., 3 or more grades of B or lower), or no credit, in any class in her or his program of work. Probation for a no credit grade is automatic only in the case of organized classes. In the case of no credit for individual instruction courses, the program faculty will place a student on probation if the no credit resulted from unsatisfactory performance by the student.
- Failure to complete a qualifying process, or dissertation supervisor has serious concerns about the student’s lack of progress or ability to complete the qualifying procedure or dissertation.

6.4 Policies and Procedures for Review of Academic Performance

Students considered for academic probation will be given feedback via the Three Levels of Review. The level of review depends upon the potential severity of the concern. Information disclosed during student meetings with faculty or school administrators will not be kept confidential if the information raises concerns about professional performance. Faculty will share pertinent information with each other for the professional purpose of identifying student issues and enhancing problem solving about the concerns. They will follow university procedures related to student performance issues.
Three Levels of Review

The AADS program is committed to providing feedback, guidance, and corrective action as is necessary for students. Therefore, at times a review process is implemented outside of, or as a component of, the annual review of students.

**Level 1**

A Level 1 review involves a faculty member and a student. When a faculty member has concerns about a student enrolled in the AADS graduate program meeting any of the academic criteria, whether related to professional behavior or scholastic performance, the concerned faculty member will:

1. Discuss those concerns directly with the student and seek to work with the student to resolve the difficulties.
2. Apprise the Graduate Advisor of the concerns in order to identify potential patterns and issues related to the student.
3. Document dates and content of meetings with students. This documentation will usually include a letter of instruction to the student detailing the nature of the concern and actions necessary to correct the situation.

In many instances, meetings between faculty and students resolve the concerns and do not necessarily lead to further reviews. As noted, typically a Level 1 review will result in corrective feedback to the student, typically documents in written form as a Letter of Instruction. Academic probation is not usually a consequence of a Level 1 review.

**Level 2**

A Level 2 review involves the faculty member, student, and Graduate Advisor. The faculty member(s) and Graduate Advisor will call a meeting when the student is not meeting or following program or university standards, policies, and procedures or when concerns have not been resolved at Level 1.

**Level 3**

Generally, this level of review is called when significant and/or persistent problematic patterns are identified with students. These issues often require formal consultation with faculty, other appropriate parties, and the student. A Level 3 review is usually conducted when 1) concerns have not been resolved in prior reviews; 2) issues related to a student not meeting the criteria for academic performance (often involving professional or ethical behaviors); 3) the student has not met the conditions of academic probation, or 4) the student is being considered for withdrawal or discontinuance in the program. In most instances, a Level 3 review is sufficient to deal with student performance and is the last decision-making step in the review process at the AADS program.

When a Level 3 review is called, the Graduate Advisor will convene a meeting with the appropriate faculty and the student to gather information, determine the nature of the problem (if one is confirmed to exist), and identity alternatives for its remediation. Appropriate faculty to be involved in a review will included, but are not limited to, those who have direct knowledge of and experience with the student. The student will be notified in writing of the concerns and meeting date, with sufficient time to prepare for and attend the meeting.
6.5 Accommodations for Students with Disabilities

No student shall be subjected to discrimination or excluded from participation in the program on the basis of disability. Any student with a protected disability who requests a reasonable accommodation must notify the Services for Students with Disabilities (SSD) office and provide documentation as needed. Please review your accommodations in order to assess the necessary coordination with individual professors.

In the event that dropping a class for non-academic (disability-related) reasons is necessary, students must complete the University’s Medical Withdrawal/Course Load Reduction Application. SSD coordinators are available for consultation regarding this process.

For information regarding the Services for Students with Disabilities see http://diversity.utexas.edu/disability/.

7. Graduate Student Grievance Procedures

AADS graduate students are encouraged to follow the grievances procedures established by the University of Texas at Austin Handbook of Operating Procedures 9-1240 and The Graduate School, found at https://gradschool.utexas.edu/academics/policies/grievances. Questions regarding this policy should be directed to the Office of the Executive Vice President and Provost at 512-471-4363 or to their Web site http://www.utexas.edu/provost/.

Leaves of Absence

Masters and Doctoral Students (not yet in candidacy)
- An Authorization for Leave of Absence form must be completed and approved by the Graduate Advisor in advance of the semester to be missed.
- Granting leaves of absence for students not in candidacy is left to the discretion of the graduate adviser and GSC.

Doctoral Candidates
- A Petition for Leave of Absence form must be completed and petitioned in advance by the Graduate Advisor to the Graduate Dean. Approval is granted only in rare and unusual circumstances.
- The form must be accompanied by a letter from the Graduate Advisor to the Dean of the Graduate School specifying the reasons for the request.

Additional Information on Leaves of Absence:
- Graduate students may apply for a leave of absence of no more than two semesters.
- A student on an approved leave may re-enter the graduate program by filing an Application for Readmission with the GIAC. No readmission fee is required.
Failure to secure a leave of absence in advance of the semester for which a student will be on leave means (1) the student will not be guaranteed readmission and, (2) the student will be assessed an application fee.
- A student on leave may not use any university facilities
- A leave of absence does not alter the time limits for degrees or coursework.

For more information please see https://gradschool.utexas.edu/academics/policies/leaves-of-absence.

Withdrawal
Dropping an entire course load constitutes a withdrawal from the University for that semester. To withdraw from the Graduate School, the student must file with the graduate dean a Withdrawal and Refund Request form. This form can be obtained from the Graduate School in Main Building 101. When a student is unable to complete a withdrawal form on campus, a signed request to withdraw may be faxed to the Graduate School at 512-475-8851. All requests for withdrawal must be accompanied by an acknowledgement from the student's Graduate Advisor. The student may withdraw through the last class day of the semester.

Students in a warning status because of failure to maintain a grade point average of at least 3.0 may not withdraw without a petition from the graduate adviser and the approval of the graduate dean.

Withdrawals for international students also require the consent of the International Office. Withdrawals for students receiving federal financial aid require the consent of the Office of Student Financial Services. Academic appointments may not extend beyond the effective date of a student's withdrawal.

Medical withdrawals are initiated through University Health Services. Specific information about the medical withdrawal process can be found at http://healthyhorns.utexas.edu/medicalwithdrawals.html.
Appendix A

Guidelines for Developing a Dissertation Proposal, or Prospectus, in African and African Diaspora Studies

As the second part of their qualifying exam, AADS doctoral students create a prospectus, or dissertation proposal. This proposal should outline the research and writing of the student’s future dissertation. The exercise in creating a proposal is an important part of professionalization in the doctoral program, and the student’s committee must accept the proposal prior to extensive dissertation research and writing.

Divided into five parts including a title page, the proposal should be between 20-40 pages in length depending on the topic and in consultation with the student’s advisor.

Purpose of the Prospectus
- To describe and outline the dissertation you intend to complete
- To think about the questions, problematics, and themes addressed in your study
- To discuss the primary arguments/questions to be addressed in the dissertation
- To identify preliminary research methods
- To locate available archival sources, sites for ethnographic research, or identify qualitative and/or quantitative methodologies needed to complete the dissertation

Goals of the Prospectus
- To create an outline for the research and writing agenda
- To identify areas of strength and weakness in the proposed study
- To receive feedback from committee members prior to dissertation research and writing

Structure of the Prospectus
1. Title Page
   - Title of Dissertation
   - Student’s Name
   - Name of supervisor and committee members

2. Introduction
   - Explain and describe the proposed study.
   - Outline the preliminary thesis, proposed hypothesis, and major research questions.
   - Define significant terms.

3. Literature Review
   - Review of the literature published on the proposed topic.
   - Place the dissertation in conversation with the published literature.
   - Identify the primary documents and sources that frame the study.
   - Explain the contribution of this study as it relates to the current literature.

4. Methodology
   - Identify the methods you intend to use in your study.
   - Explain why the methods you have chosen are suitable for your study.
Appendix B

Policies and Procedures for Review of Academic Performance

Three Levels of Review can occur at the African and African Diaspora studies program in reviewing a student’s academic performance. The level of review depends upon the potential severity of the concern. Information disclosed during student meetings with faculty or school administrators will not be kept confidential if the information raises concerns about professional performance. Faculty will share pertinent information with each other for the professional purpose of identifying student issues and enhancing problem solving about the concerns. They will follow university procedures related to student performance issues. For more information see http://www.utexas.edu/ogs/student_services/academic_policies/warning_status.html

Three Levels of Review
The AADS program is committed to providing feedback, guidance, and corrective action as is necessary for students. Therefore, at times a review process is implemented outside of, or as a component of, the annual review of students.

Level 1
A Level 1 review involves a faculty member and a student. When a faculty member has concerns about a student enrolled in the AADS graduate program meeting any of the academic criteria, whether related to professional behavior or scholastic performance, the concerned faculty member will:

1. Discuss those concerns directly with the student and seek to work with the student to resolve the difficulties.
2. Apprise the Graduate Advisor of the concerns in order to identify potential patterns and issues related to the student.
3. Document dates and content of meetings with students. This documentation will usually include a letter of instruction to the student detailing the nature of the concern and actions necessary to correct the situation.

In many instances, meetings between faculty and students resolve the concerns and do not necessarily lead to further reviews. As noted, typically a Level 1 review will result in corrective feedback to the student, typically documents in written form as a Letter of Instruction. Academic probation is not usually a consequence of a Level 1 review.

Level 2
A Level 2 review involves the faculty member, student, and Graduate Advisor. The faculty member(s) and Graduate Advisor will call a meeting when the student is not meeting or following program or university standards, policies, and procedures or when concerns have not been resolved at Level 1.

The Graduate Advisor will work with the faculty to determine the nature of the concern and gather sufficient information to develop a plan to address that concern, if one is needed. No
further action may be required, or the student may be asked, in writing, to modify his or her behavior and/or seek appropriate help. This process is designed to assist students in dealing with concerns that have an impact on their performance.

A Level 2 review may result in a student being placed on academic probation by the AADS faculty, particularly in the case of problems described in Section 6.4 Policies and Procedures for Review of Academic Performance (i.e., receiving 3 or more grades of B or lower, significant problems in developing a qualifying process or dissertation document). When a student is placed on academic probation, he or she will receive written feedback about the reasons for being placed on probation, the length of the probation, and the criteria for lifting probation.

Whether or not a Level 2 review results in a student being placed on academic probation, the Graduate Advisor will assess the nature of these concerns with appropriate faculty, consult with the Department Chair as necessary, maintain documentation, and decide if it is necessary to conduct a more comprehensive Level 3.

**Level 3**

Generally, this level of review is called when significant and/or persistent problematic patterns are identified with students. These issues often require formal consultation with faculty, other appropriate parties, and the student. A Level 3 review is usually conducted when 1) concerns have not been resolved in prior reviews; 2) issues related to a student not meeting the criteria for academic performance (often involving professional or ethical behaviors); 3) the student has not met the conditions of academic probation, or 4) the student is being considered for withdrawal or discontinuance in the program. In most instances, a Level 3 review is sufficient to deal with student performance and is the last decision-making step in the review process at the AADS program.

When a Level 3 review is called, the Graduate Advisor will convene a meeting with the appropriate faculty and the student to gather information, determine the nature of the problem (if one is confirmed to exist), and identity alternatives for its remediation. Appropriate faculty to be involved in a review will included, but are not limited to, those who have direct knowledge of and experience with the student. The student will be notified in writing of the concerns and meeting date, with sufficient time to prepare for and attend the meeting.

After the review meeting has occurred, the Graduate Advisor will consult with the AADS Department Chair to discuss the problem situation and make recommendations regarding the student. Based on this review and conference, and an objective assessment of the information provided, the Graduate Advisor will inform the student of the decisions, which can include one or more of the following actions:

- Continue the student in the program with no conditions. In these situations, the concern has been addressed and no further action by the student or program is required.

- Establish formal conditions for the student’s continuance in the program. In these situations, specific conditions must be met in order for the student to remain in the program. Action may include establishing goals, a plan, a timeline, and appropriate monitoring, providing mentoring and support; placing the student on probation and monitoring the student during the probationary period; referring the student to counseling and/or advising services; allowing the student to follow a reduced course load or delay entry to the field
• Consult with and/or refer to the Dean of Students. In some instances, depending on the nature of the problem, the University’s Office of the Dean of Students may be consulted. If a referral is made to that Office after consultation, the student will notified in writing about the nature of the concern and the fact that the referral is taking place. Examples of situations that may result in referral to the Office of the Dean of Students include scholastic dishonesty, hazing, racial or sexual harassment, possession or use of firearms or other weapons on University property, damage or destruction of University property, and conduct that endangers the health or safety of any University student, employee, or campus visitor.

• Counsel the student to change majors/degree programs and/or discontinue the student in the program. In some situations, it will be recommended that the student no longer continue in the AADS program. The student will be counseled to voluntarily change majors or degree programs. If that does not occur, the student may be discontinued from the program. In either case, the student will be provided with documentation regarding the specific reasons for their dismissal and the conditions, if any, under which they may re-apply.