

**GRADUATE PROGRAM**  
**POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**

**Vanderbilt University**  
**Department of Philosophy**

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## **PART I: OVERVIEW OF PROGRAM AND FUNDING**

### **A) PROGRAM DESCRIPTION**

The Vanderbilt Philosophy Department has a long and distinguished history of excellence and innovation in Philosophy. [Faculty](#) research spans the major areas of philosophical inquiry and reflects an uncommonly broad spectrum of methodological commitments, encompassing analytic, continental, pragmatist, and historical approaches. Departmental research strengths include Critical Theory, Epistemology, Ethics, Feminist Philosophy, History of Philosophy (Ancient, Medieval, Modern, 19th and 20th Century), Philosophy of Race, and Social and Political Philosophy.

The Department's disciplinary breadth is well represented in its course offerings at the [undergraduate](#) and [graduate](#) level, and is reflected in its ongoing series of academic events, including the [Philosophy Colloquium](#), the [Social and Political Thought Workshop](#), and the annual [Berry Lectures](#), all of which bring distinguished philosophers from around the world to Vanderbilt. In addition, the Department regularly hosts regional, national and international conferences; recent topics have included the epistemic regress problem, pacifism, social visibility, and Latina feminism. Informal study groups and research workshops, such as the department [Minorities and Philosophy \(MAP\)](#) chapter's reading group, are organized by graduate students and often involve participation from students and faculty alike.

Every student admitted to our PhD Program receives five years of full funding, which includes a tuition waiver, health insurance, and a stipend. Our PhD Program is designed to be completed in five years.

Our placement record is especially strong. Current placement data can be found [here](#). The Department has an ongoing commitment to gender, class, racial, and ethnic diversity. This commitment is evident in our graduate student population; in recent years, the gender proportion of students entering our PhD program has been over 60% women.

### **B) ADMISSION, SCHOLARSHIPS, AND FINANCIAL AID**

The Graduate Program in Philosophy at Vanderbilt is highly competitive. However, the Department is committed to fully funding every student it accepts through to the PhD. Decisions about admissions and the awarding of assistantships and fellowships are made on the basis of careful comparative evaluation of the credentials submitted by the applicants. These credentials must show that the candidates have done superior work in their previous studies, and that they have the capacity to complete successfully a program of graduate work at Vanderbilt. Applicants

typically have had an undergraduate major in philosophy, but this is not required and students may be admitted with limited undergraduate work in philosophy if their work generally gives evidence of high intellectual ability. *All applicants must submit Graduate Record Examination Aptitude Test scores.* Note: Given the situation with Covid-19, the GRE requirement is suspended for 2020-2021 applications.

All students admitted to the PhD program receive graduate assistantships. The first year is service free. In subsequent years, graduate assistants are expected to lead discussion sections and teach introductory level undergraduate courses.

It is the responsibility of each graduate student who is employed as a teaching or research assistant to carry out their duties throughout the course of the semester. For those with teaching assignments, the semester does not end until grades are computed and posted. Those graduate students who are teaching must be present for each class session. Any absences, except for last minute emergencies, must be approved in advance by the Department Chair or Director of Graduate Studies (DGS) and alternate arrangements for the class, acceptable to the Chair or DGS must be made. It is not acceptable to miss classes at the beginning or end of the semester, as well as during the semester, without the express consent of the Chair or DGS.

### **From The Graduate School Website:**

#### Tuition & Fees

Fees are as follows for 2020 - 2021:

- Graduate School Tuition (per credit hour): \$2,087
- Student health insurance (12-month coverage): \$3,655
- Student services fee: \$542
- Summer student services fee: \$92 (estimated)
- Audit fee: \$10
- All students, one time transcript fee: \$100
- Graduate Application fee: \$95

### **PhD Student Support: Assistantships or Fellowships**

Competitive financial support through teaching or research assistantships or service-free fellowships enables Vanderbilt to attract outstanding PhD students. These awards *typically* contain some combination of the following:

- Tuition support (all or partial)
- Medical insurance (all or partial)

- Stipend for living expenses (amount depends on departmental guidelines)

[For Updates, please click here.](#)

## **UNIVERSITY SCHOLARSHIPS AND FINANCIAL AID**

### **University Tuition Scholarships**

Service-free awards that pay all or part of tuition costs. Maximum award value is currently \$34,380 for the nine-month academic year.

The following awards are normally supplemented by a full University Tuition Scholarship, which usually includes student health insurance coverage: University Fellowships, Graduate Teaching Assistantships, Graduate Research Assistantships, Traineeships, and Teacher Training Awards.

### **University Graduate Fellowships**

The University Graduate Fellowship is awarded by the Graduate School to highly qualified students entering study for the PhD or the master's degree, if that is the highest degree offered by the program. In order to be considered for this award, an applicant's file must be complete by January 15. Individual departments nominate applicants for this highly competitive award, which is announced in early March. The University Graduate Fellowship, a stipend of up to \$5000, is in addition to a fellowship, assistantship, traineeship, or tuition award and are made for a period of three years for the PhD, two years for terminal master's programs. At the end of the third year, PhD students are eligible to apply for an additional 2 years of support. The University Graduate Fellowship carries the status of Russell G. Hamilton Scholar.

### **Provost's Graduate Fellowships**

The Graduate School offers these fellowships to under-represented minority graduate students who intend to pursue the PhD degree in preparation for an academic teaching career. Each award provides up to a \$5,000 stipend awarded as a supplement to any other funding that is offered to the applicant and are made for a period three years. At the end of the third year, students are eligible to apply for an additional 2 years of support. The Provost's Graduate Fellowship also carries the status of Russell G. Hamilton Scholar.

### **Russell G. Hamilton Scholarships**

As part of the initiative of the Graduate Education and Research Endowment, Russell G. Hamilton scholarships are awarded to highly qualified students intending to pursue the PhD

degree. This award is a tuition scholarship and the recipients are designated as Russell G. Hamilton Scholars.

### **Yellow Ribbon Program**

As a participant in the Yellow Ribbon Program, the Graduate School of Vanderbilt University is committed to provide financial aid as necessary (specifically, in the form of tuition and fees) up to \$6,000 per academic year to each post-9/11 eligible Veteran who is admitted and enrolls as a student in a degree program and who is determined by the VA to be eligible for the Yellow Ribbon Program. Students admitted to the Graduate School as special, non-degree students are not eligible for Yellow Ribbon financial aid from the Graduate School.

### **LOAN ASSISTANCE**

Loan assistance is available for graduate students in the form of unsubsidized loans through the Federal Direct Stafford Loan program, the Federal Direct Graduate PLUS loan program, and alternative/private loan programs offered by certain lenders. Students are typically eligible to borrow the annual maximum Direct Unsubsidized loan of \$20,500. (However, students are required to complete the FAFSA application process before a Direct Unsubsidized Loan may be awarded.) Graduate PLUS loans are federal credit based loans that graduate or professional degree students can use to help pay educational expenses. Alternative/private loans are available from private sources that are not based on financial need. We recommend that students apply for federal loans first and then pursue additional sources of funding if necessary. Information may be found at the [Federal Student Aid website](#).

In order to be considered for the Federal Direct Loan programs and/or the Federal Work Study Program, students must complete the [Free Application for Federal Student Aid \(FAFSA\)](#).

Detailed information on eligibility criteria and application procedures may be obtained from the [Office of Student Financial Aid website](#).

### **Tax Information**

Unsure of what taxes you should be paying or what education credits pertain to you? Vanderbilt University is unable to provide tax advice, however here are some resources that may guide you in your tax preparations.

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Payroll is pay for work performed, whereas a stipend is service-free payments to students. Typically, Vanderbilt withholds taxes on payroll and will send you a W-2 statement. If you did

not receive your W-2, please log onto the Vanderbilt C2HR. Taxes are not withheld from stipends.

- [The Office of Student Accounts](#) provides assistance for downloading your 1098-T, FAQs about the 1098-T, and information regarding tax benefits for education.
- [The Vanderbilt International Services](#) provides information and forms pertaining to a range of international tax topics.
- The IRS has a [Free File site](#) that can help you figure out if you can file your federal taxes for free and has the list of eligible online tax preparation companies or software. Some online tax preparation sites offer live, online support from tax experts. [Turbo Tax](#) is one option that has been used and recommended by students.

### **C) DURATION OF PROGRAM AND FUNDING**

The Vanderbilt Philosophy Doctoral Program is a five (5) year program. The Vanderbilt Philosophy Department and the College of Liberal Arts guarantees five (5) years of funding with the expectation that students graduate with a doctoral degree at the completion of the fifth year.

### **D) TRAVEL TO CONFERENCES**

Based on availability of funds, the Philosophy Department allots \$600.00 a year in travel funding to each doctoral student in good standing who is presenting at a scholarly conference. Doctoral students must request authorization for travel reimbursement in advance of the planned trip. There is additional funding available from the Graduate School (see below). And additional funding may be available for international conferences.

#### **Travel Grants from the Graduate School**

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Students are encouraged to present their research at major regional, national, and international conferences. After completing at least one academic year at Vanderbilt, students may apply for a travel grant from the Graduate School for up to \$500 per budget year (July 1-June 30) for domestic or international travel. Students are allowed a total of three travel grants during their entire tenure at Vanderbilt. Complete details are on the [2019-2020 application](#) .

View the current version of the [Travel and Business Expense Policy](#).

#### **Russell G. Hamilton Graduate Leadership Institute**

The Graduate Leadership Institute (GLI) Travel Grant provides up to \$1000 of support for graduate students seeking opportunities to further their professional and/or academic development, for which funding is commonly unavailable. Fall 2019 application opens August



20th. For full information on eligibility, guidelines and a link to apply, visit the [Russell G. Hamilton Graduate Leadership Institute website](#).

### **Graduate Student Council**

The Graduate Student Council offers a [travel grant](#) up to \$500 given to five students each semester. The travel awards are intended to aid students in covering travel expenses related to attending academic conferences, symposia, workshops, etc. Funds are only available to students who will be presenting personal research. To qualify, students must be active members of GSC. All travel funds must be approved by the GSC travel award committee prior to the conference.

### **E) PLACEMENT**

The Department of Philosophy has an excellent record of placing its students in major colleges and universities. The entire faculty is committed to the successful placement of every student in the program. This is facilitated by the Graduate Placement Officer, who organizes placement workshops, arranges for practice interviews and works closely with students to put together a competitive CV and dossier. It is important that students recognize that successful placement is a matter of professional development throughout the course of graduate education, and not just at its end. The department's interest in its alumni does not cease when they have found their first position; it endeavors to stay in touch with them and is prepared to offer further assistance in the advancement of their careers.

## PART II:

### Philosophy Graduate Program Rules and Requirements

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#### A) ANNUAL REVIEW

1. To ensure that students are making good progress in the program, the department will conduct an annual review of every graduate student. To continue in good standing:

- Students should not be carrying incompletes.
- Students should not receive more than two B grades.
- Students should fulfill all requirements in a timely fashion as stipulated in the Course Requirements above.
- Students at the dissertation stage should turn in written work to their advisor every semester. Failure to do so will result in a grade of “U.” Unsatisfactory grades can result in exit from the program.

2. Students will be sent a yearly evaluation letter, which provides an assessment of their progress in the relevant dimensions.

#### B) OVERVIEW OF REQUIREMENTS

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The Ph.D. Program in Philosophy at Vanderbilt University is designed to be completed in five years. A sketch of standard progress follows below. Please consult the [PhD Program Requirements and Guidelines](#) for a detailed description of requirements, procedures, expectations, and deadlines.

The following five requirements compose the PhD Program in Philosophy at Vanderbilt.

1. Coursework Requirement <sup>1</sup>
2. Logic Requirement
3. Foreign Language Requirement
4. Dissertation Field Exam and Prospectus
5. Prospectus and Dissertation Requirement

#### SCHEDULE FOR PROGRESS IN GOOD STANDING

In order to maintain good standing in the PhD Program, students must satisfy all requirements by the deadlines specified below. Failure to maintain good standing will result in Departmental action, which may include expulsion of the student from the PhD Program.

Training for the PhD goes beyond formal coursework and the dissertation; it includes participating in the life of the Department. Students are expected regularly to attend Departmental events, including colloquia, public lectures, workshops, and other events. Moreover, students are expected to exhibit an appropriate level of professionalism and responsibility in their roles as students, scholars, teachers, colleagues, and academic citizens. All graduate students should check and respond to their Departmental e-mail daily and should check their ground mail at least twice a week.

A student's fellowship funding and good standing in the graduate program are conditional upon the student's meeting appropriate standards of progress. In usual cases, these standards are as follows:

**Semester 1:** At the end of the first semester, students must have completed at least 11 credits, including three three-credit courses and the two-credit Proseminar. Students are advised to sit for the Logic exam (and to audit Phil 3003, "Formal Logic & Its Applications," if necessary).

**Semester 2:** At the end of the second semester, students must have completed at least three additional three-credit courses, thereby bringing the student's total number of coursework credits to at least 20, and they must have attempted to satisfy the Logic Requirement.

**Semester 3:** Students must take the Language Exam by September 1st of the third semester. At the end of the third semester students must have completed at least three additional three-credit courses, thereby bringing the student's total number of coursework credits to at least 29, and they must have satisfied the Logic Requirement.

**Semester 4:** At the end of the fourth semester, students must have completed at least three additional three-credit courses, thereby bringing the student's total number of coursework credits to at least 38. They must have passed the Foreign Language Exam by April 15th. Graduate students must constitute their DFE committee and turn in the DFE bibliography by May 15<sup>th</sup>.

**Semester 5:** At the end of the fifth semester, students must have completed at least three additional three-credit courses, thereby bringing the student's total number of coursework credits to at least 47, and satisfied all aspects of the Coursework Requirement. It is recommended that graduate students take an Independent Study with their DFE Chair during this semester to continue reading their bibliography and devising questions for the DFE exam.

**Semester 6:** In the sixth semester, students must register for at least nine research hours, thereby bringing their total number of graduate credits to at least 56, and they must meet all specified deadlines for the Field Exam (written portion is due January 25<sup>th</sup> and oral exam must be passed by February 15<sup>th</sup>) and Project Abstract (which must be submitted by March 15<sup>th</sup>). By May 15<sup>th</sup> students must have passed the Qualifying Exam (Prospectus Oral Defense) and satisfied all preceding requirements, thereby achieving ABD status.

**Semester 7:** In the seventh semester, students should register for nine research credits, thereby bringing their total number of credits to 65. Students must turn in work every semester to their dissertation director to maintain good standing in the program. Students are expected to hand in a progress report on their dissertation at the end of every semester until completion.

**Semesters 7-10:** During this time, students must register for a sufficient number of research credits to ensure the completion of the required 72 credit-hours by the time they are ready to defend the Dissertation. Once students have reached 72 credit hours, they should continue in subsequent semesters to register for research hours at zero credits in order to maintain active student status.

In the 7<sup>th</sup> Semester, students must have passed the Dissertation Prospectus Oral Exam (Qualifying Exam) by September 30<sup>th</sup>. If students are *not* ABD entering the 7<sup>th</sup> semester, they should register for a sufficient number of Phil 8999 Non- Candidate Research credits to stay on pace for the timely completion of the required 72 credit-hours by the time they are ready to defend the dissertation; if students *are* ABD at the start of the 7<sup>th</sup> semester, they should register for Phil 9999 PhD Dissertation Research instead. (Please note the policy on “S” and “U” grades for Phil 9999).

In the 8<sup>th</sup>, 9<sup>th</sup>, and 10<sup>th</sup> semesters, students must register for a sufficient number of PhD Dissertation Research credits (Phil 9999) to ensure the completion of the required 72 credit-hours by the time they are ready to defend the dissertation. (Please note the policy on “S” and “U” grades for Phil 9999).

**Semester 10:** By the end of the tenth semester, students should have passed the Final Defense (Dissertation Oral Defense), thereby completing all requirements for the PhD. No funding is guaranteed beyond this (10<sup>th</sup>) semester.

### **1. Course Distribution Requirement & Incompletes**

Students will take at least 5 seminars in the History of Philosophy and at least 5 seminars in Topical Areas of Philosophy, with the additional stipulation that students must take seminars from at least 3 different categories in each. The Topic and History categories are as follows, and the categorization of each graduate seminar in any given semester will be designated on the departmental course schedule.

#### **Topical Area Categories**

- T1. Mind and Language
- T2. Ethics, Politics, and Aesthetics
- T3. Metaphysics and Epistemology
- T4. Race, Gender, Identity
- T5. Contemporary Philosophical Movements

## Historical Categories

- H1. Ancient Philosophy
- H2. Medieval Philosophy
- H3. Modern Philosophy
- H4. 19th Century Philosophy
- H5. 20th Century Philosophy
- H6. Trans-era History of Philosophy

### 1.1) INCOMPLETES

- i) Students are strongly discouraged from taking incompletes. For pedagogical reasons and to facilitate the student's timely progress through the program, work for a particular course is expected to be completed by the end of the semester in which the course is offered.
- ii) Students must request incompletes in writing and get approval from the DGS and their instructor.
- iii) Accumulation of incompletes creates serious problems for students. Should there be a pressing need to take an incomplete, we urge that the work be completed as soon as possible after the end of the semester. The Graduate School regulations mandate that outstanding work be completed and graded within 12 weeks after the course end date in order to resolve an incomplete. The incomplete will turn into an F after that point and neither the department nor the instructor will be able to change the grade. Only in the case of an extreme circumstance, such as a severe illness, will the Graduate School make an exception to this rule.
- iv) The full paragraph from the University Bulletin, Graduate Degree Programs, Grading System, reads:
- v) To allow time for the instructor to grade the outstanding materials and post the grade, all work for incompletes ***must be submitted no later than 10 weeks after the course end***, or two weeks prior to the 12 week deadline.
- vi) Failure to meet these requirements: Each student's progress in the program will be reviewed at the end of every spring semester. Incompletes that have turned into Fs will be counted as failing grades; will impact yearly assessment negatively; and will result in the possibility that the student will be exited from the program.

### 1.2 Credits

The Graduate School requires a total of 72 hours of credit (formal coursework plus registered research hours) for the PhD. Within this 72 credit hours, the Philosophy Department requires students to complete 47 credit hours of coursework. Graduate students are required to complete at least three three-credit courses each semester, from among those courses approved by the Department for credit toward the PhD, for each of the first five semesters. During the 1<sup>st</sup> fall semester, students also are required to take a two-credit Proseminar focusing on research and teaching. By the end of the 5<sup>th</sup> semester, therefore, students will have taken a minimum of 47 credits of course work, with at least 11 in the 1<sup>st</sup> semester and 9 in each of the following four semesters.

Related requirements concerning graduate credits are as follows:

*12 Seminars.* By the end of the 5<sup>th</sup> semester, graduate students must have taken at least 12 regularly-scheduled graduate seminars (36 credit hours) in the Department of Philosophy.

*Proseminar.* In their 1<sup>st</sup> semester of graduate study, all graduate students must pass a 2-credit Department seminar on teaching and research methods. This course, graded on an A/F basis, will include guest participation by many members of the faculty.

*Other Possible Sources of Credit for Remaining 9 Credit Hours.* The regularly-scheduled graduate seminars and the proseminar must together account for a minimum of 38 of the required 47 credits of coursework in the Philosophy PhD program. This leaves students with some flexibility regarding the remaining 9 credits:

(a) Regularly-scheduled graduate seminars: Students may take additional regularly-scheduled graduate seminars in the Department of Philosophy toward remaining 9 credits.

(b) Independent Studies: Students may take, with DGS approval, PHIL 8050: Readings in Philosophy (i.e., an independent study) with Department faculty toward the remaining 9 credits. Here student and professor must agree in writing to a one-semester (and no more) course of study that includes a reading list and writing assignments. Students must complete the “Request for Independent Study/Directed Studies/Readings & Research” form to enroll in the course. The form requires **original** signatures from the student, instructor, and DGS. The form must be filed with the Department, no later than the first week of classes and submitted to the Graduate School, no later than the tenth day of classes.

(c) Enhanced undergraduate-level courses: Students may take, with prior DGS approval, enhanced undergraduate level courses with Department faculty toward the remaining 9 credits. In this case, students are expected to do additional work beyond the undergraduate requirements for the course. Here student and professor must agree in writing to a one-semester (and no more) course of study that includes writing assignments. Students must complete the “Request for Permission to Receive Graduate Credit for an Undergraduate Level or Professional Course” form to enroll in an undergraduate class for graduate credit. The form requires **original** signatures from the student, instructor, and DGS. The form must be filed with the Department no later than the first week of classes, and it must be submitted to the Graduate School no later than the tenth day of classes.

(d) Transfer Credit: Under unusual circumstances and with DGS approval, at most 6 credits can be transferred into the PhD program toward the 47 credit requirement. Students entering the PhD program with graduate credit in Philosophy from strong graduate programs who would like to transfer in credit can petition to do so at the end of the spring semester of their first year. They need to set up a meeting with the DGS and supply the DGS with their transcript/s, course syllabus/syllabi, and their coursework.

They should also be prepared to discuss how such transferred credit might fulfill course distribution requirements.

Graduate courses taken while at Vanderbilt in departments other than the Philosophy Department do NOT count toward the required 47 hours of the Departmental coursework, but they do count toward the 72 hours required by the Graduate School for the PhD.

After completing coursework, students will enroll in 9 hours of PHIL 8999 (Non-Candidate Research) and PHIL 9999 (PhD Dissertation Research) each semester until they have earned 72 credit hours. Once students have sufficient credits, students will continue registering for 0 credit hours of PHIL 9999 (PhD Dissertation Research) each semester to maintain their active student status until graduation.

### **1.3 Instructor Distribution**

By the end of the 5<sup>th</sup> semester, graduate students must have taken **seminars from at least 8 different tenured or tenure-track faculty in the Philosophy Department.**

### **1.4 Course Grades**

A student must earn a grade of B or higher in each course counted toward the 47 hours. Grades in the A range are the norm for graduate students, while grades in the B range are the exception. If a student accumulates 3 grades in the B range they will need to meet with the DGS to discuss their status.

Students enrolling in Philosophy 8999 (Non-Candidate Research) and Philosophy 9999 (PhD Dissertation Research) will be assigned S/U grades, in accordance with the Graduate School's policy: "One U grade requires consultation between the student and the research advisor; a second U grade triggers a locally defined program-level intervention process involving (at least) the student, the research advisor, the student's thesis or dissertation committee and the DGS; and a third U grade leads to de-matriculation. These steps are triggered by the accumulation of U grades, not simply U grades in succession. Each U represents approximately one-half of one academic year of unsatisfactory progress. No credit hours are awarded for an enrollment that earns a grade of U."

## **2. LOGIC REQUIREMENT**

All graduate students must satisfy the Department's logic requirement in one of two ways: a) by passing a Departmental logic exam, or b) by receiving a "B" or better in the Department's Formal Logic & Applications course, PHIL 3003. PHIL 3003 is offered only in the fall semester. Students with no or minimal training in logic are strongly encouraged to audit PHIL 3003 in their 1<sup>st</sup> semester. The logic requirement must be satisfied by the end of the 3<sup>rd</sup> semester. If students wish to formally audit the logic course, students must submit the "Permission to Audit" form. The form requires **original** signatures from the student and instructor. The form must be submitted to the Department during the first week of classes and submitted to the Graduate School by the tenth day of classes.

The logic exam and course work will cover the following three areas and will require a demonstration of competence at a level sufficient to teach an introductory symbolic logic course:

- 1) informal concepts of logic;
- 2) translation into symbolic notation for both propositional and predicate logic; and
- 3) natural deduction proofs for both propositional and predicate logic.

Students should contact the DGS to arrange for the administration of the exam. The exam will be given only once at the end of each semester.

Students who fail the exam or who fail to receive a grade of “B” or better in Formal Logic & Applications may re-take the exam or re-do the work for Formal Logic & Applications the next time the Department schedules the exam and/or the course.

Students must take the logic exam by the end of the 1<sup>st</sup> semester, and must pass the logic exam by the end of the 3<sup>rd</sup> semester.

Formal Logic & Applications does not qualify for graduate credit and so does not count toward the minimum of 47 credits students must accumulate by the end of the 5<sup>th</sup> semester.

### **3. FOREIGN LANGUAGE REQUIREMENT**

All graduate students must satisfy the Department’s foreign language requirement. The requirement is satisfied by passing a Departmental exam that tests for competence in an approved foreign language. The exam will be given after the student requests it from the DGS, who will then arrange for the exam. The timed translation exam will be blind-reviewed and graded by faculty (typically but not necessarily Philosophy Department faculty) with special competence in the given foreign language. The exam will consist of the students translating into English (i) a text (selected by the faculty member administering the exam, in consultation with and approval by the DGS) by a single philosopher (selected by the student) and (ii) a second text (selected by the faculty member administering the exam, in consultation with and approval by the DGS) by a different philosopher (selected by the faculty member). During the exam, students may use only a hard-copy dictionary. The translation exam will be marked pass or fail; passing it requires a demonstration of competence as measured by quality and quantity of translation.

Students must first **take the foreign language competence exam by September 1<sup>st</sup> of the 3<sup>rd</sup> semester** and must **pass the exam by April 15<sup>th</sup> of the 4<sup>th</sup> semester**.

### **4. DISSERTATION FIELD EXAM REQUIREMENT**

#### **4.1 Preparation for the Exam**

The Dissertation Field Exam (DFE), or Preliminary Exam, is a crucial component of the Vanderbilt Philosophy Department PhD program. The DFE takes place during the 6<sup>th</sup> semester, and by the end of this semester students are expected to have successfully transitioned from coursework to dissertation-related work. If students have satisfied all previous Department requirements, they will have this 6<sup>th</sup> semester off from teaching (in addition to no longer having



any coursework) in order to be able to devote themselves fully to this Dissertation Field Exam as well as to the Dissertation Prospectus Abstract that follows the Dissertation Field Exam at the end of the semester, and then the Prospectus. While the DFE takes place during the 6<sup>th</sup> semester, work related to the DFE begins earlier; work on the DFE Bibliography and planning of a DFE Committee should begin over the previous spring and summer (the second summer).

**Start planning for the DFE at the beginning of the 4<sup>th</sup> semester in order to meet upcoming deadlines. No later than May 1st** students must choose a director for their DFE and meet to plan for the bibliography and DFE.

#### **4.2 Dissertation Field Exam Committee**

Students must choose the members of their Dissertation Field Exam Committee and report news of this DFE Committee to the DGS and the Administrative Assistant to the Graduate Program by **May 15<sup>th</sup> of the 4<sup>th</sup> semester**. This committee needs to be composed of a minimum of 3 Philosophy Department graduate faculty members, one of whom is the DFE Committee Chair. This committee need not overlap in part or whole with the later PhD Committee, though there usually is significant overlap.

#### **4.3 Dissertation Field Exam Bibliography: Draft and Final**

The DFE is preparation for writing your dissertation. Working with a DFE committee chair and two other faculty members, the student will begin to hone a dissertation topic and their proposed area of specialization. The process of putting together a bibliography and formulating DFE exam questions is designed to facilitate the initial stages of planning for a dissertation project.

**No later than May 15<sup>th</sup>** of the 4<sup>th</sup> semester students must choose two DFE committee members and meet with them to discuss and revise the preliminary bibliography. Under the direction of the DFE director, students must compile a provisional bibliography that will help guide summer research and progress toward dissertation topic.

Bibliographies should be developed with two objectives in mind: 1. Readings to prepare to write the dissertation. 2. Major texts in an area of specialization that the student will claim as an AOS on the job market.

The bibliography should include approximately 50 sources and should follow bibliography formatting guidelines as specified in a leading source such as the Chicago Manual of Style. Students are advised to begin work on this bibliography over the previous (second) summer in the program.

Students must have a complete **final** DFE bibliography approved by their DFE Committee by **May 15<sup>th</sup> of the 5<sup>th</sup> semester**, and students must email this approved bibliography to the DGS and the Administrative Assistant to the Graduate Program by this date.

#### **4.4 DFE WRITTEN EXAM**

**No later than January 25<sup>th</sup> of the 6<sup>th</sup>:** Final DFE questions (2-3) are given to students during the first week of the Spring Semester in January. Students must complete the **DFE written exam within two weeks, and no later than January 25<sup>th</sup> of the 6<sup>th</sup> semester.** Students must send a copy of exam questions, and the completed exam, to DGS. Students are usually given 2-3 questions and answers are usually around 15-20 pages each, depending on the number of questions given.

#### **4.5 DFE ORAL EXAM**

**No later than February 15<sup>th</sup>** of the 6<sup>th</sup> semester students must meet with Dissertation Field Exam Committee for the **Oral Defense** of the written exam and broader issues emerging from bibliography.

Provided the student passes the Oral Defense, they move on to the Dissertation Prospectus Abstract (see below). If they fail to Oral Defense, they may be dismissed from the program or they may be given another chance to take the exam, depending in part on factors surrounding the failure, previous performance in the program, and the degree of promise they have shown. If a student fails the exam twice, they will be dismissed from the program.

#### **4.6 ONE-PAGE DISSERTATION ABSTRACT**

**No later than March 15<sup>th</sup> of the 6<sup>th</sup> semester** students must submit one-page **abstract of dissertation prospectus** to the dissertation director and at least one other faculty member who will serve on the dissertation committee. Students must share this abstract with the DGS.

### **5. DISSERTATION PROSPECTUS PROCESS**

#### **5.1 OVERVIEW**

The proposal is a succinct statement of the problem, related literature, procedure, method of research, primary or secondary sources, as well as an indication of the theoretical contribution the dissertation will make to philosophy. A proposal must be clearly and concisely written, and it should reflect the student's capacity to do original research and complete the project.

A proposal should include:

**Title**

**One sentence description**

**Abstract of one paragraph to a maximum of one page**

**The proposal** should deal with the following issues, though not necessarily in the order of their listing here:

1. The problem, (hypo)thesis, and its significance. Give a preliminary statement of the problem or thesis and show how the project has some promise of making a significant contribution to knowledge and/or understanding. At the minimum the proposal should map out a coherent line of inquiry; in some instances the research will be far enough

along to state a thesis or its opposite and show how, if it is confirmed or denied, it will make a contribution to the discipline. Show that the projected inquiry is restricted enough to be manageable and large enough to be significant. This section should answer the question: why is this a worthy project?

2. Literature to which the project contributes. Place the inquiry in the context of existing research on the subject or problem. Often this means bringing into juxtaposition two or more theoretical literatures. This section should answer the questions: who has worked on related questions, what insights have they gained, and how does this project contribute to those literatures?
3. Method and procedure. The student should indicate that the competencies necessary for carrying through the inquiry have been acquired and that the proposed method is adequate for the inquiry. This may mean following a tradition of philosophical thought and so the discussion of your theoretical methods may be part of your literature review. However, if you are bringing critical analysis to a literature or question that has not been done before, you need to explain that. This would amount to a “lack of” literature review, but you would need to show the sources you have used for developing your analysis (i.e. critical reading of other authors or other questions.) This section should answer the question: how will I do my research?
4. Tentative chapter outline and abstracts or overviews of each chapter. This section should answer the question: what are the parts of my project and in what order will I write them for my first draft? This section should include descriptions of each chapter of the dissertation and some sense of the conclusions of the project.
5. The length of the proposal will be decided by you and your advisor. Some advisors prefer shorter 8-12 page proposals, while others prefer longer proposals of 20-30 pages.

**Bibliography** of unlimited pages indicating read and unread material

### **5.2 Ph.D. Candidacy**

Admission to the Philosophy Graduate Program does not imply admission to candidacy for the PhD degree. To be admitted to PhD candidacy, the student must satisfy Departmental requirements, and the last of these are the Dissertation Prospectus Abstract, the Dissertation Prospectus, and the Dissertation Prospectus Defense (Qualifying Exam). Once students have successfully defended their Dissertation Prospectus, they are admitted to the PhD candidacy and have All But Dissertation (ABD) status.

### **5.3 Dissertation Prospectus Abstract**

After a student successfully passes the Oral Defense of their Dissertation Field Exam, they must next complete a Dissertation Prospectus Abstract by **March 15<sup>th</sup> in the 6<sup>th</sup> semester**. This Abstract should be one page long, single-spaced. The student should e-mail this Abstract to their DFE Committee members, the DGS, and the Administrative Assistant to the Graduate Program.

The Abstract should be submitted to an agreed-upon Dissertation Advisor and at least one more faculty member who has agreed to serve on the Dissertation Committee. Students must meet with these members individually by **April 1<sup>st</sup> of the 6<sup>th</sup> semester** for feedback on this abstract, and they must send an e-mail to all with whom they have met and the DGS and the Administrative Assistant to the Department reporting that they have held their meetings.

#### **5.4 SCHEDULING QUALIFYING EXAM**

Students must ask their dissertation director to file a request with the DGS to officially appoint a Ph.D. Committee with 3 internal members and 1 outside member at a minimum of three weeks prior to oral defense of dissertation prospectus (Qualifying Exam).

#### **5.5 ORAL QUALIFYING EXAM**

**No later than May 15<sup>th</sup> of the 6<sup>th</sup> semester** students must defend the full 10-20 page prospectus in an oral exam with their dissertation director and at least two other members of the faculty.

#### **5.6 Dissertation Committee**

The PhD Dissertation committee is appointed by the Graduate School on the advice of the Director of Graduate Studies. The committee consists of not fewer than four members. Three of the members must be graduate faculty from within (“internal” to) the Vanderbilt Philosophy Department; a fourth “external” member must come from outside the Philosophy Department. Graduate faculty include full-time tenured and tenure-track faculty with primary appointments in the Vanderbilt Philosophy Department. Tenured or tenure-track faculty having secondary appointments in the Philosophy Department may also be considered “internal” committee members. The “external” committee member may be an appropriate academic from outside of Vanderbilt, and needs to be approved by the DGS and Graduate School.

In cases where a faculty member who had been chairing a dissertation committee departs Vanderbilt for another institution, that faculty member may serve as a co-chair of a dissertation committee, but must count as an “external” member. Emeritus philosophy faculty may not serve as the sole chair of a dissertation committee, but they may co-chair dissertation committees, and they count as “internal” committee members.

The functions of the PhD committee are to: (a) to administer the Dissertation Prospectus Oral Exam (Qualifying Examination), (b) to approve the dissertation subject, (c) to aid the student and monitor the progress of the dissertation, and (d) to read and approve the dissertation and evaluate the final Oral Dissertation Defense.

Dissertation Advisors are responsible for submitting the following paperwork to the Director of Graduate Studies (or the Administrative Assistant to the Graduate Program) to appoint the PhD committee, at latest three weeks before the Qualifying Exam.

- (i) “Request to Appoint the PhD Committee” form;
- (ii) Rationale for selecting external reader (a few paragraphs);
- (iii) CV for the external reader

The paperwork will then be submitted to the Graduate School **at least two weeks in advance of the Qualifying Exam**.

Students are encouraged to begin assembling a Dissertation Committee during the 6<sup>th</sup> semester, during or soon after the DFE process, in order to make progress on their Dissertation Prospectus Abstract. It is strongly recommended that the Committee be formally appointed during the summer following the 6<sup>th</sup> semester. At latest, Dissertation Committees may be appointed in the early fall of the 7<sup>th</sup> semester, with at least three weeks notice before the Dissertation Prospectus Oral Defense (Qualifying Exam), which itself must be completed by **May 15<sup>th</sup> of the 6<sup>th</sup> semester**.

Any changes to the PhD Committee need to be approved by the Graduate School. The form to change the committee is “Request to Change the PhD Committee.” If a new external reader will be added to the committee, the Advisor needs to provide a rationale and the reviewer’s CV to the Director of Graduate Studies (or Administrative Assistant for the Graduate Program).

### **5.7 Dissertation Prospectus Oral Defense (Qualifying Exam)**

The prospectus defense provides an opportunity for a collective work session, *so the candidate should emphasize debatable theoretical and methodological questions, as well as providing preliminary answers to them*. In addition, the student should demonstrate knowledge of the field in which these debates take place. The committee members may make suggestions for further lines of inquiry or more likely for limiting or narrowing the focus of the project.

Then, after making revisions as the result of this presentation and in consultation with the Dissertation Chair, the student will submit their proposal to the Director of Graduate Studies for approval.

Note that it is usual that students will narrow their focus after the proposal/prospectus defense and the process of further focusing the project may continue as the dissertation writing progresses.

Under the direction of the Dissertation Advisor and with appropriate input from members of the Dissertation Committee, graduate students must write a Dissertation Prospectus. Once the Dissertation Committee has deemed the Prospectus worthy of defense, the student must take and pass a Dissertation Prospectus Oral Defense (or Qualifying Exam). This exam must be passed by **May 15<sup>th</sup> of the 6<sup>th</sup> semester**.

The final version of the Dissertation Prospectus must be distributed to the Dissertation Committee well in advance of the Dissertation Prospectus Oral Defense. It should reflect prior consultation, though not necessarily agreement, with each member of the Committee.

It is the responsibility of the Dissertation Advisor to schedule the Dissertation Prospectus Exam and to submit the “Request to Schedule the Qualifying Exam” form to the DGS (or to the Administrative Assistant to the Graduate program) at least three weeks in advance of the defense. This request must be received by the Graduate School at least two weeks in advance.

The Dissertation Prospectus Oral Defense is administered by the student’s Dissertation Committee in consultation with and approval by the DGS. The Dissertation Prospectus Oral

Defense will test the student's mastery of the proposed dissertation topic as well as the student's overall knowledge of the sub-field within which the proposed dissertation project resides.

If a majority of Dissertation Committee members grade the Dissertation Prospectus Oral Defense as passing, the student passes the exam.

Students who fail the Dissertation Prospectus Oral Defense may be required to pursue one or more courses of action, including re-writing the Prospectus and then re-taking the exam, re-taking the exam, or assembling a different Dissertation Committee to prepare for a different exam and perhaps a different course of study. Or a student may be dismissed from the graduate program. If a student fails the Dissertation Prospectus Oral Defense on a second attempt, the student must, according to Graduate School policy, be "officially dismissed from the Graduate School unless s/he has been given the option of receiving a Master's Degree" (<http://gradschool.vanderbilt.edu>: The Graduate School, "Maintaining Records and Monitoring Progress"). Because all possible Dissertation Prospectus Oral Defense re-takes must be completed by **May 15<sup>th</sup> of the 6<sup>th</sup> semester**, students are encouraged to schedule their Exams in the Spring or Summer before their seventh semester.

It is the responsibility of the Dissertation Advisor to complete the "Results of the Qualifying Exam" form and submit the results to the Director of Graduate Studies (or Administrative Assistant for the Graduate Program) following the defense. Once the form has the final approval of the Director of Graduate Studies, the results will be forwarded to the Graduate School.

## **6. DISSERTATION WRITING & DEFENDING PROCESS**

### **6.1 Overview**

The dissertation proposal should define a question that 1) will make an original contribution to the field and 2) is researchable by skills available to the student. The proposal should be brief, address the above concerns, and include a bibliography of both read and unread material. The student does not need to answer the question in the proposal. The oral defense of the dissertation gives the student the opportunity to clarify for herself and her committee the key challenges of the dissertation.

### **6.2 Dissertation**

Upon mentor's recommendation a draft version of the dissertation will be distributed to other members of the Committee for their suggestions, comments, and criticisms.

Students should be aware of the arduousness of preparing the dissertation. Most dissertations require successive revisions and re-writings, and it typically requires two or more years to complete, during which time the student continues to be formally enrolled ideally supported with a research or teaching fellowship.

The thesis should conform to the Chicago style, as detailed in the University of Chicago Press *Chicago Manual of Style*.

### **6.3 Dissertation Defense**

Once the dissertation is complete, there is a Dissertation Defense at which the student presents the results of their research and is questioned about the implications of the work for her chosen field within philosophy by the Dissertation Committee. The thesis defense is open to the public and is scheduled with public notice. At the conclusion of this session, the defense is closed and a vote is taken by Dissertation Committee members, at which time the dissertation is approved by a majority, the student is asked to make minor revisions which require only the chair's review, or the student is asked to undertake major revisions and a defense rescheduled.

Once the Committee judges the dissertation worthy of defense, the student must take and pass a public oral examination of the dissertation. It is the responsibility of the Dissertation Advisor to schedule the Final Dissertation Defense and to submit the "Request to Schedule Final Defense" form to the Director of Graduate Studies (or to the Administrative Assistant to the Graduate program) at least three weeks in advance of the defense. This request must be received by the Graduate School **at least two weeks in advance**.

Likewise, it is the responsibility of the Dissertation Advisor to complete the "Results of Dissertation Defense" form and submit the results to the Director of Graduate Studies (or Administrative Assistant for the Graduate Program) following the defense. Once the form has final approval of the Director of Graduate Studies, the results will be forwarded to the Graduate School.

At least a majority of the PhD committee must be present at the Dissertation Prospectus Oral Defense and at the Final Dissertation Defense and original signatures from at least a majority of the committee are required on the "Results" forms.

### **6.4 After the Final Defense**

Following a successful Dissertation Defense, students are responsible for preparing and submitting the final version of their dissertation to the Vanderbilt Library. Students are also responsible for completing the required paperwork for the official conferral of the PhD and graduation from Vanderbilt. These matters may be discussed with the DGS at the appropriate time.

### **6.5 Formatting the Dissertation**

The graduate school requires proper formatting before you submit your dissertation. Formatting requirements are outlined on the graduate school website. Contact Liz Leis in the graduate school before submitting your dissertation. She will help you make sure you turn in what is required. [liz.leis@Vanderbilt.Edu](mailto:liz.leis@Vanderbilt.Edu)

## From the Graduate School Website: Thesis and Dissertation Guidelines

These guidelines provide students at Vanderbilt University with essential information about how to prepare and submit theses and dissertations in a format acceptable to the Graduate School. You can either explore the guidelines by topic below or review the complete [Format Guidelines document](#).

### **Electronic Thesis & Dissertation Submission System**

The Vanderbilt Libraries have recently implemented [VIREO](#), an Electronic Thesis & Dissertation review and submission system for the Graduate School. The Graduate School requires electronic submission of all theses and dissertations through this new platform. Format reviews now occur within the VIREO submission process. If you have questions or would like an in-person format review, [contact administrators](#).

#### **Thesis & Dissertation Guidelines**

- [Manuscript Preparation](#)
- [General Information](#)
- [Submission Requirements](#)

#### **[Submitting Forms to Schedule Exams](#)**

Qualifying Exams, Dissertation Committee assignments, and Dissertation Exams all require that forms be submitted to the graduate school at least two weeks in advance of the Exam. Therefore, they need to be submitted at least three weeks in advance to the DGS and office administrator. Forms are available on the graduate school website. You should work with your advisor to submit forms. Check the graduate school website for deadlines for submitting intent to graduate forms and submitting your dissertation if you want to graduate in December or May.

#### **[From the Graduate School Website:](#)**

- **Complete Coursework.** Check with your program regarding transfer credit and independent study policies.
  - [Transfer credit worksheet](#)
  - [Request for graduate credit](#)
  - [Request for independent study](#)
  - [Permission to audit](#)
  - [Request to appoint or change adviser](#)
- **Appoint PhD Committee**
  - [Request to appoint PhD committee](#)
  - [Request to change PhD committee](#)



- **Qualifying Exams**
  - [Request to schedule qualifying exam](#)
  - [Request to cancel or reschedule qualifying exam](#)
  - [Submit qualifying exam results \(with original signatures\)](#)
- **Submit Intent to Graduate** to the Registrar's Office through [YES student portal](#)
  - For step-by-step instructions on how to declare intent to graduate, please refer to [this Yes User Guide document](#)
  - The [Graduation Confirmation User Guide](#) provides additional instructions required for Commencement
  - Contact [yes@vanderbilt.edu](mailto:yes@vanderbilt.edu) or 615-343-4306 if you need additional assistance
- **Prepare Dissertation** according to [Thesis and Dissertation Guidelines](#)
- **Dissertation Defense and Submission**
  - [Request to schedule dissertation defense](#)
  - Take copy of [title page](#) and [abstract](#) to defense to get signatures
  - [Request to cancel or reschedule dissertation defense](#)
  - [Submit dissertation defense results](#), signed [title page](#) and [abstract](#), *with original signatures*, to the Graduate School
- [Click here to find updates on forms.](#)

## C) GRADUATION

1. All students who plan to graduate, must fill out the appropriate forms and submit them via the DGS to the graduate school.

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### Intra-Term/End of Term Graduation Processing

Students must be approved by the Graduate School to graduate intra-term following the school-based degree certification process. All grades must be assigned to the student record, the requisite degree minimums and maximums must be met, and all degree audits (if any) must run clean. NOTE: No extensions will be given.

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### Schedule

The URO will post degrees for students who have been certified by their school(s) in the middle of a term on the following schedule:

#### **Intra-Term Graduation Dates:**

*[Submission deadline for Intra-term graduates is 10 business days prior to graduation date](#)*

- January 31
- February 28(9)
- March 31
- May 31
- June 30
- August 31
- September 30
- October 31

#### **End of Term Graduation Dates:**

- August 7, 2020 (submission deadline for theses and dissertations: July 17)
- December 19, 2020 (submission deadline: November 18)
- May 14, 2021 (submission deadline: March 24)

#### **Impact**

The student will have their degree posted in the middle of the semester; however, they will be counted as a member of the cohort graduating at the end of the term (e.g. students who have degrees posted on September 30 will be part of the Fall graduating class). Diplomas will be dated on the intra-term date (see schedule above). Transcripts will reflect degrees as soon as they are posted. Additional impacts, including loan grace period, international student status, Vanderbilt computing, health services, student employment and health insurance, are discussed in detail on the [Application for Intra-Term Graduation](#).

**Check these dates as they change from year-to-year.**

**2. Graduate Students who plan to graduate must be enrolled or on Leave of Absence (LOA) during the semester they plan to graduate, including summer semester.**

**3. Upon graduation, your graduate stipend will be terminated. Once you have your PhD you cannot receive a TA-stipend. Thus, if you graduate in May, you will not receive your stipend over the summer.**

#### **D) LEAVE OF ABSENCE**

The Graduate School requires continuous registration except for summer sessions. Students who want to interrupt their graduate study must petition the department, who on their behalf apply to the Graduate School for an authorized leave of absence. Leave of absence is granted for a maximum of one year. Those without authorized leave who do not register are dismissed from the Graduate School and are not considered students. If they want to resume graduate study at

Vanderbilt, they must petition for reinstatement. Students do not receive their stipends or benefits while on LOA.

### **E) PARENTAL LEAVE**

All students enrolled full-time in the Graduate School and supported by funding from either internal or external sources are covered by this policy. This includes students with funding through stipends, such as training grants or service-free fellowships, and students compensated for services, such as teaching or research assistants. Prior to and/or following childbirth or adoption of an infant, the primary caregiver (whether mother or father) will be allowed to take six weeks of parental leave. During this period, the student's current stipend, and, if applicable, funding for health insurance and tuition, will be continued without interruption. The student's enrollment status will be continued during this period as well.

### **F) WITHDRAWAL**

Students who intend to withdraw from the university should inform the department, who then informs the Graduate School in writing. Improper notification may result in academic and financial penalties.

### **G) RESIDENCY**

All students must be in residency while taking courses, teaching, and writing their dissertations. The philosophy department expects all students to actively participate in department events, including colloquia, conferences, symposia, and other academic activities.

## **PART III: OPPORTUNITIES, PUBLISHING, AND GOING ON THE JOB MARKET**

### **A) Practical Advice on Writing and Publishing**

#### **General Advice:**

1. Use your time taking courses to benefit from the wealth of knowledge that your professors can offer, to get to know different theoretical approaches, and to develop your writing.
2. Don't wait until the end of the class to start writing your graduate paper.
3. Bring written work for your professors to read and give you feedback before the papers are due.
4. Ask a colleague to read your work.
5. Get published by writing a book review for an academic journal.
6. Think of your graduate papers for your classes as conference presentations first (10-12pp), to be turned into publishable essays second (20-22pp).
7. Turn one or two of these conference presentations into one or two publishable essays during the time you are taking coursework.
8. When you start writing your dissertation, consider thinking of the chapters as separate publishable essays.
9. Try to send out at least one of the chapters for publication before you finish writing your dissertation.
10. By the end of the process, you should be able to have at least one published article and one submitted article to list on your CV. This would be a competitive CV.
11. Start putting together your CV soon, and put everything on it as soon as possible (so you don't forget)

#### **Specific Advice:**

1. Follow the submission procedures, guidelines, and word limit.
2. Pick the right journal. Consider the editorial board. Do you recognize the names? What kind of article does the journal publish?
3. Consider the feedback you have received in making a choice regarding the journal where you should submit the article
4. Do not send your article to more than one journal at a time.
5. Steel yourself against rejection. Rejection is the bane of our profession and extremely common.

6. If you are asked to “revise and resubmit”, do so. Try to follow the advice as best as you can, but always be prepared to have to resubmit to another journal after a rejection.
7. Always have a second pair of eyes read your work before you submit for publication to look for typos and grammatical mistakes.
8. Avail yourself of university resources like the writing center, or the library electronic links to journals where you can download their latest volume and/or individual essays in PDF format.

**For more advice on publishing in academic journals, see:**

<https://www.theguardian.com/education/2015/jan/03/how-to-get-published-in-an-academic-journal-top-tips-from-editors>

**For a list of philosophy journals with links and descriptions, see:**

[http://www.apaonline.org/general/recommended\\_links.asp?cc=33093](http://www.apaonline.org/general/recommended_links.asp?cc=33093)

## **B) EXTERNAL FUNDING**

Prospective applicants are urged to apply for fellowships or grants from national, international, industrial or foundation sources. Receiving early external awards, such as the National Science Foundation Fellowship or the Ford Foundation’s Minority Fellowships, not only enable a student to supplement the funding received in the department but also make that student a more attractive candidate for future funding opportunities. Some fellowships can be applied to prior to being admitted; some require you to apply in your first year of the PhD. To learn more about external funding sources, discuss opportunities with your program and review the resources below.

### **Resources**

**Office of Honor Fellowships** lists some of the major non-University fellowships for which U.S. citizens or permanent residents may apply. These fellowships pay annual stipends in addition to a tuition allowance. Students who receive an award from Vanderbilt and from a non-University source may be permitted to hold both concurrently, although Vanderbilt may adjust its award accordingly.

**SPIN:** Vanderbilt Faculty, Students, and Staff have access to a powerful search database, [SPIN](#), that lists thousands of funding opportunities. SPIN identifies a wide variety of funding sources according to your research interests and the search parameters you use. [This presentation](#) provides instructions on establishing a SPIN profile and searching for funding opportunities.

## C) OPPORTUNITIES FOR 6<sup>TH</sup> YEAR FUNDING AT VANDERBILT

### For graduate students who are ABD:

**Robert Penn Warren Fellowship** - The Robert Penn Warren Center for the Humanities at Vanderbilt invites applications for seven Graduate Student Dissertation Fellowships each year. These residential awards will offer graduate students in the humanities and the social sciences in the College of Arts and Science at Vanderbilt University a service-free year of support to enable full-time work on the dissertation. Each award will include tuition, health insurance, a stipend, a research budget, and affiliation with the Robert Penn Warren Center for the Humanities. [Learn more here.](#)

**Center for Teaching Graduate Teaching Fellowships** – Each year the Center for Teaching (CFT) hires a number of graduate students as part of its efforts to mentor and train graduate students, including those serving as teaching assistants or instructors of record here at Vanderbilt as well as those interested in developing teaching skills for future faculty careers. The CFT has several types of positions available for graduate students:

**Graduate Teaching Fellows** – GTFs lead sections of the Certificate in College Teaching program; consult with graduate students about their teaching; facilitate workshops for graduate students at TA Orientation and throughout the year; and assist CFT senior staff with various ongoing and short-term projects, including the creation of online resources for the Vanderbilt teaching community. The GTF position is a 12-month position carrying a stipend and graduate student health insurance. [Learn more about the GTF Program.](#)

**Mellon Graduate Teaching Fellow** – The Mellon GTF leads the seminar and practicum for the Mellon Certificate in Humanities Education program. Graduate student and post-doc participants in this program explore and develop teaching skills with special emphases on teaching in the humanities and teaching historically underrepresented populations, including first-generation college students and students of color. The Mellon GTF position is a 12-month position carrying a stipend and graduate student health insurance, and is open to graduate student applicants in the humanities. [Learn more about the Mellon Program.](#)

**WIDER Fellows** – Funded by an NSF WIDER grant, these graduate students support the planning, implementation, and assessment of “An Introduction to Evidence-Based Undergraduate STEM Teaching,” an open, online course designed for STEM graduate students and post-docs planning faculty careers. Graduate students with interests in STEM teaching and online teaching are encouraged to apply. The WIDER Fellow is a 10-month position carrying a stipend and graduate student health insurance.

**Teaching Affiliates** – The primary responsibility for Teaching Affiliates is to lead a cohort of incoming TAs through a day-long workshop at August’s TA Orientation. These workshops familiarize new TAs with the challenges and opportunities of working at TAs at Vanderbilt and help prepare TAs for the first few weeks of class. Cohorts are divided by discipline, and so the CFT seeks Teaching Affiliates from a wide variety of disciplines on campus. The Teaching Affiliate position is an 80-hour position, with most of those hours occurring in August, carrying a \$1,000 stipend.

**Vanderbilt Exchange with Freie University in Berlin.** [Get Application Form here.](#)

**CMAP joint PhD program.** The program asks students to take 18-20 credit hours of course work in four consecutive seminars and two Maymester courses. In order to meet the demands of additional course work, knowledge and skill acquisition, internship and research activities, CMAP students will be eligible to apply for one year of graduate funding in addition to the five years of support they typically receive within their home departments at Vanderbilt. **Learn more [here.](#)**

**External Fellowships** - Vanderbilt has a list of external fellowships [here.](#)

## **D) POST-DOC POSITIONS**

**Philosophy Department Post-Doc** – Each year the Philosophy Department awards one recent PhD a teaching post-doc for one academic year. This is a competitive post-doc based on your research proposal. Funding is subject to approval by the administration. [Mellon Post-Doctoral Fellowships through Vanderbilt.](#)

### **Academic Pathways: An Initiative For Academic Diversity**

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The Academic Pathways program is designed to prepare recently graduated doctoral students (Ph.D., Ed.D., etc.) and/or a law degree (J.D.) for competitive academic careers. The need is particularly acute to develop faculty candidates who come from diverse racial, ethnic and other backgrounds and experiences, as differing experiences, views and perspectives are of exceptional value for academic institutions in their research and educational roles.

Academic institutions, including Vanderbilt, have made great strides in recruiting and training undergraduate and graduate students coming from diverse groups that are underrepresented in the educational arena. Institutions have been less successful in attracting these students into postdoctoral training positions, and the challenge becomes particularly acute at the transition to

the faculty level. To continue to make strides on our campus in the education of the best and brightest students from all backgrounds and settings, and to embrace the diversity that makes Vanderbilt a leader in research and scholarship and a unique training environment for the next generation of thinkers and scholars, we must support the career development of future academics that reflect the diversity of our society.

The Academic Pathways Postdoctoral Fellowship creates a bridge between academic training and entry-level faculty positions at colleges and universities throughout the United States. Essential elements of the program include the creation of substantial “protected time” for the pursuit of the fellow’s academic and scholarly objectives, the construction of a robust mentoring architecture, and the development of the “soft skills” so important for success in today’s academic setting. Specific elements of the program will include: leadership training, grant and manuscript writing and preparation, a multi-level mentoring framework, and connections to relevant resources and training across campus. These opportunities will be individualized based on the academic discipline of fellows with similar formats for the humanities, social science, and life/physical/biomedical science areas.

This program is sponsored by Vanderbilt’s Office of the Provost with additional funding from the Alliances for Graduate Education and the Professoriate of the National Science Foundation.

Vanderbilt provides a unique environment for fellows because of:

- **Unparalleled interdisciplinary research and scholarship opportunities** framed around our intimate geography (all ten schools on a single campus) combined with a collegial and collaborative spirit. The Academic Pathways Postdoctoral Fellowship Program capitalizes on these strengths and emphasizes training in multidisciplinary approaches with a mentoring structure that builds expertise across disciplinary borders. These elements provide the ideal environment for new discoveries to happen.
- **Discipline-specific training** in traditional areas of research and scholarship.
- **Individualized, tailored opportunities** for teaching, mentoring, and service to enhance the preparation and competitive profile of fellows.
- **Unique partnerships** with local HBCUs, including Fisk University, Tennessee State University, and Meharry Medical College.

**See a news article about this exciting program initiative:**

[Building stronger, more diverse pipeline of future faculty is aim of new postdoctoral program](#)

## **Areas of Training**



The Academic Pathways program is open to all programs of study within the College of Arts & Science, Owen Graduate School of Management, Peabody College of Education and Human Development, School of Divinity, School of Engineering, School of Law, School of Nursing, and School of Medicine.

### **Award**

Academic Pathways Fellows will receive an annual stipend of \$60,000 for two years along with benefits, travel funding, and a research allowance.

### **Application**

The Vanderbilt Academic Pathways Program Application 2019 may be made electronically at [Interfolio](#).

### **EXTERNAL POST-DOCS**

#### **National Postdoctoral Association**

Visit the [NPA website](#) to find postdoc positions across the United States.

### **E) DEPARTMENTAL GUIDELINES FOR GOING ON THE JOB MARKET**

1. The official placement meeting to explain how to put together a dossier and the job market process will be held in late spring. All students are welcome, but fourth-year students should plan to attend.
2. If students are planning to go on the market, they should have a minimum of two chapters of their dissertations completed and approved by their dissertation committee chair.
3. Students requesting letters should submit their completed dissertation chapters, plus their completed dossier, to letter writers at least one month prior to the deadline of the first letter they require (this date will likely be in September).
4. Before sending out their dossiers (CV with short dissertation abstract and projected defense date, cover letter, longer dissertation abstract, research statement, teaching portfolio, writing sample, diversity statement), students should have these approved by their dissertation committee chair (in addition, they can also ask for feedback from the placement committee).



## **PART IV: RESOURCES AVAILABLE FROM THE GRADUATE SCHOOL**

### **A) ACADEMIC SERVICES & RESOURCES:**

- [Steps to Graduation](#) provides a timeline with the appropriate academic forms needed to complete the steps along your way to a degree
- [Intra-Term/End of Term Graduation Processing](#)
- [Travel Grants](#)
- [Department Contacts](#)
- [Academic Services](#)
- [Successful Student Practices](#)
- [Vanderbilt Student Handbook](#)
- [Graduate Catalog](#)

### **B) RESOURCES FOR GRADUATE STUDENT ACADEMIC & PERSONAL CONCERNS**

Students looking for assistance with concerns, ranging from program specific questions and processes to mental health and wellbeing as well as academic support, should begin with the [chart of Graduate Student Academic and Personal Concerns](#) (APC chart). The APC chart takes students through the process of identifying and contacting resources, based on their unique situations.

### **C) GRADUATE STUDENT INITIATIVES AND RESOURCES**

[The Graduate Student Resource Guide](#), created by the [Graduate Student Council](#) with support from the Graduate School, is a one-stop document summarizing procedures, policies and resources with direct links to source materials.

**Note:** the Resource Guide is intended to supplement the general [Student Handbook](#) and [Graduate School Catalog](#), and should neither replace either resource or direct, open and frequent communication between students and their respective advisors, Directors of Graduate Studies, and Department Chairs.

### **D) MENTAL HEALTH BILL OF RIGHTS & RESPONSIBILITIES**

[The Mental Health Bill of Rights and Responsibilities](#) (MHBoR&R) outlines the Vanderbilt University community's ideals and aspirations for providing mental health care to its students, as well as student responsibilities in the mental health care process and system. students are encouraged to use the MHBoR&R in conversation with their Student Care Network providers

when discussing their mental health needs and expectations. The MHBoR&R is not binding for any parties, but rather reflects Vanderbilt's commitment to provide quality mental health care for its students.

The MHBoR&R was developed through an in-depth collaboration between the Graduate Student Council, the Graduate School, the Office of the Dean of Students, the University Counseling Center, the Student Care Network, the Office of the Provost, the Office of the Chancellor, and other University community members. It is intended to be a living document, and any future changes should undergo a robust process of discussions with relevant stakeholders, including those listed above. Refer to [Health & Wellness](#) below for the links to the Student Care network and other resources for graduate students.

## **E) HEALTH & WELLNESS**

Managing stress in graduate school can be overwhelming when balancing academic, financial or language barrier pressures. Successful students take advantage of the resources below in order to stay healthy in mind, body, and spirit.

- [The Mental Health Bill of Rights and Responsibilities](#)
- [Student Care Network](#)
  - [Office of Student Care Coordination](#)
  - [Zerfoss Student Health Center](#)
  - [University Counseling Center](#)
  - [Center for Student Wellbeing](#)
- [Graduate Life Coach](#)
- [Recreation & Wellness Center](#)
- [Project Safe](#)
- [Office of the University Chaplain & Religious Life](#)
- [Outdoor Recreation Center](#)

Fellow students, staff, faculty and other community members concerned about the personal, physical or emotional wellbeing of a student may complete the [Student of Concern Reporting Form](#). For emergencies or life-endangering situations, contact VUPD at 615-421-1911 or 911.

## **F) GRADUATE STUDENT HEALTH INSURANCE**

Vanderbilt University requires all graduate and professional students registered in degree programs of four or more credits - or who are actively enrolled in research courses (including, but not limited to dissertation or thesis courses) and are designated by Vanderbilt University as maintaining full-time enrollment - to be covered by a health insurance plan that is comparable to or exceeds the Vanderbilt Student Health Insurance Plan (SHIP).

Full details regarding SHIP for the 2019-2020 academic year, including rates and coverage, can be found on the [Graduate and Professional Student Insurance page](#).

## **G) CONNECTING WITH THE COMMUNITY**

The Graduate School strongly encourages students and students' partners/families to get involved with the larger Vanderbilt community by connecting with student organizations and finding networks of support.

- [Student Organizations & Centers](#)
- [Housing](#)
- [University Services](#)
- [Family Support](#)
- [Diversity Initiatives](#)
- [International Student & Scholar Services](#)
- [FLiCX: iLens Series](#)

## **H) GRADUATE STUDENT LIFE COACH**

The Graduate Life Coach assists Graduate School students and postdoctoral scholars in their academic and professional development during their time at Vanderbilt. This position was created to support students and postdocs through individual coaching and group programming around effective time and stress management, resilience, conflict resolution, navigating academic relationships, and juggling work/life responsibilities.

### **Consider contacting the Graduate Life Coach, if you need:**

- Someone to listen to your concerns and have a discussion about your concern
- Assistance working through an issue with a colleague, advisor or supervisor
- Knowledge of and assistance accessing resources available to graduate students and postdocs on campus
- Clarification concerning a university, departmental or program policy
- To explore the formal options available for addressing your concern
- To learn methods and strategies to resolve or deescalate conflict

The Graduate Life Coach will have programming and appointments available on both the university and medical center sides of campus to best serve all Graduate School students and postdocs. Keep an eye out for more programming and information!

### **To schedule an appointment with the Graduate Life Coach:**

If you are a VU graduate student or postdoc and would like to make an appointment with the Graduate Life Coach, please first review the [Confidentiality & Consent form](#), then make an appointment utilizing the online calendaring tool.

If you are scheduling a follow up appointment and have already completed the Confidentiality & Consent form, please go ahead and scheduling utilizing the [online calendaring tool](#).

**Contact:**

If you would like to contact Stacey Satchell, Graduate Life Coach, or have ideas for supporting graduate student and postdoc needs at Vanderbilt, please contact her via [email](#).

**D) GRADUATE CAREER CENTER**

In order to provide more robust career services for graduate students, the Graduate School will be partnering with the [Career Center](#) to create a new model for serving the critical career advising and development needs of our graduate student community.

The new model will be developed based on student input and structured using survey data collected from key stakeholders, including students and faculty. In order to ensure that the new model meets those needs, Kate Brooks, the Evans Family Executive Director of the Career Center, and some of her colleagues will be conducting listening sessions this summer. Graduate students will soon receive more information about how to participate.

In the meantime, graduate students may contact the [Career Center](#) to set up an appointment beginning Monday, July 6. Please indicate in your email the degree that you are currently pursuing as well as the general nature of your question(s).

**Develop Skills for Your Career**

Rigorous academic excellence prepares graduate students for a range of different career paths in competitive fields. The Graduate School Career Development office prepares students for careers in government, business, non-profits, and academia.

- [Graduate School Career Development](#)
- [Center for Teaching](#)
- [Three Minute Thesis \(3MT\)](#)
- [Biomedical Research & Education Training \(BRET\) Office of Career Development](#)

The new [Russell G. Hamilton Graduate Leadership Development Institute \(GLDI\)](#) provides students with professional leadership training and robust career development support to help them succeed in academic and non-academic career paths.