

ADVANCING TO CANDIDACY

Students who have completed all requirements except the dissertation and who have passed the Doctoral Oral Qualifying Exam are Doctoral Candidates and have earned the C.Phil. degree; they are a “Candidate in Philosophy” (also known as “ABD,” which is Latin for “all but dissertation”). You may advance to candidacy as early as the Spring of your third year, and **you must advance to candidacy by June of your fourth year.**

The advancing to candidacy process is relatively unstructured and involves the difficult task of arriving at a dissertation topic. As such, the department requests that, immediately upon completion of the Proposition, a student select an official interim advisor who will help guide them through the initial stages of the advancing to candidacy process until they have appointed an official dissertation committee. When a faculty member agrees to be a student’s interim advisor, the department’s graduate advisor should be informed by the student. The interim advisor need not be the student’s proposition advisor nor the student’s ultimate dissertation advisor but should be someone whom the student takes to be suited to guiding them through the advancing process. Faculty may put conditions on being an interim advisor, and there is no presumption that any given faculty member will be the interim advisor for more than one student. If students do not succeed at finding an interim advisor, the department’s graduate advisor will be their default interim advisor.

Earning the C.Phil degree, and so “advancing to candidacy,” requires, in addition to the completion of all degree requirements except the dissertation, a certain amount of paperwork. This document explains that paperwork.

Coursework Completed

Assuming that you have in fact completed all your degree requirements, except the dissertation and the oral exam, you must **make sure that this fact is documented with the department, with the registrar, and with Graduate Division.**

To this end, review the degree requirements, your transcript, and/or your Degree Progress Report (“check-off sheet”), to ensure that your coursework is both complete and recorded as such. Pay particular attention to any requirements you (think you have) satisfied by petition. If in doubt, confirm with the Graduate Advisor.

Language Petition Filed

In order to advance to candidacy, **you must have filed a “Language Petition” with Graduate Division.** This records, with Graduate Division, that you have

satisfied this requirement. You may file this petition as soon as your language requirement is completed. You can find the petition on this page: <http://www.gdnet.ucla.edu/gasaa/library/degreeinfo.htm>. Fill out the petition, sign it, and give it to the Student Affairs Officer, who will submit it, with the required additional signatures, to Graduate Division. **Allow 3 weeks for the processing of this form.**

Committee Appointed, officially

Officially, “Doctoral committees are appointed by the Dean of the Graduate Division, acting for the Graduate Council, upon nomination by the chair of the department or interdepartmental program committee, after consultation with the student. The committee must be appointed prior to holding the oral qualifying examination.” (Standards and Procedures for Graduate Study, pg. 11.)

What this means is that, **before you take your Doctoral Oral Qualifying Exam, your committee must be officially “constituted” by the Dean of the Graduate Division.** This process cannot be completed until after the Language Petition has been processed.

To start the process, simply approach faculty members to see if they would agree to serve on your committee. Committees typically have four members: three from the department, including the committee Chair, and one “outside” member. The outside member is from another department at UCLA. Your possible “inside” members may have helpful suggestions about who might serve as your outside member. (It is possible to use an outside member from another university, though that requires additional paperwork and time for approval.) For more information about committees, consult the Standards and Procedures for Graduate Study, here: <http://www.gdnet.ucla.edu/gasaa/library/spintro.htm>.

Once four people have agreed to serve on your committee, the Student Affairs Officer will submit a “Nomination of Doctoral Committee” form on your behalf. To this end, send to the SAO a list containing the names of the relevant faculty, together with their department, institution, and academic rank (Assistant, Associate, or full Professor). Indicate who will chair. You may constitute your committee before you have finalized your proposal or scheduled your exam. **Again, allow 3 weeks for the processing of this form.**

Doctoral Qualifying Exam Scheduled

All of your committee members must be present at your Doctoral Qualifying Oral Exam. This can be hard to arrange, as people have complex schedules. Finding a time for the outside member can be particularly difficult. As with all such matters, it is easier to schedule the exam well in advance, **two months in advance is not too soon.** Once the exam has been scheduled, **be sure to tell the Student Affairs Officer the date, time, and location**, as the SAO must prepare a form to be signed by your committee at your exam.

Proposal Finalized

A dissertation proposal is the document that you will circulate to your committee

before your Doctoral Oral Qualifying Exam. It will be the basis for the discussion that is the exam. Presumably, you have been working on it for some time, in consultation with all members of your committee (presumably, working most closely with your chair). Well in advance of your exam date, you should **finalize your proposal and distribute it to your committee, providing them with ample time to read it before the exam** (two weeks seems to me a reasonable *minimum*).

Exam Taken and Passed: C.Phil. Degree Conferred!