

INTERUNIVERSITY PhD IN ART HISTORY

Université du Québec à Montréal

PREPARATION FOR THE COMPREHENSIVE EXAMINATION (9 credits)

General principles

The comprehensive examination is an intermediary step between the coursework (including the research tutorial) and the doctoral forum. Its goal is to ensure that the candidate possesses the knowledge necessary to undertake the writing of the thesis.

The exam is based on a reading list of theoretical and methodological sources that are directly linked to the student's research topic. It includes a written and an oral component. These are evaluated by a jury of three professors.

Students are required to demonstrate their mastery of the larger currents of thought related to their research topic, an ability to synthesize broad outlines of that intellectual context, and a capacity to reflect critically on that literature.

- a) *Mastery* of the scholarly literature implies a deep familiarity with the theories relevant to the research topic and a significant knowledge of the critical history of the works of art or other materials that form the *corpus* of the thesis.
- b) *Synthesis* refers to the ability to discern the most important ideas of the different theories that inform research in the area, and to draw out their similarities and differences.
- c) *Critical reflection* demonstrates the originality of student's research. It is based on the articulation of the student's own theorized reflections on the literature that relates to their thesis topic and objects of study.

The written submission

Students prepare a 30-40 page text that includes:

- a) A description of the topic;
- b) A literature review that justifies the significance of the topic (Why is it important to undertake this study?);
- c) A statement of objectives (What will you accomplish?);
- d) A description of the *corpus*, or the body of material to be studied (artworks, artefacts, archival documents, written texts, etc);
- e) A discussion of methodology (theoretical framework and research methods)
- f) A thesis plan;

- g) A bibliography, including annotations on the twenty most significant sources. Primary and secondary sources should be distinguished. The annotations and bibliography are not included in the 30 – 40 page limit

If illustrations accompany the text, they must be correctly captioned (artist name, title, date and place of production, medium, dimensions, etc.)

Students should deposit *three copies* of their document with the program's administrative office once it has been approved by their supervisor or co-supervisors.

Composition of the jury

On the recommendation the supervisor (or co-supervisors), the jury is composed of three professors including the supervisor, a professor from UQAM, and a faculty member from one of the partner institutions who has been authorized to supervise doctoral research. In the case of co-supervisions, the two supervisors jointly constitute one jury member.

The oral examination

During the oral examination, the student gives a 20-minute presentation of their research, after which the members of the jury ask questions and offer comments on the written document and the oral presentation.

Grading for the examination is as follows: Pass (with grade), Repeat, Fail. If the examination must be repeated, this may be done in the following year. Students who fail the examination a second time will be withdrawn from the program.