

Yale School of the Environment
Doctoral Program
Procedures and Policies Handbook
2020-2021

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Introduction

This handbook has been compiled to acquaint you with the School's doctoral program policies. Please use this in conjunction with the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences' Programs and Policies guide which can be found online, here: <https://gsas.yale.edu/academic-requirements/policies>. Students are also encouraged to consult the Yale Graduate School of Arts and Sciences website, for the many resources they offer: <https://gsas.yale.edu/>.

For the purposes of the doctoral program, the Yale School of the Environment (YSE) is considered a department within the Yale Graduate School of Arts and Sciences. Doctoral students belong to both institutions. YSE and the Yale Graduate School work together to administer the doctoral program. The Yale Graduate School Registrar's Office oversees Ph.D. students' transcripts (see registrar.yale.edu). Elisabeth Barsa, in her role as YSE's Doctoral Program Coordinator, is the YSE liaison to the Graduate School. She works with the Director of Doctoral Studies for YSE, Prof. Os Schmitz, and Sara Smiley-Smith, Ph.D., Asst. Dean of Student Affairs for YSE.

The mission of the Yale School of the Environment (YSE) is to educate professionals in research and management of the environment and natural resources for present and future generations of people worldwide. Doctoral studies focus on a wide variety of environmental issues, many of immediate concern to policy makers and resource managers. The School offers individual programs in many areas of forestry and environmental studies, as manifested in the diverse interests and expertise of the faculty and the programs of former and present doctoral students.

The Ph.D. program is designed to develop the broad knowledge, analytical powers, technical skills, and creative thinking demanded of leaders in natural resource disciplines.

All courses offered by the Yale School of the Environment are open to students working toward the doctoral degree. Courses are available in other departments, such as Agrarian Studies, Anthropology, Ecology and Evolutionary Biology, Chemistry, Economics, Public Health, Geology, History, Mathematics, Molecular Biology and Biophysics, Management, Political Science, Sociology and Statistics. Schedules of all classes offered during a semester can be found at <https://courses.yale.edu/> immediately before the beginning of the semester.

Students must take a qualifying examination before the start of the fifth semester, and no later than the end of the third year of study. This examination includes a thesis proposition that must be approved by the student's committee. The qualifying examination is discussed in more detail later in this document.

The Director of Doctoral Studies (DDS) of the School of the Environment administers both doctoral programs and may be consulted about specific problems or questions concerning either program. The material contained in this document supplements or amplifies regulations pertaining to doctoral study included in the bulletins of the Yale School of the Environment and the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences' Programs and Policies bulletin which can be found at this website: <https://gsas.yale.edu/academic-requirements/policies>. The student is referred to these two publications for additional information.

Course Requirements

Because of the great variety of research topics pursued by doctoral students in the Yale School of the Environment, just one course is required to be taken by all doctoral students: **ENV 900, Doctoral Student Seminar**. (Doctoral Seminar will incorporate the Federally mandated course on responsible conduct of research.)

During their first semester, all students should take the Doctoral Student Seminar as well as an Independent Study with their faculty advisor (at least 10 hours per week) to initiate the development of their dissertation topic.

The Graduate School requires all graduate students teaching for the first time at Yale to attend a “Teaching at Yale Day” workshop offered by the Yale Poorvu Center for Teaching and Learning. Students may take the workshop at the beginning of the fall or spring semester preceding their first teaching assignment. For more information see poorvucenter.yale.edu.

Students plan their academic programs in consultation with their major professor and faculty doctoral committee. Coursework is expected to be an important component of each student’s studies prior to achieving candidacy. A typical course load in the doctoral program is up to three to four courses per semester. Under normal circumstances, students are expected to achieve candidacy no later than their fourth semester in the program. A list of required courses for the combined degree with Anthropology can be found here:

<https://environment.yale.edu/doctoral/degrees/combined-anthropology>.

What constitutes a full-time academic program (in terms of courses, special projects, research, and so forth) is left to the discretion of the student’s doctoral committee subject to approval by the Director of Doctoral Studies (DDS).

A tentative course schedule for a student’s doctoral program should be drawn up during the first semester. The courses chosen should form a coherent plan of study, should prepare the student for a productive career in their area of interest, and should support the research work on the proposed dissertation. This schedule should be reviewed and revised at least annually.

Honors Requirement

The Graduate School and the Yale School of the Environment both require that a grade of Honors be attained in a one-year course or in two semester courses before enrolling for the third year.

These must be graduate level courses other than those concerned exclusively with dissertation research and preparation for research, that is, they must be standard courses not research projects or independent studies (ENV 900, Doctoral Student Seminar, may count as one of these Honors grade courses.) At the time of the qualifying examination, the student’s committee will determine if additional course work is necessary.

Audit Policy

The basic requirement for recording an official Audit is attendance at two-thirds of the class meetings, but the instructor may make additional requirements and may, in fact, require that the student do all the work of the class including exams. However, if the instructor does not require more than two-thirds attendance, auditing students should be so informed early in the semester.

At the end of the semester, the instructor is asked to certify whether or not auditing students have satisfactorily completed the course. Satisfactory completion is defined as meeting the two-thirds attendance standard and the work requirements (if any) set by the instructor. Only audits certified as satisfactory are entered on the student's transcript.

Language Requirements

The Yale School of the Environment has no formal language requirement. Students may be required to become familiar with the content of assigned articles from the foreign literature and may, in some cases, be required to demonstrate proficiency in a foreign language on the same basis as any other area of knowledge deemed necessary to their doctoral training.

Oral Proficiency Assessment for International Ph.D. Students

Because a high level of proficiency in English is required for graduate students to serve as teaching fellows, students whose native language is not English will be asked to demonstrate sufficient proficiency in English. Incoming Ph.D. students may do so by: 1) by documenting completion of a BA/BS degree from an English medium higher education institution; or 2) by satisfactorily completing the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL). A score of 26 or higher on the oral component of the TOEFL is considered to be satisfactory. If these two conditions are met, the Graduate School should waive the student from completing any further English language requirements. However, Yale's English Language Program (ELP) strongly recommends that the student enroll in the Professional Communication Skills, Academic Writing, or other courses offered by the ELP, because numbers 1. and 2., above, are only minimum requirements and are only a first step towards the proficiency required for academic careers.

If the two conditions are not met, and if the student's TOEFL iBT oral score is 24, the Graduate School strongly recommends that the student take Teaching in the American Classroom in the Fall and the OPA2 assessment in December. If the student's TOEFL iBT oral score is 23, the Graduate School recommends that the student take Speaking Fluently 2 in the Fall and Teaching in the American Classroom in the Spring and take the OPA2 assessment in April. If the student's score is 22 or lower, the recommended courses are Speaking Fluently 1 in the Fall, Speaking Fluently 2 in the Spring, Teaching in the American Classroom the following Fall and take the OPA2 assessment in December of the second year.

The normal route to establishing proficiency is through the course sequence outlined above and OPA2. Second-year (and after) students can take the SPEAK assessment in August. A score of 50 or higher satisfies Yale's English Oral Proficiency. (Under normal circumstances first year students are not eligible to take the SPEAK assessment.) If the student does not score 50 or higher on the SPEAK assessment in August, ELP recommends that the student take the following ELP courses based on this criteria: If the SPEAK score was 45, the student should enroll in Teaching in the American Classroom in the Fall and take the OPA2 assessment in December. If the SPEAK score was 40 or lower, then Speaking Fluently 2 in the Fall and Teaching in the American Classroom in the Spring, and the OPA2 assessment in April are recommended.

For more information on the Center for Language Studies' English Language Program, please visit their website <https://cls.yale.edu/programs/english-language-program> .

Registration

All doctoral students must register each semester through their sixth year or until they submit the dissertation, whichever comes first. Continuous registration beyond the sixth year is not required for submission of the dissertation or award of the Ph.D. Students must petition for extended registration beyond the sixth year.

Registration is an on-line process and directions are provided in the registration packet distributed to students at the beginning of each semester. The DDS will ‘sign off’ on registration electronically after verifying the course load of each student. If a student requests registration in absentia or leave of absence, or extended registration, special forms must be completed and submitted to the Doctoral Program Office. These forms can be found on the Graduate School’s website: registrar.yale.edu/forms-petitions.

During the semester in which the student takes the qualifying examination, S/he should register for “Qual 999, Preparing for Qualifying Exams” and need not take any classes. After successful completion of the qualifying exam, the student may register for “DISR 999, Dissertation Research”. Normally students do not take classes after advancing to candidacy, i.e. passing the qualifying exam.

Registration in Absentia

Ph.D. students whose program of study requires full-time dissertation research, full-time fieldwork, or full-time study at another academic institution outside the New Haven area may request to be registered in absentia. Such registration requires the recommendation of the director of graduate studies and the approval of the appropriate associate dean at the Graduate School. The forms for requesting registration in absentia may be obtained online at <https://registrar.yale.edu/forms-petitions> and should be filed at least one month before the beginning of the term during which the student expects to be studying away from New Haven.

Leaves of Absence

Students who wish or need to interrupt their study temporarily may request a leave of absence. There are three types of leave—personal, medical, and parental. For the policy regarding leaves of absence, please see the Graduate School’s Programs and Policies booklet which can be found at their website: <https://gsas.yale.edu/academic-requirements/policies>.

Selection of Major Professor and Formation of Committee

Each new doctoral student will have selected and contacted a faculty advisor before entering the program. If this arrangement is not satisfactory, the student must contact the DDS and appropriate alternative arrangements will be pursued in consultation with the concerned parties, such changes are expected to be unusual. The student should confer with a faculty member or members s/he considers most appropriate and decide which one s/he would prefer to have designated as major professor. S/he should then consult with the DDS, who will confer with the

faculty member. If for some reason it is not possible or appropriate for the student's choice to be designated as major professor, an appropriate selection will be made in consultation with between the student, the DDS and the potential major professor.

Designation of a student's major professor (who is also Chair of his or her doctoral committee) should be finalized early in the first year, preferably at the beginning of the first semester. In no case should this process extend beyond the first year. In cases where the designation of a major professor has not been finalized, the Director of Doctoral Studies will serve as a temporary advisor.

The doctoral committee will normally consist of a minimum of three members from the Yale community – the chair and two other advisors. Committee chairs must be ladder faculty. The most important consideration in the selection of the committee is that all members be willing and qualified to guide and support the academic activities of the student. The members of the committee are selected by the major professor in consultation with the student. All external as well as internal committee members must agree to attend at least the qualifying examination and thesis defense.

The selection of the full committee should be made early in the first year of residence so that the members can be involved in planning a suitable program of study for the student.

Qualifying Examination

The qualifying examination consists of three parts: (1) a written thesis proposal with a one-page abstract, (2) a written examination (2 options), and (3) an oral defense of the thesis proposal and the written examination questions. The student will be advised as to the nature and scope of the qualifying examination prior to or at the start of the semester in which it is to be administered. Normally, the examination will be taken in the second year of residence, and no later than the end of the third year of study. Without written permission from the DDS, no student will be permitted to register for a fourth year of study if the Qualifying Exam has not been successfully completed.

Students may register for “Qual 999, Preparing for Qualifying Exam”, and need not register for any classes, in the semester in which they take the qualifying exam.

Qualifying exams and prospectuses from previous years are kept in the doctoral program office, and students may refer to these as examples before taking their own exam. Contact Elisabeth Barsa for these.

The student should inform Elisabeth Barsa once the schedule for the qualifying exam has been determined.

The Doctoral Program Office will send out an announcement and invitation to faculty, not less than one week before the oral portion of the exam will take place. The written portion of the examination should be scheduled during the academic year and before the oral examination.

The student will submit copies of the qualifying exam questions and answers and dissertation proposal to each member of his or her committee. In addition, the student must submit one electronic copy to the Doctoral Program Office for circulation to the faculty at large.

Thesis Proposal

The thesis proposal is a detailed work plan for the student's dissertation including, where applicable, a statement of the central research question, a literature review demonstrating the importance and uniqueness of the question, a statement of objectives, hypotheses to be tested, a description of research approach and methods to be used, a schedule, a proposed budget, preliminary results (if any), and results anticipated. It must include an abstract of one page or less summarizing the elements above. (See also: <https://gsas.yale.edu/academic-requirements/prospectus-qualifying-exams>.)

The student must prepare the thesis proposal during the semester in which the qualifying examination takes place. The thesis proposal is part of the written qualifying examination. It is submitted to the committee for review at the same time as the other written questions (see written examination section below) and must be defended by the student during the oral defense. The student must also prepare, and submit to the Doctoral Program Office, a one-page thesis abstract before being admitted to candidacy. Students are expected to begin developing the ideas that will form the basis for their thesis proposals as soon as they enter the doctoral program. Examples of past thesis proposals and qualifying exams are available on request as templates for students preparing to take their qualifying exam, contact Elisabeth Barsa, Doctoral Program Coordinator, elisabeth.barsa@yale.edu.

Written Qualifying Examination

Two forms are available for the written qualifying examination: Option 1 requires extensive written analyses on 2 topics; Option 2 requires shorter written analyses on between 2 and 16 questions. Each is designed to evaluate the student's background preparation and knowledge appropriate to the preparation of a doctoral dissertation. Under both options, the student will be advised as to the nature and scope of the examination at least one semester prior to the examination. Well ahead of the written examination, the student's dissertation committee will be formed. Committee members will participate, along with the advisor, in the formulation and administration of the written examination.

Under Option 1, the written examination involves the preparation of analyses of 2 topics assigned by the student's committee. The analyses will be prepared with access to the literature. The first will ordinarily require a statement of judgment on some controversial issue in the student's field of interest. The two should not demand closely related answers and normally are chosen to encourage the student to develop a broader understanding of the research question context. Students are allowed two weeks to complete the written examination under Option 1.

Under Option 2, the written examination consists of between 2 and 16 questions in areas relevant to the student's academic interests. The examination is administered in two four-hour periods. Each four-hour period will take place on a separate day. Regardless of when the portions of the

written examination are administered under Option 2, all portions of the written examination as well as the oral examination and the thesis proposal are expected to be completed by the end of the second year in the program under normal circumstances, and no later than the end of the third year otherwise.

Oral Examination

The scheduling and conduct of the oral examination are the responsibility of the student's advisor. The entire committee, along with the advisor, must participate in the oral examination. It should be held no sooner than ten days after the student has submitted responses to the topics or questions. Prof. Os Schmitz, DDS and Doctoral Program Coordinator Elisabeth Barsa should be informed of the time and place of the examination as early as possible so that a notice can be sent to the faculty at large. The oral examination will be scheduled during the academic year, except in unusual circumstances (permission must be requested of the DDS for an examination outside of the normal academic year). The advisor will chair the oral examination which is open to all members of the FES faculty. Attending faculty not on the student's committee are also welcome to ask questions, but will not influence the outcome of the exam. The oral examination may take place using Zoom, Yale's conference software platform.

The student should be prepared to make a brief presentation of their thesis proposal (approximately 30-45 minutes) and then respond to questions from the advisor, committee, and attending faculty. A successful oral defense of the written examination questions and thesis proposal should inspire confidence that the dissertation topic is viable and that the student is prepared to make good on the proposed research plan. Under both written examination options, the general background of the student in his or her area of interest, issues arising from written examination responses, as well as knowledge of the specific dissertation area may be explored during the oral examination.

The responses to both written and oral examination questions are evaluated by the advisor and the committee members. The examination as a whole (written examination, oral examination, thesis proposal) is assigned a Pass, Conditional Pass, or Fail. A grade of Conditional Pass may be accompanied by conditions that must be met before a student will be allowed to advance to candidacy. As one example, the student may, after a period of study, be reexamined on portions of the examination in which he/she proved deficient. Repeated failure in any area may be grounds for asking for the withdrawal of the student based on the assessment of the advisor, the committee, and the DDS. In some cases, the advisor and committee may require the student to take additional coursework in order to rectify identified knowledge gaps. Following the completion of coursework, the advisor and committee may, if they choose, ask the student to participate in a follow up oral examination or to prepare a written document addressing the issue identified during the original examinations. Immediately following the oral examination, the advisor should communicate the outcome to the DDS and to Doctoral Program Staff. If conditions are attached to a grade of Conditional Pass, they should be delineated in writing along with a timeline for their resolution. This document should be shared with the student as well. Note that students must erase any such deficiencies before the end of their 3rd year in the program. All students must also prepare, and submit to the Doctoral Program Office, a one-page thesis abstract before being admitted to candidacy.

Admission to Candidacy

After the student has (1) passed the written and oral examinations, (2) submitted a one-page prospectus covering the nature, scope, and method of the dissertation topic to the DDS, and (3) received honors grades in at least two courses, he or she is advanced to candidacy. The student is then certified as having met all requirements for the Ph.D. except for the preparation, submission and defense of an acceptable dissertation.

After a student passes the comprehensive examination and is accepted into candidacy for the Ph.D., he or she may still elect or be required to take additional coursework. However, it is expected that, following the successful completion of the comprehensive examination, doctoral students will devote most of their time to research and thesis preparation and should register for “DISR 999, Dissertation Research” (in residence or in absentia) each semester.

The Yale Graduate School has some compiled a few resources for students who are just beginning to write their dissertation, see <https://gsas.yale.edu/academic-requirements/dissertations>.

Dissertation Progress Report

Ph.D. students who have been admitted to candidacy (i.e., completed the honors requirement and passed the qualifying exam) must continue to demonstrate satisfactory progress toward the degree in the annual Dissertation Progress Report. The report must be filled out and submitted electronically, <https://registrar.yale.edu/dpr>. Students who fail to submit the report will be put on registration hold for the following semester. The Dissertation Progress Report is due May 1.

Master of Philosophy Degree

The M.Phil. degree is awarded to students after they’ve advanced to candidacy.

Dissertation

The dissertation should demonstrate that the student has both conceptual and technical mastery of the field presented, is capable of doing independent, original, and scholarly work, and is able to develop significant contributions to our knowledge of environmental science and management. A guidance manual for thesis preparation, “Guide to Formatting the Doctoral Dissertation”, can be found online: <https://gsas.yale.edu/academic-requirements/dissertations>. Candidates may present themselves for the oral defense of the dissertation at such time and place as agreed to by the student’s committee and the Director of Doctoral Studies.

Digital Dissertations are available from the Yale Library’s subscription to the Proquest Digital Dissertations Database: www.library.yale.edu, then click “Find Databases by Title”, then “D”, then scroll down for “Dissertations & Thesis”.

Dissertation research will be directed by the student’s major professor and coordinated with the

members of the student's committee.

Dissertation Defense

The oral defense of the dissertation is a necessary part of the discipline of research. It provides the candidate with an opportunity to explain and defend his/her work publicly, just as s/he must do as an independent investigator. It also provides the student with a sympathetic group of examiners who can and should offer suggestions on how the study could have been improved and how the final draft can be improved.

The student will schedule the oral defense in consultation with their major professor and will notify doctoral program staff, so that notice can be sent out. The major advisor will chair the defense. The candidate will first present a 30 to 45-minute summary of the thesis. This part of the defense is open to the public. The student should present the thesis work as he or she would a scientific paper at a national academic conference. The questioning of the candidate on his/her dissertation at the oral defense will be primarily the responsibility of the candidate's committee, but any interested faculty member may attend and take part in the examination. This part of the defense is only open to faculty members. Before the defense, copies of the dissertation should be provided to the YSE Doctoral Program Office and committee members:

- Prepare and present complete, softbound, or electronic copies of the dissertation to the committee members (depending on the committee's preference). Additionally, submit one electronic copy to the Doctoral Program Office (elisabeth.barsa@yale.edu). This should be done at least 10 business days before the scheduled defense.

The members of the committee, with the advice of faculty present, then will vote on whether to accept the dissertation (perhaps with minor but not substantive revisions) as fulfilling the departmental requirements for the dissertation.

After the defense, the candidate formally submits the dissertation to the Yale Graduate School, instructions below.

Dissertation Readers

The Yale Graduate School and the Yale School of the Environment (YSE) require that each dissertation be read and evaluated by at least three "readers", at least two of whom have tenure or tenure track positions at Yale. Additionally, YSE requires that one of the "readers" must be from outside of the student's *advisory* committee but can come from within or outside of Yale. The major advisor of the dissertation is not eligible to be a reader for that dissertation. After the student formally submits the dissertation, the Graduate School will send the dissertation and evaluation forms to the approved readers. The student's Advisor, in consultation with the committee and sometimes with the student, chooses the readers, and sends their names and contact information to the YSE Doctoral Program Office (elisabeth.barsa@yale.edu). It is the responsibility of the advisor to ensure the readers have agreed to evaluate the dissertation beforehand, and in the time frame required (one month).

Dissertation Submission

The dissertation submission process is explained in detail on the Graduate School's website, <https://gsas.yale.edu/academic-requirements/dissertations>.

In sum, once the adviser and committee have approved a dissertation for submission and the director of doctoral studies has been notified, the student submits one unbound copy of the dissertation, softbound copies that will be distributed to each reader, a completed set of required forms (available at <https://gsas.yale.edu/academic-requirements/dissertations>), and any requisite fees to the Graduate School. The department must submit to the Graduate School a fully completed "Notification of Readers" form that has been approved by the director of doctoral studies.

The DDS reviews the Reader Reports and makes a recommendation to the Faculty of the Yale School of the Environment to approve/deny the degree. If the School decides that the dissertation is acceptable, the faculty recommends the award of the degree to the Graduate School.

Dissertations must be submitted to the Graduate School by the respective deadlines in the academic calendar to be considered for December or May degrees. No exceptions are made to these deadlines, which have been established to allow sufficient time for departments to receive evaluations from readers and recommend students to the degree committees.

Schedule for Defense, Submission, and Graduation

For receiving degree in:	MAY	DECEMBER
Oral defense:	February 17	September 1
Dissertation submitted to Grad School (Ph.D.) or YSE Doctoral Program (DFES)	March 15	October 1
Readers' Reports due:	April 15	November 2
Faculty Approval due:	April 17	November 13

Failure to meet the various deadlines will result in a six month delay in graduation.

It should be noted that dissertations submitted during the summer months will not receive official faculty consideration or action until after the opening date of the University in the fall.

Division of Responsibilities between Student, Major Professor, Student's Committee and DDS

The following checklists indicate the major responsibilities of the persons involved in doctoral procedures. However, the list is not complete, and the student should consult bulletins of the Yale School of the Environment and the Graduate School for details not covered. In case of questions, the DDS should be consulted.

The Responsibilities of the Student are to:

1. Consult major professor regarding coursework schedule for the first and each following semester.
2. Consult with committee to receive approval of full coursework program as soon as the committee is appointed.
3. Attain a grade of Honors in at least two classes.
4. Fulfill their teaching requirement.
5. In consultation with major professor and committee members, select topic for dissertation.
6. In semester in which qualifying examination is to be taken, register for "Preparation for Qualifying Exam". (No other courses are required in this semester.)
7. In consultation with major professor and committee, set date for qualifying examination.
8. Prepare dissertation prospectus.
9. Take and pass written and oral qualifying examinations.
10. Submit one-page abstract of prospectus to the YSE Doctoral Program Office (email: elisabeth.barsa@yale.edu). Be sure to include name and title of dissertation on the abstract.
11. Consult regularly (at least monthly) with major professors and at least once each semester with all committee members.
12. Prepare early drafts of dissertation and submit to major professor and committee members for criticism. (Refer to "Preparation and Submission of the Doctoral Dissertation" available online, <https://gsas.yale.edu/academic-requirements/dissertations>).
13. In preparation of the defense, submit one electronic copy of the dissertation to the Doctoral Program Office, and softbound copies to committee members by appropriate deadline.

14. Present seminar on the thesis for the Yale community as the first part of the dissertation defense.
15. Defend dissertation before committee and other interested faculty.
16. Formally submit dissertation to the Yale Graduate School (Ph.D.) or to the Yale School of the Environment Doctoral Program Office (D.F.E.S.), according to present regulations.

The Responsibilities of the Major Professor Are To:

1. Assist the newly arrived student to outline his/her program and to set up a first-year schedule and tentative second- year schedule.
2. Consult with the student regarding interests and career aspirations. Write recommendation letters for the student.
3. Help the student identify classes they can teach in order to fulfill their teaching requirement.
4. Help find financial assistance for the student's research, including but not limited to field experience, and office supplies.
5. Discuss appropriate faculty members for the student's committee with the DDS by the end of the first semester. Determine whether these are willing to serve. Transmit the final committee to the DDS.
6. Consult periodically with the members of the committee about the student's program of study.
7. Submit an information copy of the approved program to the DDS.
8. Assist the doctoral candidate to decide the option for the qualifying examination with the advice and consent of the student's committee. Inform student of academic areas for which s/he will be held responsible (if the written qualifying Option 2 is chosen).
9. Establish a tentative time schedule for the qualifying examination by the end of the first year of residence.
10. Supervise the student in the preparation of his/her dissertation proposal.
11. In consultation with the student's committee, prepare and assign topics for doctoral propositions or questions for the comprehensive exam.
12. Obtain approval of the dissertation proposal from the student's doctoral committee.

13. Report the approval of the dissertation proposal to the DDS.
14. Advise the student on the conduct of her or his research.
15. See that the student contacts other members of his/her committee while performing research for his dissertation.
16. Examine, criticize, and suggest improvements in early drafts of the dissertation, bearing in mind that the dissertation should be prepared in a form substantially ready for publication.
17. Chair oral defense of the dissertation.
18. Assist with minor corrections and revisions after defense.
19. Read and approve final draft just before binding. Consult DDS for dissertation readers' selection and contact those readers for their approval.
20. See that grades for degree candidates are submitted to Graduate School Registrar's office by established deadline.
21. Advise the DDS on the status of the student by the last day of each year: general progress, estimated date of qualifying examination, estimated date of completion of dissertation, etc.

The Responsibilities of the Student's Committee Are To:

1. Consult with the student and their major professor on the student's program of study.
2. Assist with the selection of topics for the qualifying examination as requested by the major professor. Read the written exams and thesis prospectus.
3. Take part in the oral qualifying examination. Determine if student's coursework background is sufficient.
4. Consult with the student and their major professor on the suitability of the proposed dissertation topic.
5. Examine and approve the dissertation proposal.
6. Advise student on conduct of research.
7. Advise major professor and student of any reservations regarding the student's research progress.
8. Examine, critique, and suggest improvements in early drafts of dissertation.

9. Read draft dissertation before defense.
10. Take part in defense of dissertation.
11. Read and approve final draft of dissertation before binding, if necessary.

The Responsibilities of the DDS Include:

1. Advise the student about his/her career aspirations, major professor, and general requirements of the doctoral program.
2. Select and designate major professor in consultation with the student, when necessary.
3. Assist student and major professor in selection of student's committee, when needed.
4. Receive copies of student's qualifying examination questions and notify faculty ten days prior to oral qualifying examination of time and place. Make copies available to faculty prior to examination.
5. Submit abstract of dissertation proposal to Graduate School.
6. Review and approve online Dissertation Progress Reports.
7. Notify faculty of time and place of the oral defense.
8. Notify the Graduate School of the results of the dissertation defense.
9. Approve selection of dissertation readers after defense of dissertation.
10. Arrange for faculty action on degree recommendations as soon as possible after readers' reports are completed.
11. Serve as ex officio member of all doctoral committees.
12. Prepare budgets for those students to be supported by the Yale School of the Environment and submit this to the Dean of the Yale School of the Environment.
13. Conduct such seminars and meetings as are deemed useful for the students of the doctoral program.
14. Serve as chair of the doctoral admissions committee.

Schedule of Studies

This schedule of studies illustrates the typical progression of a student through the doctoral program.

First Year	Complete ENV 900, “Doctoral Seminar”
First and Second Year	Take two to four courses per semester until semester of qualifying exam. Determine Advisory Committee Complete courses with at least two honor grades. Complete “Teaching at Yale” workshop. Decide on type of written qualifying exam.
By End of Fourth Semester	Write thesis proposal with one-page abstract, before undertaking written qualifying exam. Take written and oral qualifying exam.
Second , Third , Fourth Year	Complete four-semester teaching requirement
After Second Year	Complete on-line Dissertation Progress Report every year, after admission to candidacy (i.e. passing the qualifying exam) Research. Write. Continue to Register.
After Sixth Year	DDS written approval required for registration.

Financial Support

Most doctoral students receive a Yale School of the Environment Fellowship that covers the cost of their tuition (\$44,500 in 2020-2021), health care (\$2,548 for a single student in 2020-2021), and provides a twelve-month stipend (\$32,700 in 2020-2021). Unless the student's financial need changes significantly, progress toward the Doctoral degree is unsatisfactory, or teaching responsibilities are not met, the student may expect to receive a similar level of support for the first five years of their doctoral studies.

Doctoral student fellowships are scheduled at the beginning of each academic year by the Doctoral Program Coordinator, Elisabeth Barsa, in close coordination with the Graduate School's Financial Aid Office. Questions regarding students' School Fellowships can be directed to Elisabeth Barsa.

Tax information for Graduate School students can be found here: <https://gsas.yale.edu/resources-students/finances-fellowships/tax-information>

Teaching and Funding Policy

Teaching experiences are regarded as integral parts of the graduate training program in YSE. All students are required to serve as teaching fellows (minimum of 10 hours per week) for four semesters prior to the end of their fifth year of study. With the permission of the Director of Doctoral Studies (DDS), the total teaching requirement may be reduced for students who are awarded fellowships supported by outside funding. The nature of your teaching assignments will be determined in cooperation with your major advisor and the DDS. Regardless of outside funding, all doctoral students must serve as teaching fellows for a minimum of two semesters.

Following the policy of the Graduate School, students typically will not teach during their first year in the Program. Students who feel that their circumstances are unusual can petition the DDS for permission to teach during the first year.

Students may teach in courses outside of the School to meet their teaching obligations. The Graduate School requires all graduate students teaching for the first time at Yale to attend a "Teaching at Yale Day" workshop offered by the Yale Center for Teaching and Learning. For more information see the Yale Poorvu Center for Teaching and Learning website: <https://poorvucenter.yale.edu/>.

The Yale Graduate School's Teaching Fellows Office oversees teaching fellow positions for Yale Graduate School students (see <https://gsas.yale.edu/academic-requirements/teaching-fellows-requirements>), and students must be appointed to TF positions via their Teaching Fellow System (TFS). At the beginning of each semester the Elisabeth Barsa, Doctoral Program Coordinator, collects information from students on what they will be teaching, and appoints them to these positions via TFS.

External Fellowships and Combined Award Policy

To benefit both their current work and their future career prospects, students are strongly encouraged to seek funding from external agencies through grants. These awards, sponsored by both public and private agencies, confer distinction on a student who wins an award in a national competition. Students receiving external awards have two options. They may either (1) hold the outside awards in conjunction with University stipends (including research and teaching fellowships) up to the total of the standard department/program stipend plus \$4,000 or (2) defer financial support awarded in their admission offer for up to one year. Students must report to their Graduate School Deans (Assoc. Dean Richard Sleight or Asst. Dean Robert Harper-Mangels) and to Elisabeth Barsa any scholarship/fellowship received from an outside agency or organization. For more information on the Combined Award Policy, see the Graduate School's Programs and Policies booklet, catalog.yale.edu/gsas/financing/external-fellowships-combined-award-policy/.

Further incentives in addition to the Graduate School's Combined Award Policy:

Any student who brings in one full year of stipend recovery will be relieved of one semester of TA service. The same applies for a second or third year of stipend recovery. All students, irrespective of outside funding, need to teach for two semesters.

Travel Funds for Doctoral Students

The YSE Doctoral Program provides funds to support travel to conferences for doctoral students. Funds are available only for those presenting posters or papers.

Proposals should be submitted to Elisabeth Barsa in the Doctoral Program Office. Proposals should include an abstract of the paper or poster, a copy of the invitation and conference agenda, a budget, and a statement declaring whether doctoral travel funds have been received in the past. Awards will not exceed \$500 per student. Proposals should not exceed two pages in length and should be submitted BEFORE attendance at the conference.

When the funds have been released, students may work with their faculty member's support professional to purchase tickets or conference registration or other approved expense in advance of the conference, using a Yale P-Card. Or, the student must save their receipts so that they can be reimbursed after the conference. Students will not be awarded travel grants of up to \$500, more than once per fiscal year. The last day of the fiscal year is June 30th, July 1st is the beginning of the fiscal year.

Field Research: Some Things To Do Before Leaving

YSE holds a field research safety workshop in the spring semester, and students are encouraged to attend.

1. Request in absentia registration status one month before the beginning of the term in which you plan to be away from campus. Forms for requesting registration in absentia may be obtained online at <https://registrar.yale.edu/forms-petitions> .
2. Consult the Yale Health Plan's travel health services for students for immunizations: <https://yalehealth.yale.edu/more/travel-health-services-students> . The Graduate School has created a fellowship that provides Ph.D. students working on their dissertations with support for the cost of inoculations and drug prescriptions at Yale Health that are required for travel outside the United States. See gsas.yale.edu/resources-students/health-wellness for an application and more information.
3. Sign up for Yale Health Plan Approved Academic Travel Rider, for coverage domestically but outside of the YHP service area: <https://yalehealth.yale.edu/approved-academic-travel-rider-coverage-rates-and-contacts> .
4. InReach: YSE has a limited number of InReach devices for students traveling to areas of the world without reliable cell phone coverage. These devices need to be signed out as needed, students should email Sara Smiley Smith, Assistant Dean of Academic Affairs, Research and Sustainability, sara.smileysmith@yale.edu to do so.
5. Consult Yale's "International Toolkit" website to register your travel, and for valuable travel <https://world-toolkit.yale.edu/> .
6. Become familiar with Yale's International SOS Global Travel Assistance program: <https://ogc.yale.edu/erm/ISOS> .

Grants, Contracts, Sponsored Research, and Cooperative Agreements

Most YSE doctoral students support their research, in part, through outside funds. Students have been extraordinarily resourceful in locating funding sources and enjoy a high rate of success in competitive funding schemes. Your advisor and fellow students are good sources of information about potential funding as is Elisabeth Barsa, the Doctoral Program Coordinator. Once you have developed an idea of goals and funding needs associated with the research project you wish to have supported, one of your first stops should be a visit with members of the YSE staff whose responsibility includes supporting students in their efforts to secure funding.

Grants come in a variety of flavors with very different application and evaluation processes. Gai Doran, Director of Research, is responsible for supporting applications to government sponsored funding sources (e.g., NSF, EPA, USDA, Fulbright).

If you are interested in seeking funding from a private foundation, you should contact Lisa Bassani, Assistant Director of Development & Alumni Services. Both Gai and Lisa have a good understanding of the funding landscapes for their respective areas. Speaking to them earlier in your program can help smooth the transition from developing your thesis ideas to getting down to work. As a rule of thumb, you will want to apply for funding six months to a year before you will need the support.

Yale requires that any person seeking funding (including faculty) must be authorized in advance. In practice, this means all proposals must be reviewed by the University's grants administrative staff prior to being sent to any organization. Once a proposal is developed it is required that you provide the original grant proposal to the YSE Business Office to begin the discussion regarding deadlines and requisite authorizations. The YSE Dean and Yale's grants and contracts staff members must sign/approve the proposal before it is sent to a funding agency. It is recommended that all proposals be submitted to the Business Office early so as to permit the Dean and then the University grants staff time to read, understand, question and improve the proposal; two or three weeks in advance is highly recommended!

Searching for Funding: Some Resources

Here is a list of resources to help you in your search for grants and fellowships to fund your research:

- Yale Fellowships and Funding: <https://funding.yale.edu/>.
- The Yale MacMillan Center Graduate and Professional Student Grants: <https://macmillan.yale.edu/research-support>.
- Yale School of the Environment Tropical Resources Institute provides funding to YSE students working in the tropics: <https://tri.yale.edu/>.
- Yale School of the Environment Hixon Center for Urban Ecology provides funding to YSE students studying urban ecosystem restoration, urban forestry, and projects related to pollution of air, water and soil in cities: <https://hixon.yale.edu/>.
- Yale Institute for Biospheric Studies grants: <https://yibs.yale.edu/fellowships>.

Student Advocacy Organizations

YSE Student Affairs Committee & DocComm

The Student Affairs Committee (SAC) is an elected body of active students at the Yale School of the Environment. SAC is dedicated to facilitating communication and understanding among the YSE student body, administration, and staff; advocating on behalf of the student body on pressing issues; supporting student interest groups and executing a limited number of official duties.

In 2020, SAC was changed to consist of two branches, a governing body for the Master's community (hereafter named Master's SAC) and a governing body for the PhD community (hereafter named DocComm). DocComm activities include: (1) organizing to support PhD interests, (2) Suggesting updates to the doctoral handbook; (3) organizing social events; (4) finding reps for faculty search committees; (5) hosting the admitted student visit; (6) and more recently, communicating between students and admin on COVID-19 issues.

Representatives will typically serve a 14-month term, 12-months as voting members and 2-months as the transitioning government. Elections happen in September. Representation is needed across all cohorts.

The elected DocComm student representatives for the 2020-2021 academic year are: Jesse Bryant, Logan Billet, Yara Alshwairikh, Hayon Michelle Choi, Helen Seigel, Manon Lefevre, Chris Beltz, Samara Brock, Julia Monk, and Megan Sullivan.

Graduate Student Assembly

The Graduate Student Assembly is an elected body of Yale students in the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences. The Assembly's goals are to identify the needs and concerns of graduate students, consider possible solutions, and present these to the Dean and other administrators. See <https://gsa.yale.edu/>.

Graduate and Professional Student Senate

The mission of the student senate is to foster interaction among students through community service and engagement, social gatherings, and academic and professional events, as well as to support official and unofficial student groups. The senate also represents the graduate and professional student population on official university committees and works closely with the management of Gryphon's Pub to ensure its successful operation. See <https://gpsenate.yale.edu/>.

Questions, Inquiries

Questions and inquiries should be directed to:

Prof. Os Schmitz, Associate Dean for Research and Director of
Doctoral Studies, oswald.schmitz@yale.edu

Sara Smiley Smith, Ph.D., Assistant Dean of Academic Affairs, sara.smileysmith@yale.edu

Elisabeth Barsa, Doctoral Program Coordinator & Graduate School Liaison, 432-5146,
elisabeth.barsa@yale.edu