SPECIAL REQUIREMENTS FOR THE PH.D. DEGREE

Entering students with sound professional preparation engage in a concerted course of study that leads directly to dissertation research and a doctoral degree.

Students are required to be full-time and in residence in the New Haven area during the first three academic years. (See Degree Requirements under Policies and Regulations in the bulletin of the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences.) Students in both tracks of the program take twelve graduate and Ph.D. seminars for credit. In the History and Theory track, these include a Ph.D. seminar taught in each of the first four terms by a member of the School of Architecture faculty that introduces the student to various methodologies and areas of study. Some seminars encourage primary research on a specific topic. Others offer a survey of historiographic approaches or focus on the reading of a body of texts. The four required seminars (ARCH 551, ARCH 552, ARCH 553, ARCH 554) form the methodological foundation of the program. In the Ecosystems in Architectural Sciences track, the requirements in the initial two years include four Ecosystems in Architectural Sciences seminars, ARCH 558, ARCH 559, ARCH 568, and ARCH 569.

Students in both tracks are encouraged to take courses related to their specific areas of interest outside the School of Architecture. For example, a student working on Italian modernism would be encouraged to take a course in Italian history or culture. Likewise, a student working on biodiversity in urban contexts might take courses in the School of the Environment. Typically, at least two of the eight elective seminars would be in related fields. Students can also opt to do independent readings with individual faculty members related to their specific areas of interest.

Not later than the end of their second year, students in the History and Theory of Architecture track are also expected to demonstrate competence in at least one foreign language relevant to their field of study. Language competence is more than a formality and requires some acquaintance with literature in the chosen language. Competency may be demonstrated by a grade of B or better in a full-year intermediate-level language course, or through examination.

The student’s field of interest within both the History and Theory of Architecture track or the Ecosystems in Architectural Sciences track is defined by the end of the second year, by which point all course and language requirements are normally completed. At this time the director of doctoral studies (DDS) assigns the student a thesis adviser, who may or may not be from the School of Architecture. During the fall term of the third year, students undergo three oral examinations on topics relevant to their doctoral research, in the presence of the thesis adviser and two additional examiners selected by the student. Following successful completion of the examinations, the DDS, in consultation with the student’s adviser, appoints a dissertation committee for the student. The dissertation committee consists of the student’s adviser plus two additional faculty members. It is typical for one of the dissertation committee members to come from outside the School of Architecture, with selection based on the student’s area of interest.
By the end of the third year, students are required to present and defend their preliminary proposal of a dissertation topic. This prospectus should consist of a topic statement, an outline of a detailed program of research, and an annotated bibliography. Students are admitted to candidacy for the Ph.D. upon completion of all predissertation requirements, including the prospectus and oral examinations. At this point, they begin dissertation research and writing, submitting drafts of the dissertation chapters as they are completed. The dissertation committee guides and monitors the student’s progress in writing the dissertation and evaluates the dissertation upon completion.

The Ph.D. program is designed to be completed in five years. However, if the dissertation has not been completed by the end of the fifth year and if, at that time, the program certifies that the candidate will complete the dissertation by August of the following academic year, the candidate may be eligible to take a teaching position in the School of Architecture or elsewhere in the University and extend funding for up to an additional nine months.

GRADUATE RESEARCH ASSISTANT AND TEACHING FELLOW EXPERIENCE

Teaching is an important part of graduate training. Students in the Ph.D. program in Architecture are expected to teach or serve as research assistants for four terms, normally in their third and fourth years. During these four terms, it is anticipated that a student in the History and Theory track will teach in two survey courses in the student’s area of study at the School of Architecture or elsewhere in the University and teach in two design studios at the School of Architecture. Students in the Ecosystems in Architectural Sciences track are expected to serve as both teaching fellows in the School of Architecture and research assistants in the School’s Center for Ecosystems in Architecture. All assignments are carried out under the direct supervision of senior faculty.