RENAISSANCE STUDIES

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http://renaissance.yale.edu  
M.A., M.Phil., Ph.D.

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Faculty associated with the program  

FIELDS OF STUDY

Renaissance Studies offers a combined Ph.D. degree that integrates concentration in a departmental field with interdisciplinary study of the broader range of culture in the Renaissance and early modern periods. The program is designed to train Renaissance specialists who are firmly based in a traditional discipline but who can also work across disciplinary boundaries. Departmental areas of concentration available are Classics, Comparative Literature, English, French, History, History of Art, History of Music, Italian, and Spanish and Portuguese.

SPECIAL ADMISSIONS REQUIREMENTS

Only candidates wishing to proceed to a doctorate should apply. Application should be made to the department of concentration, with an indication that the candidate seeks nomination to the combined degree in Renaissance Studies. Applications should be accompanied by scores from the GREs and one research or critical paper.

SPECIAL REQUIREMENTS FOR THE PH.D. DEGREE

Students are subject to the combined Ph.D. supervision of the Renaissance Studies program and the relevant participating department. The student’s program will be decided in consultation with an adviser, the director of graduate studies (DGS) in Renaissance Studies, and the DGS in the participating department. As detailed below, requirements for the combined degree vary slightly to accommodate the requirements of the participating departments, but all candidates for the combined degree are expected to meet, at a minimum, the following requirements. (1) Students must demonstrate a reading knowledge of Latin, Italian, and a third language, which will vary according to departmental requirements. At the minimum, an examination in Latin or Italian should normally be passed upon entrance; a second language should be passed before the third term; and a third language by the end of the second year. (2) Each student is required to take sixteen term courses (in History of Art, fifteen). The normal pattern is to have completed fifteen courses during the first two years of study, no more than two of which may be individual reading and research. (3) A two-term core seminar (RNST 500/RNST 501), designed to present a wide range of topics concerned with Renaissance and early modern culture, is required of all combined degree candidates. This course, offered every other year, is open to students from other departments.

Training in teaching, through teaching fellowships, is considered an important part of every student’s program. Most students teach in their third and fourth years.

The scheduling of the oral examination and the dissertation prospectus follows the practice of the primary department, but in every case the two requirements must be completed not later than September of the fourth year. The oral examination, varying in length from two hours to two hours and fifteen minutes, will include questions on Renaissance topics outside the primary discipline. The remainder of the examination will be devoted to the primary discipline, including (except in the case of Classics) some further coverage of the Renaissance period. Students take additional written examinations as required by the primary departments.

Upon completion of all predissertation requirements, including the prospectus, students are admitted to candidacy for the combined Ph.D. degree. Admission to candidacy must be completed by the beginning of the fourth year.

The dissertation will be advised and completed according to departmental guidelines, but one of the readers will normally be a member of the Renaissance Studies Executive Committee.

Classics

Course work  
Students are required to complete sixteen term courses. Eight of these will be courses in Classics and will include at least four courses in Greek and Latin literature, a course in historical or comparative grammar, and at least three seminars. The eight remaining courses making up the Renaissance Studies portion of the degree will be distributed as follows: two terms of the Renaissance Studies core seminar (RNST 500/RNST 501), six additional term courses to be taken in at least two disciplines (such as literature, history, history...
of art, music, religious studies, etc.). One of these courses should respect the spirit of the ordinary Classics requirement of a course in classical art or archaeology (a course on the classical origins of Renaissance architecture, for example, will satisfy this requirement).

**Languages** Students are expected to pass the normal Greek and Latin competency exams upon entrance to the program. Italian, as set by Renaissance Studies—one hour on sixteenth-century Italian prose, and another one-hour exam on modern Italian scholarship—and a second language, normally German or French.

**Examinations** Students are expected to pass the Greek and Latin translation exams, based on the Classics and Renaissance Studies Ph.D. reading lists, by the beginning of the fifth term in residence; the oral exams in Greek and Latin literature, based on the Classics and Renaissance Studies Ph.D. reading lists, by the end of the fifth term in residence; and the oral exams on special fields appropriate to both disciplines, as described below, by the end of the sixth term in residence.

**Orals** Classics portion: seventy-five minutes on three or four topics in classical Greek and Latin literature. Renaissance Studies portion: forty-five minutes, three fifteen-minute questions on Renaissance topics to be divided between at least two disciplines, i.e., literature, history, history of art, etc.

**Prospectus and dissertation** The prospectus must be completed by the end of the seventh term in residence. Procedures regarding the dissertation will follow departmental practice, although the board of readers will normally include at least one member of the Renaissance Studies Executive Committee.

### Comparative Literature

**Course work** Students are required to complete sixteen term courses, at least seven of these (including the Comparative Literature proseminar, CPLT 515) in the Department of Comparative Literature. Students must take at least ten courses in the field of Renaissance Studies (offered in several departments), including two terms of the Renaissance Studies core seminar (RNST 500/RNST 501) and three courses in two disciplines other than literature (such as history, history of art, or religious studies). At least three of a student's overall list of courses must be in literary theory, criticism, or methodology; at least one course each in poetry, narrative fiction, and drama; and at least one course each in ancient or medieval literature and Enlightenment or modern literature. At least two courses must be completed with the grade of Honors. In general, students should take a wide range of courses with a focus on one or two national or language-based literatures.

**Languages** Latin and Italian, as set by Renaissance Studies—one hour of Renaissance Latin prose; one hour of sixteenth-century Italian prose, one of modern Italian scholarship—and two additional languages, at least one of them European.

**Orals** The joint oral examination will consist of seven twenty-minute questions (two topics in Renaissance literature from a comparative perspective; three on non-Renaissance literature, including at least one theoretical or critical question; and two questions on Renaissance topics on nonliterary disciplines). Orals should be completed no later than the end of the sixth term.

**Prospectus and dissertation** The prospectus should be completed in September of the fourth year. Procedures regarding the dissertation will follow departmental practice, although the final readers will normally include at least one member of the Renaissance Studies Executive Committee.

### English

**Course work** Students are required to complete sixteen term courses. Eleven of these will be courses in English, of which five (including those normally cross-listed, such as Comparative Literature courses and the Renaissance Studies core seminar [RNST 500/RNST 501]) will be in Renaissance literature. An additional five courses in Renaissance topics will be non-cross-listed courses from other departments. Course work must be completed by the end of the fifth term.

**Languages** Latin, Italian, and a second modern language, to be tested by the Renaissance Studies program.

**Orals** Five twenty-minute questions, including two Renaissance topics. An additional thirty-minute portion, consisting of two fifteen-minute questions in Renaissance Studies, on nonliterary disciplines.

**Prospectus and dissertation** The prospectus must be completed by the beginning (i.e., September) of the seventh term. Procedures regarding the dissertation will follow departmental practice, with at least one reader from the Renaissance Studies Executive Committee.

### French

**Course work** Sixteen term courses at the graduate level are required. Nine correspond to the requirements of the French department, seven to the requirements of the Renaissance Studies program. Of the nine courses taken in French, one must be FREN 610 (Introduction to Old French), two others must fall within the medieval and early modern periods (eleventh through seventeenth century). The six remaining courses in French must cover as broad a spectrum as possible of the various periods and subfields of French and francophone literature. Of the seven courses taken in Renaissance Studies, two must be the Renaissance Studies core seminar (RNST 500/RNST 501), two must be in a literature or literatures other than French, and three must be taken in other departments (e.g., History, History of Art, Music, Religious Studies, Philosophy, etc.).
**Languages** Latin and Italian, as required and examined by Renaissance Studies, and a third language relevant to the student’s specialization (Greek, Hebrew, Spanish, Portuguese, German), in addition to French. A written examination in Latin will consist of a passage of humanist Latin prose (one hour). A written examination in Italian will consist of a literary passage from the Italian Renaissance (one hour) and a passage of modern Italian scholarship (one hour). Written examinations in the third language will consist of passages appropriate to the language and the discipline, or may be satisfied by a graduate seminar taken in the language or literature in question.

**Orals** An oral qualifying examination must take place as early as possible in the third year of study, before spring recess at the latest. The examination will consist of seven topics: four in French and three in Renaissance Studies. Of the four topics in French, one must center on Renaissance literature, two on other areas of French and francophone literature; the fourth will consist of the textual analysis of a poem or prose passage in French, provided to the candidate twenty-four hours before the examination. Of the three topics in Renaissance Studies, one or two must center on a Renaissance literature other than French, the remainder on an area or areas of Renaissance Studies other than literature. The French part of the examination will be conducted in French; the Renaissance Studies part will be conducted in English.

**Prospectus and dissertation** A formal prospectus defense must take place no later than two weeks before the end of the sixth term (third year) of study. The prospectus committee will consist of three faculty members, including the dissertation director(s) and at least one member of the Renaissance Studies Executive Committee. Once approved by the committee, the prospectus will be submitted to the graduate faculty of the Department of French for a vote on final approval and advancement to candidacy. More than one dissertation adviser is permitted and indeed encouraged, but the principal adviser will normally be in the Department of French. The official readers of the finished dissertation need not be members of the original prospectus committee, but will include at least one member of the Department of French and at least one member of the Renaissance Studies Executive Committee.

**History**

**Course work** Students are required to complete sixteen term courses. Ten of these will be courses in History; of these, a minimum of four will be in Renaissance/early modern topics from the fourteenth through the seventeenth century. The six remaining courses making up the Renaissance Studies portion of the degree will be distributed as follows: two terms of the Renaissance Studies core seminar (RNST 500/RNST 501), four additional term courses to be taken in at least two disciplines outside of history (such as Classics, modern literatures, history of art, music, etc.). The normal History department requirements of three research seminars and a prospectus tutorial apply to combined-degree students.

**Languages** Latin and Italian, as set by Renaissance Studies—one hour of Renaissance Latin prose; two hours of Italian, one of sixteenth-century Italian prose, one of modern Italian scholarship—and a third language chosen by the student.

**Orals** History portion: seventy-five minutes in all, including forty-five minutes on the student’s major Renaissance/Reformation/early modern field, which may, but need not be, shared with more than one examiner, and thirty minutes on a minor field outside the specialization (and preferably outside of European history). Renaissance Studies portion: forty-five minutes, three fifteen-minute questions to be divided between at least two disciplines outside of history narrowly conceived (i.e., in literature, history of art, etc.). Students are expected to complete the oral examination no later than September of the fourth year.

**Prospectus and dissertation** Students are expected to complete the prospectus by March of the third year. Procedures regarding the dissertation will follow departmental practice, although the board of readers will normally include at least one member of the Renaissance Studies Executive Committee.

**History of Art**

**Course work** Students are required to complete fifteen term courses. Ten of these will be courses in History of Art; of these, a minimum of four will be in Renaissance art from fourteenth-century Italy through the baroque. The five remaining courses making up the Renaissance Studies portion of the degree will be distributed as follows: two terms of the Renaissance Studies core seminar (RNST 500/RNST 501), three additional term courses taken in at least two disciplines outside of history of art (such as literature, history, music, religious studies, etc.). Students will normally take seven courses in the first year, six in the second year (the credit for first-time teaching will be included in this number), and a final course in the fall of the third year.

**Qualifying paper** Normally during January of the second year, students submit a qualifying paper that should demonstrate the candidate’s ability to complete a Ph.D. dissertation successfully.

**Languages** Latin and Italian, as set by Renaissance Studies—one hour of Renaissance Latin prose; two hours of Italian, one of sixteenth-century Italian prose, one of modern Italian scholarship. A third language (in most cases German) at the discretion of the History of Art department.

**Orals** The comprehensive oral examination will normally take place toward the end of the first term of the third year and must be completed no later than September of the fourth year. It will consist of a three-hour written examination based on the candidate’s major field and an oral examination as follows: History of Art: seventy-five minutes, including examination on at least one field noncontiguous
with the Renaissance; Renaissance Studies: forty-five minutes, three fifteen-minute questions to be divided between at least two disciplines outside the history of art.

**Prospectus and dissertation** Students are expected to complete the prospectus and colloquium by March of the third year. Procedures for the submission and evaluation of dissertations will be those followed in History of Art, although the board of readers will normally include a member of the Renaissance Studies Executive Committee.

**Italian**

**Course work** Of the combined degree program's total of sixteen term courses, seven are in Renaissance Studies and nine are in the Department of Italian. Of the nine courses in Italian, at least three must be devoted to the period from Dante to the earlier seventeenth century. The seven courses making up the Renaissance Studies portion of the degree will be distributed as follows: two terms of the Renaissance Studies core seminar (RNST 500/RNST 501); two courses in Renaissance literatures other than Italian, and three courses divided between at least two nonliterary disciplines (e.g., history, history of art, religious studies, etc.).

**Languages** Latin, as set by Renaissance Studies (one hour of Renaissance Latin prose), a second romance language, and a non-romance language, tested in a two-hour examination (one hour of Renaissance prose, one hour of modern scholarship). Latin to be passed by the end of the first year (and preferably upon entrance); all languages to be passed before the oral examination.

**Orals** The qualifying examination, which must be completed by the end of the third year, will include an oral examination in which sixty minutes will be devoted to Italian literature, including the Renaissance, and forty-five minutes will be devoted to three fifteen-minute questions on a topic in Renaissance literature outside of Italy and two topics in nonliterary areas of the Renaissance (such as history or history of art). The portion of the examination devoted to Italian literature will also include a written component following departmental guidelines.

**Prospectus and dissertation** The dissertation (a prospectus of which must be completed by the beginning of the fourth year) will normally be directed within the Department of Italian, but at least one of the readers will normally be a member of the Renaissance Studies Executive Committee.

**Music**

**Course work** Students are required to complete sixteen term courses. Ten of these will be courses in Music, including four in early music, i.e., from the later Middle Ages through the baroque. The six remaining courses making up the Renaissance Studies portion of the degree will be distributed as follows: two terms of the Renaissance Studies core seminar (RNST 500/RNST 501), four additional term courses taken in at least two disciplines outside of music (such as literature, history, history of art, religious studies, etc.).

**Languages** Latin and Italian, as set by Renaissance Studies—one hour of Renaissance Latin prose; two hours of Italian, one of sixteenth-century Italian prose, one of modern Italian scholarship. A third language (normally French or German) at the discretion of the Department of Music.

**Comprehensive examinations** Music: three ninety-minute essays (including one on early music), followed by an oral examination of ninety minutes. Renaissance Studies: one ninety-minute essay on an interdisciplinary Renaissance topic (e.g., art and literature of a particular country, or comparison of the culture of two or three princely courts, or the history of the Reformation or Counter-Reformation), followed by a thirty-minute oral examination on the essay topic. Students take the comprehensive exam in Music at the beginning of the third year and the Renaissance Studies comprehensive exam in the spring of the third year.

**Prospectus and dissertation** Students enroll in the third-year prospectus/dissertation seminar in Music and must complete the prospectus no later than September of the fourth year. Dissertations will be approved in the Department of Music, with at least one reader to come from the Renaissance Studies Executive Committee.

**Spanish and Portuguese**

**Course work** A total of sixteen term courses at the graduate level is required. Nine correspond to the requirements of the Spanish and Portuguese department, seven to the requirements of the Renaissance Studies program. Of the nine courses taken in Spanish and Portuguese, two are required: SPAN 790, Methodologies of Modern Foreign Language Teaching, and SPAN 500, History of the Spanish Language. Of the remaining seven, three or four will be in Spanish and/or Portuguese literature from the medieval period through the seventeenth century, and the balance will be in the literature of Spain's and/or Portugal's ultramarine possessions. Students doing the combined degree program may elect to devote their departmental course work to either Hispanic or Luso-Brazilian literatures or do a combination of both in a distribution to be determined in consultation with their departmental adviser(s). Of the seven courses taken in Renaissance Studies, two must be the Renaissance Studies core seminar (RNST 500/RNST 501), two must be in a literature or literatures other than Spanish and/or Portuguese, and three must be taken in other departments (e.g., History, History of Art, Religious Studies, Philosophy, etc.).

**Languages** Students are expected to have a strong command of Spanish and/or Portuguese as well as English. In addition, the following requirements must be met: (1) Latin, as set by the Renaissance Studies program (passing a one-hour translation examination in Renaissance Latin prose); (2) Italian, as set by the Renaissance Studies program (successful completion of a one-hour translation exam in sixteenth-century Italian prose and a one-hour translation exam in modern Italian scholarship); (3) demonstration of reading/translation
proficiency in one of the following languages: French, German, Greek, Portuguese (available to students doing departmental course work exclusively in Spanish), Spanish (available to students doing departmental course work exclusively in Portuguese), or another language relevant to the student’s specialization. Students doing their departmental course work in a combination of Spanish-language and Portuguese-language courses will be understood to have satisfied this third reading knowledge requirement so long as the courses are taught and the readings done in the relevant Romance language. If the course work in either Hispanic or Luso-Brazilian literatures is done in English, then the student will be expected to demonstrate proficiency by taking a one-hour translation exam in the sixteenth-century prose of the relevant language. One language requirement must be satisfied by the end of the first year of study, if not upon entrance into the program (preferably Latin or Italian); the remaining requirement (for students doing both Spanish- and Portuguese-language literatures) or requirements (for the student working exclusively in either Spanish or Portuguese) must be satisfied by the end of the second year.

Qualifying examination Written component: (1) a two-hour examination in peninsular Spanish and/or Portuguese literatures, and (2) a two-hour exam in the ultramarine literatures of Spain and/or Portugal. Oral component: eight fifteen-minute questions, distributed as follows: four in Spanish/Portuguese peninsular/ultramarine literatures (medieval period through the seventeenth century), and three in Renaissance Studies (one question on a non-Spanish/Portuguese literature, and two questions from extra-literary fields such as history, history of art, religious studies, etc.).

Prospectus The dissertation project should be carefully planned with faculty members from the relevant departments specializing in the respective areas. The prospectus should meet the approval of the student’s adviser in the Department of Spanish and Portuguese and the Renaissance Studies program member advising the student. The prospectus must include a presentation of the topic to be investigated, an explanation of the reasons for its significance, and a description of the theoretical and methodological framework to be employed. The prospectus must be submitted to the DGS in the Department of Spanish and Portuguese, who will circulate it to the departmental faculty for their review and approval; the prospectus will likewise be submitted to the Renaissance Studies program for review and approval by the faculty member(s) working with the student. The prospectus must be submitted and approved by the faculty by the beginning of the seventh term of enrollment. Failure to meet this deadline will result in suspension of registration privileges by the Graduate School. The deadline for the submission of the dissertation prospectus in either term is the Monday of the final week of classes.

Dissertation The dissertation is to achieve a strong disciplinary (i.e., Spanish, Portuguese, or Spanish/Portuguese) identity while at the same time projecting a clear Renaissance Studies profile. The dissertation normally will be directed from within the Department of Spanish and Portuguese, and there will be at least one reader from the Renaissance Studies Executive Committee.

M.A. degrees

M.Phil. The combined M.Phil. degree may be requested after all requirements but the dissertation are met.

M.A. (en route to the Ph.D.) The M.A. degree is awarded upon completion of eight term courses, taken in at least three disciplines, and with at least three grades of Honors. The examination in Latin or Italian must have been passed.

Program materials are available upon request to the Chair, Renaissance Studies Program, Yale University, PO Box 208298, New Haven CT 06520-8298.

COURSES

The two-term Renaissance Studies core seminar (RNST 500/RNST 501) is offered every other year.

RNST 684a / CPLT 684a / ENGL 574a / ITAL 720a, Renaissance Epic David Quint and Jane Tylus
This course looks at Renaissance epic poetry in relationship to classical models and as a continuing generic tradition. It examines epic type scenes, formal strategies, and poetic architecture. It looks at themes of exile and imperial foundations, aristocratic ideology, and the role of gender. The main readings are drawn from Vergil’s Aeneid, Lucan’s De bello civili, Dante’s Purgatorio, Tasso’s Gerusalemme liberata, Camões’s Os Lusíadas, and Spenser’s Faerie Queene.