



**Ph.D. in**

**Rhetorics, Communication, and  
Information Design**

**College of Architecture, Arts, and Humanities  
Clemson University, SC**

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**RCID Handbook-Guide for Students & Faculty**  
**Students in residence and distance online**

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Throughout this Handbook-Guide, it is assumed that a "faculty" member in RCID is someone in the CAAH, as well as potentially across all Colleges at CU, who participates in *the life of the program*. There are multiple ways to participate: In teaching seminars, serving on exam/dissertation Committees, chairing or participating on a regular basis in colloquia, presenting research at the RCID Research Forum, and serving on the RCID Advisory Committee. Additionally, **ALL policies and procedures of CU** supersede those in this Handbook. Moreover, the **CU Graduate School policies and procedures** are noted throughout and for the most part supersede guidelines established by the RCID program. The Graduate School recognizes that "best practices" are different across fields and disciplines. **As such, these Guidelines do not constitute a contract, nor an official catalog of CU.** All in the RCID program, however, are subject to following the guidelines *as updated*. For all **CU Policies and Procedures**, visit and study: < <https://www.clemson.edu/policies/index.html> >.

# 1. Guidelines for Courses

## A. The Graduate School's Guidelines (Policy Handbook)

## B. The RCID Program's Guidelines

While it is the professional prerogative of our colleagues to manage RCID seminars as they see best in relation to selected content and the doctoral program itself, there are some *necessary* programmatic guidelines put forth by the Clemson Graduate School (CU GS) and the RCID program. Additionally, there are, as in all programs, emerging guidelines and best practices arrived at through the everyday lived experiences of faculty and students actively participating in the program. (*The RCID in-residence and distance online, both in sync, have basically the same policies, as well as the same privileges (e.g., access to books in the Cooper Library and access to financial support to present research papers at conferences, as well as access to the colloquia, etc.).* Where different, there are notations in the Handbook as well as the RCID FAQs.)

A. The CU GS requires that the Course Description/Syllabus have information concerning (a) academic integrity, (b) class roll [first-day attendance], (c) grading system, (d) syllabus, including required information, (e) attendance policy, (f) final examinations/final papers, (g) retention of examinations, and (h) posting of grades. For more detailed information/policies, **both faculty and students should study *The Clemson Graduate School Policies and Procedures*** <<https://www.clemson.edu/graduate/students/policies-procedures/index.html>> for all policies, including a grade of Incomplete.

B. The RCID program has the following policies:

**In general, all work:**

- Should have as its primary purpose the *professionalization* of the students.
- Should place less emphasis, if any at all, on the giving of grades, and more emphasis on the mentoring of future colleagues in the profession.
- Should be done at the Doctoral level.

A seminar leader should attempt by discussing with the Director and other seminar leaders what locally as well as globally constitutes "Doctoral level." As the program progresses—we are in our 17th AY—there will be a body of syllabi available to study and best practices to consider.

Seminars that are **Core** and **Cognate** are for the most part fundamentally different. The *Core* seminars, though radically different in their emphases, function in breadth and serve as *propaedeutics* for all future studies in respect to theoretical, practical (pedagogical), and productive knowledge, while *Cognate* seminars function in depth and provide opportunities for the investigation and further growth of this knowledge in special scholarly areas and problems. A **Studio** differs from the *Core* and *Cognate*. Two sections are offered simultaneously.

RCID 8800: Applied Experience in Research and Communication in Studio (6hrs)  
 Students apply their seminar work systematically to individual research projects in a primary area and two support areas. Introduction to applied research in a variety of places, both actual and virtual (archives, labs, studios), and to ever-changing notions of intellectual property and creative commons.

The two *Studio* facilitators will meet together with the Director to develop complementary schedules and strategies for initially preparing students for the qualifying exams and for applied methods of research in dissertation topics. The facilitators of the *Studios* should work closely with the Chair of each student. (Students in the *Studios* should select their Chair of Committee by the end of the studio. Guidelines are stated on pp. 13-16.) *For additional information on what is expected in terms of complementary sections of the Studios, see appendix L.*

**Course Descriptions/Syllabi:** Should be available to students *prior to the first meeting and online*. Should be a collection of detailed information with a list of sources (in print/online) for additional readings/viewings. The descriptions/syllabi should be ongoing works by individual and collective seminar leaders that students may turn to during and return to after taking the seminar. The descriptions/syllabi will constitute a public archive of the program. The URL or .pdf file of the syllabus should be sent to the Director. (See note A above for necessary elements in the descriptions/syllabi.) Also, it is mandatory, prior to classes, that a .pdf file be sent to <<https://syllabus.app.clemson.edu/>>. If not deposited, the Dean will be notified and then the Director will be notified. Please take care of this matter in a timely manner.

**Assignments:** All assignments should be approached as being produced for eventual publication in a *professional* journal in print or online as well as a chapter in a book. Assignments may vary in a number of ways. Given that some seminars such as those with a pedagogical emphasis might stress a particular disciplinary approach (e.g., technical-business writing or cultural studies), the assignments need to be detailed in their expectations according to that discipline's writing/research protocols and its various journals and editors' expectations. For example, if in one discipline the editors expect 5-6 opening pages with a review of the literature on the subject, while another discipline's protocols and its editors expect two to three opening paragraphs with a review further documented in endnotes, or none at all, then, these research and writing protocols need to be detailed in the assignment. (For the most part, as students progress into their assignments through the core/cognate seminars, they will have had a chance to learn more about disciplinary expectations as stated and practiced in a wide array of journals. What is said here applies not only to disciplinary but also to transdisciplinary writing/research protocols and journals as well. RCID is not one discipline, but works across many disciplines.) Additionally, given that the RCID program is concerned not only with print cultures but also with other media cultures such as photography (including photo essays and photomontage), graphic narrative (in comics, novels, reports, ads), audio (oral/aural), video, serious games, etc., students are expected to be proficient in these various media and, therefore, should be allowed and encouraged to work in these other media in completing their assignments, again, for particular online, as well as, if applicable, print journals. In a seminar that has, say, five assignments, the facilitator

should expect the students to attempt at least 1-2 of the assignments in other media. Length of written papers may vary according to the genre or the assignment, 1-5 pages (evocative papers, exploratory-position papers, or book reviews) to 20-25 pages (articles); length and amount of other media—singular or in assemblages—may vary according to publishers' and audiences' expectations and generic-technological constraints.

**Assessments:** *Students should be allowed—rather, expected—to revise their work after initial submission in the seminar, with the understanding that the final assignments will leave no time for revisions in terms of the final report but, nonetheless, should continue to be worked on through revisions for eventual publication. With the idea of revision in mind, the seminar facilitator should be less concerned with assigning a grade to what constitutes a draft and be more concerned with mentoring the student in terms of improving the draft on its ways to print. While seminars end in terms of semesters, the work of scholarship in the seminars never ends. This goal assumes that the assignments and the works completed warrant such attention. If the assignment is an exercise, then, the purpose of that assignment is to be satisfied. However, if the assignment is for the advancement of knowledge, which is the expectation, then, the purpose is to disseminate what has been found and learned through a presentation at conferences and through publication in journals. Often works submitted in seminars are rejected as unsuccessful, for they are more of an exercise without professional purpose and, consequently, do not speak to any community of readers in a discipline or across disciplines. Similarly—and here's the lesson—often works submitted for publication by colleagues are rejected for a variety of good reasons (e.g., the ms. is sent indiscriminately to just any journal, or the proper research has not been done or is not up to date, or the discussion does not contribute to a scholarly conversation, etc.). When accepted, however, it is not unusual for an editor to request a colleague to revise his or her work prior to final publication. Likewise, students should be asked to revise, and they should be guided through this process of revision each time the work is revised. In this light, Students should be encouraged to develop an on-going portfolio of their work from seminar to seminar and semester to semester for the sake of revision and dissemination. The portfolios will be revisited by the facilitators of the two Studios and the Chairs of students' committees.*

**Caveat:** Students should work with their professors, during or after completion of the seminar, to further revise, if necessary, and to prepare their manuscripts for publication. Under no circumstances should a student send a ms. without first having the appropriate faculty read and study the ms. By "appropriate faculty" is meant the faculty member who taught the seminar that the work was produced for.

To foster the success of the assignments and their assessments and revisions, *the seminar leader should develop a detailed plan for expectations and assessment—all in terms of publications—and distribute the plan, during the first meeting of the course, to the students enrolled.* (A sample: <<http://people.clemson.edu/~SOPHIST/assessment.pdf>>.) *The failure to communicate a detailed plan can lead to failure of the seminar and to a student's (one or more) filing a grievance against the seminar leader.*

**Disabilities and Sexual Harassment policies:** See the *Office of Access and Equity*, <<http://www.clemson.edu/campus-life/campus-services/access/>>. Chairs of dissertation

committees, as well as faculty participating in the program, should study this site and may want to take the course offered by the Office on disabilities and sexual harassment. < <http://www.clemson.edu/campus-life/campus-services/access/services/titleix-videos/index.html> >. The legal phrase "Sexual Harassment" has a variety of meanings and, therefore, it would benefit faculty as well as GTAs to study the full array of what that phrase constitutes. Additionally, CU has its own policy in terms reporting any issue concerning access and equity.

**Understand**, therefore, that **if any grievance is hinted at or alleged or reported to the Director that *appears to be a violation of basic principles of access and equity (broadly and specifically defined by the Federal Government as well as in the policies set forth by Clemson University), the Director must report the grievance.*** It is not the responsibility of the Director or other "managers" to help those involved or to investigate the matter; rather, it is the responsibility of the Director to report the matter to the proper person (a Chair of a Department or a Dean of a College) or agency (Access and Equity, etc.).

#### ***RCID Policy on Race and Racism:***

Our program acknowledges the presence of historical systemic racism in cultures, political systems, educational institutions, and every aspect of our lives. To help address racism, the students have written the following recommendations for RCID:

- Encouraging the formation of a more diverse student body. RCID is a predominantly white PhD program, and more can be done to actively bring more students of color into the program.
- Encouraging more representation of black, indigenous, and disabled writers in RCID courses, colloquia, and reading lists.
- Encouraging coursework in RCID devoted fully and explicitly to critical race theory, to antiracist pedagogies and assessment, to cultural and feminist rhetorics, and to the languages, literacies, and rhetorics of social justice movements.
- Encouraging more active engagement with antiracist and socially just pedagogies, as many of us are teachers in addition to being PhD students.
- Encouraging a more robust effort to probe questions of privilege, intersectionality, and inequality in everything S3S and RCID do.
- Encouraging more active and vocal accountability among program stakeholders in an effort to improve the program from the inside.
- Encouraging fundamental shifts in the everyday attitudes, approaches, sensibilities, and practices of the program to more actively foreground social justice in our lives, our curricula, and our discussions.

## 2. Guidelines for Colloquia

### A. The Two Colloquia

### B. Implementation of the Colloquia

### C. Colloquia as Reading Groups and as Opportunities to Develop Special-Topic Seminars

### D. RCID Research Forum

### E. Student-Works-In-Progress Forum (SWIP)

**A. The two colloquia:** Students as well as prospective faculty throughout the CAAH, as well as across the campus, are encouraged to attend and participate in the available colloquia throughout the academic year. (**The students are expected** to participate in all events.) The colloquia supplement seminars and research work with a set of standing, informal communities that are designed to bring all RCID faculty and students together under two rubrics:

- Criticism-Theory (Facilitator, Dr. Ufuk Ersoy, 2021-2022)
- Games-Media-Cinema (Facilitator, Dr. Aga Skrodzka, 2021-2022)

[The rubrics may be subject to revision as they evolve. Both faculty and students should have **equal access** in determining the rubrics.]

The colloquia are, in part, *the life of the RCID program*. Each of the two standing colloquia has as its primary purpose the building of scholarly communities within RCID, in the bringing together of disciplinary/interdisciplinary faculty in and all across the CAAH in order to create transdisciplinary communities.

Additionally, the purpose of the colloquia is potentially to introduce all students to all faculty, as well as faculty to students, in informal discussion groups outside of formal seminars for the sake of additional learning experiences and for selection of exam and dissertation Committee members.

**B. Implementation of the Colloquia:** The Chair or Co-Chairs of each Colloquium must be scheduled on alternating Mondays, along with the *Research Forum* and *SWIP*. The issue is access and equity! A time slot in the mornings has been set aside for the meetings: 9AM-10AM and 10:30-11:30AM. These time slots have been established, again, so that *all students will have equal access to the colloquia and forums*. (All classes for students to take and for students to teach are not to be scheduled during this time slot on Mondays. The times of Colloquia and Forums may change in 2022.) The first Monday after the first meeting of classes in the Fall and Spring semesters will be the beginning of the alternate weeks: First week, *Research Forum*, 9-10AM, then, *Criticism-Theory*, 10:30-11:30AM. The next week: respectively, *Games-Media-Cinema* and then *SWIP*.

Students as well as faculty should feel free to move across the Colloquia depending on the readings. But there still should be a sense of identifying with both Colloquia. It is understood that the Colloquia will take on lives of their own within the parameters set by

the RCID program. The Chairs should announce the speakers/readings according to this protocol:

**The announcements for the RCID RF and the three colloquia will be sent on the Wednesday before the next Monday. The announcement will go to:**

-- [RCID-L@lists.clemson.edu](mailto:RCID-L@lists.clemson.edu)

The copy should have an image (book cover, author, whatever, etc.) along with the information--something similar to the announcements that are posted for the Research Forum. If there are any questions/concerns or in need of help, please contact the Director, who makes the announcements.

It will be the responsibility of the Chair of the colloquia to disseminate the .pdf files of readings as designated above. **Again, the basic presumption of the RCID program is that all communications about the colloquia and RF are to be open, transparent, to all students and faculty across the CAAH as well as perhaps to other Colleges.**

**C. Colloquia as *Reading Groups* and Opportunities to Develop *Special-Topic Seminars*** See 3. below: In practice, each colloquium *meets as a reading group*. Every attempt should be made by the members of each colloquium to include all suggestions of articles/chapters/books as well as other media (film, video, audio, etc.) by all colleagues (both faculty and students who actively participate on a regular basis).

Additionally, the members should attempt

- to monitor the *library holdings* for needed works in all media and to report them to the Director of RCID; and
- to propose *special-topic seminars*, at least, one each year—based on the general rubric of the colloquium—to the Director, who will take the proposal to the Advisory Committee, composed of faculty and students.

**D. Research Forum (RCID RF)** was started the 2009-10 AY. The Director of RCID will coordinate the forum. The purpose of the forum is to invite researchers in each of the departments in the CAAH to speak on their current research. Additionally, the purpose is to help foster research communities in the CAAH as well as all other colleges on campus. Eventually, researchers outside the College will be invited to speak. The practice of the forum is to invite a faculty member to speak for about 30 minutes on his/her research. Then, following the presentation, there will be a Q&A. **All graduate students are expected to attend**, and faculty are invited to attend. The forum will always be at 9AM to 10AM on alternating Mondays with the Criticism-Theory Colloquium at 10:30AM to 11:30AM. And will be held in the Studio of the Class of 1941, unless otherwise announced on RCID-L.



**E. Student-Works-In-Progress Forum (SWIP)** was new Fall (2011), mirroring RCID Research Forum. SWIP will give RCID students an opportunity to present their research for publication, their grant proposals for submission, and their presentations for delivery at conferences. The President of S3S (the RCID student organization) along with the Vice President and RSA Coordinator and interested students will schedule and select students and faculty to make presentations. SWIP will always be at 10:30AM to 11:30AM on alternating Mondays with the Games-Media-Cinema Colloquium, from 9AM to 10AM, in the Studio of the Class of 1941, unless otherwise announced on RCID-L.

### 3. Cognate, Special-Topic Seminars

#### A. How to submit a proposal:

The *proposal* should be in the form of

- a seminar description,
- a well-developed syllabus that must include
  - seminar objectives (what will have been accomplished),
  - how objectives are to be implemented through assignments and how the assignments will be assessed,
  - texts,
  - weekly reading assignments along with additional recommended readings,
  - assessment (formerly, "grading") policy, and
- the name of a faculty member/s who would teach it and the students who have requested the cognate seminar.

The development of the proposals and the rotation of faculty in teaching should be distributed democratically through each of the *active faculty* members of the colloquium. *Active participating students in a colloquium are equal partners with active faculty in the development of the proposals.* The proposal is offered in the name of the colloquium, but not limited to the theme (rubric) of any colloquium.

*The proposed seminars, ideally, should come out of the readings and discussions.*

The Director's and Advisory Committee's selection will be based on students' as well as programmatic needs at the time and on faculty availability. (The Dean/Associate Dean of Research and Graduate Studies in the CAAH will meet with the Department Chairs to see if the faculty member is available. Remember: RCID does not have its own faculty; rather, it borrows its faculty from the CAAH.) The Chairs of colloquia *should inquire*

with the Director about the feasibility of proposing seminars prior to developing a proposal for any given semester in an AY. Proposals should be submitted, if it is at all possible, the prior AY. The RCID Advisory Committee will attempt to privilege these faculty-student proposals from the colloquia for cross-listed special topics seminars over other RCID special topics seminars generated by the Director or submitted by a single faculty member.

## 4. Guidelines for Exams/Dissertation Committees

- A. Aim
- B. Timing
- C. Format
- D. Sample Exams and Dissemination of Exams
- E. Selection of Chair and Committee
- F. Additional Necessary Information
- G. Assessment of Exams
- H. Final Approval of Dissertation Prospectus
- I. Administration, Assessment, and Defense of the Dissertation
- J. Pre- and post-Dissertation (Placement, The Job Market)

**A. Aim:** To prepare students for their *transdisciplinary* emphasis in research and in writing their dissertation.

**B. Timing:** The exams should be taken as early as possible during the third year—in a four-year program—after the satisfactory completion of all *Core* and *Cognate* courses as well as the two Studios. (There is further discussion, below about the timing of the exams.)

**C. Format:** *Three written exams and one oral-multimodal presentation* based on the emphasis of the dissertation.

- The *three written exams* include *one exam* in a student's *primary area* that is tied to the *initially-approved prospectus* for the dissertation project and *two* in *support areas*, which should contribute to the transdisciplinary nature of the primary area. (See p. 25 for possible paradigms of areas.) *It should stand to reason that no exams should be allowed to be held IF the prospectus is problematic for the Chair as well as the Readers on the Committee! The distribution of the three areas is not necessarily fixed in terms of dealing with each in a separate exam.* For example, while the three areas (one primary and two secondary areas) may each individually inform an exam, other combinations may be possible. The first may be primary, while the second may be a combination of the two secondary areas in support of the primary area, and the third may focus on combined pedagogies of the three areas. This latter approach has been generally followed. (See such a paradigm for the three exams on p. 25 below.)

The exams should be **formal essay exams** with a set of carefully worded questions with stipulations. The Chair, in consultation with the readers on the Committee, should give

precise directions at the head of each day's exams, e.g., the Chair may include the following directions:

Instructions: The questions being put to you demand an essay response. Therefore, be sure that you respond in standard academic essay form and prose (with a claim and support all the way through); be sure that you construct clear expository prose and cogent arguments; and be sure to follow recommended time of writing for each question. Please attempt to write at least 15-20 pages, typed, double-spaced, regular margins, etc. When you have completed your essays, be sure to proofread them very carefully, looking for omissions, typos, etc. (Before emailing your essays to your Chair, be sure that they are formatted in double space and be sure to place this sheet of question/s on top of each day's exams.)

The exams should be about *4-6 hours* and *closed book, no notes*. The three written exams must be done within the *time limit of seven days*, with any variation such as M, W, F; or W, F, Tues. Each exam may have one question with subparts, or two to three questions on some specific aspect of the project or support areas. (The questions will be most likely determined by the nature of the problem or issue the student is working on, **but should** attempt to take into consideration *theoretical knowledge*, or knowing; *practical knowledge*, or pedagogy and praxis; and *productive knowledge*, making.)

The Chair of the exam, in consultation with the Committee, may allow the student to take his/her exams on *the honor system*, away from being monitored. The honor system includes the understanding that the student is to use no prepared information, in print or in e-file form, to assist in taking the exam.

These exams are based on selected, yet comprehensive *scholarly material* that is commonly cited or in need of inclusion and approved by the student's Committee, and that is commensurate in selection and numbers of articles, books, etc., *with the student's dissertation project itself* as developed in the student's approved prospectus. For the three written exams, this material *may be* approximately 75-100 books, with three to four articles being approximately equal to one book. Again, the scholarly material should be part of the *prospectus*, focusing on the primary and two secondary areas. Hence, three bibliographies, one for each area.

**Caveat:** *The exact number, however, is not the issue; rather, the exact scholarly works on the project of interest, their quality and importance in an on-going historical scholarly conversation on the project, is the issue. In as much as the written exams are qualifying and diagnostic, they are, nonetheless, *comprehensive* in terms of the primary and secondary areas.*

- The *oral-multimodal exam* is a 30-35 minute presentation to the dissertation Committee and other interested RCID faculty and students and should be the week after the written exams. The oral-multimodal exam should be comparable to a conference presentation or an on-campus interview with presentation on the dissertation project, but must be in both oral and multimodal formats. Since the RCID program prepares students to develop their thinking across a number of different media, traditional and new, it is *necessary* that the student demonstrate his or her fluency in a variety of oral and new media formats. The expectation is beyond a simple PowerPoint presentation. After the presentation, which must be on campus and scheduled at an open time—there should be

an open Q&A discussion among *those present who are not on the Committee*. After the discussion—the time is to be determined by the Chair—all will be asked to leave the room so that the Chair and the Committee can be with the student alone and begin to question the student's performance on the exams. This time should be devoted to feedback on the student's exams and presentation, but most especially on helping the student (through a robust conversation) move forward to the dissertation. After the Chair and the Committee are ready to deliberate among themselves, the student should leave the room. Again, it is the committee's task to determine whether the student is ready to move forward to the dissertation. After determining P/F or additional work, the Chair and Committee should sign the GS7D form, and then invite the student back into the room to report the results. Presumably, with a Congratulations!

**D. Sample Exams and Dissemination of Exams:** The exams should be essay questions—usually one per exam—and given to the student for preparation **two weeks** before the actual taking of the exams. The *student's preparation* for the exam is of the essence. For example, the exams may be given after several drafts of the prospectus have been developed over a period of time and strongly demonstrate to the Committee that proper preparation for the taking of the exams has been achieved. *It is especially the Chair's responsibility to determine the student's preparation*. The Chair with or without members of the Committee should give the student **a mock oral exam on the readings** to determine, as best as possible, whether the student has read and understands the works included in the approved three bibliographies in the prospectus. The three written exams should focus on the primary and two secondary areas as well as a concern with pedagogy, if the topic lends itself to such. Here is a general **paradigm**:

**Sample: First exam, Primary Area, Rhetorical Invention:**

Articulate and defend the scholarly, yet everyday, *importance* and *value* of your proposed dissertation on "rhetorical invention." In other words, what is the point of issue? What is *the conjecture*? How is it rooted in a rhetorical situation, arising from a conflict of issues among thinkers/researchers in or across disciplines/fields? And how do you see yourself entering and contributing at the level of *theory* to this situation? What's in it for the general public?

Here is one general way, according to stasis theory in rhetorical invention, to take on this first day of questions: *Conjecture*: Is there an issue or crisis in rhetorics as well as communication and information design (specifically in the canon of rhetorical invention) that needs and should be addressed? *Definition*: How would you define this issue or crisis? *Quality*: How serious to the growth of knowledge is this issue or crisis? *Policy*: How should this issue or crisis be addressed?

**Sample: Second exam, first- and second-Support Areas, Electronic Discourse and Cultural Studies, Critical Theories:**

Articulate and defend your two support areas for your primary area. Concentrate on how each support area complements the other in their overall support of the primary area of rhetorical invention. Develop your answers according to this triangulation of areas. One approach might be to take four contributors to each of the two support areas and bring

their thinking to bear on this complementary/collaborative support of the primary area. An additional approach might be to explain what common or different grounds, if any, do the two support areas bring to this effort? Once you have determined how the two support areas complement each other and together complement the primary area, then, explain where you see they leave areas of connections left unexplored that you wish to explore in your dissertation.

**Sample: Third exam, *A Pedagogy of knowing, doing, and making:***

The RCID program is concerned with the complementarity of knowing, doing, and making; that is, theoretical knowledge, practical-pragmatic knowledge, and productive knowledge. The middle form of knowledge we often refer to as pedagogical knowledge, that is, how best, given a variety of situations and genres/media, to teach and to learn about rhetorical invention. In this light, develop an advanced (i.e., third or fourth year) undergraduate course for general education in rhetorical invention as you have redescribed and theorized it in your two previous days of exams. Stipulate in your course description what the course is about, why it is important, and how you and the students will realize various outcomes. Develop tentative readings and assignments progressively in terms of your understandings of what has been done and what you think should be done, as argued for the last two exams, and how you would assess these works (which means by what criteria).

Develop your course, and the rationales for readings, assignments, etc., in an essay for publication (we will accept this essay in draft form) and in two voices, if not three: One, the facts of the course with your justification of the facts that inform the course (in other words, Why is this course at the general education level so important?); two, your reflections pro and con, on the facts and justification (in other words, engage in *dialectical*, or rather *diatactical*, self-critique in respect to the course); third, your open choice if you think necessary. Or promising. Additionally, because this is, at best, a draft of an essay for publication, choose your audience (e.g., readers of *College English* or *Kairos* or *The WAC Journal* or whatever appropriate academic journal), and then contextualize your course planning and philosophy of teaching it with references to appropriate secondary sources.

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Now after discussing the exams, we turn to the Chair and Committee, who should be generally informed about the program, A through D above:

**E. Selection of Chair and Committee:** The student must, according to the CU Graduate School, select a Chair and Committee members and file a Graduate Degree Curriculum (see CU GS form GS2). For the RCID students the deadline is *during the fourth semester*, when enrolled in the two Studios, if possible. At the latest, following that semester into the *summer or fall (i.e., the student's 5<sup>th</sup> semester)*.

*First*, however, the student should meet with the Director of RCID and discuss the possible options for a Chair and Committee. The discussion can start as early as the fall

semester of the student's second year, but most probably in the two RCID 8800 Studios, especially, section 001. *Keep in mind, however, that each faculty member may chair and direct a maximum of three committees.* The issue is work loads.

*The Chair:* It is generally assumed that the student has had some communications with the prospective Chair and has ideally taken a course with the faculty member. It is also generally assumed that the Chair is someone with at least a disciplinary identity that will aid the student not only with the exams and the dissertation topic but also in a job search. For example, if the student's *primary area* is Writing Theories or Communications Across the Curriculum and if the student intends to find an administrative position in that area in an English or Communications Department, or in a College of Liberal Arts, then, the Chair should be selected in accord with that intention. Or if the student's *primary area* is in Health Communication, then, again, the student should select someone in that area and in the appropriate departments. In other words, the area of interest should be in accordance with the Chair's interest and background. And again, Chairs are limited to directing three committees. There may be rare exceptions, but the policy is three.

It is generally understood that the prospective Chair has demonstrated an active interest in the RCID program with its colloquia and research forums. (For this general rule, there are exceptions given students' needs and faculty availability.) It is also assumed that the prospective Chair, at least, has an active research interest in the *primary areas of the student's interest* for publication. (For this general rule, there are rare exceptions.)

*Request for the Chair:* After meeting with the student and discussing the proper choice for a Chair, the Director will meet with the proposed faculty member to determine interest. *But understand that for final approval,* the Director must, in consultation with the Chair of the faculty member's department, determine if he or she is available for Chairing a doctoral Committee. There is a work-load policy that the Director and the program must follow.

***Caveat:*** If a faculty member who has been asked to serve as Chair of a committee has expectations of leaving Clemson (for a sabbatical, for a position elsewhere, or for retirement), the faculty member should not agree to serve. A faculty member who agrees to serve as a Chair of a student's Committee is expected to be present on campus and available in order to see the student through the qualifying exams, through the dissertation process with a successful defense and to help the student through the job search.

*Chair and Committee:* The constitution of the Committee should be arrived at through discussions between the Chair and student in consultation with the Director, who will eventually have to approve and to sign the GS2 Plan of Study agreement form. (Often forms are filled out incorrectly and the GS returns them to the student. Please follow the guidelines put forth on the *Graduate School Policy Handbook*, as well as the guidelines below.) Along with the Chair, there must be three additional members. (This is a requirement of the CU GS.) These *three* committee members should be selected, if at all possible, in terms of the student's *two secondary support areas*. In some cases, the student with the approval of the Chair, may have a fifth committee member. Since RCID is a transdisciplinary program, no student, however, should have all members of the Committee from a single department. Rather, it is necessary that members from several

disciplines/departments constitute the Committee and that the members can work together harmoniously and that they will be available to help the student.

When the student, then, selects a Chair and three Readers, the Committee must be constituted with CU faculty ideally from at least three, different departments. Hence, 2, 1, 1. Or 1, 1, 1, 1. If the student selects a Chair and four Readers, so as to bring to the Committee an additional, necessary consultant, the Committee again ideally should be constituted with CU faculty from, at least, three departments. Hence, possibly, 2, 1, 1, 1. Or a possibly wider spread of 1, 1, 1, 1, 1. Several combinations of permutations are possible. (If there are understandably good reasons, in terms of the research project, for a student to have the four members from two, instead of three, departments, in a 2, 2, ratio, then, such a mix will be acceptable. Under **no** circumstances, however, will a 3, 1, 1, relation be acceptable, counting the Chair of the Committee in the total count.

*Additional members on the Committee:* Students may have an *additional reader* who is outside the CAAH at CU and even a fifth from another University. The former, or faculty outside CAAH, should be fully apprised of the program by the Chair of the Committee (with the help of the Director, if wished) and its basic requirements so that there will be no misunderstandings of the student's steps toward satisfying the exams and dissertation; the latter, or *faculty from another institution*, as a fifth reader, does not figure in the distribution of three different departments.

To obtain approval for an **"external"** *non-CU faculty member*, the Chair of the student's Committee should contact the Director. The Director will forward the form to the student for initiating the process of requesting the faculty member to be added to the committee.

*Some additional thoughts prior to the exams:* The Chair will have the major responsibility of mentoring and over-seeing the student's work towards the completion of the doctorate. The Chair with the approval of the Committee may recommend, prior to taking the exams, that a student take an additional course or courses (up to 9 hrs) in the student's specialized exams and dissertation area(s). It is expected, however, during the second two years that the student, in fact, *is engaged in independent research*. It is, nonetheless possible, however, that a Chair with good reasons may want the student to take a doctoral or MA-level course in the college or outside of it. The Chair should be cognizant of the fact that RCID is a four-year program and GTAships are good for four years and, therefore, should encourage the student to complete all additional courses, all research, and the writing of the dissertation in a timely manner, especially if the student is relying solely on the stipend and remission of the tuition. But there is no guarantee that any student, in fact, will or must finish in four years. While most students complete the degree in four years, others have not. An argument to take the exams or defend the dissertation, based on the necessity of financial support, will *not* be accepted. *The Chair will have the final say* with the general approval of the Committee on when the student is ready to take the exams and defend the dissertation. If the issue of timing becomes irresolvable for the student or the Chair, then, see the Director. It must be stressed that *no exam should be given if there is no general approval among the Committee about the completed prospectus, which is the very basis of the exams.*

**NOTE:** RCID 8310, RCID 8330, and ENGL 8910 are research courses for residential students on an assistantship only after the two sections of the Studio, 8800, are completed. It is necessary to take a full course load to maintain the assistantship. These courses are not used as substitutes for a cognate course.

*Additionally, it is especially important that the Chair monitor and make sure that the student, if a GTA teaching two courses or working as a GRA on a funded project, does not violate the GTA contract and work over 20 hours a week. This applies for any additional work the student might take outside the university. The presumption is that the student is enrolled to finish the degree, successfully and professionally, in a timely manner. [The only exception is that the Graduate School allows any student on an assistantship to work an additional 8 hours per week, meaning no student on an assistantship is allowed to work more than a total of 28 hours per week.]*

**But one last issue:** If a student wishes to change the Chair of a Committee: *See the Director first.*

**Caveat:** Always, the protocol for communication among members of the group is that the student and the Committee members work **through the Chair of the Committee**. Under no circumstances should the student attempt to Chair, i.e., *to manage*, his or her own program.

**F. Additional Necessary Information:** Once selected and approved, the Chair with the three readers will become the student's Committee, guiding, recommending, and assessing the student's path and work toward completing the research project. During this time, the Chair will help the student further develop the prospectus, which is the very basis of the exams (written and oral). In some cases, a student may have to write several drafts of the prospectus to warrant the taking of the exams. (If a student fails to progress through the program, as expected and outlined in Appendix K, see p. 22 [below], then, the Chair should consult with the Director.)

After successfully completing the exams, the student will commence writing the dissertation and the Chair will assist when needed. There should be a meeting between the student and Chair frequently to check on progress. The Chair, when relatively satisfied with a chapter, should pass it on to the three readers. From time to time, the Committee may have to meet with or without the student to discuss the development of the dissertation.

Before and during the writing of the dissertation, the student and the Chair should familiarize themselves with all procedures concerning the dissertation. *The Chair should assist the student in the final format of the dissertation if needed.* Failure to follow the correct format can delay the final submission in time for graduation.

See <<https://www.clemson.edu/graduate/students/theses-and-dissertations/index.html>>.

While the **Chair** finally becomes the academic mentor of the student, **the Director with the English Department Chair** will continue to determine the student's teaching assignments and schedules (or other assistantship supervisors if outside of English).



It must be understood that prior to the development and approval of the Chair and the Committee, the students will be enrolled in the two 8800-001/401 and 8800-002/402 Studios during the fourth semester. The major project in Studio (sec. 1) is the determination and development of the research project and the primary and two secondary areas in terms of the early drafts of the prospectus. In the Studio, sec. 1, students begin with the Director to think, given the research project, who would be an appropriate Chair of Committee. If, however, a Chair has already been selected and the GS2 form has been signed and approved, then, every effort will be made by the instructors in the Studios to work with the Chair so as to help advance the student to the fifth semester.

**G. Assessment of Exams:** The Chair and Committee evaluate and determine the exams to be Pass/Fail. The Chair and Committee have the option (used sparingly) to Pass the student with "distinction." (The Chair and Committee must unanimously vote in favor of an award of "distinction.") If the Committee recommends a retake, a student failing any part or whole of the exams may retake those parts or the whole exam once. If the student fails the exams the first time without a recommendation of a retake or fails the exams the second time, the student's Chair and Committee should request, through the Director, that the Graduate School dismiss the student from the program. (These options and limits are a part of the *Graduate School Policy Handbook*.) The proper form for reporting Pass/Fail and retake/no retake is the GS5D form. Again, there is *no guarantee* that a student will automatically be given a second chance to take an exam or exams the second time. *The Chair of the student's Committee should notify the Director of the results of the exams. A copy of the GS5D form should be made and given to the Director for the student's file in addition to being submitted to the Graduate School according to the direction at the bottom of the form.*

*Suggestions for How the Chair and Committee might assess the written and oral exams:* The preliminary document of the dissertation prospectus (focusing on a primary project area and two support areas) should determine the nature of the three written exams.

The Chair and Committee, in assessing the *written exams*, should take great care to determine

- How well the student is able to articulate and defend the importance and value of the project to the major area of interest;
- How well the student demonstrates his/her abilities to identify work done in the primary area and secondary areas;
- How well a student is able to grasp the importance of the work (judging it, vetting it, assimilating it); and
- How well the student is able to incorporate and further develop the work (appropriating the work by thinking logically and creatively with it) toward the advancement of knowledge within the major area of interest.

The Chair and Committee, in assessing the *oral exam*, should take great care to determine

- How well the student can make a multimodal presentation (both simultaneously an oral and visual presentation) on the proposed dissertation (with perhaps the principle of organization for the prospectus [see below, p. 24]);
- How articulate the student can be in a Q & A situation, responding to follow-up questions *based on the written exams*; and
- How well the student can join in on a discussion of his or her oral and visual presentation with their committee and take productive criticism of the work of the content, as well the rendering of the content in oral and visual delivery.

And very importantly,

- Assuming that the presentation was being made by an on-campus applicant for a position at the University of X, how might the Chair and the Committee be moved by the student's presentation to recommend him or her for the position? What department or departments and programs might you think would be appropriate given this presentation?

Additionally, in the written exams and the presentation exam, the Chair and the Committee should determine the ability of the student to conduct, at best, *transdisciplinary* work when researching and writing the dissertation.

In general, in assessing the exams, the Chair and the Committee must determine the overall probability of the student's ability to write a dissertation with identifiable research and interpretive protocols (from the two RCID methods seminars, 8020 and 8030). While seminars test one group of abilities, independent research and the writing of a dissertation, test a varied, different group of abilities. All "A"s in courses does not necessarily suggest that a student will succeed at independent study in preparation for exams and will be able to research and write (revise) a dissertation.

**Caveat:** While the exam is diagnostic of a **comprehensive approach** to the primary project and two support areas, under no circumstances should the Chair and the Committee pass the student, thinking that the student will, while writing the dissertation, come to judge, assimilate, and appropriate the material. The student, in the written exams, must demonstrate a wide-scope along with an intricate and intimate understanding of the material.

**Caveat:** If by chance, as commonsense dictates, a student changes his/her dissertation project in a major way (e.g., a different topic), after passing the exams, whether with the original Chair of Committee or a new Chair, the student *must start over* by developing a new prospectus with the proper primary and two secondary areas; and *must retake exams* based on the new prospectus.

## H. Final approval of Dissertation Prospectus (after the exams):

After the student's successful completion of the examinations (when he or she becomes an official "candidate" for the degree), the student must meet again with the Chair of the Committee to determine the final document of the *dissertation prospectus*, which will be approved by the Chair and Committee.

*The final dissertation prospectus* must have a cover sheet for the signatures of the Chair and the three Readers. On this sheet, there is the student's full name as the registrar has it, the title of the dissertation, the date of the submission of the prospectus, and then the names of the Chair and Readers. The prospectus *must* follow the form and steps numbered below. No other form or schema will be acceptable. (See p. 26-27, Outline for Dissertation Prospectus.)

Once the final prospectus has been approved by the student's Chair and Committee (with signatures), the Chair of the student's Committee should distribute copies of the prospectus to the committee members and send the original to the Director of RCID. *The final approval of the prospectus is determined solely by the student's Chair and Committee as long as the prospectus follows the directions of the dissertation prospectus form.* The original copy will be kept on file by the Director of RCID.

**I. Administration, Assessment, and Defense of the Dissertation:** The protocol for administering and assessing the writing and reading of the Dissertation chapters is best determined by the Chair with the assent of the Committee. Under no circumstances, however, should the Chair tell the student to go off and read/write and come back when the dissertation is done. The student writing the dissertation should expect and realize from the Chair timely responses and productive assessment of the chapters as they are written recursively. The major task of the Chair is *to mentor* the student. The Chair, in turn, should expect that the student writer submits the very best work to be assessed. If by chance, the student is *stuck*, there should be ample opportunity for discussions between the Chair and the student with the idea of helping the student take the next steps in additional research and in writing the dissertation. The Chair is the primary reader and should pass on work (chapter by chapter) to the Committee when he or she believes it is ready for the Committee to read. The Chair, of course, should feel free to consult one member of the Committee or the whole Committee, if warranted, to read a problematic draft of a chapter.

It happens, on occasion, that during the summer, when a Chair is away from Clemson, the student may not have the benefit of the Chair's help. Therefore, prior to establishing a Committee, the student and the Chair must have a clear understanding of what the expectations will be concerning contact and support during the summer. The student has the right to expect that he or she will be mentored without sustained interruptions during the AY. There are, of course, exceptions.

**Caveats:** *If the Chair cannot be available, say for a month, during the summer to help the student, then, the Chair should make arrangements for at least one member of the Committee to mentor the student. Additionally, if by chance the student continues to work on the dissertation into the fifth year and thereafter, the Chair of the Committee should notify and inform the Director about the nature of the delay.*

*The notification should be at least twice during each semester (at the beginning and the end of each semester).*

The dissertation itself is solely approved by the student's Chair and Committee as long as they are within the guidelines established by the Graduate School. If a student is attempting to graduate during a particular semester, including summer, the Chair should familiarize him-herself with the Graduation Deadlines:

<<https://www.clemson.edu/graduate/students/deadlines.html>>. Also, upon approval of the dissertation defense, the Chair with the Committee should use form GS7D found at <<https://www.clemson.edu/graduate/files/pdfs/GS7D.pdf>> to report to the GS successful completion of the defense.

It is crucial that the Chair work not only with the student and the Committee but also with the Director of RCID and with the CU Graduate school in order to follow guidelines.

**J. Pre- and post-Dissertation (Placement, The Job Market):** Since the Chair of the student's Committee is the major professor of the student, it is generally assumed through tradition that the Chair will be the primary faculty member helping the student with and during the whole search for a position in academia as well as in industry upon graduation. It is customary to begin the search prior to the completion of the dissertation, assuming that the student has at least 2-3 chapters generally approved by the Chair and Committee by September of the AY for the search. (Advertisements for positions begin appearing in September, and in some cases earlier.) Additionally, there has to be a reasonable expectation that the student can and will defend, at least, in the late spring semester or no later than mid-summer. (Most contracts for new assistant professors state that the degree must be in hand prior to the beginning of work.)

**Caveat:** If the student is projecting that his or her dissertation will be defended in the summer, both the Chair and the student must be sure that everyone on the Committee will be available and agrees to appear for the defense. Additionally, if a student and Chair project that the student will graduate in May, but does not, both need to understand that the fee paid for graduation does not roll over to the next scheduled graduation.

What is expected of the Chair is to guide the student through the search for a position, specifically, through the locating of positions proper to the student's background, the writing and vetting of proper letters for specific positions (no generic letters), prepping the student for interviews, etc. The Chair and the student should expect additional help from the RCID faculty, the RCID Job Placement Committee, *and especially the Director, who may oversee the actual applications made. Multiple applications from the same program [RCID] to the same job advertisement can and often do end up being counterproductive.* The Director of the RCID program will assist in making contacts, examining letters written in support of the candidate to make sure that the letters are not at odds or undercut the student's abilities and degree, and all other matters such as studying the history of the program/department that the student is making application to; and should be periodically communicated with about applications sent, letters written, interviews forthcoming, etc. It must be commonly recognized and acknowledged that both student-faculty networking and making presentations at conferences are opportune

moments for job searching, even as many as two to three years before the actual search period for the student.

It is important for the Chair of a student's Committee, as well as the members of that Committee, to understand that it is typical that a Chair of a *search committee* will contact a Director of a program to discuss the job candidate, so it is in the best interests of all concerned to keep the Director fully informed. The Director will establish a special *job search committee* and a *job workshop* for coordinating all searches and placements. The purpose of the workshop is to prepare students in reading/assessing job postings, in developing CVs and letters of application, in being interviewed, and in negotiating for a position. (Additionally, from time to time, the Director will also organize workshops on best policies in submitting an article or book ms. to an editor and publisher, on how to write a book proposal for an academic publisher, etc. Most of these workshops will be offered through the two studio sections of RCID 8800.)

**In summary, Some *best practices* for ABD students in a job search:**

- Work with the Chair and Committee members, and the Director of RCID (all of whom will help you establish a network with the faculty in the program/colloquia, and in a wider scope of the field itself);
- Apply across disciplines if you are competent specifically and generally across comparable disciplines (do not overly limit yourself unnecessarily, but be aware, with the help of your Chair and others, that some programs hire mostly specialized, not hybridized, colleagues);
- Realize that your virtue, in the RCID program, is virtuosity in multiple hybridic interests and practices (see Richard Lanham; Bruno Latour);
- *Study* the job ads you read (get help from faculty and the Director);
- Determine the positions you want to apply for and then study the Website of the field/programs (the programs themselves, the Chair of the department, especially the faculty and their research interests, the course/seminar offerings, and the general history of the department, etc.);
- Meet with the Director, if there are more than 3 students on the market, about applying for a particular position;
- Write letters of applications for each position (no generic letter) and incorporate what you have learned from your studying the program's site. When writing, give proof of your having studied a site by referring, when appropriate, to faculty by names and interests. Answer the presumed question about *how* you can complement what they are already doing well and deliver and satisfy what their needs and interests are as stated in the ad.
- Start early, as early as the moment you enter this program (these *best practices* are not really just for ABD students), thinking about the kinds of position you would like to have and looking for positions in particular departments across the country, but remain open to multiple possibilities. Please do not expect, however, that you will be hired by your own university.
- It is important to obtain at least 3 letter writers of reference for your job search. Provide your letter writers with information about the job description, contact information for Search Committee/Chair, and deadlines for submitting their letters.

Additional best practices will be discussed in Job Placement Committee meetings and Job Search Workshops.

## Appendix to Assessment:

### K. Satisfactory Progress Being Made Toward the Degree

*There are structural steps built into the program that help the faculty/students/administration determine *successful progress toward completion of the degree*. Successful completion of all work is mandatory. (The maintenance of a grade-point average of at least a "B," however, is only one of several determining factors.) At any step along the way, if a student fails to move on to the next step, the student is subject to being dismissed from the program. **Understand that the program can only recommend to the Graduate School that a student be dismissed. If the Chair of committee sees a student not making progress and has determined that the student will not succeed in the program, the Chair, in consultation with the Director, should document a request to have the student dismissed from the program and submit the document to the Director, who will present the charge to the Graduate School.***

For satisfactory progress, the *first* step is completion of all core and cognate courses. (Before advancing at the end of the third semester of courses, the student must have satisfactorily completed the five core and at least four of five cognate courses to enroll in the two required sections of the studio RCID 8800, Applied Research.)

The *second* is completion of the two RCID studios along with the fifth cognate course.

The *third* is the successful completion of the four exams.

The *fourth* is the completion and successful defense of the dissertation.

Failure to advance to each of these successive steps can and most likely will contribute to a student's being dismissed. Often the problems that arise are owing to Incompletes taken and not satisfied quickly. Only under the most extreme situations (illness, death in the family, etc.) should the student be given an Incomplete, assuming that all other work up to the final assignment has been satisfactorily submitted. (If it is an extreme situation, then, the student will simply have to retake, if allowed, the courses when offered. But it is necessary to realize that courses are in a two-year cycle. Every reasonable opportunity will be afforded the student to successfully complete a course or courses. If students request to step out of the program for a semester, assuming that the CU GS approves as well as the International Office for international students, such a request will be considered. See the Graduate School policies on requesting a leave of absence.) Additionally, problems arise when students do not communicate professionally with their faculty and the Director, allowing for mentoring and revising of work submitted. And finally, serious problems arise when students attempt *to manage* their own programs.

For the GS's statement concerning *incompletes and dismissals*, see the Graduate Handbook <[https://www.clemson.edu/graduate/files/pdfs/policyhandbook\\_2020-21.pdf](https://www.clemson.edu/graduate/files/pdfs/policyhandbook_2020-21.pdf)>.

## Appendix to Studios:

### L. Two Complementary Sections of RCID 8800

#### Two sections of Studio, same students in each:

The basic assumption is that the "instructor" is also, if not more so, a "facilitator." This is not a course; rather, a studio.

--One option is to do the same tasks in each section, but with the assumption that the two different instructors will have radically different takes and, therefore, the tasks will be slightly or greatly pitched differently.

--Another option is to conduct different tasks for each, altogether, but tasks that are complementary.

See, e.g., Dr. Victor Vitanza's section 001:

<<http://people.clemson.edu/~SOPHIST/880vv.html>> and Dr. Steve Katz's section 002:

<<http://people.clemson.edu/~SOPHIST/RCID880.2Syllabus.pdf>>.

#### Tasks in one section, over a period of 15wks: students spend time

*Studying the History of the research issue, question, or problem:*

1. focusing on their primary area and specific issue, question, or problem;
2. concentrating on the scholarly conversation that this issue, etc., is a part of and making manifest the various permutations and combinations of the conversation as it manifests itself in the published research;

[This assumes that the issue, etc., is not uniquely cited by the student. If unique, never seen as an issue, or conjecture, etc., then the student will have to demonstrate, if necessary, that, indeed, there is an issue, etc.]

3. start looking for any "alternative ways," perhaps not necessarily conventional ways that research on this issue, etc., has or is being done;
4. additionally, concentrating on the support areas that the various scholars are using to deal with the issue, or to answer the question, or to solve the problem and asking if the different support areas with their different methodologies are creating the different permutations and combinations of the arguments/conclusions in the conversation;

*Establishing the issue, etc.: After circulating through the literature on the issue, etc., above (several times), the students then could begin*

5. defining (limiting) the issue, etc., into a statement with support statements, while also explaining why it is important to them, and to a larger community of scholars, if not the general public itself;
6. arriving at their support areas, including methodology or methodologies, etc.
7. re-begin gathering the books, articles, etc., necessary for an in-depth understanding of the overall historical context, focusing on which journals are hosting the particular scholarly conversations;
8. depending on the kind of issue, etc., begin the research and collecting of data and writing.

Various faculty, Chair and Committee members of these four students' areas of interest, can come in and collaborate with the main facilitator, working with the students stage by stage.

**The overall task in *this* studio, therefore,** is to determine the primary and two support areas and to discover the scholarly communities that make up all three areas, but all this in the light of the issue, the question, the problem and how it manifests itself variously in a scholarly field. So, by the end of the semester, the student should have a very clear statement of what his/her issue, etc., is and what the primary and two secondary areas are; what the main work (books, articles, etc.) is and stated it in bibliographical form. What the student is at present moving toward is establishing a draft of his/her Prospectus and preparing for four Qualifying Exams on the primary area, the two support areas, and the public, multimodal 30-minute presentation to the Chair and Committee and to RCID faculty and students.

### **Tasks in a complementary section, over a period of 15wks: students spend time**

1. in peer reviews of each other's work (the other seminar, above);
2. in workshops with various researchers and Centers in the college of AAH as well as the other colleges (e.g., CU-CIRE: Clemson University Center for Interdisciplinary Research Excellence; IGERT, NSF: Integrated Graduate Education, Research and Teaching, grant application; Charleston Architecture Center; and The Robert J. Rutland Center for Ethics; etc. );
3. in workshops with various research groups on campus;
4. visit other "spaces" besides the studio for research, such as computer research labs (e.g., the usability testing lab connected to MATRF, in Daniels, Digital Production



Arts, etc.), chemistry labs, biology labs, art studios, communication labs, agriculture labs, etc. An additional and fairly new major resource on campus is the Sonoco Institute.

**The overall task in this studio, therefore,** is for the students to get a practical and theoretical sense of what variously constitutes research in other "spaces" in other disciplines in and outside the college, and to search for ways of appropriating and recombining what is learned "outside" the field and how it might work for their own research habits and goals. Etc.

**Both sections will meet** in a *workshop* on plagiarism, academic integrity, copyright/copyleft, intellectual property, creative commons, hip-hop cultures of sampling-remixing-repurposing. Additionally, there will be workshops on book and dissertation proposals and on the job search.

## Appendices to Exams/Dissertations:

**M. Possible Examples of the Primary/Secondary Areas:** Of an RCID student whose dissertation is in the general area of

### **Example 1: Information Design**

- a. Dissertation Primary Project Area: "Information Design"
- b. Area of Support: Visual Rhetorics/Communication
- c. Area of Support: History of Rhetoric (say, since Ong on Ramus, et. al, "geometric patterns of thought")
- d. Oral exam as conference presentation of specific area and support areas for "information design" (45mins, multimodal presentation)

Note: This primary area of "information design" as stipulated here is already transdisciplinary. Yet there are particular, disciplinary "takes" (and narrow ones) fostered in the area of information design.

### **Example 2: Postmodern Ethnography** (Stephen Pfohl)

- a. Dissertation Primary Project Area: "Postmodern Ethnography"
- b. Area of Support: Revisionary Anthropology (Geertz, Wagner, Taylor)
- c. Area of Support: New Media
- d. Oral exam as conference presentation of specific area of and support areas for "Postmodern Ethnography" (30-35 minutes, multimodal presentation)

### **Example 3: Rhetorical Invention**

- a. Dissertation Primary Project Area: "Rhetorical Invention"
- b. Area of Support: Electronic Discourse (electracy)
- c. Area of Support: Critical Theory
- d. Oral exam as conference presentation of specific area of and support areas for "Rhetorical Invention" (30-35 minutes, multimodal presentation)

### **Example 4: The Sister Arts**

- a. Dissertation Primary Project Area: "The Sister Arts"
- b. Area of Support: History of Art in Rhetoric (*ut pictura poesis, ecphrasis*)
- c. Area of Support: Visual Rhetorics and New Media from a feminist perspective
- d. Oral exam as conference presentation of specific area of and support areas for "The Sister Arts" (30-35 minutes, multimodal presentation)

**N. For a student to be successful, the length of time for completion** of the exams and dissertation should not exceed two years. It is important to recognize, however, that a student must have much of his or her work done by September-October of the fourth year, when advertisements for positions first appear. It is the late fall semester, for the most part, when on-campus interviews begin. The interviews continue through the spring semester. **One possible scenario** for the timing and preparation through the exams is

- Tentative Dissertation Prospectus and Examination Reading Lists (by the end of the studios)
- Examinations Taken and Oral and Multimodal Presentation Given (four exams, during the first full month of the Fall (5th) semester, third year)
- Meeting with Dissertation Committee (1 week after exams)
- Final, Working Dissertation Prospectus (2-3 weeks after exams).
- Two to three chapters of the Dissertation approved by September-October of the fourth year.

**O. The Dissertation Prospectus** must follow and include this outline of topics:

The prospectus should state, up front, what *the primary* and *two secondary areas* are.

- Statement of Research Problem, Question, Issue, Conjecture

Research, at the stage of a needed rationale, begins with the discovery and statement of a problem, question, or crucial issue. Therefore, the student should state, as clearly as possible in at least one page, what his or her research problem is. So as to avoid the exclusive use of high-level abstractions, the student should give, if need be, several examples of how the problem manifests itself.

- Review of Scholarship

The student should summarize as succinctly as possible the major as well as minor or even tangential researchers who have worked on the problem, question, or crucial issue that will be investigated. In a phrase, the student is to report comprehensively *what has been done*. This review should include accounts of the approaches and results. The student should explain how his or her assumptions and approach might be different from previous researchers, or investigators.

- Significance of the Research

The student should explain why the research project is important to him or her and how the project will contribute to the growth of knowledge. The student should not assume,

however, that others will necessarily see and agree that there is a problem to work on. The student may have to spell out in detail why and how there is, in *fact*, a problem *worthy* of investigating and offering a solution. (To emphasize: The student must argue for both a statement of fact and a statement of value.) If the problem is a common, on-going and a valued one acknowledged in research community, the student should simply move to a discussion and justification of a particular or combination of methodologies to be used.

- Methodology (Mixed Methodologies)

The student should indicate how he or she will "research" the problem, question, crucial issue, and show why this is an appropriate method or methods. The student should call on the methodologies studied in Core Courses in research (RCID 8020 and 8030), either empirical or cultural methodologies or perhaps both. The student should be specific in terms of method and expected outcomes.

- Tentative Organization

In outline form, the student should list chapters with titles and give brief, yet informative, summaries of what will be covered in each chapter. The structuring and sequencing of the chapters should unfold in a systematic, logical manner.

- Preliminary Bibliography

The student should provide a *comprehensive* list of works that he or she will have read and studied critically for both the qualifying exams and this project. The student should get as much help as possible from his or her Chair as well as other faculty and students, perhaps in the proper colloquia, and should take care to determine what might be needed that is not presently available in the Clemson libraries. But the compilation of works to study should come out of the student's actual reading and studying of the works themselves. The student should look for the scholarly "conversation" often signaled within books/articles in each publication/report that the investigator is having with previous scholars. Any work that is not pertinent to the overall project will be considered padding. The actual bibliography in the prospectus should be composed of **three** separate, yet complementary bibliographies in the primary and the two secondary areas.

In general, a complete, well-thought-out prospectus can run around 30-35 pages + bibliographies.

## **P. Updated Exam Process – 2021:**

### **Preliminary point:**

All committee Chairs should insure that before a committee member has agreed to serve on a student's committee, that they have read the student's prospectus. Then and only then should the student fill out the Graduate School's form for forming the committee. The GS2 Plan of Study form is then filed after the committee form has been completed.

**Timeline:**

After a student has written their dissertation prospectus and 3 reading lists for their Primary and two Support areas, and their committee chair is satisfied with all of that, these documents should be given to the other 3 committee members. Chairs should explain to the committee that this is the time for them to communicate to the student any feedback on the prospectus and any additions or deletions they recommend for the reading lists. This is crucial so that the students are in communication with ALL of their committee members prior to being green-lighted to “take” the exams. We do not want situations in which students are surprised during an exam defense by criticisms of their exams (or prospectus) that involve holding them responsible for readings/theories they have not included in the prospectus or reading lists. At some point after the committee has provided this feedback to the student, the Chair should query the committee to ask whether they believe the student is ready to move forward with taking the exams. If they agree, then the Chair and student work out a schedule that includes the exact date they receive their questions (TWO weeks in advance of writing in accordance with the Handbook), the exact dates they will write the 3 essay exams, and the exact date they will do their 4<sup>th</sup> exam...the multimodal presentation to the public. Sometimes it may be necessary to lock down the presentation/defense date in advance of their having given the “thumbs up” on the prospectus and reading lists. Please be sure to state that this is in order to get things on everyone’s calendar, but that until they “approve” the prospectus and readings lists, this is merely a tentative defense date. It is still incumbent upon the Chair to get all committee members’ approvals before moving forward with the exams.

**Exam questions:**

Again, please review pp 10-13 of the Handbook for the RCID best practices and guidelines for crafting the exam questions. It is up to the Chair to decide whether they write all the questions following the handbook samples, or whether they prefer to ask the whole committee to collaborate on the questions. If the latter, then please make sure you provide the committee with the relevant sample questions and language from the Handbook to guide them. In some cases, given our students who are not going into academia, the third question on pedagogy might not be relevant, in which case you may choose to craft 3 essay questions that cover the Primary Area, First Support Area, and Second Support Area. The exam questions are given to the student by email TWO weeks in advance to the exact date you and the student have agreed they will begin writing the first exam. Once the student begins to write the exams, at the end of each of the 3 specified writing days, the student sends their essay to their Chair. The chair forwards the essay directly to the committee,

[NOTE: The Handbook states that the students are to take the exams on the Honor System, writing them on 3 separate days, during approximately 4-6 hours, with no texts or notes beside them. This practice is being taken up by the RCID Advisory Committee soon, inasmuch as some students do honor this, and some do not. We need to either make this an “open book take home exam” or tighten up the Honor System. For now, we continue with how it is stated in the Handbook until such time as the policy is officially revised.]

**4<sup>th</sup> Exam/Multimodal Presentation:**

About one week to 10 days after the student turns in the 3<sup>rd</sup> essay exam, they do a 30-minute multimodal presentation on the dissertation project (again described in pp 10-13 of the Handbook), which constitutes their 4<sup>th</sup> exam. The public is invited, and an email announcement to the [RCID-L@lists.clemson.edu](mailto:RCID-L@lists.clemson.edu) should be sent about one week in advance of the presentation. The Chair should welcome everyone, introduce the committee members, and hand the “floor” over to the student. After the 30-minute presentation, there are 30 minutes during which ONLY the public is allowed to make comments and ask questions. Then the Chair should then dismiss the public and offer a short break to the committee and student before the “private conferral” period starts with the student and committee only. During the conferral, the committee should make comments and ask questions about the 3 written exams, the multimodal presentation, etc. The criteria for students passing the exam is whether the committee feels the student is ready to move forward to the dissertation. There must be a majority vote of the committee to pass. If the committee feels that one or more of the questions require a rewrite, then they must explain to the student explicitly what that involves and give them a date for turning in the re-writes. This constitutes a kind of “conditional pass” where the Chair withholds the GS5D form until the committee is satisfied with the rewrites. The alternative is to fail the student and require them to re-take the exams with entirely new questions. This re-taking cannot occur before two months have passed (according to the Graduate School Policies and Procedures). If all goes well, and the student passes the exams, the GS5D form is circulated by email to the committee members and returned to the Chair who then submits it to the Graduate School and copies me.

**Next steps:**

At this stage, the student should proceed to writing the dissertation. There should be no required rewrites of the prospectus itself or readings lists because that should have been part of the process after the committee first receives the prospectus and readings lists and have been in communication with the student and chair if such revisions are required before moving on to the exams.