The Environmental Humanities
Graduate Handbook

INTRODUCTION

This handbook provides Environmental Humanities Graduate Program students with current policies and practices that govern the Program. Information here reflects policies and procedures in effect as of August 2016. Because policies and requirements are subject to continuous review and periodic revision, the material contained in this handbook should be confirmed with the Program Director to insure that it has not been superseded by more recent faculty action. Information on pending changes is also available on the Environmental Humanities web page http://environmental-humanities.utah.edu/.

This handbook should be seen as a companion to the current University of Utah Graduate Catalog. The handbook records all of the Program-specific regulations, but not necessarily all of the Graduate School policies and requirements. A student's program is governed by the regulations operative on the date of initial matriculation unless the student elects for changes occurring at a later date. Interruptions in the continuity of a graduate degree program may require a student to meet the latest requirements. Each graduate student in the Program is responsible for keeping abreast of any revisions in Program or Graduate School policy, procedures, or regulations that might affect the individual's academic program or status as a student in good standing. Ultimately, students are responsible for their own progress and success.

GENERAL INFORMATION

Admission

Each fall, a cohort of Master’s students is admitted to the Environmental Humanities Graduate Program (EH). The admission of a cohort facilitates academic exchange, and student well-being and camaraderie.

Graduate Student Orientation

Orientation is scheduled and required for EH graduate students prior to the beginning of fall semester. The purpose is to introduce graduate students, review policies and requirements, and explain the curriculum. Students are further encouraged to meet individually with members of the faculty throughout the first semester of residency in order to discover mutual interests and to discuss individual goals and objectives.
A faculty steering committee is appointed each year to create and recommend policies and regulations directly related to the program's graduate program. The committee is chaired by the Director of EH Graduate Studies.

In addition to policy formation and on-going review of the Graduate program, the Faculty Steering Committee addresses requests for variance from established rules and regulations. The committee also serves as an appellate body for students and faculty members requesting a review of supervisory committee actions or other matters affecting the graduate program in general, or an individual student in particular.

**Program Graduate Administration**

The Director of Graduate Studies administers the graduate program, chairs the Graduate Faculty Steering Committee, and is responsible for ongoing graduate student evaluation. The Graduate Adviser facilitates the implementation of policy and procedures established by the faculty, and assists students in completing graduate program requirements. Most technical questions regarding the graduate program and its requirements are handled by the Graduate Adviser. The Graduate Adviser also maintains all graduate student records and serves as the liaison between the Program and the Graduate School.

Both the Graduate Adviser and Director of Graduate Studies facilitate course registration. The Director of Graduate Studies maintains regular office hours for graduate students, and is available for consultation regarding all aspects of a student's graduate program.

**GRADUATE ADVISING AND REVIEW**

**Temporary Advisers**

Upon admission to graduate study in the Environmental Humanities program, the Director of the Environmental Humanities serves as a temporary or ad hoc advisor. The temporary adviser will mentor students until they initiate a request for a supervisory committee, whose Chair will then serve as the student’s formal adviser.

**Selection of the Supervisory Committee**

Each student selects his or her supervisory committee with the guidance and approval of the Director of Graduate Studies. Supervisory committees are formally approved by the Dean of the Graduate School.

Students begin the selection process toward the end of the second semester and at the latest by the beginning of the third semester of graduate study by making arrangements with a faculty member to serve as chair of the supervisory committee. The supervisory committee chairperson should be a tenured or tenure-track faculty member of the University of Utah. In consultation with the supervisory committee chair, the student selects two additional faculty as potential members of his or her supervisory committee and personally discusses with each individual the basis for his or her selection and the individual's willingness to serve on the committee. Once this informal process has been completed, the student initiates a **Request for Supervisory Committee** which is submitted
to the Director of Graduate Studies for approval. After approval is granted, the student gives the form to the Graduate Adviser to upload to the Graduate Tracking System. Final approval will be granted by the Dean of the Graduate School.

Supervisory committees are subject to the following criteria: the chair of the committee should be tenured or tenure-track faculty at the University of Utah; two of the three members must be tenured or tenure-track members of the University of Utah; two of the three embers must be faculty from the College of Humanities. One outside member to the University of Utah may be included. All supervisory committees must be approved by The Graduate School.

It is occasionally necessary for the membership of a supervisory committee to change due to a shift in student academic focus, or unforeseen responsibilities of faculty committee members. The Director of Graduate Studies is responsible for assisting the student in creating the change. The student revises the Request for Supervisory Committee form and submits the form to both the Chair of the committee, then the Director of Graduate Studies. The approved request is then forwarded to the Graduate Adviser to update the student’s Graduate Tracking Record. Names of committee members listed on the approved form must correspond with all signatures on examination reports and the thesis or project final approval page.

Program of Study

Once the supervisory committee is approved by The Graduate School, the student’s Program of Study is entered by the Graduate Adviser for the supervisory committee to review and approve in the Graduate Tracking System.

Committee Responsibilities and Procedures

The importance of the supervisory committee to a student's graduate program cannot be emphasized too strongly. The supervisory committee has responsibility for approving the student's academic program, approving the thesis or project prospectus and the thesis or project itself, and administering and judging the final examination for students selecting the non-thesis degree option. Decisions concerning program requirements, examination, and the thesis are made by majority vote of the supervisory committee. It is expected that all members of the supervisory committee will be present in order to hold any formal meeting which may result in an official supervisory committee action. Circumstances can exist, however, that make this expectation an unreasonable burden on the candidate or committee. In those cases, the supervisory committee chair will consult with the Director of Graduate Studies to arrange an alternative that still provides for full participation by the majority of the committee.

Graduate Student Review

All graduate students in the Program are reviewed by the faculty steering committee each year at the end of the spring semester. The purpose of the review is to assess the overall
progress of each student in the program, and to identify means by which the faculty can assist each student to achieve success in the program. Prior to the review, each student will meet with his or her adviser to discuss particular concerns or areas of difficulty and provide a statement of his or her research and progress to the Director of Graduate Studies.

**REQUIREMENTS FOR M.A. AND M.S. DEGREES**

The primary distinction between the two Master's degrees offered by the Program is that the Master of Arts degree requires "standard proficiency" in an approved language, while the Masters of Science requires students to complete three research methods courses approved by the student’s committee. Any coursework taken to reach proficiency in a language may *not* be counted toward degree course credit. Beyond the language and research methods requirements, the distinction between Masters of Arts and Science is a matter of personal choice.

The general university-wide requirements for either Master's degree may be found in The Graduate Catalog.

**Change of Graduate Classification**

When a student applies to the Program and is accepted, that program is how the student is registered. If a student wishes to change the type of Master’s degree, e.g. an MA to an MS or vice versa, the student would file a Request for Change of Graduate Classification with the approval of the Director of Graduate Studies. *This must be completed no later than the semester prior to intended graduation.*

**Minimum Credit Hours**

Candidates for the Master of Arts and the Master of Science degrees in the Program must complete a minimum of 33 semester hours, of which a minimum of 27 hours is represented by coursework. A maximum of six credits may be transferred from another institution for inclusion in a program of study and a maximum of nine credits taken no more than three year prior to approval, while on non-matriculated status at the University of Utah may be included. Inclusion of transfer or non-matriculated credit in a student's program of study requires the approval of the supervisory committee. Students may not register for CR/NC courses in their major departments unless a course in the major department is offered only on a CR/NC basis.

Students have three options in completing the requirements for the Master's degree: the thesis option, the project option, and the exam option. The student chooses this option at the latest by the end of the third semester.

**The Thesis Option**
Students electing the thesis option are required to complete a minimum of 27 hours of course work and six hours of thesis credit. The student will prepare a thesis prospectus in consultation with his or her adviser and the supervisory committee. The prospectus meeting for the master's thesis may be open to the faculty and graduate students at the discretion of the candidate and his or her supervisory committee. The final prospectus must be approved by the supervisory committee and be filed with the Graduate Adviser. A public presentation and defense of the thesis is required and is to be scheduled by the final day of classes of the preceding semester in which the candidate intends to graduate. Copies of the thesis should be delivered to the members of the supervisory committee no fewer than two weeks prior to the scheduled defense. Notice of the presentation and defense must be published no later than one week prior to the defense. Preparation, writing and formatting of the thesis must conform to the A Handbook for Theses and Dissertations.

The Project Option

Students who select the project option are required to complete at least 27 hours of course work and a minimum of six thesis credits hours to complete a creative or applied project. Students who select the project option are encouraged to combine internship experiences with their project. Students will prepare a project prospectus which must receive final approval of the supervisory committee. The prospectus meeting for the master's project may be open to the faculty and graduate students at the discretion of the candidate and his or her supervisory committee. A public presentation and defense of the project is required and is to be scheduled by the final day of classes of the semester in which the candidate intends to graduate. The procedures are the same as the thesis defense described in the previous section, but final project approval remains in-house. In addition, a bound copy of the project or a final professional practicum report must be filed with the Director of Graduate Studies upon graduation.

The Non-Thesis/Project Exam Option

Students who select the non-thesis option must complete a minimum of 30 semester hours of course work and three credit hours of independent study or EHUM 6970 which reflect the student’s preparation for a final comprehensive examination administered by the supervisory committee. Election of this option must be made and approved by the supervisory committee prior to the completion of 24 credit hours of coursework, or during the semester prior to the one in which the student plans to take the exam. The comprehensive examination has two parts.

The first part is a take-home written examination which will test the student’s knowledge and understanding of any or all of the following areas:

1) The theoretical foundations of humanities-based inquiry of ecology and environmental issues; 2) the major methodological approaches in environmental humanities-based research; 3) the research literature in the student’s developing area of specialization.
The second part of the comprehensive examination is a *two-hour oral examination or defense*, whose basis will be the student’s written exam response and any reading lists developed by the student in consultation with the supervisory committee in preparation for the exam.

The supervisory committee will not schedule the oral examination until it has agreed that the student has passed the written examination and is ready to proceed to the oral exam. The student must successfully pass both the written and oral portions of the exam to complete his or her degree.

**The Prospectus for Thesis or Project**

The prospectus is a proposal for a research/creative project and is essentially a "blueprint" or plan for carrying out the study. The prospectus should be developed only after considerable preliminary investigation of a general problem. The prospectus is a well-detailed document which outlines the research problem, the justification and purpose of the research problem, the theoretical and research literature leading to the problem, and specific procedure for performing the research or creative project itself.

The form *Report of Thesis/Project Prospectus Meeting* summarizes the action of the committee and must be filed in the Program Graduate Office along with a copy of the approved prospectus immediately following the prospectus meeting. The prospectus meeting is open to all graduate students and faculty members. All graduate students are encouraged to schedule a public presentation of the prospectus, such as in a colloquium, prior to asking for formal approval from the supervisory committee. New ideas and suggestions resulting from the presentation are often helpful in the preparation of the final prospectus. Students are encouraged to review approved prospectuses in organizing their own prospectus.

If the research projects involve human subjects, either directly or indirectly, prior approval or exemption by the University Institutional Review Board (IRB) must be secured before the student initiates data collection. A complete discussion of the university's regulations regarding the use of human subjects and the procedures for requesting project approval is available on the IRB web sitehttp://irb.utah.edu/.

**Program of Study**

Specific course requirements for the master's degree are established on an individual basis for each student by his or her supervisory committee. Six courses must be successfully completed by all students: EHUM 6101 *Foundations of Environmental Humanities*, EHUM 6102 *Field Methods in Environmental Humanities*, EHUM 6103 *Ecology of Residency*, EHUM 6105 *Environmental Humanities Writing Seminar*, three semesters of the one-credit seminar EHUM 6804 *Tertulia* and one 5000-7000 level course that focuses on environmental content offered by a department in the College of
Humanities (e.g. Environmental Literature, Environmental History, Environmental Communication or Environmental Philosophy). These courses provide a core understanding of theoretical and research perspectives represented in the Environmental Humanities, as well as a necessary cohort experience for students in an interdisciplinary Program.

1. *Independent Study* classes are limited to 25% of a student’s course work.

2. Prior to the appointment of a supervisory committee, the student should consult with his or her temporary adviser to select course work. Courses which meet the minimal degree requirements are not officially accepted until approved by the student's supervisory committee. Therefore, students are encouraged to consult with their supervisory committee as early as possible in planning their program.

Provisions for the Grade of Incomplete

The grade of “Incomplete” is given when special circumstances intervene to prevent the timely completion of course work. It is expected that the work necessary to complete the course will be done expeditiously. Students who have two or more “Incompletes” on their record in any semester will be asked to supply a plan for the timely completion of that course work to their adviser and Director of Graduate Studies. Failure to complete incompletes in a timely fashion so as to make satisfactory progress toward the degree can result in, for example, loss of graduate fellowship support or the removal of the student’s admission status.

MAINTAINING GOOD STANDING

Minimum Continuous Registration

All graduate students must be registered for at least one course from the time of formal admission through completion of all requirements for the degree they are seeking, unless granted an official leave of absence (see Leaves of Absence section, below). Students not on campus and not using University facilities are not expected to register for summer term. Students must, however, be registered during summer term if they are taking examinations or defending theses or projects.

If students do not comply with this continuous registration policy and do not obtain an official leave of absence, they will be automatically discontinued from graduate study. In this case, students will be required to reapply for admission to the University through Graduate Admissions upon approval of the home department. Students should be registered for graduate level courses (5000-6000 level for masters; 6000-7000 level for doctoral) until they have completed all requirements for the degree including the examination, or defense of the project/thesis.
Time Limit

All work for the master’s degree must be completed within four consecutive calendar years. On recommendation of the student’s supervisory committee, the dean of The Graduate School can modify or waive this requirement. If the student exceeds the time limit and is not granted a modification or waiver, the department has the option to discontinue the student. Students whose studies have been interrupted for long periods of time and who have been granted extended time to complete their degrees may be required to complete additional courses, to pass examinations, or otherwise to demonstrate that they are current in their field.

Petitions for time limit exceptions are initiated by the student and must be accompanied by written support of members of the supervisory committee. Petitions are evaluated by the Steering Committee and if approved, forwarded to the Dean of the Graduate School by the Director of Graduate Studies. Petitions must contain (1) a rationale for the time extension, (2) an explanation of what requirements need to be completed, including any additional measure for evaluating student performance, and (3) a descriptive timeline and final date for completion of all degree requirements, including clearance by the Thesis Editor and the Graduate School.

Summer Session

Continuous registration, for the purpose of this policy, refers only to registration during the regular academic year i.e. fall and spring. Continuous registration is not terminated or interrupted by not registering during summer terms (between the end of Spring Semester and the beginning of Fall Semester). Nothing in this paragraph, however, prevents a student from maintaining registration status, if appropriate, during the summer term.

Tuition

Nonresident tuition will not be imposed for courses number 6970-6980 and 7970-7990, but reduced tuition, as approved by the Institutional Council, may be charged for course number 7990.

Leaves of Absence & Accommodation Policy

Environmental Humanities Graduate Program is compliant with Title IX regulations designed to ensure gender equity; moreover, the Program recognizes that various life circumstances, family and otherwise, may inhibit timely progression through the graduate program.

1. Full-time graduate students who are in good academic standing and are making satisfactory progress toward degree may request a leave of absence from the Department’s Director of Graduate Studies (subject to the approval of the Dean of the Graduate School) to discontinue their studies for one or more regular semesters for a maximum of one year. Leaves of absence may be granted in the following circumstances: Leaves of absence will generally be granted for reasons relating to pregnancy, childbirth, childcare or other family care needs; illness, unexpected impairment, military service or residence outside the state of Utah. Leaves may
also be granted to students who, in the judgment of the Director of Graduate Studies, are engaged in work considered beneficial to their academic goals, such as temporary teaching or professional positions or employment which will allow the student ultimately to complete the degree.

2. Leaves for other reasons may be granted when the Director of Graduate Studies believes the leave is in the best interest of both the student and the University.

3. In the event that a leave of absence is not possible or desirable, Environmental Humanities Graduate Program also observes an accommodation policy that, to the extent possible, works with graduate students to navigate reasonable alternative methods of meeting programmatic and teaching obligations. For instance, an accommodation may be requested if the student’s situation is very temporary or not sufficiently taxing of time to warrant a leave of absence but nonetheless impinges on a student’s ability to participate as fully as is optimal for a short period of time. The purpose of the accommodation policy is to provide, where and when possible, an alternative to leave of absence request so as not to slow the student’s progress through the program and also ensure that, if applicable, student stipend, tuition, and health benefits are not interrupted. Whether a circumstance is eligible for accommodation and what appropriate accommodations might entail must be determined in consultation with and ultimately approved by the Director of Graduate Studies. Students who experience a medical condition associated with their pregnancy and need accommodations recommended by their medical provider should contact the University's Title IX Coordinator, who will work with the student, cognizant faculty, and administration to determine what accommodations are reasonable and effective.

**Readmission**

Students who do not maintain registration as listed above will be removed from the program after the “Last Day to Add” deadline has passed for that semester (typically two weeks after regular classes begin), unless the student is taking a leave of absence. To reenter the program, students must reapply to the Program via ApplyYourself and the University of Utah Office of Admission.

**Criteria for Dismissal from the Program**

Students may be dismissed from the Program for failure to achieve any of the following:

1. Maintain minimum GPA of 3.0

2. Officially register documentation of a supervisory committee and supervisory committee chair by the end of their 3rd semester as a master’s student.

3. Continuously maintain an official adviser and supervisory committee from the time of official registration through completion of the program.

4. Make acceptable progress toward the degree as determined by the supervisory committee.
GRADUATE FUNDING

Tuition Benefit Program

Each year the Environmental Humanities Program awards a number of graduate teaching assistantships to qualified applicants. The Tuition Benefit Program (TBP) provides a tuition waiver for eligible graduate students. Graduate tuition benefit is available only to matriculated graduate students compensated through the University of Utah; TBP covers general graduate tuition and mandatory fees. Differential tuition charged by various university graduate and professional programs, and all non-mandatory fees are the responsibility of the graduate student.

At the end of the second semester, graduate students are evaluated on the basis of their performance and satisfactory progress toward completion of the degree and normally, those teaching assistantships will be renewed without a formal faculty review if students meet the following criteria:

1. Maintain a 3.3. GPA.
2. Receive recommendations as adequate teachers from course supervisors.
3. Carry an annual load of classes which will permit completion of the degree in the normal period.
4. Make consistent progress toward the completion of the degree by avoiding excessive incompletes and by moving expeditiously through the various stages of graduate study (chair, committee, program of study, qualifying examination, prospectus, and thesis or dissertation preparation).

Students employed by the Program are expected to manage their priorities to demonstrate good progress in meeting the requirements of their degree as well as to appropriately discharge all responsibilities of their work assignments. The Program places no restrictions on outside employment, i.e. non-University of Utah, but requires that all such employment and the hours involved be declared, and the declaration kept current. Should conflicts arise and good progress cannot be maintained or assignment responsibilities met, students will be required to resolve those conflicts by reducing or ending the outside work. Continued conflict can result in the surrender of the teaching assistantship and tuition waiver.

Students may consult http://gradschool.utah.edu/tbp/graduate-fellowship-opportunities/ for additional graduate fellowship assistance and requirements from the Graduate School.
Subsidized Student Health Insurance

The Program expects all enrolled students to be insured. Fully-funded students are eligible for subsidized health insurance via TBP. Each semester, the Graduate Adviser will coordinate coverage between the student and the Graduate School each semester to register for coverage. Spring coverage includes coverage through the summer term. For more information, see http://gradschool.utah.edu/tbp/insurance-information/. Keep in mind that thanks to the Affordable Care Act, there may be other options available to students from federal or private providers.