

# CULTURAL STUDIES, PHD

Banner Code: LA-PHD-CULT

## Academic Advising

320 Enterprise Hall  
Fairfax Campus

Email: [cultural@gmu.edu](mailto:cultural@gmu.edu)

Website: [culturalstudies.gmu.edu/programs/la-phd-cult](http://culturalstudies.gmu.edu/programs/la-phd-cult)

The PhD in cultural studies combines theory and method with practice and concrete case studies. Students' research projects are individualized, as should be the case when research is not confined to the objects and methods of a single discipline. The program's emphasis is in the development of intellectual mastery and professional competence, while training students for scholarship and teaching. Most graduates go on to careers as university professors. Others pursue careers in cultural advocacy, museum work, and related areas.

## Admissions & Policies

### Admissions

Applicants to all graduate programs at George Mason University must meet the admission standards and application requirements for graduate study as specified in Graduate Admissions. Applicants must already have earned a master's degree in a relevant field. For further information specific to the PhD in cultural studies, see Application Requirements and Deadlines (<https://culturalstudies.gmu.edu/programs/la-phd-cult/application>).

### Policies

For policies governing all graduate degrees, see Graduate Policies.

### Reduction of Credit

Students must have a master's degree before being admitted to the PhD. Most students receive a reduction of study of 30 credits based on their previous master's degree.

### Academic Performance Standards

Students are required to maintain a minimum cumulative GPA of 3.33 for all coursework, with no unsatisfactory grades. Students who fail to meet this standard at any point will be given a warning and one semester to raise their GPA to the 3.33 minimum. Students who fail to meet this minimum standard for two consecutive or non-consecutive semesters will be terminated from the program.

## Requirements

### Degree Requirements

Total credits: 78-81

Students should be aware of the specific policies associated with this program, located on the Admissions & Policies tab.

## Doctoral Coursework

Code	Title	Credits
<b>Core Courses</b>		
CULT 802	Histories of Cultural Studies	3
CULT 804	Histories of Cultural Studies II	3
CULT 806	Research Seminar in Cultural Studies	3
CULT 808	Student/Faculty Colloquium in Cultural Studies <sup>1</sup>	1
<b>Theory</b>		
Select a minimum of one course from the following:		3
CULT 810	Culture and Political Economy	
CULT 814	Gender and Sexuality	
CULT 820	After Colonialism	
<b>Topic</b>		
Select a minimum of one course from the following:		3
CULT 812	Visual Culture	
CULT 816	Science/Technology	
CULT 818	Social Institutions	
Total Credits		18

<sup>1</sup> Students must take CULT 808 Student/Faculty Colloquium in Cultural Studies a minimum of 3 times

### Field Requirements

Under the guidance of faculty advisory committees, students define two fields that point topically and theoretically toward teaching interests, dissertation research, and related forms of professional development. If doctoral level coursework is not available in a given area, students may take one independent study (CULT 870 Independent Study) to support the development of the field.

Code	Title	Credits
<b>Field One</b>		
CULT 880	Field Concentration <sup>1</sup>	3
Two relevant courses from theory or topic courses not used to fulfill the previous requirements or from special topics courses.		6
<b>Field Two</b>		
CULT 880	Field Concentration <sup>1</sup>	3
Two relevant courses from theory or topic courses not used to fulfill the previous requirements or from special topics courses.		6
Total Credits		18

<sup>1</sup> Must be taught by that field's primary advisor.

### Field Statements

Students demonstrate competence in each of their two chosen fields by producing and orally defending a field statement that consists of a comprehensive, critical literature review.

The field statements and the defense constitute the candidacy exam for the PhD.

## Methodology

Code	Title	Credits
	Students must take one course in a relevant methodology in which they are not already trained	3
Total Credits		3

Students choose the specific course from program or departmental graduate offerings (600 level or above) under the guidance of their faculty advisory committee.

A course chosen to fulfill the credits for a field requirement, if relevant, may be used to meet the methodology requirement with permission of the faculty advisory committee. Students who do not take a relevant and approved methodology course in partial fulfillment of a field requirement need to take a methodology course (3 credits) to fulfill this requirement. They will have a degree total of 81 credits.

## Proficiency in a Foreign Language

Students are required to demonstrate proficiency in at least one foreign language before being permitted to defend the doctoral dissertation proposal.

## Electives

Code	Title	Credits
	Students can complete the 78 credit requirement through credits of additional coursework chosen in consultation with an advisor	0-30
Total Credits		0-30

## Advancement to Candidacy

To advance to candidacy, students must successfully complete all course work required on their approved program of study and demonstrate proficiency in a foreign language. Students must also successfully complete two written field statements and pass an oral comprehensive exam based on them.

## Dissertation

Once enrolled in CULT 998 Doctoral Dissertation Proposal, students in this degree program must maintain continuous registration in CULT 998 Doctoral Dissertation Proposal or CULT 999 Doctoral Dissertation each semester (excluding summers) until the dissertation is submitted to and accepted by the University Libraries. Once enrolled in CULT 999 Doctoral Dissertation, students must follow the university's continuous registration policy. Students who defend in the summer must be registered for at least 1 credit of CULT 999 Doctoral Dissertation.

Students must complete a minimum of 3 credits of CULT 999 Doctoral Dissertation. They may apply a maximum of 12 dissertation credits (CULT 998 Doctoral Dissertation Proposal and CULT 999 Doctoral Dissertation combined) to the degree.

Code	Title	Credits
	Dissertation Research	12
CULT 998	Doctoral Dissertation Proposal	
CULT 999	Doctoral Dissertation (minimum of 3 credits)	
Total Credits		12