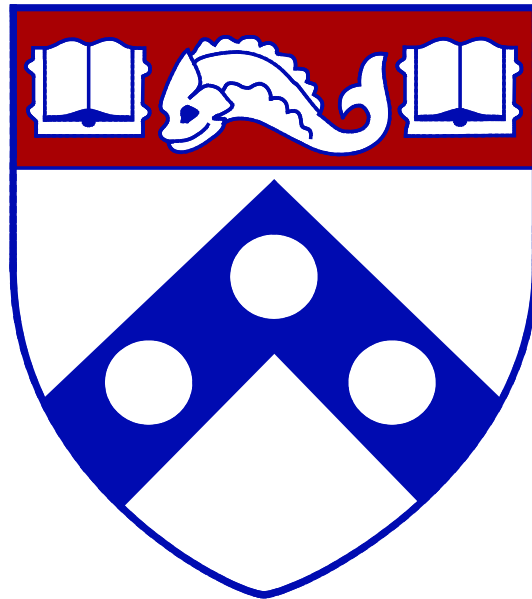


UNIVERSITY *of* PENNSYLVANIA



Master of Liberal Arts &
Master of Philosophy Programs
Student Handbook

College of Liberal and Professional Studies
Academic Year 2022-2

THE MLA & MPhil HANDBOOK: A GUIDE FOR STUDENTS

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Welcome to the University of Pennsylvania and the Master of Liberal Arts or Master of Philosophy Program. This handbook describes policies and procedures, outlines degree requirements, shares tips on structuring your individualized curriculum, and provides information about the academic resources available to you at Penn. It should prove useful to you as you pursue your degree.

I. MLA Program Requirements

Graduation Requirements

The MLA degree will be awarded after successful completion of nine graduate courses (courses 5000-level and above), including the submission of a Capstone Project.

- Ideally, you will define your area of concentration during your first semester, if not before, so that you can generate a program of study and define your capstone project during your first year in the program.
- No more than four courses may be taken in any one discipline; however, at least five courses should define your area of concentration, which will likely be interdisciplinary in nature.
- You must take at least one, and may take up to three, MLA Proseminars as part of your program.
- You may incorporate up to two independent studies into your MLA program.
- You may count up to two graduate courses from schools other than the School of Arts and Sciences at Penn toward your degree.

MLA Seminars

MLA seminars are graduate seminars designed specifically for MLA students with no prerequisites. These dynamic and interactive seminars meet exclusively in the evenings to accommodate students who work during the day and are typically reserved for MLA students. Class sizes are kept small in order to facilitate an intimate, collegial atmosphere. The instructors for MLA seminars are each approved by the Program Director and by the department rostering the courses, and they typically teach additional courses outside of the MLA program at Penn. Though the instructors do not presuppose student familiarity with the course material, they hold MLA students to the same standards as any other graduate student at Penn.

MLA Proseminars are led by members of Penn's Standing Faculty and are designed to introduce students to graduate level coursework and to conducting interdisciplinary research. MLA Proseminars require extensive written work. **We require MLA students to take at least one MLA Proseminar as one of their first three courses in the program.** Their performance in each MLA Proseminar

will be assessed by the faculty members, and these evaluations will be returned to the Program Director to support advising and curricular design.

II. MPhil Program Requirements

The MPhil in the Liberal Arts provides students holding graduate degrees with an opportunity to continue their previous interdisciplinary study in greater depth. Student may take two different approaches to developing an MPhil program:

- 1) their work may further develop their previous graduate research; or
- 2) they can explore a new intellectual project, which draws from prior coursework.

The MPhil degree will be awarded after successful completion of six graduate courses (courses 5000-level and above), which includes five courses most relevant to student interests (with up to four in a single discipline) and an independent study dedicated to completing the final thesis project.

Students will select a graduate committee comprised of two Penn faculty members, who will help them determine the guidelines of their thesis project as well as whether their project requires an oral defense, an examination, or language proficiency. The Committee will also review and approve the written project as part of the successful completion of the MPhil degree.

Typically, MPhil students complete the majority of their coursework in the School of Arts and Sciences (SAS) by selecting graduate courses with the approval of their program advisor and thesis committee. Depending on their field of concentration, MPhil candidates may pursue two courses outside of SAS with the approval of their committee chair. The Program Director will permit the registration of MPhil candidates in non-SAS courses upon receipt of a permission form with the signature and confirmation of the Faculty Committee.

MPhil candidates are limited to one Independent Study course excluding the thesis course, and registration for this Independent Study course can only be completed with the approval of the candidate's thesis committee chair. Independent Study courses cannot be pursued with non-SAS faculty unless approved by the thesis committee chair and the MPhil Faculty Advisory Committee.

The MPhil thesis will be completed as the sixth course unit and as an Independent Study course supervised by the thesis committee chair. Registration in this final course will be permitted upon submission of the

approved thesis independent study form and confirmation of the chair and second reader of the MPhil thesis prior to the start of the term.

III. MLA and MPhil Program and University Policies

Enrollment Status and Timeline to Degree

Full-time students are enrolled in 3 or 4 courses per semester, while part-time students are enrolled in 1 or 2 courses per semester. Students are permitted to change their status from full- to part-time and vice versa at any point in their career without seeking prior permission. However, international students should be aware that they must maintain their full-time status to meet visa requirements.

The timeline to graduation for MLA students is variable; however, full-time students usually complete their degree in 1 to 2 years, whereas part-time students may take 3 or 4 years. MPhil students usually complete their degree within 2 years, depending on how long their thesis research takes. All students who become inactive (see below) will have to re-apply to the program for re-admission.

Students are not allowed to be simultaneously enrolled in a graduate program at another university while they are completing their degree at Penn. Enrollment in a graduate certificate at Penn requires prior permission from the student's graduate advisor or committee and the Program Director.

Academic Standards

The MLA and MPhil Faculty Advisory Committee has set the following minimum standards for all students to ensure they are making good progress toward their degrees. Students:

- Must maintain term and cumulative GPAs above 3.0;
- Must take all courses that will count towards their degree requirements for a letter grade; pass/fail courses will not be counted toward the degree (the letter grades of "S" or "U" also do not count toward the degree;
- Must earn course grades of B or above for courses that count towards the degree;
- Only one grade below B can count toward the degree and no grades below C may be counted;
- May not have two or more incomplete courses.

Students who receive one grade of B- or lower will be given an academic warning via email. Further grades below B will not count toward the minimum number of course units (CU) required for the degree, and additional courses will be required if the student is otherwise in good academic standing and continuing in the program.

When the same course is taken again to meet the academic requirements of the program, both courses and grades appear in the transcript, but only the first course's CU contributes to the total number of CUs and only the grade for the first course is included in the cumulative GPA.

Students who receive more than one grade below a B-, or who do not meet the above criteria to maintain good academic standing, will be placed on academic probation and reviewed by the Faculty Advisory Committee. With the permission of the Faculty Advisory Committee, students may take additional courses in order to increase their GPA or to fulfill requirements in courses where the student received a grade below a "B". Students must work with the Program Director to develop an academic plan and facilitate student success; students will not be allowed to register for courses during their probation period without an approved plan in place.

Program Dismissal

Students who do not meet the terms of academic probation are subject to dismissal from the program. The Faculty Advisory Committee will review the progress made by students placed on academic probation. This review will take place by the end of the first semester after the student has been placed on academic probation. Based on this review, the committee may decide to lift academic probation; continue academic probation for another semester; or drop the student from the program. If the Committee decides to dismiss a student, the student will be sent an academic dismissal letter via email and U.S. postal mail. Students who have been dropped for poor academic performance and who wish to be considered for readmission must contact the Program Director for requirements and procedures for readmission. Students cannot be readmitted to the program without a review by the Faculty Advisory Committee. If a student is readmitted, the student must maintain good academic standing throughout the duration of program until they graduate. If the student fails to meet these conditions, the student will be dismissed from their program again without further warning, and with no opportunity for readmission.

Provisional Status

Many students seeking admission to the MLA program are returning to school after a long absence or have undergraduate records that do not accurately reflect their academic ability. Some of those applicants are accepted into the MLA program provisionally. Applicants accepted as provisional admits should adhere to the following procedure:

- Students must successfully complete two courses, taught by different instructors, and one of the courses must be an MLA Proseminar;
- Students must receive a grade of "B" or better in both courses;

- If a student takes three courses in their first semester, all three courses must receive grades of “B” or better;
- Students may not receive an Incomplete (I, NR, GR) in any of these courses;
- Students must receive a favorable recommendation from the instructors in both courses.

Students who meet the above requirements will have their status changed to full admit status. If after two courses, students do not meet the requirements outlined above, they will not be allowed to continue in the MLA Program.

There is no option for provisional admission to the MPhil program.

Deferred Enrollment

Students who are admitted to the MLA or MPhil program may defer their matriculation for one year. Students who wish to defer should notify the Program Director in writing of their intentions as early as possible. After confirmation with the Program Director, students must submit a request for a deferral to LPS Records in an email to Penn LPS at lps@sas.upenn.edu. It is not necessary for deferred students to reapply. However, students must inform the Program Director if they enroll at any other institution prior to their matriculation at the University of Pennsylvania, and they must submit final official transcripts of any coursework completed prior to their enrollment at the University of Pennsylvania.

Students are not allowed to be simultaneously enrolled in another degree program outside the University of Pennsylvania while enrolled in either the MLA or MPhil program.

Sub-Matriculation

The MLA and MPhil programs do not permit sub-matriculation.

Incomplete Coursework

An incomplete grade indicates that a student has not completed all the work in a course and has done so with the instructor’s permission. If the work for a course is incomplete as a result of the student’s unexplained failure to hand in assignments or to take the final examination at the regularly scheduled time, the instructor should issue a grade of F for the course. An instructor who chooses to grant an extension to a student who has not completed a course by the end of the term may grant either an Incomplete (I) or an Extended Incomplete (II). An Incomplete must be made up within the first 4 weeks of the start of the next term, and an Extended Incomplete must be made up by the end of the next term (including the summer term). In either case, if the Incomplete is not made up by

the deadline, it will become an F. An Incomplete is made up only when the official grade is received by the LPS Office and recorded by the Registrar's office on the student's official transcript. Once an Incomplete grade is converted to an F, the instructor may change the grade after the student has completed all required work. Students with two or more Incomplete grades are subject to registration hold and are required to meet with the Program Director to explain the circumstances of the Incompletes and develop a plan to resolve them. Students with two or more outstanding grades of Incomplete will not be allowed to register for courses; students with two or more outstanding grades of Incomplete who have already registered will be dropped from courses.

Inactive Status

Students who do not enroll in courses for four consecutive semesters, including summer, will be in inactive status and automatically withdrawn from the program during the fourth semester. Students who are withdrawn will be required to apply for readmission. Standard application fees will apply.

Academic Grievance

<https://catalog.upenn.edu/pennbook/student-grievance/>

The following procedures should be followed in the event of an academic grievance. Academic grievances concern only matters pertaining to a student's performance and progress in his or her academic program, such as coursework, grading, evaluations, teaching and research responsibilities, examinations, dissertation, and time-to-degree.

<https://www.sas.upenn.edu/graduate-division/resources/academic-grievance-procedure>

These procedures apply to current students enrolled in graduate programs in SAS, and may also be used by former students within 3 years after leaving the University. This policy covers School-based Master's degrees that are administered either by the College of Liberal and Professional Studies (and the Associate Dean for Continuing Education) or the SAS Graduate Division (and the Associate Dean for Graduate Studies). At the local level, they are overseen by Program Directors. A standing Faculty Advisory Committee and the SAS Committee on Graduate Continuing Education advise the two Associate Deans on these programs.

In addition to the channels outlined above, students may take problems to the Office of the Ombudsman (<http://www.upenn.edu/ombudsman/>). The Ombudsman does not have decision-making authority, but serves as an impartial mediator in helping to resolve disputes. Further, any student who feels that he or she has been subject to discrimination may take his or her complaint to

the Office of Affirmative Action & Equal Opportunity Programs. The role of the Office of Affirmative Action is to coordinate compliance with certain anti-discrimination laws.

The Penn Book

<https://catalog.upenn.edu/pennbook/>

The Penn Book is a collection of policies that relate to student life at the University of Pennsylvania. These policies govern academic activities such as grading and exams, provide guidance on the use of campus resources, and explain expectations for membership in the university community.

Leave of Absence

Students take time away from their studies for a wide variety of reasons including to: manage a medical concern, fulfill a family obligation, pursue career-related opportunities, complete military service, or work on a political campaign

While interrupting your studies to take time away may seem intimidating, a leave is a means to the successful completion of a degree, not a barrier to graduating. More than 75% of students who take a leave return to complete their degree within 2 years.

If you are considering a leave, take time to think carefully about your goals for your time away and for when you return. Speaking with the Program Director is an important first step. Depending on your circumstances you should get advice from other sources as well. Students taking time away in order to manage a medical condition should discuss the leave with their healthcare provider. Your Program Director will help you connect with other campus resources as you prepare to take a leave of absence, such as Student Financial Services, Housing, and International Student and Scholar Services.

Students typically take a leave for a full academic year. Individual circumstances may require more or less time; the length of the leave is determined by the school. Students on leave should remain in contact with their Program Director and update them about changes in plans. The return from leave process supports students in a successful re-entry to academic life at Penn. When preparing to return, students must consult their Program Director to develop a plan that includes connection with appropriate resources.

(1) Requesting a Leave of Absence

- You must meet with the Program Director to discuss a leave request.
- You must submit a written request for leave of absence, detailing the reasons for the desired leave.

- The leave request will be evaluated and, if the request is approved, the program will stipulate conditions that must be met by you before returning from leave.
- You will be notified with the result of the leave request. The program may deny any request for leave. In granting leaves, the decision of the program is final.
- While you are on leave, you may not be enrolled in Penn classes and will not receive credit for classes taken elsewhere during the leave unless special approval by the program is given. Students on leave may not live in University-owned housing during the term of their leave. In addition, students may not participate in and/or hold a leadership position in a registered University organization.
- Discontinuance of study without permission from the University does not constitute a leave of absence. If you have requested a leave of absence for a given semester, you may still be dropped from the University rolls if your previous term's grades qualify you for this action.

(2) Checklist: Leave of Absence, Drop or Withdrawal

Once a leave of absence or withdrawal has been approved, or you have been dropped from the program, that action will be posted to your transcript. Your PennCard will be deactivated as soon as the leave, drop, or withdrawal has been processed.

You should notify all relevant offices of the leave or drop. These offices may include the following, if applicable:

- [Student Registration and Financial Services](#)
- [Housing and Conference Services](#)
- [International Student and Scholar Services](#) (ISSS)
- [Student Health Service](#)
- [Office of Student Conduct](#)

(3) While Out

During the term of your leave or drop, you may call your program office if you have any questions. Please be aware of the conditions for return outlined in your leave or drop letter, since you will be required to fulfill them before you may re-enroll.

(4) Applying to Return

You must apply to return from leave or drop by the relevant deadline (for the fall semester, July 15; for the spring semester, November 15; for the summer, April 15). Any return request submitted to the Program Director later than the deadline may be denied. Please fill out a request to return from leave and show

that you have fulfilled all of the conditions for return as outlined in your original letter from your program.

Transfer Credits

No transfer credits from other colleges or universities are accepted into the program. The MLA program can accept transfer credits from other Penn programs provided that the classes were graduate-level and the coursework did not count toward an earned degree. The maximum number of courses eligible for internal transfer to the MLA is two. These courses must be approved for transfer by the Program Director as courses that contribute toward the stated area of concentration in the student's MLA program of study.

Transfer credits are not allowed for the MPhil degree.

Student Health Information

<http://www.upenn.edu/shs>

The university has a number of health-related requirements for students. These include completion and submission of health and immunization records, coverage for outpatient medical care through the Student Health Service (SHS) and maintenance of health insurance coverage for in-patient and catastrophic care. Students are advised to call SHS or consult their website for the most accurate and up-to-date information on student health requirements.

Visit the website for more information or call 215-662-2850.

Student Health Insurance

The University requires all full-time students to maintain medical insurance with coverage for in-patient care and catastrophic illness and injury. Students may satisfy insurance requirements through enrollment in the Penn Student Insurance Plan (PSIP), payment of a clinical fee each semester, or submit a waiver indicating alternative coverage through a private or employer-sponsored plan. **Students who fail to provide information about coverage will be enrolled in and billed for PSIP.** Part-time students may enroll voluntarily in PSIP, but they are not subject to the insurance requirement, and will not be enrolled by default in PSIP. Coverage for the Student Health Service (either through the clinical fee or through enrollment in PSIP) is optional for part-time students.

Student Health Service

The University provides outpatient medical care to students through its Student Health Service, which offers an array of clinical services, including initial and follow-up treatment of acute medical illness and injury, management of chronic health problems, health screening and preventive care. Full-time students who

have private or employer-sponsored insurance do not have to purchase the student plan, but they must still pay the clinical fee to take advantage of Student Health Service. Coverage for the Student Health Service (either through the clinical fee or through enrollment in PSIP) is optional for part-time students.

The Student Health Clinic is located at 3535 Market Street, Suite 100. Be sure to bring your PennCard and insurance information whenever you go for medical care.

Immunization

<https://shs.wellness.upenn.edu/immreq>

Students enrolled in the MLA or MPhil program are part of the University community and benefit from the University's efforts to provide a safe and healthy environment. **All MLA and MPhil students are required to comply with immunization requirements upon first enrolling in credit courses.**

Penn requires all incoming students to be immunized against certain diseases and to submit this information using the online form for [Healthcare Professional students](#) or for [non-Healthcare Professional students](#). Please visit the website for additional information on fulfilling these important requirements.

In the event of an outbreak of a communicable disease in any University class, all students in that class would be required to comply immediately with the University's immunization requirements. Contact the Immunization Coordinator at 215-746-3535 or email vpul-immun@pobox.upenn.edu for more information.

Code of Academic Integrity and Code of Student Conduct

Inasmuch as the standing of an educational institution and the value of a degree from that institution are dependent upon the integrity of study and research carried on at that institution, the Code of Academic Integrity is drawn to make clear the policy of the University concerning academic honesty. Each student attending the University must abide by this code, the text of which appears in the Pennbook and is described on multiple websites:

Provost's Code of Academic Integrity:

<https://catalog.upenn.edu/pennbook/code-of-academic-integrity/>

Provost's Code of Student Conduct:

<https://catalog.upenn.edu/pennbook/code-of-student-conduct/>

Rules Governing Examinations

<https://catalog.upenn.edu/pennbook/final-examinations/>

Policy on common midterm examinations: Instructors teaching a course with multiple sections who plan to schedule a common midterm examination outside the class's regular meeting time must notify students of this event during the first week of the semester and be prepared to offer one or more make-up examinations to accommodate any student who is enrolled in a course that meets at the time of the common examination.

Students enrolled in a course that conflicts with the time of a common midterm examination must notify the instructor administering the common midterm examination of the conflict by the end of the course selection (add) period. Students may not be required to miss their regularly scheduled class.

<https://catalog.upenn.edu/pennbook/common-midterm-examinations/>

Confidentiality of Student Records

<https://catalog.upenn.edu/pennbook/confidentiality-student-records/>

Pursuant to the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974, as amended, in general, personally identifiable information can be disclosed to people outside the University only with the written consent of the student or alumnus/na involved. A statement setting forth specific University policy concerning (1) disclosure of information to people outside the University, (2) disclosure of information to people within the University, (3) permitting students to inspect and review records and (4) providing students with the opportunity to seek the correction of their records appears in the Pennbook found here:

Nondiscrimination

<http://www.upenn.edu/affirm-action/docs/EqualOpptyPol.pdf>

The University of Pennsylvania values diversity and seeks talented students, faculty and staff from diverse backgrounds. The University of Pennsylvania does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, religion, creed, national or ethnic origin, citizenship status, age, disability, veteran status or any other legally protected class status in the administration of its admissions, financial aid, educational or athletic programs, or other University-administered programs or in its employment practices. The policy on Equal Opportunity and Affirmative Action can be found online:

Questions or complaints regarding this policy should be communicated to the Executive Director of the Office of Affirmative Action and Equal Opportunity Programs located at 3451 Walnut Street, Franklin Building, 4th Floor, Room 421 Philadelphia, PA 19104; 215-898-6993.

Holidays

<https://catalog.upenn.edu/pennbook/secular-religious-holidays/>

The University observes the following holidays: Martin Luther King, Jr. Day, Memorial Day, Juneteenth, Independence Day, Labor Day, Thanksgiving and the day after, and New Year's Day. The University also recognizes that there are several religious holidays that affect large numbers of University community members, including Christmas, Rosh Hashanah, Yom Kippur, the first two days of Passover and Good Friday. In consideration of their significance for many students, no examinations may be given and no assigned work may be required on these days. Students who observe these holidays will be given an opportunity to make up missed work in both laboratories and lecture courses. If an examination is given on the first class day after one of these holidays, it must not cover material introduced in class on that holiday.

Penn Violence Prevention

<https://secure.www.upenn.edu/vpul/pvp/>

The University of Pennsylvania is committed to the safety of all students, and is at the forefront of handling cases involving sexual violence, relationship violence, and stalking. The Penn Violence Prevention (PVP) is a collaborative program that grew out of the Penn Women's Center and aims to engage the Penn community in the prevention of sexual violence, relationship violence, and stalking on campus. The goal is to not only ensure students have access to safe and effective resources, but to provide preventative education focused on building healthy relationships, understanding consent, reaching out to friends in need, and being an active bystander.

Please go to the website below for specific concerns including:

- sexual harassment, sexual violence, relationship violence and stalking policy
- consensual romantic and sexual relationships in the workplace and education settings
- student disciplinary procedures for resolving complaints of sexual misconduct
- procedures for resolving complaints of sexual misconduct against faculty
- procedures for resolving complaints of sexual misconduct against staff

<https://catalog.upenn.edu/pennbook/sexual-misconduct-resource-offices-complaint-procedures/>

IV. Designing Your MLA and MPhil Program

Advising

Do not expect to be able to negotiate the complexities of Penn alone. The Program Director and LPS staff look forward to assisting you through the bureaucratic mazes and to navigating with you the vast, academic options Penn offers. For example, your Program Director will know what prerequisites are expected for a course or which other well-suited courses loom on the horizon. You can get advice when the requirements of two specific courses are likely to overwhelm even the most accomplished student. Please remember that your Program Director is available to help you at all stages of your academic program.

The Program Director's office is located at 3440 Market Street, Suite 100. To schedule an appointment, please call the main office at 215-898-7326 or email lps@sas.upenn.edu.

Both MLA and MPhil students should also regularly communicate with and receive guidance from their capstone/thesis supervisors and secondary readers.

Course Selection

Your academic development will largely depend on the courses you select. All coursework must be at the graduate level with course numbers 5000 or higher. No courses numbered 4999 or lower will count toward degree requirements. Accordingly, you should strive for a balanced program of method- and content-driven courses in complementary departments around an area of concentration of your choosing. You may take a course outside of your primary area of concentration; however, the majority of courses in your program should be related to your concentration. If your curriculum is simply a random selection of courses that do not relate to one another, you will not be prepared to undertake a Capstone Project. Your advisors will assist you in formulating your area of concentration and selecting appropriate courses, given your background and goals.

MLA students should submit the [Declaration of Concentration form](#) to the Program Director as soon as they have decided what their area of concentration will be. After approval by the Program Director you must then submit a request using the forms on Path@Penn: <https://srfs.upenn.edu/registrar/forms> (use the form to Declare/Update Field of Study)

MPhil students should work with their graduate committee to define their program of study, and a written plan for MPhil coursework should be submitted to the Program Director before the end of the first semester.

The University's Catalog, available online <https://catalog.upenn.edu/>, provides descriptions of most courses offered at Penn. Departmental webpages often include course descriptions as well. In addition, the course rosters and timetables webpage (<https://srfs.upenn.edu/registration-catalog-calendar/rosters-timetables>) shares the time and location of all scheduled courses in semesters that are currently open for registration.

LPS offers evening courses in most areas of the arts and sciences. A complete listing of evening courses with times and descriptions is published in the LPS Course Guide available in March for the following fall term, in October for the spring term, and in January for summer sessions. Courses numbered at the 5000-level or above may be taken for graduate credit. The LPS course guide is found here: <https://www.lps.upenn.edu/courses/lps>.

Independent Study

Students who are interested in a particular subject related to their course of study, or who would like to more fully explore a topic covered in a course, may conduct an Independent Study under the supervision of a faculty member. It is the student's responsibility to propose a topic to an instructor(s) and to secure his/her agreement to work with the student on the project. The role of the faculty member is to recommend a focus for the paper produced for this study, suggest literature to review and a methodology to follow, and read and grade the final paper. Please contact the Program Director for guidance about the appropriate Independent Study forms.

MPhil students will need approval from their thesis committee chair to register for an Independent Study course. MPhil students are limited to one Independent Study course, in addition to their thesis course.

MLA students may find it helpful to enroll in Independent Study as their eighth course in preparation for writing their capstone. In this case, the person who will serve as the primary reader of the capstone project should supervise the Independent Study. MLA students are limited to two Independent Study courses in their program, in addition to their capstone.

To register for an Independent Study, MLA and MPhil students must submit an [LPS Independent Study Form](#) before the end of the semester prior to the term in which they will complete the Independent Study. The LPS ISP Form must be completed and signed by the MLA faculty supervisor or MPhil committee chair and returned to the Program Director in order to register for Independent Study.

V. Course Registration Procedures

Registration

To access the online registration system in Pennant, students should log on Path@Penn, go to <https://path.at.upenn.edu/student/landing> . You will need a PennKey to register for courses via Path@Penn. To establish a PennKey, go to <http://www.upenn.edu/computing/pennkey> and follow the steps there.

Note: You will need the PennKey SetUp Code which is emailed to you at the email address you submitted with your application to set up a PennKey. You can also visit <https://pennkeysupport.upenn.edu/help-for-students> for additional help.

- Once you have authenticated yourself by establishing your PennKey, click “Search & Register for Courses” in the Academic Planning & Registration section, which is in the upper right of the Path@Penn Student Landing Page, to begin the process of registering for classes. Please note that courses must be taken for a normal letter grade in order to count toward your degree. Also, only courses numbered 5000 and above may count toward your degree (the first set of four digits after the course subject is the course number – e.g., HIST 5050 601 but **not** HIST 0001 601).
- As a Master’s student, you will likely need permission from the instructor to register for a Ph.D. seminar (courses numbered 6000 and above). See “Permits and Authorizations” below for instructions.

Advance Registration

The course registration process involves two registration periods. The first is Advance Registration, when students enter their requests for courses that they wish to take. At the end of Advance Registration, a scheduling program processes all registration requests at the same time to determine who gets enrolled in the requested courses. Approximately 2 weeks after Advance Registration closes, students may view the schedule of courses in which they have actually been enrolled Path@Penn. Students may advance register during a 2-week period in early November for the following spring semester. Advanced Registration for fall is normally held in April. There is no Advance Registration for summer sessions, but students may register for summer courses during Add/Drop/Swap for Summer Sessions, which will open at the same time as Advanced Registration for fall courses.

Permits and Authorizations

If a course requires permission from the instructor, the department, a program or a School, you will not be able to Submit your Cart and then Submit your Request and get enrolled. As you make course selections and add classes to your Primary Cart, you can request the course in Path@Penn by putting it in your Primary Cart

and Submitting your Registration. Courses that require Permission will not be added but a clickable message will appear in the right panel under the course information that says “Request permission for this course.” Please click that link and then submit your permit request. This will be reviewed and approved by the appropriate department or school administrator.

Auditing Courses

MLA and MPhil students may audit courses. However, they will be charged tuition and fees at their program’s tuition level. Audited courses will appear on the student’s transcript, but no grade will be issued and the course will not count toward the CUs needed to complete the program. Most courses are open to auditors on a space-available basis.

Course Changes

MLA and MPhil students are subject to LPS registration and drop/add deadlines, which may be different than deadlines for other schools and departments. Students should consult the current LPS Course Guide or the LPS website for deadlines regarding registration changes and for the corresponding financial obligations (<https://www.lps.upenn.edu/about/academic-calendar>). Students are able to make registration changes in Path@Penn. Adherence to LPS deadlines is strictly observed. Should students need to drop or withdraw from a course beyond the deadline, they should petition LPS (<http://www.sas.upenn.edu/lps/students/current/forms-handbooks>). It may be necessary to provide documentation of the situation that necessitates the drop or withdrawal, particularly if the student is requesting a refund of tuition.

Adding a Course

Students may add a new course through the second week of the semester via Path@Penn. After that, it is not possible to add a course.

Dropping a Course

Students may drop a course with no financial obligation until the published Add/Drop deadline posted on the LPS Website (<http://www.sas.upenn.edu/lps/about/academic-calendar>), which is approximately 2 weeks into the semester.

Students may also drop a course between the second and fourth weeks of the semester, but in so doing, they will incur a 50% financial obligation for tuition and fees for the dropped course. Absence from class does not constitute a drop, nor does notifying the instructor. Students can officially drop a course through Penn InTouch through the second week of the semester. After the second week of the semester, students must submit a [Late Drop Form](#) to LPS.

When making registration changes via Path@Penn, it is always advisable to double-check and make sure the changes have taken effect before logging out. Students may also want to contact the Program Director to confirm that the dropped courses are no longer on their schedules. **Students who fail to drop a course officially may receive a grade of F and will be required to pay the full tuition rate.**

Changing Grade or Credit Status of a Course

All MLA and MPhil courses must be taken for a letter grade. However, students may register for courses that they do not want to count for their program on an audit or Pass/Fail basis. Before doing so, however, they should discuss this with the Program Director. Once they have done so, students may change their status in a course from credit to audit, from a letter grade to Pass/Fail, or from Pass/Fail to a letter grade until the published deadline on the LPS website (approximately 4 weeks into the semester). No change is permissible after the published deadline. Auditors pay full tuition and fees.

Withdrawing from a Course

Students may withdraw from a course after the deadline to drop a course has passed (approximately 4 weeks into the semester). To withdraw, students must submit a petition to the LPS office

(<http://www.sas.upenn.edu/lps/students/current/forms-handbooks>).

Normally, permission is granted and a W (withdrawal) is recorded on the transcript. After the published withdrawal deadline, students are permitted to withdraw only under extraordinary circumstances, which must be documented. Students who withdraw from a course have full financial obligation, except in documented cases of illness, military service, or other extraordinary circumstances, when they may petition for a 50% refund.

Note: Dropping a course is not identical to withdrawing from a course.

Withdrawing from a course takes place after the sixth week of class and carries with it full financial obligation. In addition, the student's transcript will read "W" (Withdrawal) next to the title of this course. However, if a student drops a course during the normal Add/Drop period, no record of that course will appear on the transcript and there is no financial obligation.

VI. Capstone and Graduation Procedures

Capstone and Thesis Guidelines

The MLA capstone project or MPhil thesis should represent the student's expertise in his/her area of concentration. It provides each student with the opportunity to integrate, synthesize, and analyze information, and to design and execute a piece of individual research. While it is expected that each student should have a good working familiarity with the literature in his/her field, the student's knowledge of this literature need not be as exhaustive as for students writing traditional master's theses or doctoral dissertations. Nor is it necessary that the work be publishable in a scholarly journal, although this is encouraged.

Capstone Project Timetable

Generally speaking, during the semester in which an MPhil student is enrolled in their fifth course or an MLA student is enrolled in their sixth course (for full-time students, this is typically the second semester in the program), they should decide which topic they would like to pursue for their capstone or thesis project and select their graduate committee members or faculty readers.

Capstone/Thesis Project Development

MLA students: There are three ways to complete a capstone project:

- as part of an Independent Study (usually the ninth course) -- summer capstone projects are almost exclusively MLA capstone Independent Study projects;
- as part of the capstone seminar (offered during both fall and spring semesters); or
- as the term paper in a course whose content exactly matches the student's capstone topic.

Please note that, in order to receive credit for your capstone project, your capstone project proposal must be approved by the end of the semester *prior to* the one during which you plan to work on your project.

If you intend to enroll in the capstone seminar, you should have an approved capstone proposal with you *at the first class meeting* of the seminar. The capstone seminar normally runs only during fall and spring semesters. **You will need to meet with the Program Director before you are permitted to enroll in the capstone seminar.** Please submit [Form 400](#) with the signature of your Primary Reader and an approved capstone project proposal to the Program Director prior to the beginning of the semester, and you will be issued a permit to register for the MLA capstone seminar.

MPhil students: Thesis projects are generally initiated after the completion of four or five courses, should be developed in collaboration with the student's graduate committee, and should be described in detail and approved by committee members on the [MPhil Thesis Independent Study Approval Form](#). While working on the thesis project, MPhil students should be registered for Independent Study. Please note that your thesis project proposal must be approved by the end of the semester *prior to* the one during which you plan to work on your project.

The MPhil project paper may take one of two forms:

- an extended traditional academic research paper normally of 30-35 pages that digs deeper into a topic than a traditional graduate seminar paper, or
- a creative piece (e.g., students have written novels/short stories and produced films for their capstone). If you choose to do a creative capstone, you must write a brief analytical paper (normally 10-15 pages and included as a preface to a creative capstone/thesis) that places the creative piece in an academic context.

Selecting Faculty Readers

You will need two faculty readers or graduate committee members for your capstone project: one you designate as the primary reader or graduate advisor and the other as the secondary reader. The difference is based on degree of involvement in your project. Generally, the primary reader or graduate advisor is the one who will help you compile your bibliography, suggest the research methods you should employ in your capstone, and ultimately approve your proposal and evaluate your final capstone project. The secondary reader will evaluate drafts of the proposal and/or project, though he/she may also be involved in formulating the project as well. The primary reader or graduate advisor must be a standing Penn faculty member and be an expert in your field of study; however, the secondary reader need not be. Both committee members must have a Ph.D. and be academically engaged in your area of concentration or field of study. Professors from local universities have served as capstone readers, as have adjunct faculty members and lecturers. In general, students choose faculty readers from among the professors who have taught in their program at Penn.

It is never too early to think about whom you might like to have serve on your capstone committee. You should forge relationships with faculty members right from the start of your program. If you have difficulty identifying individuals, the Program Director can recommend likely prospects among the faculty. However, it is your responsibility to contact the potential readers and committee members and discuss your project in depth.

Writing the Capstone Proposal

Proposals will vary based on the disciplines MLA and MPhil students will explore in their research. These may also vary based upon the amount of preliminary research or writing done in advance. In general, a capstone proposal that is 3 to 5 pages in length and outlines the goals of the projects, identifies a research agenda, thesis or creative genre, and is supplemented by a preliminary bibliography will suffice. This proposal must be approved by the two capstone readers or research committee members when they agree to serve; and the proposal must then be submitted with the appropriate forms and signatures indicating their approval of the project proposal and willingness to serve as graduate readers and committee members.

Forms

There are several forms associated with your capstone project, which need to be submitted at various times during the completion of your project. These forms are available online at <https://www.lps.upenn.edu/degree-programs/mla/resources>. You must also submit a capstone project proposal to your readers or committee members and, after receiving approval, submit the proposal to the Program Director.

1. **[Form 400: Agreement to Serve on Capstone Project Committee](#)** – certifies that two people have agreed to serve as your MLA capstone readers. This form must be filed along with a capstone proposal in order to register in the capstone seminar or be enrolled in capstone Independent Study.
2. **[Form 401: Agreement to Serve on Graduate Thesis Committee](#)** – certifies that two people have agreed to serve on your graduate committee as MPhil capstone readers. This form must be filed along with a capstone proposal in order to enroll in capstone Independent Study.
3. **[MLA Capstone Independent Study Approval Form](#)** confirms term and registration details for an MLA Capstone Project. Please fill this form out and submit it to the MLA Program Director for approval and processing. The MLA Program will create your Capstone Independent Study after confirming the approval of your two (2) readers. Once created, you will be sent a Course Record Number (CRN) and can then find your unique MLA Capstone Independent Study in Path@Penn and enroll.
4. **[MPhil Thesis Independent Study Approval Form](#)** is the equivalent form MPhil Students. Again, please submit this to the Program Director and then follow the procedure to enroll using your discrete CRN in Path@Penn after your Thesis Independent Study is approved and created.
5. **Capstone Project Proposal** – There is no standard proposal. Each project will have a proposal formatted to satisfy the two readers or graduate committee

members and fit into disciplinary models appropriate to the project. Most proposals are 3 to 5 pages in length, define the thesis and research agenda, project timeline, describe previous work completed, outline the paper and argument to be pursued and developed in the capstone. Please contact your committee members or the Program Director with any questions about your project proposal.

6. **Form 500: Completion of Capstone Project Certification** – to be completed by your MLA readers or MPhil graduate committee to certify the approval of your completed capstone project. This form will be submitted along with the final digital clean pdf version of the capstone on the last day of classes during the semester in which you intend to graduate.
7. **Form 501: Completion of MPhil Thesis** - to be completed by your MPhil graduate committee to certify the approval of your completed thesis. This form will be submitted along with the final clean pdf version on the last day of classes during the semester in which you intend to graduate.
8. **Graduation application** - lets us know when you intend to graduate. This form should be filed at the beginning of the semester in which you intend to complete the program and graduate. Please find graduation information, deadlines, and forms here:
<http://www.sas.upenn.edu/lps/students/current/graduation/application>

The table that follows indicates the deadlines for submitting the necessary forms. Please refer to this table and the LPS Academic Calendar to determine when classes begin and end, as these dates change every semester and academic year.

Capstone and Graduation Timetable

Forms	Deadline
Form 400 or 401 – Agreement to serve on committee Independent Study form	Before the end of classes during the semester <i>prior to</i> the semester in which you intend to complete the capstone
Approved capstone proposal	First day of classes in the semester during which you intend to complete the capstone
Graduation application	Spring semester: Feb 1 Summer semester: June 1 (Feb 1 if you wish to participate in May ceremony) Fall semester: Oct 1
Capstone project completed and approved	Submit final clean digital copy on last day of classes to the Program Director as a pdf for the Digital Capstone and Thesis Archive.
Form 500 or 501 – Completion of capstone project or thesis	Submit signed Form 500 or 501 to Program Director on last day of classes

Incomplete Capstone Projects and Master's Thesis Registration

Students who fail to complete capstone projects before the final deadline during the semester in which they register for a capstone seminar or capstone Independent Study course must remain active students during all subsequent semesters in order to complete their MLA or MPhil program and graduate. In brief, capstone projects are projects that you complete by enrolling in a 1 CU/semester course, and **the Capstone is due approximately 2 weeks prior to the end of semester** to allow time for processing grades and auditing students for graduation. If a student receives an Incomplete grade for their capstone project, they must register for Master's Thesis (MLA 9900) in the subsequent semester, and for each and every semester thereafter, until the completed and approved capstone is submitted to the Program Director. Should a student wish to extend Master's Thesis registration beyond two semesters, they must receive permission from the Faculty Advisory Committee. **Students not completing the**

program requirements after two semesters of Master's Thesis may be withdrawn from the program.

In addition to the requirements for enrollment in each semester while students continue to work on their capstone, graduation posting will also be affected. Students must reapply online for graduation in the semester during which they plan to complete the capstone. Thus, if a student does not complete the capstone in the semester in which they originally applied, they must re-apply for graduation in the next semester. The student's graduation date will be posted for the semester in which they complete their capstone and receive a grade, not the semester in which the student originally intended to graduate.

VII. University Resources

Below are some additional resources available to you at Penn. For more information, please visit the Program Resources webpages:

<http://www.sas.upenn.edu/lps/graduate/mla/resources>

and

<https://www.lps.upenn.edu/students/current-students>

Communications and Access

PennCard

In order to use the library, enter and exit campus buildings after 6:30 p.m., and use any of the University's recreational facilities, a Penn ID card (PennCard) is necessary. To obtain a PennCard, students should bring a valid form of photo ID (e.g., driver's license, passport) to the PennCard Center located on the 2nd floor of Penn Bookstore at 3601 Walnut Street, Philadelphia, PA 19104. Additional information about the PennCard, including PennCard office hours, is available online: <http://www.upenn.edu/penncard/>, or you may call the office at 215-417-CARD. Only active students registered for courses in the current or upcoming semester may receive a PennCard, which should be carried at all times on campus.

PennKey

<http://www.upenn.edu/computing/pennkey/>

A PennKey is required to authenticate, or verify, an individual's identity for many of Penn's networked computer systems and services. Authorized users need a PennKey and password to access such resources as Path@Penn (course registration), Canvas (used in most classes/ <https://canvas.upenn.edu>), certain library resources, and public campus computers. A PennKey is also required to obtain a Penn email address. New students should receive either a letter or an email with information on how to create a PennKey and password within a few days of their admission to the MLA or MPhil program. Please consult this page for further support with PennKey [setup. https://medley.isc-seo.upenn.edu/penn_portal/intouch/splash.html](https://medley.isc-seo.upenn.edu/penn_portal/intouch/splash.html)

Path@Penn and Pennant

Path@Penn is the student interface of the Pennant Records System and provides secure access via the Internet to online course registration, class schedules, academic records, future academic planning, billing, financial aid application status and awards, address corrections and updates, and student health information. A PennKey is required to access Path@Penn and all Pennant applications.

Email

<http://www.sas.upenn.edu/computing/help/students/email>

All students enrolled at the University of Pennsylvania are eligible for a Penn email address free of charge. Even if the student plans to use a non-Penn email account, they should also establish a Penn address. The Program Director will send program information to this address and also contact students with important information through this system. Course instructors will be given this address as well and will expect to contact students in this way. Should students wish, they may forward email from their Penn address to another account through Penn's webmail site. Instructions on how to create and use a Penn email account are available through SAS Computing website above. Students can arrange to forward email from their Penn account to another account at this website.

MLA-MPhil Listserv

The Program Director uses a listserv as the primary means of informing students about changes in course offerings, campus events, job/fellowship opportunities, important dates, and other useful information. Upon completing your intent to enroll in the program please confirm with the program staff that you have a Penn email address or if you have another preferred email address in order to be subscribed to the list. We can subscribe both Penn *and* non-Penn email addresses to make sure you will receive our important messages – so feel free to subscribe more than one email address.

Academic Support Services

Student Financial Services

<https://srfs.upenn.edu/sfs>

215-898-1988

100 of the Franklin Building at 3451 Walnut Street

Student financial aid, including applications and disbursement of money, are handled through Student Financial Services (SFS). Call or visit the website for deadlines and procedures.

International Student and Scholar Services (ISSS)

<https://global.upenn.edu/iss>

3701 Chestnut Street, Suite 1W

215-898-4661 or iss@pobox.upenn.edu

International students are responsible for maintaining their proper student visa status. ISSS is an important resource for all international students; they can answer questions about visas, international student tax issues, and more.

Penn Bookstore

<https://upenn.bncollege.com/shop/upenn/home>

215-898-7595

36th and Walnut Streets

The Penn Bookstore carries textbooks and trade books as well as stationery, art supplies, school supplies, gifts, and other items.

Computer Connection

<http://cms.business-services.upenn.edu/computerstore>

215-898-3282

Second floor of the Penn Bookstore

Carries computers, software, and computer supplies at student rates.

Career Counseling

<https://careerservices.upenn.edu/>

215-898-7530

3718 Locust Walk

The University provides career counseling through the Career Services office.

Computer Labs

https://computing.sas.upenn.edu/teaching_resources/computer_labs

They provide a current list of computer labs on campus, along with a list of software installed and eligibility for usage.

The Tech Center

<https://www.isc.upenn.edu/student-services>

215-898-9720 or techcenter@upenn.edu

Room G-102 of the Van Pelt Library, 3420 Walnut Street

The Tech Center (formerly CRC) offers advice, training, consulting services and computer support to Penn students. Students will need their PennCard for access to the building.

Libraries

<http://www.library.upenn.edu/>

215-898-7555

3420 Walnut Street (entrance on College Green)

There are numerous libraries (<https://www.library.upenn.edu/about/locations>) but the main one is the Van Pelt Library, the main University library has extensive holdings and houses Weigle Information Commons.

Weigle Information Commons

<https://www.library.upenn.edu/wic>

215-898-7555 or 215-746-2498

Group study spaces and technology-rich classrooms foster collaborative learning and student engagement. They offer training, equipment, and support for digital media, including immersive technology, for Penn students, faculty and staff.

Writing Center

<http://www.writing.upenn.edu/critical/>

215-573-2729

The Writing Center provides free writing consultation by appointment, which can be made online.

Weingarten Center

<https://wlrc.vpul.upenn.edu/>

215-573-9235

Hamilton Village, 220 S. 40th Street, Suite 260, Philadelphia, PA 19104-6027
Weingarten is Penn's Home for Academic Support & Disability Services. The Center offers learning consultations, tutoring, and interactive programs support students as they develop learning strategies and content knowledge to further their academic and professional goals. Weingarten also provides comprehensive, professional services and programs for students who self-identify with disabilities to ensure equal academic opportunities and participation in University-sponsored programs.

Student Disability Services (SDS)

<https://wlrc.vpul.upenn.edu/>

215-573-9235 or TDD 215-746-6320

Stouffer Commons, 3702 Spruce Street, Suite 300

The Weingarten Center houses the Office of Student Disabilities Services (SDS), which provides comprehensive professional services and programs for students with disabilities to ensure equal academic opportunities and participation in University-sponsored programs. Reasonable accommodation to a qualified student's known disability may be provided to assure equal access. Penn invites students with disabilities to self-identify at any time during their course of study as enrolled students. Although the self-identification process is confidential and completely voluntary, it is required for those requesting accommodation.

Recreation Facilities

<http://www.upenn.edu/recreation/>

215-898-6100

MLA and MPhil students have access to all of the recreation facilities available to the University community. For information on fees, hours, programs, and locker rentals see website above.

Office of the University Ombudsman
<http://www.upenn.edu/ombudsman>
215-898-8261

The Office of the Ombudsman assists individuals in finding solutions to problems that they may not be able to resolve through normal channels.

Counseling and Psychological Services
<https://caps.wellness.upenn.edu/>
215-898-7021

3624 Market Street, First Floor West

CAPS provides professional psychological and psychiatric services to all Penn students who need help in dealing with academic stress, social difficulties, situational crises, managing personal problems, developing greater self-awareness and skills for life-long learning. Students presenting with more serious concerns like depression, anxiety, and eating disorders, among others, are seen as well. Licensed psychologists, psychiatrists, and social workers provide confidential short term psychotherapy for individuals, group counseling, emergency crisis services, medication evaluations, workshops, career assessments/development counseling, and referrals free of charge.

Office of Alcohol and Other Drug Initiatives
<https://aod.wellness.upenn.edu/>
215-573-3525

3535 Market St, Mezzanine

This office seeks to identify methods to reduce substance abuse and violence, control and mitigate campus environments where potential abusive behavior exists, and foster a campus culture in which healthy living efforts are plentiful and successful.

Office of Student Affairs
<https://www.vpul.upenn.edu/osa/>
200 Houston Hall, 3417 Spruce Street
215-898-6533

The Office of Student Affairs, a department within the Division of University Life, serves as a primary source of information and advice about co-curricular opportunities and resources. Staff members assist students in becoming involved in campus life, conduct leadership development programs, provide continuity for organizations from year to year, manage organizational finances, educate students about University policies, mediate disputes, advise event planners, and help students put classroom learning into practice through the techniques of experiential education. A full list of services provided by the Office is available.

The Office of Student Affairs seeks to provide a range of co-curricular experiences designed to supplement students' classroom experience and contribute significantly to their personal development. Staff members encourage students to create and participate in intellectual, artistic, social, recreational and multicultural activities; to assume campus leadership and governance responsibilities; to develop positive interpersonal relationships and skills within groups; to explore different cultures, ideas and experiences; and to put their learning into practice in the laboratory of co-curricular programs. Staff members support students through various forms of advocacy, through the encouragement of proactive approaches to campus problems and concerns, and through a commitment to the creation of a Penn community.

Student Responsibility

While advisors, faculty, and staff will assist the student in every aspect of their graduate study, it is the responsibility of the student to ensure that all steps and necessary paperwork have been completed and submitted to their capstone advisors or graduate committee and the Program Director. Please remember to be respectful of the time that readers and advisors invest to help you develop and produce a successful capstone or thesis project!

