

# Comp 1: Step-by-Step

**Winter of Year 1:** identify your field for Comp. 1; identify your supervisor and two committee members for this comp; construct your reading list as an assignment in the second term of the core PhD course, CDNS6900.

**Summer of Year 1:** read and meet with your Comp. 1 supervisor as you make your way through the reading list

**Fall of Year 2:** write and defend Comp 1, CDNS6905, in October.

- 1. Winter of Year 1:** As an assignment in CDNS6900, you will construct a **reading list** with the field of knowledge in which you want to develop research and teaching expertise in mind.
  - Your reading for Comp 1 should give you a *comprehensive* knowledge of a field or intersecting fields of scholarship. Defining your field(s) is a matter of knowing your interest, researching what is out there-- seeing how the area breaks down into sub-fields, themes, approaches--and then setting some parameters. Breadth is key to the design of this reading list: the purpose is to learn the debates, the key contributions, the changing approaches, the different angles.
  - The list should be 50 books or the equivalent (with each scholarly article or book chapter counting as 1/5 a book). Between 20% and 30% of the list must consist of assigned readings from CDNS6900. Preface your list with a 1-2 page introduction and rationale.
  - While you are defining your field for this exam, **identify your Comp 1 committee**, composed of a supervisor (normally not the instructor of CDNS6900) and two others. Committee members must be members of the Carleton graduate faculty and at least one must be from SICS. See appendix B to the PhD Guidelines, "Finding a Supervisor: Who Qualifies." You are expected to research faculty profiles in order to identify prospective committee members and contact these faculty with your request. Keep in mind, our Graduate Supervisor is available to advise and assist you.
  - You are expected to do most of the work of compiling the reading list yourself, although you are encouraged to consult with your committee members for advice, suggestions, and recommendations. The committee may comment on the draft of your list. Following the evaluation of the list by the CDNS6900 course instructor, move to Step 2.
- 2. Spring of Year 1:** Obtain your committee's final approval of the list and submit the **CDNS 6905-6907 PhD Comp Sign-Up Form**. Do this at least two weeks before the Early Summer registration deadline, which is near the beginning of May. Check [the graduate calendar](#).
  - The form will ask you and your supervisor to explain your comp preparation process, for example, meetings and any written work. It also asks you for an anticipated writing date.
  - Your reading list will be reviewed for approval by the SICS graduate committee. Once you have that approval, you may proceed to Step 3.
- 3. Spring of Year 1: Register in CDNS 6905**, the comp 1 exam preparation course. In practice, this is not a formal course but rather the placeholder for your exam preparation and meetings with your

supervisor through the months from April to October. Once you register in the comp, you must maintain continuous registration in the course until it has been completed successfully.

4. **Early Fall of Year 2:** Submit the *PhD Comp 1 Written Exam Request Form* as soon as your committee members agree that you are ready to schedule the written exam and at least two weeks before the date on which you will write the exam in October. The form asks you to commit to a date and time for either the take-home (7 days) or the sit-down format (four hours). It also asks you to commit to the date and time for the oral component of the exam.
5. **One week before** the date for writing the exam, your committee will provide a list of 6 questions to the Program Administrator, copying the Graduate Supervisor.
6. **On the day** you are scheduled to write, you will receive the questions from the SICS program administrator, along with a set of instructions for submission of your answers.
7. You **submit your written answers** to the program administrator either 7 days later, by the indicated time, or the same day, in the case of the sit-down exam written on the 12<sup>th</sup> floor of DT. Your answers go to your committee members, who normally are given 1 week to read them and decide whether or not you can proceed to the oral defence.
8. **Two weeks after submitting** your written answers, the **oral defence** is held. At the end of the defence, your committee will give you your **grade** of “Satisfactory” or “Unsatisfactory” and will complete a Grade Report Form, which they will submit to the program administrator. You will be formally notified of the results of your comp via email and the grade will be available on Carleton Central at the end of the term.
9. Now it is time for you to begin preparing for Comp 2! (see step-by-step guide)