**Qualifying Paper:**

The Qualifying paper offers evidence of a student's readiness to pursue a Ph.D. in literature.

Employing discussion followed by individual scoring of each rubric by each faculty member, the committee assesses the following aspects of student performance and also provides an overall assessment (all scores accumulated by the program are periodically pooled, evaluated, and presented to the literature faculty for consideration of possible improvements to the program through changes in program design):

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Surpasses | Meets | | Barely Meets | | Fails to Meet | |
| Significant progress toward presenting original work in a professional manner as established by major, peer-reviewed journals and presses in the fields relevant to the paper's purview |  |  | |  | |  | |
| Superior professional writing ability, as measured by the work published by established scholars in peer-reviewed venues |  | |  | |  | |  |
| Critical judgment and acumen in choosing and digesting the current academic conversations relevant to the paper's purview |  | |  | |  | |  |

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Surpasses | Meets | Barely Meets | Fails to Meet |
| An ability to generate well-supported analysis, grounded in the current critical conversations relevant to the paper's purview |  |  |  |  |
| An ability to ground the analysis in the major historical lines of the critical and theoretical conversations that precede the current critical conversation |  |  |  |  |
| Demonstration in the paper that the student has grasped the full range of pertinent scholarship and established his or her argument as one that will contribute to our understanding of the literary issues the paper raises |  |  |  |  |
| Superior grasp of the mechanics of formal scholarly documentation and style |  |  |  |  |
| Overall assessment of student learning |  |  |  |  |

In assessing the Qualifying Paper, one committee member (typically the Chair) also evaluates the Writing Sample the student submitted as part of his or her application to the program (using the identical rubric to that used in scoring performance on the Qualifying Paper). Scores on the two papers are compared for evidence of significant progress (or the lack thereof) during the student’s tenure in the MA program. (All scores accumulated by the program are periodically pooled, evaluated, and presented to the literature faculty for consideration of possible improvements to the program through changes in program design)