

Guidelines for submitting a PhD proposal to the Program in English, Irish and American Studies

As part of the application process, you are kindly asked to submit a proposal for the project you embark on when working towards your PhD. It is vital that you understand what we initially require you to include, hence we collected a few suggestions you might observe when preparing the proposal.

First and foremost, you are to carefully delineate what it is you wish to do research on by identifying the corpus with as well as the context in which you will be working, be it cultural, historical, social, political, theoretical, thematic or otherwise. You are required to demonstrate that you have prior knowledge and an understanding of the field and are aware of at least some of the difficulties that may emerge during the research. This entails that you have already processed a portion of the secondary literature relating to your topic, and you are up-to-date with at least some of the problems, contradictions, debates, etc. that pertain to the works in question, so that you can position your own approach to the literary works and issues in question.

We kindly ask you to write a text as opposed to an outline punctured by lists and bullet points. While it is not required to formulate a full-blown research question at the beginning of your studies, it is nevertheless important that you articulate that you are aware of at least some of the problems you will be engaging with. In order to formulate them, it is highly beneficial to consult and include relevant secondary sources in your proposal even at this early stage of the research. We would like to see you to have started thinking about the issues. And since it is your abilities we are trying to judge, we strongly suggest that you avoid the use of computer-assisted methods when composing the text of your proposal.

We hope the above the above suggestions will help you on your way to studying with us.