Professional Development and Professional Ethics Goals

I. Professional Development

Students completing the Ph.D. in English are expected to have acquired the following foundations for professional development:

1) The ability to teach undergraduate courses in writing and literature.

   Practices and Methods of Assessment: The program offers a Teaching Orientation event for new students each August. Students who have not previously taught at CUNY are usually required to take a semester-long Teaching Practicum [ENG 79000: The Teaching of College Writing] at one of the CUNY colleges during their first semester of teaching. Students can pursue many teaching opportunities at CUNY campuses as adjunct instructors, Graduate Teaching Fellows, and Writing Fellows.

2) Familiarity with academic organizations and structures; and experience as active citizens of a collaborative academic community.

   Practices and Methods of Assessment: Students are encouraged to serve on English Program and Graduate Center committees; to collaborate with other graduate students on scholarly projects, including organizing and participating in English Student Association and other GC conferences; and to participate in professional organizations and conferences. Through the Placement Committee, the Program offers annual workshops on academic structure, applying for grants, and applying for academic positions. Students also become familiar with academic structures through their experience teaching and mentoring undergraduate students and serving as adjunct department members.

3) Specialized competence in the primary and secondary literatures of a particular field within literary studies or Composition/Rhetoric studies, and the ability to position themselves as contributing members of their professional community of scholars and writers.

   Practices and Method of Assessment: Students develop specialized competence in a particular field through coursework in that field; completion of the oral examination; and completion of a dissertation and a dissertation defense. Additionally, lectures, conferences, and seminars sponsored by the English Program (and by other Ph.D. Programs, Certificate Programs, Interdisciplinary Committees, and research centers at the GC) provide students opportunities to engage with scholarship in various fields. The English Program offers a semester-long Publication Workshop and sponsors professional
development events on presenting conference papers and on publishing journal essays. For students on the job market, the Placement Committee offers guidelines and feedback on application letters and CVs; mock interviews and mock job talks provide students opportunities to articulate their scholarly commitments and to hone their presentation skills.

II. Professional Ethics

Students completing the Ph.D. in English are expected to be conversant with the ethical issues commonly encountered in the following areas:

1) Teaching. Through their training and experience teaching at the CUNY colleges, students should be familiar with policies regarding sexual harassment and academic dishonesty, and should know where to turn to address institutionally any ethical violations that they might encounter or experience.

2) Research. Students conducting research with human subjects should be conversant with the guidelines for human subject clearance and must receive approval from an Institutional Review Board. In accordance with CUNY policy, all graduate students must complete training in the Responsible Conduct of Research.

3) Publication. Students should be able to make responsible use of evidence in developing arguments, and properly to acknowledge sources that they cite in their work. ENG 70000 (“Introduction to Doctoral Studies in English”), required of first-year students, provides a foundation in conventions of citation and fair use. Guidance in making responsible use of the work of others is also provided by seminar instructors, faculty mentors, and dissertation supervisors.