

DEPARTMENT OF ITALIAN  
REPORT ON THE “2-4 PROJECT”

BACKGROUND

Penny Marcus and Giuseppe Mazzotta met a number of times to discuss the situation in our Department and to assess the validity of the existing program. We held a number of interviews with Graduate students and we also sought the input of other faculty members (Risa Sodi, Francesca Cadel). The following conclusions reflect the views and opinions of the Department. Remarkably, there exists a real harmony among faculty members and students about the shape of our Doctoral Program.

IN SUMMARY

1. Language Requirements. The present handbook demands candidates must demonstrate a reading knowledge of a second Romance language, Latin, and a non-Romance (German recommended).

Commentary: We intend to keep this requirement and make the requirement for the non-Romance language more flexible than it presently is. We encourage students to acquire proficiency in a non-Romance language (which could be any language, such as, for instance, Greek or Russian, according to scholarly interest).

2. Our students are required to take 16 courses during the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> years. Because of the low number of our faculty members we find ourselves by necessity

encouraging our students to take courses outside our Department (they do so, typically in, Comparative Literature, History, Classics, etc).

Commentary: The reason why we want to keep a course load of 16 has to do with the fact that our Graduate Students, who usually come to us from somewhat shaky undergraduate programs, need as a full exposure to Italian literary history as possible.

3. Qualifying Examination: Students are asked to prepare for the qualifying exam within the 3<sup>rd</sup> year by compiling a list of six (5) topics which they eventually turn into research subjects. We also administer a written exam (over a two day period).

Commentary: The general consensus is to keep this most valuable structure as is.

4. General Suggestion: There was some division among Graduate students and faculty members as to whether or not the graduate program can be completed in 5 or 6 years.