The Council on Advanced Studies

The Council on Advanced Studies oversees a number of interdisciplinary workshops, which are administered by UChicagoGRAD. Council members are appointed in Autumn, and so the membership listed below reflects the 2020-2021 academic year. For the most up-to-date information on Council membership, and a list of current workshops, please consult http://cas.uchicago.edu (http://cas.uchicago.edu/).

Willemien Otten, Chair

Members

- Persis Berlekamp
- Mark Bradley
- Paul Cheney
- Julie Chu
- Allyson Nadia Field
- Anastasia Giannakidou
- Timothy Harrison
- Jonathan Lyon
- Sankar Muthu
- Eric Slauter
- Sofia Torallas
- Jenny Trinitapoli

Ex Officio Members

- David Nirenberg, Dean of the Divinity School
- Anne Robertson, Dean of the Humanities Division
- Amanda Woodward, Dean of the Division of the Social Sciences Division

THE COUNCIL ON ADVANCED STUDIES
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In 1982, the University of Chicago pioneered a new dimension in graduate education—interdisciplinary workshops that bring together students and faculty in the Divinity School, Humanities Division, and the Social Sciences Division for ongoing and collaborative exchange of ideas around particular areas of interest. By providing graduate students with a forum for presenting their research and writing, the workshops, which have been widely replicated at other universities, have become an important part of the UChicago graduate education experience. Workshops facilitate the dissertation-writing process and create opportunities for professionalization as they encourage students to engage rigorously with their own and their fellow students’ work through discussion, debate, evaluation, and critical feedback.

In addition to the academic importance of workshops, participation in a workshop series, which can include scheduled meetings as well as dinners and other social gatherings, serves well to combat intellectual isolation. The workshop setting provides an informal forum for students to develop close and supportive ties with their fellow students as well as faculty mentors and even guest faculty. More advanced graduate students often become mentors and role models to other students as they experience together the different stages of their transition from consumers to creators of knowledge. The workshops represent dozens of vibrant micro-communities of scholars where the participants engage in lively conversation and receive valuable insight and encouragement.