Guidelines for HLS Faculty Supervisors of LL.M. Students for the Winter Term Writing Program

(To be given to the HLS Faculty Supervisor
with the student's completed application)

The Winter Term Writing Program ("WWP") supports students who seek to devote an intensive period of time to research and writing on an ongoing project, in lieu of taking a winter course. As the program continues to attract great interest and participation, HLS faculty supervisors may want to take note of certain considerations.

Eligibility and Credits

- Students pursuing the WWP must be engaged full time in research and writing toward completion of a single two-credit writing project instead of taking a winter course. (This is essential for the student to maintain status in a full-time course of study.) The work done during winter term is part of a larger project, typically the LL.M. Written Work Requirement. It is the full project for which the student registers, and it is for the full project that the student seeks supervision.

- The program itself does not confer credit. To be eligible for the WWP, a student must be writing an independent paper (that is, independent of a course or seminar) of at least 50 pages.

Project Description

- The applicant must respond to a series of narrative questions to provide a clear description of a feasible research topic and a workable methodology that you have approved. Thus, the student must have done the necessary preliminary research to locate and define a topic, identify key sources, and formulate a workable approach. This requirement is meant to ensure that students have already begun intensive directed research and/or writing and can productively continue; in the past, some students have found managing the unstructured time of the WWP challenging and subsequently struggled during the spring term to complete their project. Students who have advanced their research prior to the winter term should be able to produce by the end of the term a reasonably detailed outline or, in some cases, a first draft.

- Your email approval of the application indicates that (1) you and the student have discussed the plan set out in their narrative response form and that you are satisfied that it is well thought out, meets the program's criteria, and would constitute a worthwhile, law-related winter term experience for the student; (2) you are willing to provide the supervision that the student has requested; and (3) you have worked or will/are willing to work out problems or details with the student.

Please note: Students are aware that they are responsible for conducting research ethically. Accordingly, students have been advised that if the project involves human subjects in any way—for example, interviews, surveys, or obtaining information about individuals by other means—it may require review by the Committee on the Use of Human Subjects (IRB). Students seeking to conduct research involving human subjects should contact the IRB to confirm if their work will

contribute to generalizable knowledge as per the IRB definition and requires IRB oversight. The HUA IRB assigns dedicated reviewers to departments and schools who can assist with this decision. These reviewers can be contacted directly and offer office hours as well. For general questions, students may also email cuhs@harvard.edu or call (617) 496-2847.

Location

- Students who pursue the WWP are expected to be in residence in Cambridge for the entirety of the winter term, and to devote themselves to full-time pursuit of their research and writing project. LL.M. students proposing to conduct research outside of Cambridge during any part of the winter term may only do so if granted prior approval by the Graduate Program based on demonstrated necessity of such research to the final project.

- Your sign-off on the application of a student who proposes to do research outside Cambridge represents that you have reviewed the proposal and determined that (1) the research is necessary and clearly needs to be done outside of Cambridge (e.g., it involves source material unavailable at HLS or on-site interviewing that is critical to the project) and (2) the student's plans for doing this on-site research are concrete and "do-able" in the short winter term period.

- Please note in particular the importance of ensuring adequate supervision for a student who proposes doing research outside of Cambridge during the winter term.

Evaluation

- The work to be completed during winter term is not graded except as part of the overall final paper. The work must be submitted to you by a date you set with the student; this date should allow you enough time to review, evaluate, and provide feedback to the student where applicable. If the work to be completed during the winter term is not the final paper, the final paper is due on April 23, 2027, or by an earlier date if you require.

Application Details

- **Students will submit their application, including a copy of your approval, via a Qualtrics form.**
    1. Your supervisee must send you an email request for approval of the project that includes the basic details of their project and a copy of their complete narrative response form. Please respond to their request for approval with the following statement:
        a. "**I confirm that I will be supervising the required written work for [*Your Name*] during the winter term, as described in the message below, and that I have read and approved the details set out in the student's narrative response form included with that message.**"

Calendar

November 12, 2026	Application deadline
January 4, 2027	Start of winter term
January 22, 2027	End of winter term
January 25, 2027	Start of spring term