

# School of Languages and Cultures

## Guidelines for the Master's Degree Effective Fall 2018

These guidelines are intended to supplement, but not supersede, the applicable regulations in the Policies and Procedures Manual for Administering Graduate Student Programs and the Bulletin of the Graduate School, with which the student should also be familiar. The current guidelines will apply to all graduate students who are admitted to the Master of Arts and they are intended to give information and provide direction to students and faculty of the School of Languages and Cultures. Amendments to these guidelines may be initiated by the faculty and submitted to the Committee on Graduate Studies.

The Graduate Advisor for each program/department offering advanced degrees (Applied Linguistics, French, German, Japanese, and Spanish) is appointed by the Head of the School in consultation with the Department Chair. The school committee on graduate studies is comprised of the Graduate Advisors and a Chair, the Director of Graduate Studies, to be appointed by the Head of the School. In addition, each language department, at its discretion, may appoint a departmental graduate committee to work with its Graduate Advisor.

### **1. Requirements for Admission to Graduate Studies**

**GRADES:** The normal requirement is a B+ average (3.5 out of 4) in work in the language, linguistics and literature and a B average in the overall undergraduate program.

**GRE EXAM:** Prospective graduate students who are native speakers of English are required to take the GRE exam. 160 or above verbal is desirable.

**TOEFL EXAM:** All international students are required to take the TOEFL exam and must score a minimum of 550 for the paper-based test, 213 for the computer-based test, or 80 on the internet-based test with a minimum in the following areas: writing 18, speaking 18, listening 14, and reading 19 in order to be admitted to the Graduate School. The Graduate School will routinely waive the TOEFL/IELTS for applicants who have received a baccalaureate degree or graduate or professional degree, within the last 24 months, from a school where English is the primary language of instruction in a country/location where English is the native language.

**LANGUAGE SKILLS:** The applicant must be able to read, write, speak, and understand the language of study accurately in academic and everyday settings. If such ability is not evident from the application (e.g., course work, recommendations, time spent in target culture, native speaker status), it will be verified by phone or personal interview with a faculty member in the appropriate language.

**ACADEMIC PREPARATION:** The applicant must have a background in the proposed area of study, for example, the equivalent of a two-semester survey of the literature to be studied. Those without such basic preparation are eligible for conditional admission only, with deficiencies to be made up in the first one or two semesters. Remedial work may be prescribed as necessary by the specific language department.

**LETTERS OF RECOMMENDATION:** Three letters of recommendation are required.

**TRANSCRIPTS:** Complete official transcripts from all higher-level education are required.

### **2. The Master of Arts Degree**

The M.A. degree will include a minimum of 30 hours of graduate-level course work (24 hours for the thesis option, since up to six credits may be awarded for thesis research and writing). Of these 30 hours, 21 to 24 hours constitute a Primary Area in one of two tracks, either the literature or the

linguistics of the major language. The remaining six to nine hours are devoted to a Related Area which can be taken in the same or in any other field, in consultation with the student's advisory committee. Both the Primary Area and the Related Area should be coherent groupings of courses, each with a unifying thread. Courses included in the Primary Area must have a content which is directly connected with the track and the major language which have been selected by the student, though they need not all be listed under the same subject abbreviation. Courses included in the Related Area may be selected from any discipline with the advice and guidance of the student's graduate advisor or major professor. It is recommended that the Primary Area contain at least three 600-level, three-credit courses (including one seminar). The course on bibliography and literary criticism is required for the literature track, and may be included as one of the three required 600-level courses, on the condition that the student earns a grade of "B" or better in said course. The 30-hour program must include at least seven three-credit courses which carry the subject abbreviation of the major language (FR, JPNS, GER, or SPAN). Under ordinary circumstances not more than three credits of individual directed reading courses numbered 590 may be included in the 30 hours required for the degree. Among the 30 hours minimally required for the degree, not more than one course for which the student earns the grade of "C" may be included on the Plan of Study. All candidates for the M.A. are expected to read the works included on the appropriate reading lists.

For the M.A., the student must demonstrate proficiency in one additional language other than English or the student's major language. The student, in consultation with his/her committee, will determine which language would be most appropriate for the student's program, which may represent the student's native language. This language requirement may be met in any of the following ways:

- a. by examination in the language,
- b. by completing a graduate course in the language,
- c. by completing the course 605 in the language with a minimum grade of B (3.0),
- d. by completing course 202 or higher in the language with a minimum grade of B (3.0), or
- e. by completing the equivalent of 202 or higher in the language with a minimum grade of B (3.0) at another institution within five years of beginning the SLC graduate program.

This additional language requirement must be satisfied before the final Master's examination can be scheduled.

### **3. Guidelines for the M.A.**

Before entering our graduate program, candidates for the literature track are required to have the equivalent of two one-semester survey courses in the literature of their major language. Students lacking part of the requirement may be admitted by virtue of a strong academic record and an otherwise satisfactory preparation in the major or by examination, but with the provision that they make up this deficiency by the end of their first year of residence without receiving credit toward the 30-hour minimum required for the Master's degree. (Such courses will, however, be listed on the student's transcript.)

Language skills may be tested during the first semester. Students whose language skills are unsatisfactory may be advised to take an advanced language skills course. These courses will be listed on the student's transcript, but will not count as part of the 30-hour minimum required for the M.A. degree.

Students receiving the M.A. degree from Purdue's School of Languages and Cultures must demonstrate, at a minimum, the ability:

- to speak the major language fluently, in a substantially correct form,

- to read and comprehend texts in the major language,
- to write the major language in a style completely understandable to a native speaker, even if neither elegant nor perfect, and
- to understand the language as spoken by native speakers.

The course in college teaching (519), required of new teaching assistants, may be counted toward the 30-hour requirement for the Master's degree.

All teaching assistants who are enrolled in SLC graduate programs are expected to take at least 15 hours of graduate or dual-level course work per calendar year toward their degree program. An average of two courses per academic year must be taken in the School of Languages and Cultures. Adjustments may be made where appropriate for the student's program (as determined by his/her committee).

Up to six hours of appropriate graduate-level work may be transferred from another university to apply to the Master's degree.

The student's advisory committee must be constituted during the second semester of residence. The major professor must be chosen by the fifth week of that semester. The committee will be established in conformity with the procedures outlined in the Bulletin and Policies and Procedures Manual:

"The student and the major professor are responsible for the selection of an advisory committee. The duties of that committee are to assist the student in the preparation of the plan of study and to offer advice during the period of graduate work, including research and thesis preparation when these are required components of the student's degree program.

The committee consists of the major professor and at least two other members of the graduate faculty, and must be approved by the head of the graduate program and the school dean (if so requested by the school). Members of the committee need not be faculty with whom the student has taken coursework, however, at least 51% of the committee members must have regular graduate faculty certification. The request to the dean of the Graduate School for appointment of the advisory committee is made on the same form and at the same time as the request for approval of the student's plan of study. The dean of the Graduate School may appoint additional members if it seems advisable." {Policies and Procedures Manual Sec. VII, A, 2}

In the School of Languages and Cultures, this committee consists of a major professor and at least two other faculty members. The advisory committee is responsible for ensuring that the student meets all of his/her requirements on schedule and that he/she pursues a rational program of studies.

Not later than the fifth week of the second semester of graduate work, the student must begin drafting a plan of study to be submitted for approval by the major professor and the members of the student's advisory committee. The definitive plan of study (revised, if need be) must be approved by the student's advisory committee, the Graduate Advisor for the Department, the Director of Graduate Studies, and the Head of the School prior to the end of the tenth week of the second semester of coursework.

The major professor and the candidate should consult regularly regarding the candidate's progress toward the degree. The candidate may be advised to withdraw from the program if progress is not satisfactory. A graduate student is expected to maintain a cumulative index of 3.0. Teaching assistants must demonstrate satisfactory performance both as teachers and as students in order to be eligible for renewal of their appointments. The performance of all graduate students will be reviewed by the faculty each year before assistantships are awarded for the following year.

#### **4. The Reading Lists and Final Examination**

The M.A. examination, written and oral, will be based upon the broad educational experience of the candidates, with allowance and opportunity for them to draw on the reading lists, outside readings, and general background gained in courses, rather than on any particular course work individuals might have completed. In each of the languages there is a distinct reading list for both the literature and the linguistics tracks. The duration of the written and oral examinations is established by each language department, and students are advised to consult with the major professor as to the particular departmental requirements.

At least one of the questions on the written examination is to be answered in the language of specialization, and at least a portion of the oral examination will be conducted in that language.

The examination will be graded by the members of the advisory committee assisted by any interested members of the faculty. The method of grading will be uniform within each language department. No student will be advanced to the oral examination unless the written part has been judged satisfactory by the committee. The oral examination will be administered within two weeks of the written examination.

The student may take the M.A. examination no more than three times. A repeated examination may not occur within the same registration period. Whether the candidate is successful or not, the report of the final examination must be completed, signed, and submitted online. The written examination papers of all candidates will be included in their permanent files.

Examinations are usually held in the tenth week of each semester; no part of the examination will be given when classes are not in session.

#### **5. The Thesis Option**

The candidate for the M.A. with the thesis option must complete the thesis, a substantial piece of original scholarship, and have the formatting approved before scheduling written and oral exams. As stated in the Graduate School Bulletin, a thesis option student "must prepare an acceptable thesis in residence. Research in absentia is not allowed for the Master's degree." For more information on the written exam see above: "The Reading Lists and Final Examination." The oral exam will be at least in part a defense of the student's thesis.

During the final semester at Purdue, any time prior to scheduling an appointment to deposit the thesis, the student must complete the online Graduate School exit questionnaire.

#### **6. Duration of Assistantship Funding**

Graduate teaching assistants who are successful in both their own coursework and in the fulfillment of teaching or other obligations associated with the assistantship will normally be assured funding for four semesters (excluding summer sessions).

#### **7. Exceptional Cases**

These school guidelines are intended to help students design effective programs of study which will contribute to their academic and professional growth. Exceptions to these guidelines may be granted in individual cases when a student's needs warrant special consideration. It will be incumbent on the student and/or his or her advisor to justify requests for exceptions via memorandum addressed to the

language/area graduate advisor, who will forward a recommendation to the Director of Graduate Studies prior to the filing of the Plan of Study. Requests for extension should be addressed to the language/area graduate advisor. Students should be advised that regulations in the Policies and Procedures Manual for Administering Graduate Student Programs and the Bulletin of the Graduate School cannot be overruled by the SLC Graduate Committee.

#### **8. Admission to Doctoral Study Upon Completion of the Masters Degree**

Continuation to doctoral study beyond the master's level is not automatic. Students wishing to seek admission to the doctoral program must write a letter to the SLC Director of Graduate Studies stating briefly why the student wishes to seek the Ph.D. degree. Such requests may be submitted prior to completion of the course work, but not prior to completion of the comprehensive written and oral examinations for the Master's degree.

**NOTE: It is the student's responsibility to comply with The School of Languages and Cultures and Graduate School guidelines and deadlines.**

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