Departmental M.A. and Ph.D. Policies and Procedures

Please note: These policies and procedures are provided only for reference and might not be completely up-to-date. For the authoritative departmental policies and procedures, please see the official version, available in the departmental office, Gowen 225.

1.0.0 Scope of Thesis, Research Papers, and Dissertation

1.1.0 The principal focus of research undertaken for M.A. theses and papers, and for Ph.D. dissertations must fall within the proper purview of the Department's academic responsibilities: the scholarly disciplines concerned with the humanistic study of the languages and literatures of South, Inner, and East Asia in all of their forms and manifestations. Language study is understood to encompass all aspects of linguistics and philology, including textual criticism, textual history, and formal textual analysis, as well as the usual areas of diachronic and synchronic linguistic research.

1.2.0 While M.A. theses and papers will differ greatly in scope and complexity from Ph.D. dissertations, each must demonstrate the candidate's ability to conduct original research on a well-defined topic, employing suitable methodology, and to present the results of her research in a coherent form that employs the conventional scholarly apparatus (footnotes, bibliography, etc.). (For further information, see “Master's Degree: Thesis Program.”) (Feminine pronouns are used in this and in subsequent passages for the sake of succinctness and brevity.)

1.2.1 Graduate level research must show an ability to work with sources in original languages and is expected to be more than translation or bibliographic compilation.

1.2.2 Original research is typically done under faculty supervision, while still allowing the maximum feasible opportunity for the student to engage her own research initiatives and procedures.

1.3.0 Research topics that normally fall within the purview of disciplines such as political science, history, medicine, philosophy, arts, etc., can be accommodated only if the primary approach is literary, philological, linguistic, or textual.

2.0.0 M.A. Program and Requirements

2.1.0 The M.A. program requires a minimum of 45 credits, with 18 credits of course work in numerically graded courses at the 400 and 500 level; 18 credits of courses at the 500 level and above; and 9 credits (Asian 700) for the thesis option. The non-thesis option
has for a requirement 45 credits of course work. The M.A. supervisory committee consists of a minimum of two graduate faculty members of this Department.

2.1.1 The student may present her research in either of two ways: (1) by submitting a thesis, in which case she takes at least 36 course credits and 9 thesis credits; or (2) by submitting two research papers, in which case all 45 minimum credits will be in course credits.

2.1.2 A graduate student is expected to maintain a 3.00 cumulative grade point average. Procedures for review of student progress and guidelines for determining status change recommendations (e.g., Warn, Probation, etc.) shall be in accordance with Graduate School Memorandum No. 16: “Continuation or Termination of Students in the Graduate School.”

2.1.3 The M.A. and Ph.D. programs are separate and independent. Admission to the M.A. program does not guarantee admission to the Ph.D. program. For procedures on bypassing the M.A., see sections 3.4.1.c and 3.4.1.d.

2.2.0 The student is encouraged to arrange an appointment with the language program coordinator as soon as possible after arrival in order to discuss the appointment of an academic adviser. Any special problems should be discussed at that time. During the second and no later than the third quarter, an appointment should be made with the academic adviser to develop a program of studies (PDF). Forms for this purpose can be obtained from the Academic Counselor. Filing a plan of study is a formal requirement of the M.A. program.

2.2.1 The program of studies is to be established on an individual basis in consultation with the academic adviser, and should take into account the student's background and special interests. It should incorporate specific course requirements as outlined in the individual departmental program descriptions. It must also constitute a comprehensive and interrelated set of courses within the language and literature framework.

2.3.0 After the student has completed an amount of course work that is sufficient in the opinion of the academic adviser to provide a general foundation, the student shall arrange with the adviser to take an examination administered by a two-member examination committee (PDF) that will test the student's general knowledge of the area.

The exact format of the examination, called the M.A. General Examination, will be determined by the faculty members of the student's program. In general, the following specifications apply:

1. The examination shall be written and the language of the examination shall be English.
2. The examination shall be four hours in length, consisting of two two-hour parts. Each part must be taken as a unit, and the two parts must be taken within the same five-day period (i.e., no more than three days may elapse between the parts).
3. A minimum of two faculty members must prepare, administer, and evaluate the examination in roughly equal proportions.
4. Within the parameters stated above, the structure and content of the examination may vary to suit the purposes of the examiners, but some effort shall be made to ensure that the examination has a reasonable breadth of coverage, including, in addition to a core component testing the student's knowledge of the language and literature in question, some aspects of literary, linguistic, and cultural history, broadly interpreted. The student must arrange to meet with her academic adviser in order to discuss the form of the examination and the expectations of the examiners. This meeting, which should be held no later than the quarter prior to the quarter in which the examination is to be taken, will constitute a final assessment of the student's preparation for the examination, and in connection with this, the student may be asked to compile a list of courses taken and readings done during the program of study.
2.3.1 The two-member examination committee will normally consist of the student's academic adviser as chairman and another member suggested by the adviser upon consultation with the student and approval by the other faculty in the specific area (e.g., Chinese, Japanese, Korean, South Asian).

2.3.2 In the event the student fails the examination, the examining committee may arrange for another to be given at an appropriate time. If the student's performance is especially poor and it is the opinion of the examining committee, after evaluating the student's grade reports, performance during course work and seminars, and overall research work and achievements, that the student has demonstrated no likelihood of successfully completing the degree, the student may be asked by her adviser to leave the program. (See section 2.1.2.)

2.4.0 After successful completion of the examination, the student may proceed to write a thesis or submit two research papers in lieu of the thesis. (In practice, the actual writing of the thesis may begin any time that the adviser and the student agree it can be conveniently included in the student's program.) As a piece of research on a narrowly-defined topic, it is properly presented for consideration by all members of the M.A. examining committee only after the student has demonstrated a general competence in the field.

2.4.1 After satisfactory completion of course work, passing of the requisite examinations, and presentation of acceptable research work, the student will be deemed to have satisfied the requirements for the M.A. degree.

2.4.2 A copy of the successful candidate's research (whether thesis or research papers) will be kept in the student's file along with comments of the examining committee and their specific recommendations as to whether or not the student should be encouraged to continue for a Ph.D. degree. These recommendations should be included regardless of whether the student has expressed her intention to continue for the Ph.D. or not.

Coordinators of language programs change from year to year. Please consult with the office to learn the current language program coordinator for your area of study.

3.0.0 Ph.D. Program and Requirements

3.1.0 No specific number of course credits is prescribed for the Ph.D. degree by the Department (the Graduate School requires a minimum of 90 credits) but the student should refer to the individual program descriptions for course requirements. In addition, the student should familiarize herself with the "Doctoral Degree Requirements," particularly those items relating to course-level and residence requirements.

3.1.1 A graduate student is expected to maintain a 3.00 cumulative grade point average. (See section 2.1.2.)

3.2.0 The student should arrange an appointment with the language program coordinator as soon as possible after arrival in order to discuss the appointment of an academic adviser and development of a program of studies. The filing of a program of studies is a formal requirement of the Ph.D. program.

3.3.0 A student who is pursuing the Ph.D. degree is required to pass an an examination in a language other than the language chosen for specialization. This examination must be passed before she can proceed to the doctoral General Examination.

3.3.1 During the second and no later than the third quarter after the student has started graduate studies, an appointment should be made with the academic adviser to develop a plan of language study (PDF). The plan of language study should clearly state the
reasons for selecting a specific language to satisfy this additional language requirement, how it is relevant to the student's field of study, and the level of proficiency the student should attain in view of those reasons, as well as a time schedule, determining which courses to be taken when, which works to be read when, and how the student will generally endeavor to work towards this proficiency. The goal may be proficiency to read texts of all sorts, including specific journals, or monographs by specific authors productive in the field. In this case student and faculty will prepare a reading list (that can of course be revised in the course of the study). This serves the purpose of allowing the student to become acquainted with literature crucial to the field of study, as deemed useful in consultation with the advisor. Alternatively, if speaking/listening language proficiency or linguistic analysis is the goal, an oral exam or a specific course requirement, or both, may be specified in consultation with the adviser.

3.4.0 No student will be considered for admission to precandidacy for the Ph.D. degree who has not completed at least two quarters of graduate study in this Department. (University of Washington General Catalog, “Graduate Student Level Classifications,” Category 3, Precandidate: “Having had a doctoral committee appointed and thus having been admitted into the doctoral program but not yet having completed the Graduate School General Examination.”)

3.4.1 No student may be considered for admission to precandidacy until she has completed the minimum 45 course credits for the M.A. degree and has passed the written M.A. comprehensive examination.

3.4.1.a Students who have taken an M.A. in this Department will have satisfied these requirements automatically.

3.4.1.b Students who bypass the M.A. must satisfy these requirements in their entirety.

3.4.1.c Students entering the Department with an M.A. from another University of Washington department or from another institution must satisfy these requirements in their entirety.

3.4.1.d Students entering the Department with an M.A. from another institution in the same language and literature area as the proposed Ph.D. work will be exempted from taking the written M.A. comprehensive examination in this Department.

3.4.2 A student desiring to be admitted to precandidacy for the Ph.D. must present a formal petition to that effect (PDF), explaining as concretely as possible her academic plans and goals, and indicating the faculty member(s) with whom she expects primarily to study. Petition forms are available in the Department office. The principal part of the petition is a statement of purpose that the student is to append to the form. The statement may be whatever length is deemed appropriate, and should discuss in precise terms the relation between the studies the student has pursued up to this point and proposed Ph.D. work. It may include a specification of the three fields that the student intends to establish, but it does not have to include them.

3.4.2.a In addition to the formal petition, the student desiring admission to precandidacy should prepare as supporting documents: a copy of her M.A. thesis, or appropriate seminar papers, or both; her written M.A. examination papers; and transcripts of all graduate work done. (Note that, when the final copy of a thesis or of the papers is not available, clean penultimate drafts are acceptable. The student should bear in mind that the better the version submitted, the better the application will appear.)

3.4.2.b Beyond these items, a student may ask that any relevant material be included in the file and taken into consideration, for example, records of honors and awards, professional accomplishments, paper presentations, publications, and so forth. The normal procedure will be to cull from the student's M.A. file appropriate materials to be included in the Ph.D. program application file.
3.4.2.c The petition is the formal means by which a student expresses her desire to be considered for admission to the Ph.D. program, and is to be filed with the Department Academic Counselor, who will open the necessary file and handle all of the administrative work involved in the application.

3.4.2.d Students will be informed in writing by the Graduate Program Coordinator whether or not they have been admitted to the Ph.D. program within four weeks of completing their files for admission. Students receiving an M.A. degree in this Department who wish to be admitted without delay into the Ph.D. program must, therefore, complete their application file by the eighth Friday of the quarter in which they expect to receive their M.A. degree. Otherwise the student must file the Petition to Proceed to the Ph.D. program by the end of the first quarter after the M.A. degree has been received (Summer Quarters excepted). To be assured of knowing the outcome of the petition before the end of the quarter in question students must file their petitions by the end of the eighth week of the quarter. Failure to file by the end of the quarter after having obtained an M.A. degree will have the effect of signaling the student's intention not to continue, and the student will be expected not to register further. Students who attempt to register for more than one quarter after the M.A. degree has been received from this Department but who have not filed a petition to be admitted into the Ph.D. program will be asked to withdraw from the program. In the event that a student does not withdraw upon such a request, the Department will recommend to the Graduate School that the student be dismissed.

3.4.2.e For students entering the Department with M.A. degrees from other University of Washington departments or from other institutions, the petition cannot be filed before all of the M.A. equivalency requirements (course/credit requirements as specified in section 3.4.1 and following) have been satisfied. Students entering the Department with an M.A. in the same language and literature as that of the proposed Ph.D. work will be exempted from taking the written M.A. comprehensive examinations in this Department, and submission of written M.A. examination papers will not be required (though students may elect optionally to take the written M.A. comprehensive examination in order to strengthen their application to the Ph.D. program).

Once those requirements have been satisfied the student must file the petition to proceed into the Ph.D. program by the end of the following quarter (Summer Quarters excepted). Students who fail to file by this time will be expected to withdraw from the program.

3.4.3.a Once a file is complete, the Academic Counselor will notify all of the graduate faculty in the program in question of the application via a dated evaluation form, accompanied by a copy of the student's petition. Each faculty member then bears the responsibility of scrutinizing the applicant's file (available in the Academic Counselor's office), and of returning the evaluation form with a recommendation for admission or not. Only two options are available: yes or no. Faculty members must choose one or the other or abstain. (Abstentions reduce the effectiveness of the process.)

3.4.3.b When all of the faculty responses have been received by the Academic Counselor, or by the end of a period of three weeks from the time when the applicant's file became complete, whichever comes first, the Academic Counselor will forward the faculty recommendation forms together with the applicant's file to the coordinator of the language program in question, who will have the authority and responsibility for making the formal decision. The language program coordinator, may, of course, consult informally with any faculty member about the advisability of a particular admission, but in cases of strong differences of opinion, the language program coordinator must make every effort to evaluate both sides of the question fairly. The written faculty responses to the application will be considered confidential, and will be so treated by the language program coordinator. They will not become a part of the student's permanent file.

3.4.3.c In the event that, for whatever reason, after informal consultations with other faculty, the language program coordinator
cannot arrive at an appropriate decision, he or she may call a meeting of the program faculty so that the question can be discussed *viva voce*, and a decision can be reached. If this recourse fails to yield a decision, the faculty shall prepare written summaries of the arguments for and against admission, no more than two typescript pages for each summary, and these, together with the application file, shall be turned over to the Department chair, who will decide the question as he or she sees fit.

**3.4.3.d** The decision will be delivered to the applicant by means of a letter written by the Graduate Program Coordinator within four weeks of the date when the application file became complete, except in cases where consultations and meetings are required such that the four-week deadline cannot be met. In such cases, the student shall be notified of the delay and given a reasonable estimate of when a decision is likely to be forthcoming.

**3.4.3.e** In the event of an unfavorable decision, the student may, within the time limitations specified in section 3.4.2.d, repeat the petition and application process. Unless the new file is significantly different from the file for the first application, the same decision may be expected.

**3.4.3.f** If the time limitations specified in section 3.4.2.d have been exceeded, the petition and application process is no longer valid for students whose original application was unsuccessful. Such students must initiate a new application for admission to the Department.

**3.5.0** Once accepted into the Ph.D. program the student shall formally establish her/his three fields of specialization, at least two of which must be taken with faculty in the Department of Asian Languages and Literature. The three fields in the aggregate must represent a broad coverage of language and literature. No Ph.D. program can be accepted that does not have at least one field in *literature* and at least one in *language* (including linguistics and philology).

**3.5.1** A statement shall be entered into the student's file indicating the fields for which she is studying and the faculty members who are guiding her in each of the fields. These faculty members shall constitute the student's Supervisory Committee, whose appointment will then be made official by the Academic Counselor to the Graduate School. The Graduate School Representative (GSR) should also be appointed at this time. The choice of the Graduate School Representative is to be made by the student's faculty adviser in consultation with the student and other program faculty. The Graduate School requires that the Supervisory Committee be appointed at least four months prior to the General Examination.

**3.6.0** To ensure that the requirements for either M.A. or Ph.D. programs are closely adhered to, a checklist of all requirements should be made to be kept in the student's file. As a student completes a requirement, the Academic Counselor will indicate (by initialing each item) that the requirement has been met. Samples of the checklists shall be attached to these Policies and Procedures.

**3.7.0** Oral examinations for Ph.D. candidates and the defense of the Ph.D. dissertation are, in principle, open to anyone to attend. The Department encourages students still pursuing course work to attend such examinations to become better acquainted with examples of questions that are put to the examinees, the depth and breadth of inquiries, and the challenges and objections that are raised during these oral examinations and defenses.

**3.8.0** It shall be the responsibility of the student to seek the advice of the individual members of their Supervisory Committee regarding preparation for their study toward the three field examinations, and to keep the appropriate faculty members apprised of their progress in this regard. No faculty member is obligated to provide an examination on short notice for a student who has failed to keep him or her informed of these matters. Faculty members are, on the other hand, required to evaluate the student's progress and either to administer the examination or to recommend remedial study as appropriate.
3.8.1 It shall likewise be the responsibility of the student to keep her faculty adviser informed of her progress and to provide him or her sufficient advance notice of her readiness to be examined in each of her three fields.

3.8.2 A field examination may be scheduled at the request of the student or the decision of the supervising faculty member for the field in question, when either the student or the faculty member judges that an appropriate amount of time has been spent on preparation of the field.

3.8.3 After the student has successfully completed the last of their Field Examinations, the chair of the Supervisory Committee will schedule an oral General Examination. This may be scheduled no earlier than four months from the date that the Supervisory Committee is officially appointed to the Graduate School via MyGrad. Upon successfully completing the General Examination, the student is admitted to candidacy and proceeds to write the dissertation. See the University of Washington Graduate School Policies and Procedures, “Admission to Candidacy for Doctoral Degree.”

3.9.0 An informal reading committee will be appointed to evaluate periodically the candidate's research progress. The committee will consist of the student's faculty adviser and one or two others. (This is not the Reading Committee to be formally designated by the Dean of the Graduate School.)

3.9.1 The candidate is expected to present to the reading committee a detailed prospectus (about twenty pages) explaining the topic of her projected dissertation, its originality and significance, a bibliography of works related to the topic, and the feasibility of the plan in view of the time and resources available. The committee's written comments on the prospectus shall be presented to the faculty adviser, who will convey them to the candidate.

3.9.2 The candidate is expected to report on the progress of her research at least once a year and to submit written sections of her research to her faculty adviser. No reading committee member may refuse to read preliminary chapters or decline to evaluate a candidate's ongoing research.

3.9.3 It is expected that a student will be registered at least two quarters at the University of Washington after passing the General Examination and before a warrant is authorized for the Final Examination.

3.10.1 The chair, as well as the other members of the formal Reading Committee, shall have a minimum of three weeks to read and study a final draft copy of the whole dissertation before signing the “Request for Final Examination,” which is itself due in the Graduate School three weeks before the scheduled Final Examination. Candidates should allow, therefore, a minimum of six weeks between submission of the first draft copy of the complete dissertation and the Final Examination (Defense).

3.10.2 The Reading Committee can in addition request at least two weeks to check on the final form and text of the candidate's dissertation before the Defense to insure that the comments, reservations, and suggestions made by the members of the Reading Committee have been taken into consideration.

3.10.3 The Ph.D. candidate is not bound to follow the opinion or to accept the corrections and suggestions made by the Reading Committee, provided she has taken cognizance of them and is ready to defend her position at the defense.

4.0.0 Committees

Each graduate student in this Department shall have a Supervisory Committee or other appropriate supervisory faculty members to guide her through the successive steps of her program. Each student shall have a Reading Committee, which will be concerned with
the research and actual writing of the thesis or dissertation. Finally, a Grievance Committee shall be constituted by the Department Chair on an *ad hoc* basis to offer solutions when disagreements arise between members of the Supervisory Committee, the Reading Committee, or between the student and the members of the committees.

4.2.0 The Ph.D. Supervisory Committee will normally consist of a minimum of three AL&L graduate faculty members and one Graduate School Representative (one from each field; in exceptional cases additional members may be necessary) but must consist of at least four members, three of whom will belong to this Department.

4.3.0 The appointment of the members of the committees shall be done by the chairman of the Supervisory Committee after consultation with the relevant faculty, and with the concurrence of the Graduate School. All appointments shall be made known to all faculty. In case outside faculty participation is required, the chairman may invite such an individual. The requirement that at least two of the Supervisory Committee members must be from this Department remains.

4.3.1 At regular intervals in the year the Graduate Program Coordinator will prepare a list of the existing Supervisory Committees, giving the names of the M.A. and Ph.D. candidates and their respective committees.

4.3.2 At least once a year, faculty of the separate programs in the Department should meet to discuss and evaluate the progress of the students. It is the responsibility of the Graduate Program Coordinator to transmit the substance of the annual evaluation to students in a timely fashion.

4.3.3 No member of a committee shall be removed without his or her knowledge, nor shall any member be allowed to remove himself from a committee without sufficient cause. All new committee members shall also be approved after consultation with the relevant faculty and the Graduate School and their appointments be made known to all the faculty.

4.3.4 The chair of a Supervisory Committee is charged with informing other members of the substance of the candidate's program, any changes that take place, or any other matter that is of legitimate concern to the other committee members.

5.0.0 Other Procedural Details and Matters of Policy

5.1.0 A graduate student in this Department is not permitted to register for any courses offered by this Department on an S/NS basis.

5.1.1 The Graduate School requires that an M.A. degree be completed within six years, a Ph.D. within ten years from the date of first admission as a graduate student.

5.2.0 A student is required to be registered for the quarter in which she takes an M.A. General Examination, Ph.D. General Examination, or Ph.D. Dissertation Defense. A student must be registered as a full-time or part-time student at the University during the quarter the Master's degree, the Candidate's certificate, or Doctoral degree is conferred. For further details, see the University of Washington Graduate School Policies and Procedures, "Final Quarter Registration."

5.2.1 Aside from fulfilling the academic requirements in this Department, the student must submit a review request for the Master's degree via MyGrad within the deadlines of the quarter in which she expects the degree to be conferred. The filing of the request is the responsibility solely of the student, but deadline dates will be posted on the bulletin board outside the Department office. See "Application for Master's Degree."

5.2.2 In order to obtain credit for a course, a student should convert an Incomplete into a passing grade no later than the last day of
her next quarter in residence. Under no circumstances can an Incomplete be converted into a passing grade after a lapse of two years or more. A grade of Incomplete is the result of prior discussion and agreement between student and instructor; it is not an automatic privilege.

5.2.3 A graduate student should meet the continuous enrollment requirement and maintain continuous active status either by being registered full or part time or by being officially on leave. A Department on-leave petition may be obtained from the Academic Counselor, and will be approved or denied by the Department Graduate Program Coordinator and the student’s faculty adviser. Students looking to be on leave must also submit a request via MyGrad, by the deadline of the first quarter the student is requesting, along with the current fee. If the student is an international graduate student, International Student Services will also have to approve the MyGrad request. Students may check the progress of their request via MyGrad. The time spent on leave is counted in the six years allowed to complete the requirements for a Master’s degree and in the ten years allowed to complete the Ph.D. On-leave status for graduate students enrolled in this Department is limited to four academic quarters, i.e., one full academic year. Any extension beyond this period must be justified by the student in a written petition to the Graduate Program Coordinator and approved by the student’s academic adviser. No student will be allowed on-leave status until he has completed at least three quarters in residence; exceptions may be made upon recommendation by a committee consisting of the student’s academic adviser, the Graduate Program Coordinator, and the Department chairman.

5.3.0 If a graduate student finds a change of registration necessary, the Graduate Program Coordinator should be contacted during the first week of the quarter. There is a service charge for a change of registration made after the first week of the quarter.

5.4.0 The Academic Counselor should be notified of any change in a student’s local or permanent phone, email, or mailing address.

5.5.0 The University of Washington Graduate School Policies and Procedures, “Master’s Degree Requirements” and “Doctoral Degree Requirements” stipulates that a student must satisfy the requirements for the degree that are in force at the time the degree is awarded.

5.6.0 Upon acceptance to the Graduate School, each student in the Department will receive a copy of these Policies and Procedures.

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Related Forms
- Program of Studies Form (PDF)
- Dept. MA & PhD Supervisory Committee & Faculty Adviser Appointment Form (PDF)
- Plan of Language Studies Form (PDF)
- Petition to Proceed Cover Form (PDF)

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