

PHD IN LINGUISTICS

Degree Requirements, PhD in Linguistics

Coursework

Students are required to take a minimum of 57 credits beyond the B.A./B.S.:

- 48 credits in graded courses;
- 9 credits in dissertation research.

Students entering with an M.A./M.S. in an appropriate area as determined by the department may transfer up to 9 credits, and all transfer credits must be in accord with the rules of the Graduate College; approval of transferred degrees and courses is at the discretion of the Committee on Graduate Studies of the Department of Linguistics and Cognitive Science.

1. Requirements are listed in the [Graduate Catalog](#).
2. Students must also satisfy all the requirements for academic progress as specified in the [academic progress policy guidelines](#).

No course can satisfy two requirements. Transfer credit for these requirements may be accepted, but only under the conditions stated above.

Core Courses and Timeline. All core courses listed in (1) above should be taken in the first year, as they provide crucial skills needed for conducting any kind of theoretical and/or experimental work in the field. If a student has a good reason to extend the timeline for completing these courses (e.g., needing to work in a lab during their first year), they may complete up to two of the required courses in their second year. However, to do so, they must obtain prior approval from the graduate director (in consultation with their advisor, if their advisor is not the graduate director). The full set of core courses should be completed by the end of the second year. If a student finds it necessary to complete these courses beyond the second year, they must discuss this possibility with the graduate director first.

Independent Study and Substitutions. Independent study will not count toward the total number of credits required for the degree without prior approval from the Committee on Graduate Studies. Students should consult with their advisor each semester before they register for courses. (In most cases, the advisor for first-year students will be the graduate director.)

Students may substitute other courses for those listed above only by petitioning in writing the Director of Graduate Studies. The substitution must be approved by the departmental Committee on Graduate Studies.

Other requirements for the degree:

Qualifying Papers

Students are required to submit two Qualifying Papers that are judged to meet professional standards of scholarship by the Qualifying Paper committee, which consists of the primary advisor

for the paper and a second reader. The two papers must be in distinct areas of linguistics, and no faculty member can serve as the primary advisor for both papers. The purpose of Qualifying Papers is to train students in learning the standards required for submitting papers to conferences and academic journals. It is these standards that we will use to judge the quality of a Qualifying Paper.

Qualifying Paper 1. A substantial draft of the **first paper** must be submitted to the student's qualifying paper advisor by the end of the **Fall semester** of the second year. The advisor must certify to the Graduate Committee that an acceptable draft has been submitted. By the **end of the student's second year**, the final version of the first paper must be submitted and approved by both the advisor and the Graduate Committee. Possible grades are Pass, Revise, and Fail. The grade of Revise indicates that in the judgment of the committee, the paper will be acceptable with revision. The grade of Fail indicates that the student should submit a different paper to meet the requirements. Students whose paper has received the grade of Revise or Fail will be allowed one semester to satisfactorily complete the requirement for the research paper. Course papers may be submitted as a qualifying paper, but a grade of A in a course does not imply that the paper is acceptable as a qualifying paper.

Students who do not comply with these deadlines will no longer be in good academic standing, which may result in the discontinuation of the students' funding. If one semester passes without a student meeting these deadlines, the student will be dismissed from the program. Students may petition the Graduate Committee in writing for an extension to these deadlines. The petition must be submitted prior to the deadlines and should explain any exceptional circumstances which made the timely completion of the requirement impossible. Petitions should also include a supporting letter from the academic advisor.

Qualifying Paper 2. A substantial draft of the **second paper** must be submitted to the student's qualifying paper advisor by the end of the **Fall semester of the third year**. The advisor must certify to the Graduate Committee that an acceptable draft has been submitted. By the **end of the student's third year**, the final version of the second paper must be submitted and approved by both the advisor and the Graduate Committee. Possible grades are Pass, Revise, and Fail. The grade of Revise indicates that in the judgment of the committee, the paper will be acceptable with revision. The grade of Fail indicates that the student should submit a different paper to meet the requirements. Students whose paper has received the grade of Revise or Fail will be allowed one semester to satisfactorily complete the requirement for the research paper. Course papers may be submitted as a qualifying paper, but a grade of A in a course does not imply that the paper is acceptable as a qualifying paper.

Students who do not comply with these deadlines will no longer be in good academic standing, which may result in the discontinuation of the students' funding. If one semester passes without a student meeting these deadlines, the student will be dismissed from the program. Students may petition the Graduate Committee in writing for an extension to these deadlines. The petition must be submitted prior to the deadlines and should explain any exceptional circumstances which made the timely completion of the requirement impossible. Petitions should also include a supporting letter from the academic advisor.

Advanced Seminars

Both before and after advancement to candidacy, all students are expected to participate in advanced courses and research forums. Specifically, all students who have not yet advanced to candidacy are required to enroll in at least one advanced seminar at the 3-credit level per semester; all students who have advanced to candidacy and are in sustaining status are encouraged to attend one or more advanced seminars each semester. All students are expected to participate in other departmental-level research forums related to the student's area of specialization (e.g., departmental colloquia, seminars, and brown bags), as well as lab meetings in their area of specialization).

Dissertation Prospectus

The final requirement for admission to candidacy is the acceptance of the Dissertation Prospectus. By the end of the Fall semester of their fourth year, each student must choose a dissertation director, form a dissertation committee, and submit a Dissertation Prospectus for approval. The dissertation director must hold a faculty appointment in the Department of Linguistics and Cognitive Science. There must be at least three other members, chosen by the student, that are acceptable to the dissertation director, one of whom must be outside the student's major area. Further information about the composition of dissertation committees can be found in the [Graduate Catalog](#).

The dissertation committee will meet with the student to examine the proposal and the qualifications of the student to carry out the proposed research. The results of this review will be acceptance into candidacy or a re-examination to be held at a later date to be determined by the dissertation director. The committee may also require further course work if deficiencies are found.

Students whose research proposals involve human volunteers must comply with all University and governmental requirements, including obtaining human subjects approval from the University's Office of the Vice Provost for Research.

Admission to Doctoral Candidacy

A student who has advanced to candidacy has completed all of the requirements for the Ph.D. apart from the dissertation. Once a student has advanced to candidacy and completed the minimum number of dissertation credits, it is possible to enroll with 'sustaining' status. In order to advance to candidacy, all of the requirements listed above must be completed.

As part of the Ph.D. requirements, students must also complete 9 credits of dissertation research. 9 credits of pre-candidacy study may also count towards satisfying this requirement, provided that they are taken no earlier than the full semester immediately preceding advancement to candidacy.

Dissertation

Students who have completed all of the above requirements are allowed to write the dissertation. The dissertation director has the responsibility of distributing the dissertation to the readers in ample time for the dissertation to be read adequately; the director also must see to it that the dissertation committee meet when necessary as a group to discuss the progress of the dissertation. The committee is to administer a final oral defense of the dissertation. Certification of successful defense is then submitted to the Graduate College of the University.

Assessment of Academic Progress

In addition to the academic progress policy guidelines of the Graduate College, the Graduate Committee closely evaluates students' progress each semester, based on the students' performance in classes, timely satisfaction of program requirements, performance as teaching or research assistants (if applicable), conference presentations, publications, and other qualitative factors that demonstrate progress towards successful research and scholarship.

Students taking the basic courses specified above (Advanced Phonology, Advanced Syntax, Experimental Linguistics, Language and Cognition) are evaluated twice a semester: at midterm and at the end of the semester. The instructor reports midterm and final grades to the Director of Graduate Studies. Students must receive a minimum final grade of B in each of these courses. If a student receives a final grade below a B in any of these courses, their case is evaluated by the Graduate Committee within two weeks of final grades being posted. The Graduate Committee will decide on one of two remedies: (1) The student will be immediately dismissed from the program; (2) The student will be allowed to enroll in courses for the following semester, but they will be Under Review for Approval for Continuation in the Program during the following semester. This means that they must pass all courses taken in this semester with a grade of B or higher, or they will be subject to dismissal at the end of the semester. If they succeed in achieving grades of B or higher for that semester, then they will be removed from being Under Review and will be in good academic standing once again. The Graduate Committee may also require them to repeat the failed course(s) as soon as the course(s) in question are offered again, and they must achieve a grade of B or higher in each one. Failure to do so will result in the student once again being placed Under Review for Approval for Continuation in the Program.

When the Graduate Committee finds a student's performance less than satisfactory, the student will receive a letter stating the reasons for the concern and what the student must do to improve performance. Lack of sufficient improvement/progress after two or more warning letters may result in discontinuation of the student's funding or dismissal from the program.

Termination for Failure to Fulfill the Requirements

As described under individual requirements above, students who do not successfully complete any of the requirements may be terminated from the program. Students can grieve termination for failure by a written application to the Committee on Graduate Studies within 14 days of notification of failure. Further information about the grievance process can be found on the [website for the Graduate College](#).

Course Load and Advisement

All students will be assigned a temporary first-year advisor, typically the Graduate Director, when they enter the program. Since it is important for students to begin to work with faculty members in their area of specialization early in their academic career, they are encouraged to choose an advisor in their area of specialization as soon as they feel ready. Until students make their choice, the temporary advisor continues to advise the students. Students are free to change advisors at any time, but are required to inform department staff of the change.

The departmental Committee on Graduate Studies will continue to monitor students' progress throughout their program of study. The Committee on Graduate Studies will meet to discuss and evaluate the progress of every student in the program. The results of this procedure will be communicated to the students.

Financial Aid

The Department of Linguistics and Cognitive Science offers a small number of teaching assistantships, graduate assistantships, and/or research assistantships to Ph.D. students. The awards are granted to full-time students, normally for five years (the amount of time a full-time student needs to complete the Ph.D.), and are renewed each year based on satisfactory progress in the program.

Students funded by the department normally work as TAs/graders for undergraduate courses or RAs in a lab setting. The Department therefore requires that first-year students whose native language is not English successfully complete the University's ITA program and pass the UDIA and the University's Speak Test with a score of 45. The ITA program is administered in August and January; we strongly advise students to complete it in August. Students must score 50 or higher on the Speak Test by the start of their second semester and need to establish proof of their English proficiency by retaking the University UDIA and SPEAK tests, scoring 250 and 55, respectively by the start of their second year, or they will not continue to receive funding.

Students who are appointed as TAs on a nine-month contract are expected to work an average of 20 hours per week, except during official university holiday breaks (Dec 22- Jan 2/3) and the week of Spring Break. All other absences from campus (for example, extended absences during the winter term) have to be approved by the departmental Committee on Graduate Studies.

Students on TA contracts are evaluated at the end of each semester by the Director of Graduate Studies; students on RA contracts are evaluated by their research supervisor. Evaluations have to be forwarded to the Director of Graduate Studies and the Department Chair. TA and RA support can be discontinued if the evaluations are not satisfactory.

Assistantship renewal is contingent on satisfactory progress and being in good academic standing.

For more information, please contact:

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