

Graduate Handbook

Linguistics Program

For Students Admitted Prior to Academic Year 2015-2016

Academic year 2014-2015

Last Revised March 16, 2015

The Linguistics Program Graduate Handbook supplements The Graduate School's policies and procedures. The following pages contain information about program-specific policies, procedures, and regulations. Students are subject to the regulations in effect at the time of matriculation. It is your responsibility as a student to be aware of these and The Graduate School's regulations.

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Program Administration

The primary responsibilities of each administrative office is given below. A list of current individuals filling each of the offices listed below is available on the Department's website (<http://www.linguistics.northwestern.edu>).

- Director of Graduate Studies: Any academic issues (curriculum, advising, department policy, record keeping); advising of first year students in the graduate program.
- Department Assistant: Financial issues.
- Graduate Programs Assistant: Other administrative issues (e.g., filing of TGS forms, event scheduling)
- Admissions Officer: Graduate program admissions.

Required Courses

PhD program

Coursework requirements	Means of meeting requirements
Sound Structure (3 quarters)	LING 350, LING 450-1, 2
Syntax (3 quarters)	LING 360, LING 460-1, 2
Meaning (3 quarters)	LING 370, LING 372, LING 470-1
Morphology (1 quarter)	LING 361
Comparative Linguistics(1 quarter)	Any LING 34X course
Methods (2 quarters)	LING 330 plus an additional course in statistics, computation, or laboratory technique (normally in another department).

MA program

Coursework requirements	Means of meeting requirements
Sound Structure (2 quarters)	LING 350, LING 450-1
Syntax (2 quarters)	LING 360, LING 460-1
Meaning (2 quarters)	LING 370, LING 372 or LING 470-1
Methods (1 quarter)	LING 330

PhD Program: Qualifying Papers

Before being admitted to candidacy, PhD students must demonstrate their research skills by having two Qualifying Papers approved by a qualifying paper committee (consisting of a primary advisor and a second reader). Both Qualifying Papers must be original research contributions to the field, suitable for a conference presentation or publication. One Qualifying Paper must demonstrate the student's ability to conduct independent research, corresponding to the level of first author of a potentially multi-authored work. This paper must be presented to the Department, and can be used to satisfy the requirements for a master's thesis. The other may be either independent or collaborative. For a collaborative project, the student must have made substantial contributions justifying a co-authorship, but does not need to be the first author.

Language Requirement

PhD Program

To advance to candidacy in the Northwestern Linguistics program, the student must be competent in three natural languages – the native language plus two additional languages.

- If the native language is English, then the student must demonstrate advanced competence in a second language (equivalent to two years of college study with a grade of B or better) and moderate competence in a third language, as determined by the Director for Graduate Studies.
- If the student's native, second, and third languages are all Romance and/or Germanic languages, then the student is required to take one quarter of additional coursework to provide greater understanding of language diversity. This requirement may be fulfilled either by Linguistics 341 (Language Typology) or by Linguistics 342 (Structure of Various Languages) in years when this course focuses on a non-Romance, non-Germanic language.
- In order to demonstrate competence in a language, a student may [1] present a transcript showing the relevant coursework, [2] pass an exam, [3] take a 200- or 300-level language course, or [4] take an intensive language course during the summer.

MA Program

Students must demonstrate proficiency in a language other than English, at a level equivalent to two years of college study, with an average grade of at least B.

PhD Program: Advancing to Candidacy/The Dissertation Prospectus

By the end of the summer quarter of Year 3, PhD students must be admitted to candidacy. In addition to completing the course requirements, language requirements, and qualifying papers, they must identify a preliminary topic, a primary advisor, and a provisional committee for their Dissertation.

By the end of the summer quarter of Year 4, PhD students must successfully defend a Dissertation Prospectus. The specific requirements for the Dissertation Prospectus are developed in consultation with the Dissertation committee (consisting of the primary research advisor as chair and at least two other committee members). The Prospectus and Prospectus defense must demonstrate to the Dissertation committee that the student has a well-defined area of research, has identified a problem to investigate within this area, knows the relevant literature, and has developed a clear research strategy. The oral Prospectus defense will provide the student with an opportunity to receive feedback from the committee on the direction of his/her research. The Prospectus defense is closed.

PhD Program: Dissertation Completion

A Dissertation must be completed by the end of the 5th year of study. Students must first pass a public oral defense. A meeting of the full committee with the student two weeks before the public oral defense is strongly encouraged. A full draft of the dissertation must be submitted to the members of the Dissertation committee at least two weeks before the defense or committee meeting. Following the defense, the student must make any revisions required by the committee. The full committee must then approve the final document prior to filing.

MA Program: MA Thesis

Students must demonstrate their research skills by having a thesis approved by a committee (consisting of a primary advisor and a second reader). It must be an original research contribution to the field, suitable for a conference presentation or publication. It must demonstrate the student's ability to conduct independent research, corresponding to the level of first author of a potentially multi-authored work.

Responsible Conduct of Research Requirement

Students must complete Responsible Conduct of Research Training during their first year of study.

Advising and Committee Membership

Advising timeline: PhD Students

Year 1: Director of Graduate Studies advises all students; no student action needed.

Years 2-3: Students must identify primary research advisors for supervision of each of their Qualifying Papers, along with a second reader for each paper.

Years 4-5: Students must identify a committee chair for their dissertation, along with a dissertation committee consisting of the chair and at least two additional members. The committee chair will also be the student's primary research advisor during this time.

Advising timeline: MA Students

Year 1: Director of Graduate Studies advises all students; no student action needed.

Year 2: Students must identify a primary research advisor for supervision of their thesis, along with a second reader.

In addition to regularly consulting with their primary research advisor, students should arrange for some form of annual update for their entire committee.

Advising eligibility

- Primary research advisor (Qualifying Paper, MA Thesis, or Dissertation): A faculty member of the Department of Linguistics and on the Graduate School Faculty. The Qualifying Paper advisors and Dissertation advisor need not be the same individual. Two faculty members may serve as co-advisors.
- Second reader of the Qualifying Papers or MA Thesis: A member of the Northwestern Faculty or another qualified researcher approved by the Director of Graduate Studies. For an MA Thesis (or a Qualifying Paper used to satisfy the requirements for a Master's Degree), the second reader must be on the Graduate School Faculty.
- Dissertation committee member: A member of the Northwestern Faculty or another qualified researcher approved by the Director of Graduate Studies. The committee must have in total at least 3 members (including the chair or co-chairs). At least 2 of these 3 members must be on the Graduate School Faculty.

Students identify the faculty members that will advise their research using the Graduate Student Tracking System (<http://gsts.northwestern.edu>). Approval of advising arrangements by program staff will be recorded by this system.

If the student and/or primary research advisor believe at any point that the student would be better served by a different advisor, the student must identify another advisor or be subject to possible exclusion from the graduate program. In such a situation, the student must immediately contact the Director of Graduate Studies, who will consult with the faculty to determine a deadline by which the student must identify a new advisor.

Changes to second readers and committee members may be made at the discretion of the student and primary advisor. Faculty that can no longer serve in these roles must promptly notify the affected student(s).

Students should notify all faculty affected by any changes to advising (including anyone who will no longer be advising the student), and promptly update records in the Graduate Student Tracking System.

Progressing Through Program: Timeline overview

Note: Each deadline is at the conclusion of the listed quarter (e.g., Q4 means at the end of the fourth quarter of study, the summer following the first academic year)

PhD Program

Year One Milestones

- Q4: Completion of Responsible Conduct of Research Training.

Year Three Milestones

- Q11: Presentation of Qualifying Paper to Department.
- Q12: Advance to candidacy
 - Approval of completed qualifying papers by qualifying paper committees.
 - Completion of all course requirements.
 - Satisfaction of Foreign Language requirement.
 - Identification of preliminary topic, a primary advisor and provisional committee for the Dissertation.

Year Four Milestones

- Q16: Successful oral defense of approved Dissertation Prospectus.

Year Five Milestones

- Q20: Successful oral defense of approved Dissertation.

MA Program

Year One Milestones

- Q4: Completion of Responsible Conduct of Research Training.

Year Two Milestones

- Q8: Completion of Program
 - Approval of MA thesis by committee.
 - Completion of all course requirements.
 - Satisfaction of Foreign Language requirement.

Graduate Student Responsibilities

PhD Program: Teaching and research assistantships

In quarters where PhD students do not receive fellowship funding, their studies will be supported by a teaching or research assistantship. Assistantship-specific duties are expected to require, up to 20 hours of work per week (averaged over the quarter). Teaching and research assistants should have a clear arrangement with the supervising faculty member (instructor or grant principal investigator) regarding the duties associated with the assistantship.

In some cases, a student's qualifying paper or dissertation research fits within the work plan for a grant, so the research assistantship directly supports his or her research. In most cases, however, a student funded by a research assistantship will be expected to do some work not directly related to his or own research.

In most cases, students on research assistantships are funded by a project on which their advisor is a principal investigator. However, occasionally a student will be funded as an RA on another faculty member's grant.

PhD Program offices

Each year, students in the PhD program work together to decide who will fill various program offices. All students are expected to contribute over the course of their graduate career. These include:

- Graduate student representative. Elected by the graduate students to represent them at faculty meetings.
- Admissions committee. Assists with graduate recruitment.
- Colloquium committee. Assists with the departmental colloquium series.
- Reception committee. Assists with receptions for departmental colloquia.
- First-year liaison. An advanced student that serves as a point of contact for first year students.

- Graduate Student Association representative. Departmental representative to this Graduate School organization.
- Noon colloquium committee. Organizes the noon colloquium brownbag.
- Subject pool coordinator. Assists the faculty subject pool coordinator with administration of the subject pool.
- Video coordinator. Coordinates showings of videos as part of the subject pool.
- Social coordinator. Organizes social events for graduate students.
- Web coordinator. Coordinates with faculty and staff for support of department website.

General Expectations for Graduate Students

Students are expected to participate in the intellectual life of the department through participation in department events including (but not limited to):

- the departmental colloquium series;
- other (inter)departmental speaker series;
- new student recruitment;
- faculty searches;
- a weekly graduate-student brownbag series ('noon colloquium');
- departmental discussion groups and lab meetings.

Students are expected to maintain a personal web page for dissemination of their academic work.

Students must consult, in advance, with their primary research advisor regarding:

- Any academic submission (including but not limited to applications for internal or external fellowships, submissions to conferences, and submissions for publication);
- Vacation plans.

Satisfactory Academic Progress; Conflict Resolution and Appeals Processes

Satisfactory progress in the program depends on many factors, including following the timeline for successful completion of the milestones outlined above (e.g., coursework, language requirements, qualifying papers, MA thesis), a minimum quantity and quality of research productivity, fulfilling all program responsibilities (e.g., teaching or research assistantship duties), full participation in the intellectual life of the program, and respectful and responsible conduct within the department. If the faculty has any concerns about a student's progress, these concerns will be brought to the student's attention. In cases where a student's performance is inadequate, they may be put on probation. If the student fails to make sufficient improvement they may be excluded from the program by the faculty.

Annual assessment letters for PhD students are written at the end of spring quarter on the basis of input from all the faculty in the department, as well as qualifying paper and thesis committee members outside the department. The assessment letters for pre-candidacy students will be written by the Director of Graduate Studies. The assessments for post-candidacy students will be written by the chair of the student's Ph.D. committee. In addition to the end of year assessments, the faculty will make a preliminary assessment each January of third year students, in order to determine whether they are likely to be invited to develop a dissertation proposal. The Director of Graduate Studies will write a warning letter to students whose progress towards the dissertation proposal is not adequate at that time. The DGS will also send warning letters to fourth year students who have not successfully defended a dissertation proposal by January. A third year student who receives a warning letter must remedy the problems identified in the letter in time for the end-of-year assessment; otherwise, he or she may be excluded from the program. Similarly, students who do not have a Ph.D. proposal accepted by the end of the fourth year may be excluded from the program.

In the event that a student is in a dispute with their primary research advisor (including but not limited to approval of qualifying papers, assessment of prospectus or thesis defense, assessment of the dissertation or MA thesis) or any other supervisor (including but not limited to a research assistant advisor or instructor), they should contact the Director of Graduate Studies or the Department Chair to discuss the issues. If they do not feel comfortable contacting someone within the department, they should contact the Graduate School's Associate Dean for Student Affairs.

If a student wishes to appeal a probation decision, they should contact the Director of Graduate Studies or the Department Chair to discuss the issues. If you do not feel comfortable contacting someone within the department or feel that this route has not produced acceptable results, you may file a petition through the Graduate School's regular petition process.

Students may appeal an exclusion decision to The Graduate School. Students should submit a request in writing to the attention of the Director of Student Services within ten days of the date of the program's final written determination of exclusion to the student and include any supporting materials at that time.