

APPLIED LINGUISTICS

Degree Requirements

Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.)

Requirements listed here are in addition to Graduate Council policies listed under GCAC-600 Research Degree Policies. (<https://gradschool.psu.edu/graduate-education-policies/>)

qualifying examination

In the third semester (a minimum of 18 credits) of graduate study, all students must satisfactorily complete a qualifying evaluation in which they are required to present a portfolio of work completed in their program of study. The portfolio will include a transcript of the student's academic record, a program plan, samples of scholarly work in Applied Linguistics and related areas, and a brief description of the proposed dissertation research, showing relevant course work completed and projected. Following submission of this portfolio, the student will meet with the members of his/her Ph.D. committee for an oral qualifying evaluation. The purpose of this evaluation is threefold:

1. to determine whether the student has achieved a level of learning and understanding sufficient to justify continuing in the program,
2. to discover what further study is required to bring the student to the competence required for the research being proposed, and
3. to secure approval of a program of course work and independent study to achieve the requisite competence. The particulars of each student's program of study and research are defined on the basis of the qualifying evaluation.

English Language Competence

During course work prior to the qualifying examination, students will be assessed for communicative competence in reading, writing, and speaking English. Should a higher level of competence be required, the student will be directed to the appropriate resources. International candidates will be advised that the passage of the minimal TOEFL requirement does not demonstrate the level of competence required for completion of the Ph.D. program.

Additional Language Competence

All students must demonstrate competence in reading relevant research literature in one language other than English and intermediate speaking competence in an additional language. The additional language competence requirements may be demonstrated in a variety of ways.

Ph.D. Committee Composition

The Ph.D. committee must meet all Graduate Council requirements (<http://gradschool.psu.edu/graduate-education-policies/gcac/gcac-600/phd-dissertation-committee-formation/>). Members of the Graduate Faculty with courtesy appointments in LALS who are members of the Applied Linguistics Graduate Faculty may serve as the chair of the Ph.D. committee with approval of the Director of LALS.

Comprehensive Examination

All doctoral students must pass a comprehensive examination designed to assess mastery of and ability to synthesize and integrate theoretical issues in Applied Linguistics. This examination is taken upon completion of all course work. The content and format of the comprehensive exam will be established by the members of the candidate's Ph.D. committee in accordance with degree requirements of LALS and consist of two course papers that are of publishable quality and two or three research papers based on questions developed by members of the Ph.D. committee. The

original papers must be submitted by end of semester prior to that in which the student plans to take the comprehensive exam. The student will be given two months' time in which to complete and submit these exam papers. Within three weeks of submission of the exam papers, the student will take an oral exam based on the original research papers and the exam papers. Students who fail the examination on the first attempt may repeat it once. Students who fail the examination the second time will not be permitted to continue in the program.

Dissertation

Each doctoral candidate is required to conduct an original and independent research project representing a significant contribution to knowledge in the field of study. The project should be presented in a scholarly manner, show an ability on the part of the candidate to do independent research of high quality, and demonstrate considerable experience in using appropriate research techniques. The content and conclusions of the dissertation will be defended at the time of the final oral examination. A written dissertation proposal is required and must be approved at a proposal hearing by a majority vote of the candidate's Ph.D. committee. A majority vote is also required for approval of the completed written dissertation at the final oral defense. The dissertation must be accepted by the Ph.D. committee, the head of the graduate program, and the Graduate School.