

DEPARTMENT OF LINGUISTICS  
GUIDE FOR GRADUATE STUDENTS  
Fall 2021

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## 1. Introduction

### 1.1 Statement of Objective

Linguistics is the study of the organizing principles underlying human language. Graduate programs in linguistics emphasize theory and research but also provide the opportunity to combine a strong foundation in theoretical linguistics with multilingual language acquisition and other related areas. At the M.A. level, students may have an option to focus on the Teaching of English as a Second Language.

### 1.2 Graduate Training in Linguistics

The Department offers programs leading to the Master of Arts (M.A.) and Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.) in Linguistics. The core of the programs is in phonology, syntax, and multilingualism with an experimental focus.

The M.A. degree provides a broad education in linguistics, which serves as a base for further study in linguistics or related disciplines. If a student chooses the TESL (Teaching English as a Second Language) focus, in conjunction with the M.A., then the degree prepares the student for a career in teaching English to nonnative speakers. The Ph.D. degree is primarily a research degree with a basis in phonology, syntax, and multilingualism, with the opportunity for students to develop an area of research specialization.

### 1.3 Graduate Student Regulations

Students should be familiar with [The Manual of Rules and Regulations](#) of the Graduate College of the University of Iowa. Students are also encouraged to consult resources related to thesis writing, career counseling, and professional development available through the [Graduate College](#) website. Students should also be familiar with the College of Liberal Arts' [student complaint procedures](#), the College's policy regarding [student academic misconduct](#), and the [University policy on sexual harassment](#).

### 1.4 Facilities

The Department's administrative office is in 111 Phillips Hall, and the Department is part of the [Division of World Languages, Literatures and Cultures](#) (DWLLC). At present, the Department of Linguistics has faculty-run labs where students can train on various research methods and conduct their own research under the supervision of a faculty mentor. The Center for Language and Culture Learning (CLCL) in PH 120 also offers research support, computing resources, study space, and meeting rooms. Students are encouraged to make use of this center.

Teaching Assistants (TAs) have offices in 314 Phillips Hall, where they can meet with other graduate students, hold office hours, and work. Together with the other graduate students from the DWLLC, all efforts must be made to keep the space clean and orderly and the environment professional. PH 314 has computers and a printer available for printing related to TA duties. Personal printing (e.g., for graduate courses,

downloaded research papers, etc.) must be done elsewhere. In order to use one of the computer terminals, students need to establish a computer account (which is free), by setting up an account through [MyUI](#) or directly from the Information Technology Services (ITS). The Department also has access to copy machines in PH 409, 550, and 664. In order to use the copy machine for teaching materials, teaching assistants must get a code from the administrative services coordinator in PH 111 or their supervising professor. Students may not use the copy machine for personal copying.

Each student has a hanging folder to receive mail and general correspondence in PH 101. Students are responsible for checking it for announcements and messages. Entry to the building after hours is by means of the Iowa One card, which can be swiped in a card reader beside the outside entrance on Clinton Street.

### 1.5 Student Representative and Linguistics Club

Graduate students in the Department should choose a representative each year to attend faculty meetings and report back to the students. The name of the student representative should be given to the Department Executive Officer (DEO) and to the DWLLC administrative coordinator for graduate studies so that notices of meetings can be forwarded to the correct person. The student representative will be excused from the portion of faculty meetings which deals with evaluation or discussion of other students, or of individual staff or faculty members.

Students have, at one time or another, organized a “Linguistics Graduate Student Group” to arrange social activities, reading and study groups, and generally serve as an informal organization around which Linguistics graduate students across all years of the program can gather and participate in activities. The faculty supports such activities and can help with contacting outside speakers, giving colloquia, etc. As part of their professionalization, faculty strongly encourage all graduate students to participate

### 1.6 Financial Aid

The Department can give financial assistance to a limited number of students. Such financial support is in the form of teaching assistantships. Teaching assistantships are awarded on the basis of merit and suitability for assignment to the courses or projects for which the Department has TA funding. In particular, first year students are eligible to assist in linguistics courses only if they have the appropriate background, and students are eligible to teach English as a Second Language (ESL) courses only after they have completed the practicum in teaching English (LING:5070: Practicum in TESL) or its equivalent. In addition, native speaker fluency in English will be given priority in ESL course assignments. Students who have the appropriate background will be eligible for TAs in the General Education course Language and Formal Reasoning (LING:1050). More advanced graduate students who have taken the course Articulatory and Acoustic Phonetics (LING:3005) and who have the appropriate background will be eligible for TAs in that class.

For information on other sources of financial aid, please visit the Graduate College funding page: <https://www.grad.uiowa.edu/professional-development> and the International Program student funding website: <https://international.uiowa.edu/students>.

The Department gives financial assistance priority to Ph.D. students who are making adequate progress toward their degrees, and then to M.A. students who are making adequate progress toward their degrees. The Department will, however, reserve some aid for new graduate students each year.

Financial aid is usually limited to four semesters for M.A. students and twelve semesters for Ph.D. students (inclusive of all aid in the Department). Notification of awards will be made to students in the semester prior to the semester for which the award has been granted. Since financial aid awards are made before the end of the semester, each award is contingent upon satisfactory completion of that semester's work by the student. When awards are made for the academic year, continuation for the second semester is contingent upon satisfactory completion of the first semester's work by the student. Students who do not complete the TESL focus may have limited options for funding beyond year one. Summer TA funding is not typically available.

## 2. General Procedures

### 2.1 Admission to M.A. and Ph.D. Programs

Students applying for admission to the M.A. program in linguistics will be considered regardless of field of previous training.

Students who apply to the graduate program must submit the following:

- 1) a complete University application form,
- 2) transcripts of all previous undergraduate and graduate work,
- 3) three letters of recommendation from individuals competent to judge the student's potential for graduate work,
- 4) scores from the general (aptitude) test of the Graduate Record Examination, and
- 5) a statement of purpose.

International students who do not have a previous degree from an English-speaking university must additionally take the TOEFL exam. Entering international students in linguistics are evaluated for English proficiency by the ESL staff and are required to take any ESL courses recommended as a result of the evaluation.

Admission to the Ph.D. program requires a Master's degree in linguistics from the University of Iowa or equivalent background in course work. Admission to the M.A. program at Iowa does not imply admission to the Ph.D. program. Admission to the Ph.D. program does not constitute qualification (see 2.3.2 for complete procedures for applying for Ph.D. qualification). Admission to the Ph.D. program depends in part on the availability of a faculty member to serve as the student's advisor. Qualification depends on an evaluation of the student's potential for completing the Ph.D.

## 2.2 Advisory and Committee System

### 2.2.1 Advisor

Once a student has been admitted to the graduate program, the Department will assign an advisor, matching student interests with faculty interests where known and feasible. After the first semester, students may sign up for an advisor of their choice, after consultation with the Director of Graduate Studies.

Students who pursue an M.A. will be guided in their programs of study by their advisor. Students who elect the TESL focus follow the prescribed course of study. Students who elect a different focus area, including general linguistics, draw up a plan of study with their advisor.

### 2.2.2 M.A. Thesis Committee

Students who pursue an M.A. with thesis and wish to complete their degree in four semesters must work with an advisor on the thesis project and establish a thesis committee of no fewer than three members at the beginning of the third semester. The student's advisor (perhaps newly chosen to reflect the student's topic of interest) is the chair of the thesis committee; the rest of the committee is chosen by the student in consultation with the advisor. At least two of the three committee members must be regular or adjunct members of the Linguistics Department. The committee is responsible for supervising and approving the student's thesis.

### 2.2.3 Ph.D. Comprehensive Examination Committee

The comprehensive examination committee consists of no fewer than five faculty members, at least two of whom are from the Department. See 4.2 below for further details.

### 2.2.4 Ph.D. Dissertation Committee

The dissertation committee consists of no fewer than five faculty members, at least two of whom are from the Department and one from outside the Department. The committee is responsible for advising the student on the dissertation topic (see 4.4), supervising the research for and writing of the dissertation, and for administering and evaluating the dissertation defense.

## 2.3 Evaluation

### 2.3.1 First Year Evaluation

A preliminary evaluation of first-semester M.A./Ph.D. students' progress is made during a faculty meeting near the end of the first semester of study. Students who appear to be having difficulty will be informed in writing by the DEO. Although subsequent evaluations will be performed at the end of each year by the faculty, the objective of this

first evaluation in all cases is to determine as early as possible the student's likelihood of success in completing an advanced degree in linguistics at the University of Iowa.

There are two outcomes of this evaluation:

- 1) Qualified
- 2) Not Qualified

Students who are evaluated as Not Qualified may be reconsidered during the following regular semester, if they so request and remain enrolled in the program, but if the reconsideration does not result in an evaluation of Qualified, the student will be dismissed from the program at the end of the semester in which they are reconsidered. A consultation regarding graduate student progress will be carried out at a faculty meeting towards the end of each Spring semester.

### 2.3.2. Ph.D. Qualification

All M.A. students intending to pursue the doctoral degree will normally be evaluated for Ph.D. qualification by the faculty during their fourth semester of graduate study in the Department. However, consultation with faculty who could potentially serve as Ph.D. advisor must begin in the third semester of the M.A. (i.e., fall of the second year). Students are strongly encouraged to have a Ph.D. proposal developed by the end of the fall semester, prior to applying to the Ph.D. program.

All students must request in writing an evaluation for Qualification and submit to the faculty the following material in support of their request:

- 1) A statement of purpose outlining their goals and a general plan of study for the Ph.D. This statement should be written after consultation with the student's potential Ph.D. advisor and appropriate faculty. The statement should describe their graduate study in linguistics thus far and the areas of linguistics and related fields they plan to study.
- 2) Written evidence of ability to do advanced work in linguistics. The evidence will consist of a paper in linguistics, which preferably is based on original research done by the student and may take the form of one or more of the following:
  - a. the final paper for a course,
  - b. a short "squib-style" paper that focuses on a particular aspect of linguistics and that demonstrates an ability to do linguistic analysis
  - c. a research statement clearly identifying with whom students plan to work on their Ph.D. research and a proposal for what this research will consist of (area, tentative methods). It should include a short bibliography and a short literature review (not to exceed ten pages).

All determinations will be made by a majority vote of the faculty. Four outcomes are possible:

- 1) Qualified.
- 2) Conditionally Qualified. This outcome will be reached only for students who show clear promise of being able to complete the degree but whose competence in some areas needs to be improved. The weaknesses, the means of demonstrating that the desired standard of competence has been reached, and the time limit for so doing will be specified by the faculty in writing.
- 3) Deferred Without Prejudice. This outcome will typically be reached for students whose application for qualification is premature or for whom special circumstances have hindered their reaching the desired standard of competence within the expected time limits. (Students are expected to bring such circumstances to the attention of the faculty.) In the case of premature application, the faculty will specify in writing what steps the student should take before petitioning again.
- 4) Not Qualified.

If there is a tie vote on all outcomes considered, then the fourth outcome, Not Qualified, is the default outcome.

#### 2.4 Normal Progress Toward Degrees

After two regular semesters of study, a student must have a cumulative grade-point average in courses offered by the Department of at least 3.0 (3.5 for Ph.D. students), and must maintain academic performance which, in the majority opinion of the faculty, is satisfactory and demonstrates promise of ability to complete degree requirements. If not, the student shall be so advised in writing by the DEO and shall be placed on departmental probation for the immediately following semester of study. The notification will specify in what way (or ways) the student is failing to meet the standards and will also include an indication of how these deficiencies may be remedied. If, at the end of this probationary semester, the student's grade-point average in the Department remains below 3.0 (3.5 for Ph.D. students) or if a majority of the faculty considers that the student has not remedied the deficiencies, the student will not be permitted to re-register in the Department. (See section 2.5 for further details on academic dismissal.) For two-semester sequenced courses, it is required that the student receive at least a B in the first semester before continuing to the second semester. If this grade is not achieved, the Director of Graduate Studies, together with the instructor and student, will determine an appropriate plan of action. This may mean re-taking the first semester course the following year and may have serious ramifications for financial aid in the second year. Specifically, as per the University of Iowa Department of Linguistics TA contract:

The Department of Linguistics limits assistantship support to 2 years for those pursuing a Master's degree and 6 years for those pursuing a Ph.D. Each year, approval of renewal will be based upon factors including the quality of work during

the previous appointment, satisfactory progress toward the degree, and satisfactory completion of all duties related to the appointment.

A student's chances for continuation of financial aid and avoiding probation or dismissal depend on following the established schedule reflecting timely and appropriate progress through the program. In particular, students must qualify for the Ph.D. degree within twelve months after completion of two academic years of graduate study in the Department, or they will be dropped from the graduate program.

A student who enters with a Master's degree from another institution must qualify for the Ph.D. degree (completing two papers) within five semesters of being admitted to the Ph.D. program; otherwise, the student will be dropped from the graduate program.

## 2.5 Academic Dismissal

Grounds for dismissal are:

- 1) Failure to maintain minimum GPA for the program in which the student is enrolled (see section 2.4).
- 2) Failure to make normal progress toward the degree.
- 3) Failure to perform tasks and meet deadlines set by the Department and the Graduate College.
- 4) Commission of an unprofessional act, such as plagiarism or falsification of data, in the course of academic work.

See Section IV of the Graduate College's Manual of Rules and Regulations ([Academic Standing, Probation, and Dismissal](#)) for information on dismissal procedures.

## 2.6 Right of Petition

As with all regulations, students have the right to petition that an exception be made on the grounds of unusual circumstances or special cases not covered by the procedure outlined.

## 3. The M.A. Degree

### 3.1 Requirements

The Master of Arts program in linguistics requires a minimum of 37 s.h. of graduate credit. A student's advisor must approve all courses that count toward the degree.

A student with a linguistics background may waive up to 6 s.h. of coursework if the Department determines that the student completed comparable work before enrolling in the program.

All M.A. students complete the following set of required core courses in phonetics, phonology, syntax, and language acquisition (total of 22 s.h.):

Courses	Credit hours
Articulatory and Acoustic Phonetics (3005)	3
Proseminar: Morphosyntax (5000)	1
Introduction to Syntax (5010)	3
Introduction to Phonology (5020)	3
Syntactic Theory (6010)	3
Phonological Theory (6020)	3
Topics in Second Language Acquisition (6080)	3
Linguistic Structures (6040), or Language Universals Linguistic Typology (6050)	3

Non-thesis students also complete an additional 15 s.h. of graduate coursework, which may include a 9 s.h. focus area (e.g., teaching English as a second language).

If a focus area is chosen, it is decided upon by students in conjunction with their advisor. The focus area can be in TESL, syntax, phonology, psycholinguistics, theory of second language acquisition, and others.

The TESL focus area consists of the following courses:

The Structure of English (4040),  
Methods of Teaching English as a Second Language (4050), and  
Practicum in Teaching English as a Second Language (5070)

Students who have had one or more of these courses prior to beginning the program may substitute an approved elective in consultation with their advisors and the relevant course instructors. Students are rarely exempted from the Practicum in TESL (5070).

Thesis students also complete at least 9 s.h. of electives or a focus area and may earn up to 6 s.h. of Master's Thesis (6900) credit for thesis work.

### 3.2 Sequence of Courses

All electives and focus courses must be approved by an advisor.

1) Sequence of courses for Linguistics M.A., non-thesis with 9-hour focus area:

<b>Semester 1 (Fall)</b>	Credit hours
Articulatory and Acoustic Phonetics (3005)	3
Proseminar: Morphosyntax (5000)	1
Introduction to Syntax (5010)	3
Elective or Focus	3
 <b>Semester 2 (Spring)</b>	
Introduction to Phonology (5020)	3
Syntactic Theory (6010)	3
Elective or Focus	3

**Semester 3 (Fall)**

Phonological Theory (6020)	3
Topics in Second Language Acquisition (6080)	3
Elective or Focus	3

**Semester 4 (Spring)**

Linguistic Structures (6040), or Language Universals Linguistic Typology (6050)	3
Elective or Focus	3
Elective or Focus	3

## 2) Sequence of courses for Linguistics M.A., non-thesis with TESL focus area:

**Semester 1 (Fall)**

	Credit hours
Articulatory and Acoustic Phonetics (3005)	3
Proseminar: Morphosyntax (5000)	1
Introduction to Syntax (5010)	3
Structure of English (4040)	3

**Semester 2 (Spring)**

Introduction to Phonology (5020)	3
Syntactic Theory (6010)	3
Methods of Teaching English as a Second Language (4050)	3
Practicum in Teaching English as a Second Language (5070)	3

**Semester 3 (Fall)**

Phonological Theory (6020)	3
Topics in Second Language Acquisition (6080)	3
Elective	3

**Semester 4 (Spring)**

Linguistic Structures (6040), or Language Universals Linguistic Typology (6050)	3
Elective	3

## 3) Sequence of courses for Linguistics M.A., with thesis:

**Semester 1 (Fall)**

	Credit hours
Articulatory and Acoustic Phonetics (3005)	3
Proseminar: Morphosyntax (5000)	1
Introduction to Syntax (5010)	3
Elective or Focus	3

### **Semester 2 (Spring)**

Introduction to Phonology (5020)	3
Syntactic Theory (6010)	3
Elective or Focus	3

### **Semester 3 (Fall)**

Phonological Theory (6020)	3
Topics in Second Language Acquisition (6080)	3
Elective or Focus	3
Master's Thesis (6900)	3

### **Semester 4 (Spring)**

Linguistic Structures (6040), or Language Universals Linguistic Typology (6050)	3
Master's Thesis (6900)	3

It is possible to take the M.A. curriculum on a part-time basis, that is, taking fewer than 9 hours of classes per semester. However, students wishing to do so should devise a timetable with their advisor.

### 3.3 M.A. Thesis

The thesis is a paper of potentially publishable quality on an area of research undertaken by the student. Students work closely with their advisor and thesis committee members on the selection of a topic for the thesis and the writing of a thesis prospectus. After the thesis is completed and approved by the advisor and committee, the student defends it in an oral examination before the committee. All faculty are invited to attend the thesis defense. A copy of the thesis should be made available to the faculty a minimum of two weeks prior to the defense.

## 4. The Ph.D. Degree

### 4.1 Requirements

The Ph.D. requires a minimum of 72 hours of graduate credit (73 hours for graduates of the M.A. program), including courses taken for the M.A. A minimum of 18 hours must be advanced coursework. Students may fulfill this through courses in Linguistics and/or related disciplines, in consultation with their advisor. In addition, students whose work is focused on a particular language are strongly encouraged to take courses in or on that language (e.g., courses in French, Spanish, Japanese, Chinese, or Korean linguistics), in consultation with their advisor. In addition, students must pass the Ph.D. comprehensive examination and write and defend a dissertation. Three years of residence are required, as is supervised experience in teaching and research.

Ph.D. students are strongly encouraged to register for the [Cognitive Science of Language Certificate](#). This certificate provides students with multidisciplinary training in cognitive science – a field that complements Linguistics in many diverse ways – and the

opportunity to work closely with faculty and graduate students from other departments across campus.

## 4.2 Comprehensive Examination

To pass the comprehensive examination for the Ph.D., a student must have two papers of publishable quality approved, as defined below. One of the papers must be in phonology or syntax and the other in an area of the student's choosing, but distinct from the area of the first paper. Either paper may be in the proposed dissertation area. Each paper will be read by a committee made up of three faculty members, one of whom will serve as the main advisor for that paper. At most one committee member may come from outside the Department. The members of the two paper committees together constitute the comprehensive exam committee. For each paper, the student will choose an advisor appropriate to the paper's topic. The student and the advisor will consult on the makeup of the committee. It is the student's responsibility to approach the other prospective members of the committee and, after each member has agreed to serve, to report the list of members to the advisor. The advisor will then consult with the other committee members about the direction of the work on the paper and a tentative timetable for its completion.

In the normal case, comprehensive exam papers will be substantially revised and rewritten seminar papers, papers from advanced classes, a project done as an independent study, or papers from other courses or based on individual work completed in a lab with a faculty supervisor. Maximum length for papers is 50 pages, unless special arrangements are made with the advisor and the committee. A paper will be considered Approved after it has been judged of publishable quality by the committee. Part of this judgment includes successful presentation at a departmental colloquium. This oral presentation must be scheduled with the consent of the advisor and committee members; a draft of the paper must be submitted to committee members at least two weeks prior to the presentation. To ensure steady progress and timely completion of papers, students should work closely with advisors on a plan for research and writing. It is expected that the student will enroll in an individual study course (LING:5090:0IND) with the primary advisor during the semester in which he or she plans to present the paper orally.

### 4.2.1 Completion Dates for Comprehensive Exam Papers

The timetable for the completion of the comprehensive exam papers is as follows:

- (1) The first paper will normally be started, at the latest, during the first semester post-M.A. During that semester, students will typically enroll in an advanced class or seminar which requires a research paper or will sign up for independent study to revise an existing paper written for a class or seminar. The first paper will typically be approved during the second semester post-M.A. and presented at the colloquium at the end of the semester or at the beginning of the following semester. (Deadline: end of the 3rd semester post-M.A.)

- (2) The second paper will typically be approved by the end of the fourth semester post-M.A. and be presented during the fifth semester. (Deadline: end of the 5th semester post-M.A.)

#### 4.2.2 Failure to Meet Deadlines for Comprehensive Papers

If a student misses a deadline for a comprehensive paper, this constitutes a failure of the Ph.D. comprehensive exam. The student is allowed one opportunity to retake the examination. The retake will be passed if the paper is presented and approved within the following time frame:

Paper #1: by the end of the fourth semester of enrollment post-MA  
Paper #2: by the end of the sixth semester of enrollment post-MA

A student who successfully retakes the first paper will have two semesters in which to complete the second paper. By Graduate College policy, the student is allowed a single retake of the exam. Any student failing more than one time will be subject to dismissal from the program.

#### 4.2.3 Specifications for a “Publishable Paper”

- (1) The Ph.D. qualifying exam requires two publishable papers. While it is not required that the paper be published, it should be written in the same way as papers submitted to linguistics journals. Many journal articles start out as course papers or conference papers, just like the comprehensive examination papers. They undergo revision and expansion, often in several stages. In fact, the published version of a journal article may have been written, rewritten, and rewritten again. In each version, the analysis is strengthened and refined, and the presentation is improved, in response to comments and criticism.

The comprehensive exam paper should be of the quality and format for submission to a refereed publication. A refereed journal or annual collection is one which has an editor and an editorial board, who select two to four anonymous referees to read the manuscript carefully and critically. The referees are expected to know the field and the subject matter of the manuscript, so that they can assess the soundness of the arguments and the appropriateness and quality of data. They each send a written report to the editor. The papers selected for publication are chosen by the editor and board on the basis of the referees' reports.

- (2) Writing a paper like this of restricted length, on a single topic, is good practice for writing a longer and more complex analysis in a dissertation. It is also a chance to do reading in some area in more depth than was possible in regular courses. Students and their advisors should consult on what preliminary reading the student should do.

There are three basic options for topics:

(i) The topic of the paper can be a single, well-focused and substantive issue which is discussed in relation to a theory or a set of assumptions within a theory about some aspect of language or language acquisition. Previous work on the topic should be presented clearly and concisely; existing proposals should be summarized and evaluated in terms of their strengths and weaknesses and how they might be expanded upon or improved. The paper should resolve the issue by providing substantial arguments and evidence for a particular (possibly new) proposal. The paper should make clear the consequences of the proposal for the theory and note any remaining issues which have not been accounted for. There could also be a discussion of why these issues are not accounted for and what future research might be done which is not within the scope of the paper.

(ii) The topic of the paper can be the description of a particular grammatical phenomenon in a single language that has not been well described, e.g., a thorough description of a phonological process, a morphological characteristic, or a syntactic construction. It should not only catalogue all the environments in which the phenomenon occurs but also propose an analysis and summarize any previous work on the phenomenon in the language, and, if appropriate, give an overview of that type of phenomenon in general. Comparative data from related languages could be included where they illuminate the main focus of the paper. Finally, there should be a discussion of any potential theoretical implications of the data and proposed analysis. In the normal case, the data for such a paper would come from consultation with native speakers.

(iii) The topic of the paper can be an experiment of the student's design and execution. Language acquisition psycholinguistic investigations, as well as computational linguistic studies are appropriate. The experiment may involve human subjects. It may also involve a corpus such as CHILDES or the UPenn Treebank. The experiment should be motivated by clear hypotheses driven by theoretical analyses and current research questions in the fields of language acquisition, psycholinguistics, or computational linguistics. Acquisition of phonetics, phonology, syntax, semantics, or pragmatics are all acceptable topics. Previous work on the topic should be concisely described and interpreted, with a view toward explaining what has prompted the present study. Appropriate statistical analysis of the data obtained in the experimental study should be presented, and implications of the study for current theories should be discussed.

(3) Articles written for submission to journals typically must conform to various specifications. There may be an overall limit on length, like the 50-page limit for the comprehensive exam papers. There may be formatting and style requirements. For the comprehensive paper, there should be a list of references in which the information is presented in a specific format (use the *Language* style sheet in the LSA Bulletin, the *Linguistic Inquiry* style sheet, or the most recent APA guide for experimentally focused work). Papers that do not fully respect one of these style

options will be returned immediately to the student for revision.

Ph.D. students are strongly encouraged, once their papers have been approved, to seek conference presentation opportunities and publication venues. This must be carried out in consultation with the advisor.

#### 4.3 Dissertation Topic

In the semester following the comprehensive examination, but no later than the sixth semester of enrollment in the Ph.D. program, the student presents a dissertation prospectus to the dissertation committee. The dissertation prospectus consists of a formal statement of the dissertation topic and proposed research program which is defended by the student before the dissertation committee: The prospectus will highlight both the significance of and the original contribution to be made by the proposed research. In the typical case, the dissertation prospectus will consist of two main sections: (1) a narrative of approximately twenty to forty pages which describes in detail the dissertation topic, provides a review of the existing literature relevant to the topic, and outlines the research methodology and/or theoretical approach to the topic, and (2) a preliminary bibliography, a preliminary description of the chapter divisions, and a timetable for completion of the research and writing of the dissertation.

The dissertation advisor, in consultation with the student, will determine when the prospectus is complete. The dissertation advisor will then ask a Department administrator to set up a meeting of the dissertation committee at which the candidate will give a brief oral presentation of the prospectus and answer questions which the committee members may have. The committee members should receive the written prospectus at least two weeks prior to this meeting. The dissertation committee must approve the prospectus in order for the student to proceed with the dissertation. The student is responsible for keeping each committee member informed on the progress of the dissertation prospectus as it is being written.

#### 4.4 Dissertation

The dissertation is a major research work on a topic chosen by the student and approved by the dissertation committee. Typically, the members of the committee provide feedback on drafts of chapters of the dissertation as it is being written. After the dissertation committee reads and approves the dissertation, it is defended orally by the student in a public defense. A complete, revised copy of the dissertation must be available to the faculty at least two weeks prior to the defense.

#### 5. Graduate Grants and Fellowships

Where appropriate and in close consultation with advisors, students are encouraged to consider applying for funding to support their Ph.D. studies. Students must consult with their advisors well in advance (at least a year) before thinking of applying for outside funding sources.

The University of Iowa also offers fellowships for post-comprehensive exam

students. The Director of Graduate Studies, together with faculty members, will nominate Ph.D. students for these awards when they are at the appropriate point in their Ph.D. program. Funding is also available for travel and international research activities. The link to these fellowships and awards offered through the Graduate College is [here](#).

## 6. Graduate Student Professionalization

All graduate students are strongly encouraged to contact faculty working in the student's area of interest and request the opportunity to participate in the faculty member's lab. This will involve regularly attending meetings, participating in research study design/implementation, and presenting to the group.

Graduate students are also strongly encouraged to attend professionalization workshops and events held through the University of Iowa Center for Teaching. It is important for all students to attend and present at conferences in their field. For students in the M.A. TESL program, the annual MidTESL conference is an excellent venue at which to present work and hear about recent advances in the field. As part of their professionalization, students are strongly encouraged to participate in a Linguistics Department faculty-run lab.

## 7. Graduate Program Timetable

### **M.A.**

- 1st semester: select focus area for non-thesis degree (especially important for TESL focus)
- 2nd semester: choose advisor
- 3rd semester: if planning on continuing to the Ph.D., begin to consult with potential advisors and prepare application materials
- 4th semester: (where applicable) write and defend thesis  
(where applicable) apply for Ph.D. qualification

### **Ph.D.**

- 1st semester: choose advisor  
begin first comprehensive paper  
begin Cognitive Science of Language Certificate (CSLC)
- 2nd semester: present first comprehensive paper
- 3rd semester: establish specialty area
- 4th semester: present second comprehensive paper

5th semester: establish Ph.D. dissertation committee (with advisor)  
select dissertation topic and present it to the committee

6th semester: finish CSLC  
complete paperwork for CSLC

7th semester: write dissertation

8th semester: defend dissertation