

Graduate Program Handbook

Revision 3.0

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1.0 Purpose and scope

This handbook is a collection of all department-level requirements, policies and procedures governing graduate study in the Department of Linguistics at the University of Pittsburgh. Full version numbers have been approved by the full faculty of the department, and single decimals represent minor revisions made by the Director of Graduate Studies.

The handbook is available on the department website and at the courseweb page () for current graduate students. If you are a current student and do not have access to this page, please contact the Director of Graduate Studies.

1.1 READ THESE!

Dietrich School and University policies, procedures and regulations

Other regulations exist at the level of the School of Arts and Sciences and the University. The best place to find information on these additional regulations is the graduate page of the School of Arts and Sciences website: .

Students and advisors must consult the graduate and professional bulletin as well: .

1.2 Abbreviations

DGS= Director of Graduate Studies

A&S= University of Pittsburgh Kenneth P. Dietrich School of Arts and Sciences

GAdmin=Departmental Graduate Administrator

ELI= English Language Institute

ARCO=Area of Concentration

2.0 General Information

2.1 Advising

Upon acceptance to a degree program, students will be assigned an advisor. We make every effort to fit students with appropriate advisors during the admissions process, so that students who express interest in working with a particular faculty member will be assigned that person as advisor. Some students may be assigned to the DGS and can change advisors at any time.

Procedure to change advisors: Simply fill out an advisor declaration form and have the new advisor sign. Give the form to the GAdmin, who will file the form. If you had an advisor previously, the former advisor should be notified that you are making a change.

Students should first go to their primary advisor for all questions. Some bureaucratic questions will be referred to the DGS, but your advisor should always be your first stop; they are your advocate in the department.

2.2 Responsibilities of the graduate student

The graduate student is responsible for the timely satisfaction of the requirements for the degree. This also means adhering to the academic and other policies of the Dietrich School of Arts & Sciences and the University of Pittsburgh. Students are strongly encouraged to note milestones and monitor their own progress. Students are required to meet with their advisors at least once per academic term, though more frequent meetings, especially in the dissertation-writing stages, are strongly recommended. Students are exhorted to develop manageable timelines for their dissertation work, to share drafts in progress frequently, and to provide their advisors and committees with ample time for them to review and provide helpful feedback.

2.3 Time to degree

The normal times for students to attain degrees are as follows:

MA in Applied Linguistics: 2 years or 4 semesters

MA+TESOL Certificate: 4 semesters

MA/PhD: 5 years or 10 semesters

PhD (previous Master's degree): 3 years or 6 semesters

These are not time limits, but ideal and attainable amounts of time for completing degrees from the Department of Linguistics. However, note that the Dietrich School and the University

does impose outer limits which should be reviewed carefully. See the Graduate Bulletin, linked above.

2.4 Registration procedures, permission numbers

All students can register themselves for courses through PeopleSoft. Before registering, students must consult with their advisor about the courses and units to take. If permission numbers are needed for LING courses, the student must email the GAdmin and copy (cc) the instructor and their advisor with the following information:

Student's Name

Student's PeopleSoft Number

Course title and instructor's last name

Course number (5-digits)

If appropriate permission from the course instructor is in place, the DGS will reply with a permission number.

For courses outside the linguistics department (that is, without a LING course number), students must first obtain permission from the instructor.

Registration deadline: There are penalties for late registration. A wealth of enrollment information is available at .

2.5 Transfer of credits

Policies for the transfer of credits are set by the Dietrich School. See the Graduate Bulletin, linked above. In general, students can transfer up to 24 credits from a previous MA degree towards their PhD. Only 6 credits from a Pitt certificate (such as the TESOL Certificate) may be transferred.

Transferring credits may mean that less elective coursework needs to be done and may speed progress to the degree.

However, **credit transfers are not the same as requirement fulfillment**. All the required courses for a degree must be fulfilled regardless of the number of credits on record.

2.6 Fulfilling requirements with coursework at previous institution

Students can also have previous courses count for the course requirements for the degree, whether or not the credits are transferred. The student will need a transcript and, in most cases, syllabi for the courses to be counted. The student may have to make a presentation or

solve a problem in the field of study. The faculty will determine whether the coursework can count for the degree. For approved transferred requirements, the DGS or advisor must make note of the transfer in the student's file.

2.7 Leaves of absence and medical leaves

Such leaves of absence, as they become necessary, should be discussed with the student's advisor and the DGS. Please see the for the Dietrich School policy details. A form must be submitted to the DGS for approval by the Dean of Graduate Students. A leave of absence extends the statute of limitations for finishing the degree.

Note that official leaves must be requested. If a student has not registered for two or more semesters, the Dietrich School requires that they must be readmitted. See the graduate bulletin for Dietrich School procedures.

2.7.1 Student responsibilities upon returning from a leave

When a student has been out of the department for any significant period of time, s/he must schedule an appointment with the advisor to review their program of study and have a detailed discussion of goals and the timeline to achieve the goals.

2.8 Graduate Seminar (Colloquium)

Attendance at the graduate seminar, informally known as the colloquium and held most Fridays from 3 to 4 or 4:30 pm, is required for **all** first-year MA or MA/PhD students regardless of the degree sought. Attendance thereafter is optional but highly recommended. The one credit per semester earned during year one does **not** count towards the total credits required for the degree(s), but it **can** count towards the number of credits required to be considered a full-time student.

2.9 Applying to the PhD program while an admitted MA

2.9.1 U.S. citizens

You do not need to re-apply through the Pitt application portal (ApplyYourself). However, you must do the following:

- a. Submit a new statement of purpose/plan for the PhD
- b. Submit 2 papers that show your area expertise: 1 core, 1 specialty
- c. Submit your University of Pittsburgh MA transcript
- d. Obtain and submit a letter of support from the professor(s) who will supervise you.

2.9.2 International students

You must submit items a-d above as well as paperwork from the Office of International Students stating that your visa status is approved to continue your studies. To obtain this approval, work with the GSAdmin who will coordinate with the Office of Graduate Students.

3.0 Financial support

3.1 Forms of Support from the Department

Students are expected to seek external sources of funding whenever possible. Funding from within the department can come in any of the following forms:

1. Teaching Assistant/Teaching Fellow
 - a. Providing grading or office hour assistance to a faculty member
 - b. Instructing a language-learning or Linguistics course
2. Graduate Student Researcher on a faculty grant

The above awards generally cover tuition and provide a stipend. For more detail, see: .

According to University policy, none of these assignments may exceed 20 hours of work per week. Students and faculty are encouraged to read the University Regulations (

3.1.1 Definition of Teaching Assistant and Teaching Fellow

Normally, students entering the program without an MA degree will be designated a Teaching Assistant. In most cases, students will become a Teaching Fellow once they have passed their preliminary exam or if they are assigned to teach a course as a sole instructor. Students entering the program with an MA degree will typically be designated a Teaching Fellow. Note that there are variations on these criteria in different departments and the ELI, so there may be cases that deviate from normal practice.

3.2 Selection of students to be funded

Students are selected based on two interacting criteria: academic merit and suitability to the duties of the position. TA/TF funding is generally limited to students in the PhD program.

Incoming students: Students will be ranked by academic merit at the admissions meeting in January and funding will be offered to the highest ranked students who are suitable for available opportunities.

Current students who are not already funded: The same criteria apply as for incoming students. Students who do not already have funding should apply by writing a letter or email to the Admissions Officer and DGS by December 15 indicating that they wish to be considered for funding for the next academic year. The Admissions Officer will then include the student in the rankings of incoming students. Note that this funding comes from the School of Arts and Sciences, and it is the wish of the school that funding should be used to recruit high-quality

new students. The bar for receiving funding under normal circumstances for students previously admitted without funding is thus very high, and the likelihood very low.

However, funding often becomes available during the academic year, or after regular funding has been awarded in April. All students currently enrolled and not receiving funding will automatically be considered for such funding. Such funding will be based on the criteria listed in section 3 and the student's anticipated graduation date may be considered as well.

The awarding of this "last minute" funding (usually from sources such as grants to faculty) is time-limited, and does not imply continuation of funding once the source expires. Such awards, however, do count toward total funding time limits. Students are advised to determine their funding source and its reliability at the time they accept an award.

3.3 Guarantee of TA/TF funding

TA/TF funding awarded to incoming PhD students is guaranteed for five years, provided the conditions outlined below are met.

Students with TA/TF funding are technically funded for two terms (Fall and Spring). "Technically" means that students must sign a new contract every year. "Technically" also means that this yearly contract is a bureaucratic necessity, and does not change the department's guarantee of five-year funding. In short: if you were awarded a TA when you started the PhD program in the Department of Linguistics at Pitt, you have funding for five years unless you do not meet the conditions outlined below. All forms of funding count towards these five years.

3.4 Conditions on the continuation of funding

Continuation of funding is awarded on the basis of awards availability and the following criteria:

1. Academic merit
2. Progress through the program in a timely manner
3. Performance in previous funded assignments
4. Suitability for the teaching or research position

If a student meets the above criteria, they will be considered in good standing for financial support.

If any of the criteria above are not met, funding may be withdrawn by the department. Students' progress will be evaluated yearly.

These conditions for continuation apply only for funding sources that are continuing; if a funding source is limited to a particular time period (e.g. from a research grant), students being directly or indirectly funded through such a source will likely lose funding when that source expires even if they meet the above criteria.

The department will generally not fund PhD students beyond 10 full-time (or equivalent) terms. All funding counts towards this time limits, regardless of the source or method of funding.

3.5 Evaluation of progress and performance

3.5.1 Progress through the Program

Student progress will be assessed based on how well the student matches the timeline for completion. Note that the sample milestones are not hard and fast deadlines, but a goal for attainment. However, if a student has a significant mismatch with these milestones, it will endanger future funding even before funding is exhausted.

3.5.2 Performance in Funded Assignments

Students will be notified by the eighth week of each term (or approximately halfway through any term) at the latest if performance in their assignment is unsatisfactory. Students teaching their own courses should arrange for an informal survey through Courseweb or a classroom observation conducted by a person designated by the DGS and faculty. Students receiving unsatisfactory evaluations shall outline a plan for improvement in collaboration with their supervisor/mentor. Following the completion of a term's assignment, the student's supervisor/mentor will evaluate their performance by means of a short checklist (see the Funded Appointment Evaluation Form, in the forms section of the courseweb page). These evaluations will be given to the student, the student's advisor and the DGS at the end of each term and included in the student's permanent record. Students teaching their own courses should provide copies of their OMET forms to the DGS. Students receiving a problematic evaluation will be given an opportunity to discuss the problems with the DGS.

3.5.3 Annual Report

The Department of Linguistics requires an annual self-reporting of graduate student accomplishments to the department and an annual evaluation of progress of all graduate students by subfield faculty. The self-report is an important means of assessing student progress and accomplishments by the supervisory committee chair for use at the subfield evaluation meeting. **The report is due April 1 every year.**

Students must use the form on the courseweb website. The report consists of two parts:

- General information and Milestones: Information from PeopleSoft and dates of milestone events.
- A list of your accomplishments in several categories. The form lists categories that must be covered if relevant.

3.5.3.1 Evaluation Process

1. Students submit the annual report to their individual faculty advisor by April 1.
2. Faculty Advisor completes the evaluation section and forwards all evaluations to the DGS.
3. Other evaluations may be submitted to the Advisor and DGS for TA duties.
4. Students are evaluated by all faculty at an annual evaluation meeting
5. Advisors will provide feedback to students individually following the meeting.
6. Final annual reports are filed with the GAdmin.

3.6 Summer Term Funding

There are extremely limited opportunities for students to obtain summer funding in the form of TA/TF/GSR positions. Note: The summer term is often referred to as the ‘third term.’

3.6.1 Funding commonly available

ELI funding. Summer TA/TF positions are sometimes available in the ELI. The same selection criteria apply for summer funding as for Fall and Spring term funding. There are also sometimes GSR positions for funded research projects. Summer TA/TF positions in the ELI are only awarded if the student needs a required course taught in the summer and has already taught in the ELI. Otherwise, students are appointed as part-time instructors with no tuition benefits:

The ELI have additional selection criteria, among which is that all instructors must be native speakers of English. To determine whether a student is eligible for ELI tuition funding, the ELI faculty adhere to the criteria in the ELI Handbook. These criteria include, but are not limited to, students' experience, academic achievement, teaching ability, and professional behavior.

PhD summer fellowships. The Dietrich School regularly makes available some fellowships for advanced PhD students, with awards in the past ranging from \$1,000 to \$3,000. Applications

for this program are on the courseweb site. A report is required summarizing the student's summer productivity.

Summer teaching. Qualified students may be hired as an instructor for a summer undergraduate course, if enrollment warrants. The department offers a section of LING 1000 and a section of Cross-Cultural Communication in the first six-week session.

Tuition Scholarships. Students who will graduate in summer should apply for the Dietrich School Tuition Scholarship (see §3.10.3 below). Students should not apply for this scholarship if the summer is not their final term of study.

3.6.2 Selection of students for summer funding

With the exception of the Dietrich School Tuition Scholarship, summer funding positions are determined by the faculty based on students' academic standing, in conjunction with the following factors:

1. Students who are in their final semester of study will be given first priority.
2. PhD students have priority over MA students.
3. PhD students who have been funded by the linguistics department for fewer than five years (PhD) will be given priority over those who have been funded for longer.
4. Students who are required to take a class over the summer that will not be offered in the fall or spring.
5. The visa status of international students will also be a significant factor in the decision-making process.
6. Students who are taking non-required courses or who are doing a directed study will be given next priority. Students should defend their purpose for taking the course/study and explain why it is important.

Further decisions may be made at the discretion of departmental faculty based on students' experience and effectiveness as TA/TFs and/or research skills for GSRs and Assistants.

3.7 Explanation about funding sources

This section is designed to be informational only and is not part of the official policy. It is meant to help students understand more fully where funding comes from. Funding for graduate students comes from three sources:

1. TA lines that the Dietrich School funds directly ("hard money");

2. TA lines that are funded from other sources but are awarded by the department ("soft money"); and
3. External sources such as scholarships and fellowships that are awarded outside the department, either within the University (such as the Mellon Fellowships) or outside (such as NSF dissertation fellowships). Also, other departments and centers (such as Psychology or the LRDC) may offer linguistics students funding to TA courses or work on research grants if they are qualified.

How a TA line is funded is important. Most students receiving funding at the time of admission are funded through hard money. Some students are funded by fellowships at admissions time, but these fellowships usually require that the department dedicate future hard money funds to that student (the Irvis Fellowships work this way).

Students who don't receive funding at admissions time sometimes receive soft money funding during their studies. This money comes primarily from two sources: grants awarded to faculty and the ELI. Both of these sources are quite variable; grants end or use up their funds, and the ELI enrollment can wax and wane quite dramatically. This means that this funding can be offered at the last minute, but often lasts only a semester (in the case of grant funding).

Scholarships and fellowships are pretty clear-cut, and have definite, explicit time frames. However, as noted above, some come with the promise of later hard money funding.

Note that all awards are subject to students being in good standing, but that being in good standing alone does not entail getting funding if you are funded by soft money, because the source of that funding could run out before you graduate.

3.8 Funding: Research and conference

3.8.1. University Funding Sources

There are several travel grants for research and conference travel available from the Dietrich School. See the links at [for details](#). Other resources include the Dietrich School GSO Travel grants, the Graduate and Professional Student Government (GPSG) grants or the Dietrich School Planning and Budget Committee grants. Various area studies programs have their own travel grants as well. See: .

3.8.2 Departmental Research Grant

This grant provides partial support for research that leads to a PhD dissertation or comprehensive paper. Priority is given to applicants who have not been given departmental travel/research funds before. The maximum amount is \$800 for research involving

international travel or travel to Hawaii or Puerto Rico, and \$400 for research that can be conducted within the continental US and Canada.

Deadlines: October 30, January 31, and April 1

Eligibility: Typically open to PhD students enrolled in Linguistics at the University of Pittsburgh. Master's students are occasionally offered support by invitation.

Students must complete the Departmental Research Grant Proposal Form, available on courseweb. Application materials should ALL be submitted as a single PDF file by email to the DGS and the GAdmin.

3.8.3 Departmental Graduate Student Conference Participation Grant

This grant provides partial support for graduate students to travel to a professional conference and present a paper. Priority is given to applicants who have not been given departmental travel/research funds before, and to those who have exhausted other sources of funding mentioned in 3.8.1 above.

Applications should be submitted BEFORE the conference takes place if at all possible, and the conference should be held in the same fiscal year (ending June 30).

Deadlines: October 30, January 31, and April 1

Eligibility: Open to graduate students enrolled in Linguistics at the University of Pittsburgh.

Students must complete the Conference Participation Grant Proposal Form available on courseweb. Application materials should ALL be submitted as a single PDF file by email to the DGS and GAdmin.

3.9 Other fellowships

Students in Linguistics are eligible for University-sponsored fellowships as well as the TA/TF/GSR positions. Most of these fellowships require that the student apply to the department, after which the department faculty rank all applicants and send the ranking to the University selection committee. Below is a listing of such fellowships and their deadlines, along with any other restrictions. For application information, students should contact the DGS.

3.9.1 Fellowship Opportunities for Linguistics Graduate Students

Note: deadlines are for final submission; deadlines to submit to department are likely to be at least one month earlier.

3.9.2 Henderson Award

The Robert Henderson Award of at least \$2,000 is given to a student in the TESOL Certificate program or working in the area of TESOL. This is a cash award which may be used for tuition or research expenses. The deadline is typically early in the spring semester. For more information please contact Dawn McCormick (mccormic@pitt.edu).

3.9.3 Dietrich School Tuition Scholarships

Dean's Tuition Scholarships are awarded by the Dietrich School Office of Graduate Studies to returning graduate students who demonstrate academic achievement and financial need. They are normally awarded to students in their last semester of study if funding has been exhausted. See: .

3.9.4 Fellowships Available

Fellowship	Usual deadline	Number of years	Eligibility
<i>Foreign Language Area Scholarships (FLAS)</i>	Jan 15	1 year	Intensive study of language; see FLAS websites for languages.
<i>FLAS Summer</i>	Mar 01	1 summer	Intensive study of language; see FLAS websites for languages.
<i>Gutierrez Fellowship</i>	Feb 19	1 year	1 st or 2 nd year student Focus on Latin America
<i>Irvis Fellowship</i>	Feb 01	Usually 1; 2 possible	Minority incoming students only
<i>LASPPF (CLAS)</i>	Feb 01	1 year	Social or Public Policy
<i>Lawler Fellowship</i>	Jan 15	1 year	Advanced PhD student Must be in HL program
<i>Mellon Fellowship</i>	Jan 15	1, possible renewal	Anyone, but usually new students or advanced PhD
<i>Provost Development Fellowship</i>	Feb 01		Minority students
<i>Provost Humanities Fellowship</i>	Feb 01	1 year	New students

4.0 Degree Requirements

4.1 PhD Program Requirements

The PhD program (also referred to as the MA/PhD program) is a combined program designed for students entering with the intention of earning a PhD. The program consists of core coursework, requirements for specific Areas of Concentration (ARCOs), preliminary exams, comprehensive exams, and dissertation work. The ARCOs available are:

Applied Linguistics

Hispanic Linguistics

Sociolinguistics

Students in the PhD program must choose one of the above ARCOs.

4.1.1 Required Core Courses for the PhD (all concentrations)

The following courses are required of all students in the PhD program. Students entering with an MA degree from another institution may petition to have coursework from that MA degree apply to the PhD degree at Pitt (see also the Preliminary exam requirement for students with an existing MA).

4.1.1.1 Courses normally required to be taken in the first year

2578 Phonetics (Fall)

2144 Research Methods (Fall)

2773 Morphology (Fall)

2777 Syntax (Spring)

2579 Phonology (Spring)

4.1.1.2 Required courses that can be taken any time

One course in sociolinguistics/language change

2267 Sociolinguistics

2253 Pidgin and Creole Languages

4.1.1.3 Required upper level course

Choose one advanced level core course approved by the student's advisor and DGS or Chair.

4.1.2 Applied Linguistics ARCO PhD Course Requirements

2146 Second Language Acquisition

2142 Second Language Teaching

A course in psycholinguistics or first language development

A course in statistics

One of the following:

2147 Current Issues in Second Language Learning

2149 Advanced Second Language Acquisition

4.1.3 Hispanic Linguistics ARCO PhD Requirements

4.1.3.1 Required Courses

2394 Spanish Dialectology

2391 Spanish Phonology

Two Special Topics courses in Hispanic Linguistics

A course in statistics

4.1.3.2 Other requirements

Entrance requirement: Advanced Low Proficiency in Spanish as measured by an OPI or equivalent. Students are also interviewed by faculty in Spanish during the admissions process.

In core courses, students are encouraged to work on topics in Hispanic linguistics and to use Spanish sources.

4.1.3.3 Further specialization within Hispanic Linguistics

Students may wish to focus on Applied Spanish Linguistics or Spanish Sociolinguistics, but these are not official ARCOs. The following are **suggested** courses.

Applied Spanish Linguistics:

Second Language Acquisition

Approaches and Methods of TESOL

Techniques and Procedures of TESOL

Spanish Sociolinguistics:

Language Contact

Discourse Analysis

Variation Analysis

4.1.4 Sociolinguistics ARCO PhD Course Requirements

Sociolinguistics (if not already taken)

Field Methods

SOC 2102: Sociological Theory 2 – Post-Classical

A statistics course

Two of the following:

- 2271 Discourse Analysis
- 2274 Language Contact
- 2269 Variation Analysis
- 2860 Historical Linguistics

4.1.5 Other MA/PhD Requirements

4.1.5.1 Language requirement:

Native speakers of English: 1) three semesters of a language taught at the college level plus 2) at least one semester with a grade of B or better in a language that is not Germanic, Greek, Italic (Romance, including Latin), or Slavic.

Non-native speakers of English: 1) English-language proficiency and 2) at least one semester with a grade of B or better in a language that is not Germanic, Greek, Italic (Romance, including Latin), or Slavic.

Candidates for the Hispanic Linguistics ARCO: 1) English-language proficiency, 2) at least one semester with a grade of B or better in a language that is not Germanic, Greek, Italic (Romance, including Latin), or Slavic, and 3) satisfactorily completing the Spanish language proficiency required of candidates.

See the DGS to set up a language exam.

4.1.5.2 Preliminary exam

Students entering without an MA: The preliminary exam is fulfilled by attaining a grade of B+ or better on the final exam of all core courses with a B+ grade or better, and by submitting a portfolio of written work from coursework.

Upon completion of all core courses, the students must assemble three course papers from any course taken: one paper to come from the ARCO; and at least one paper from phonetics, phonology, morphology, or syntax. Students are encouraged revise their papers in light of the feedback from their course instructors before submitting the papers for the preliminary evaluation. This portfolio must be submitted by January 15th of the second academic year. A rubric for evaluation is used for evaluation and is available on the graduate student courseweb page. Faculty will review the portfolio and determine by March 15 if the student passes or fails. In addition, faculty may request written evaluations of writing performance

from any former instructors. . The consequences of failing depend on the nature of the shortcoming. The most extreme consequence is immediate termination from the program, but a student may also be required to remediate knowledge that is lacking in a particular area and resubmit that portion of the preliminary portfolio.

Students entering with an MA: Students entering with an MA degree may petition to have core courses waived. In order to waive phonetics, phonology, morphology or syntax, a student must demonstrate knowledge by providing course syllabi and passing an oral interview. In order to fulfill the portfolio requirement when entering with an MA, a student must submit an identical portfolio as outlined above from their MA coursework by the end of their first semester of study. Students will be notified of the outcome by the end of the next semester.

4.1.5.3 Comprehensive exam

Two comprehensive papers are required to fulfill the comprehensive exam requirement for the Linguistics PhD. The topics of the two papers must be substantially different. Although the topics can be in the same specialty of linguistics, at least one paper should involve linguistic form or structure (for example, by analyzing the acquisition of a particular syntactic construction, by investigating variation of a phonological variable, or by doing a theoretical analysis in syntax or phonology). Both papers have a paper and presentation portion, but only one of the presentations must be public in department colloquium. The second paper can be presented to the readers only, but it is possible to present it publicly.

Only upon completion of the second comprehensive paper should the milestone card be sent to the GAdmin, who will forward it to the office of the Dean of Graduate Students.

Comprehensive Paper Procedures

The following procedures are for each paper. The student should first discuss the general topics of the two comps papers with their main advisor, and identify likely committee readers for each paper. Readers are strongly encouraged to meet with the student and agree on the scope of the content of the paper, and an appropriate timeline, before the student begins work. It is suggested that students develop comprehensive papers from a paper written for a course.

The student must obtain agreement from the faculty members to be readers and set a timeline. The readers must be minimally composed of at least two Pitt Department of Linguistics faculty members, one of whom will be the primary reader. The amount of consultation required by readers will vary and should be negotiated with the student and chair. The student will work mainly with the primary reader. They should agree on a target presentation date and (if relevant) must notify the committee in charge of scheduling colloquia the semester preceding the semester in which the paper will be presented.

Procedure for the public comps presentation: The student presents the paper in 30 minutes. This presentation is followed by a 15-minute question session in which faculty, students, and other audience members may pose questions to the student. All non-faculty, including the student, then withdraw for 10 minutes as all faculty present discuss the strengths and weaknesses of the presentation and paper, and decide on a grade. The student is then invited in and informed of the grade and, if there is time, to listen to faculty comments and requirements for revision.

Procedure for the non-public comps presentation: The student presents the paper in 30 minutes. This presentation is followed by a 15-minute question session in which readers may pose questions to the student. The student then withdraws for approximately 10 minutes as readers discuss the strengths and weaknesses of the presentation and paper, and decide on a grade. The student is then invited in and informed of the grade and, if there is time, to listen to faculty comments and requirements for revision.

Outcome: The faculty must decide on two grades: one for the presentation and one for the paper. The student can either pass or fail the presentation. For the paper, the student can pass with no revisions, pass with revisions, or fail. The following actions for all combinations are as follows:

Pass presentation and paper with no revisions. Student gathers signatures from committee and submits.

Pass presentation and paper with revisions: Student must perform the required revisions under the supervision of the committee chair within four months of the presentation.

Pass presentation and fail the paper: Student must write a new paper and present it within six months, or as soon thereafter as practical.

Fail presentation and pass paper with no revisions. Student must present again within one semester.

Fail presentation and pass paper with revisions: Student must perform the required revisions under the supervision of the primary reader within four months of the presentation and present again within one semester.

Fail presentation and fail the paper: At the discretion of the faculty, the student must write a new paper and present it within one semester.

If a student fails the paper more than once (total for both comprehensive papers), they will be terminated from the program.

Once the paper is approved, it should be signed on the cover page (template available on courseweb site) by the readers and the signed copy given to the GAdmin to place in the student's file. The GAdmin will also record completion of the comprehensive paper.

Once both comprehensive papers have been filed, a “Report of Examination” card is filled out by the GAdmin, approved by the student’s principal academic advisor and the DGS and then the GAdmin sends the Examination Card to the Dietrich School Graduate Dean’s office. All Examination Cards must be sent to the Dean’s office via the GAdmin. Cards should be never be conveyed by a student to the Dean's office.

4.1.5.4 Dissertation proposal

When the student has successfully completed the PhD comprehensive examination, they must prepare a dissertation proposal and present it in a formal dissertation proposal defense. A minimum four-person doctoral committee will direct the dissertation and administer the required proposal defense after the proposal has been submitted. Students and advisors are strongly advised to consult the regulations pertaining to the dissertation committee at the Dietrich School level, as outlined in the Graduate Bulletin. The student chooses the chair of the doctoral committee, and together they select the remaining committee members, subject to the approval of the department chair. One of the committee members must be from outside the core faculty of the Department of Linguistics, while three members must be affiliated with the Linguistics Department. The committee may be composed of more than four members, but at least four must be on the graduate faculty of the University of Pittsburgh. The fourth member may be from outside the University, but must be approved by the Graduate Dean. Consult the [Graduate Bulletin](#), the DGS, or the GAdmin for details and procedures.

A dissertation proposal must have at least two main elements: a knowledge essay and a proposal. The dissertation advisor will determine exactly the format for these two elements. For example, the advisor may require the first few literature review chapters of the dissertation for the knowledge essay portion, and then require a student to provide a proposal based on those chapters. Alternately, the advisor may construct a series of questions about the topic that a student must satisfactorily answer (in written essay form) in addition to providing a proposal. Students should confirm in writing the exact expectations of their advisor for the proposal. In addition to these main elements, a proposal must have a proposed timeline for work with deadlines for specific milestones, including the submission of specific chapters.

The advisor and student must schedule a dissertation overview meeting at which all members can attend. It is suggested that this be scheduled at least six months in advance, and the date should avoid the last three weeks of the semester. Overview meetings are only held during the fall and spring terms. Dietrich School regulations dictate that all members of the committee

must be physically present at the proposal meeting (in other words, no telephone or Skype participation). There are no dedicated department or Dietrich School funds available for travel of outside members to Pittsburgh for such meetings. As soon as a date is set, the student must inform the GAdmin. The GAdmin will prepare an “Admission to Candidacy” form and the GAdmin will forward it to the advisor prior to the overview meeting. The advisor must obtain committee members’ signatures on the form at the conclusion of the defense. If revisions are needed, the committee chair will withhold the form until all committee members are satisfied with the revisions, at which time the form is sent to the GAdmin.

The overview meeting itself is not a defense, but rather a ‘meeting of experts:’ The student is the only expert in all of the knowledge needed for the dissertation, and the committee has specific expertise and experience to help the student carry out the proposal. There need not be a presentation at the event; the format is determined by the advisor. The overview’s purpose is for the committee to work with the student to ensure that the dissertation, if completed as proposed, will be a significant contribution to knowledge in linguistics. In addition, they will determine whether the project is feasible in the timeline. The overview is useful for the student because they will know that if they perform the study as outlined in the proposal, they should successfully pass this requirement.

Note that the Dietrich School requires a delay of at least eight months between the admission to candidacy and the defense, so it is imperative not to delay the overview meeting. (Note that the date of admission to candidacy is not the same as the proposal defense date -- there will be a delay between the two).

4.1.5.5 Dissertation

After being admitted to candidacy, the student will conduct dissertation research and write a dissertation primarily in consultation with the main advisor, with secondary consultation with committee members when needed. If the dissertation requires more than one year, the committee must meet with the student yearly to discuss progress.

Students are highly encouraged to consult at least monthly with their advisor, and they should be proactive about setting up such meetings – do not wait for the advisor to ask how things are going! Do not write a whole dissertation and give it to an advisor as one lump; rather, send completed chapter drafts for comment. This will avoid headache later on and is the most efficient method. Students who write the entire dissertation and submit it often lose most of that work because it is unacceptable.

A dissertation defense should be scheduled at least six months in advance. The dissertation draft should be submitted to the committee at least one month before the defense, and the

defense draft must be approved by the advisor. The date of the defense thus involves some educated guesswork on the part of the advisor and the student. As soon as the defense date is set, the student must notify the GAdmin, who will help the student with other procedures surrounding the defense. (See for regulations governing the dissertation committee and defense).

The dissertation defense is by regulation open to all members of the University community, and all graduate faculty members who attend have the right to pose questions to the candidate. See the bulletin regulations linked above for details. Dietrich School regulations dictate that all members of the committee must be physically present at the proposal meeting (in other words, no telephone or Skype participation). There are no dedicated department or Dietrich School funds available for travel of outside members to Pittsburgh for such meetings.

4.2 Sample progression through MA/PhD program (milestones)

This is a sample progression through the program; everyone's path will be unique. This represents the fastest that one could complete the program without a previous MA. Students entering with a previous MA may progress more quickly (although not necessarily; some MA programs do not have as rigorous core courses as Pitt's and the student will still need to take these).

Year 1

Core courses

Year 2

Core courses and electives

Submit preliminary exam portfolio (January)

Year 3

Elective courses

Defend comprehensive 1

Present comprehensive paper in colloquium (can wait until year 4)

Year 4

Defend comprehensive 2

Present comprehensive paper in colloquium (if not done in year 3) Dissertation proposal defense

Year 5-6

Dissertation research or fieldwork

Defend dissertation

4.3 Requirements for a terminal MA in Applied Linguistics

The Department offers a terminal MA degree in Applied Linguistics, with or without the TESOL Certification.

4.3.1 Required Courses

2578 Phonetics

2579 Phonology

2777 Syntax

2144 Research Methods

One course in sociolinguistics/language change. Choose one from:

2267 Sociolinguistics

2680 Historical Linguistics

2253 Language Contact

2146 Second Language Acquisition

A language pedagogy course

Choose one from:

A course in psycholinguistics

A course in First Language Development

2147 Current Issues in Second Language Acquisition

4.3.3 Other MA Requirements

4.3.3.1 Course Grades

Students must attain a B+ in all core courses. If the grade is lower than a B+, in consultation with the DGS and the course instructor, a student must take the final exam the following year and attain a grade of B+ on the exam, or retake the course.

4.3.3.2 Language requirement

Proficiency in one foreign language is required for the MA degree.

Native-English speakers: three terms of a language taught at the college level.

Non-native speakers of English: Completion of the MA coursework with a grade point average of B (3.0) or better.

See the DGS to set up a language exam.

4.3.3.3. Comprehensive exam

The comprehensive exam is fulfilled by attaining a grade of B+ or better in all core courses.

Students who do not attain a B+ in a particular course may retake the course or perform remedial work with the approval of the DGS and their advisor. Students must notify the DGS

and their advisor immediately upon receiving a deficient grade (ideally, they should notify even earlier if they are performing poorly in a particular course, as advisors may be able to help set up tutoring). Students falling short in multiple core courses may be terminated from the program.

4.4 TESOL Certificate Requirements

TESOL is an acronym for Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages. Any student who wishes to earn the certificate at the MA or PhD level must fulfill the following requirements:

1000	Introduction to Linguistics
2738	Linguistic Structure of English
2142	Theories and Practices of Second Language Teaching
2143	Materials Development for Second Language Teaching & Testing
2145	Second Language Acquisition
I&L 2253	Testing and Assessment
2195	Practicum in Second Language Teaching (1 credit)

In addition, PhD students must complete one additional 3-credit course as approved by the TESOL Certificate Advisor

Typical yearly calendar of important dates and deadlines

September

Apply for Fall graduation

Notify colloquium committee of comprehensive paper presentations for spring semester

October 30

Applications for travel or research grants due to the DGS

December:

December 15: Deadline for application for all graduate programs. Deadline for MA students to notify the department of an intent to continue to PhD.

Henderson Award deadline announced

January:

Fellowship deadlines!

January 15: Preliminary Exam Portfolios due

Apply for Spring semester graduation

January 31: Applications for travel or research grants due to the DGS

Notify colloquium committee of comprehensive paper presentations for fall semester

February:

Fellowship deadlines!

April:

April 1: All graduate student annual reports due to advisors

April 1: Applications for travel or research grants due to the DGS

April 15: Faculty meet to evaluate students

Handbook Revision History

0.1 First draft

0.2 Confirmed time for funding, fleshed out some sections and added links.

0.3 Editing and expansion of evaluation.

1.0 Split off forms appendix, added annual review. First official version.

1.1 Typos and minor clarifications. Clarifying guarantee of funding.

2.0 Complete revision, mostly to reflect changes in Master's requirements and preliminary exam.

2.0.1 Minor revisions for calendar and preliminary portfolio. February 2014

2.1 Minor revisions of formatting. Comprehensive paper revision policy added. Number of comprehensive committee members altered. September 2014.

2.2 Minor revisions. Program requirements updates. Dissertation Committee policy updates.

3.0 Major revisions and reorganization. July 2017