Academic Milestones for Doctoral Students in Linguistics
Years One and Two

Effective Fall 2013

Diagnostic Exam

PhD students will be tested on the three core theoretical areas of linguistics – sound structure, sentence structure, and meaning & use – in an oral exam format. These exams will be taken at the end of the 2\textsuperscript{nd} semester in the program. The faculty may, however, decide to delay one or more of these exams until the end of the 3\textsuperscript{rd} semester, depending on course offerings during the first two semesters of study. (Delaying of any section of the exam will be announced by census day of the second semester.) Exam questions for each area will require analysis of a specific set of linguistic data and theoretically informed solution(s) to some specific problem(s) related to this data.

Questions will be distributed within the last three weeks of classes, with the exam scheduled one week after distribution. The exam will consist of a 5-10-minute presentation for each subject area in which the examinee details his/her solution to the problem, followed by 10 minutes of questions from a committee of (at least three) department faculty members. No written responses are required and no electronic presentation should be prepared, but students may (and are encouraged to) bring a 1-page handout to support their presentation.

The exam for each area will be graded as High Pass (HP), Pass (P), Low Pass (LP), or Fail (F). In order to successfully pass the Diagnostic Exam, students must receive a grade of LP or higher on each area. (Students with grades of LP may be required to complete additional work.) Students who do not pass the Diagnostic Exam may have their funding suspended or may be dismissed from the PhD program. Exams may be retaken at the discretion of the Graduate Studies Committee.
Qualifying Paper (Second year written milestone)

PhD students must submit and defend a qualifying paper (QP) after successfully passing their diagnostic exams. This paper should be submitted and defended during the 4th or 5th semester in the PhD program. It should be developed by working closely with a committee of at least three faculty members from our department, one of whom will serve as the committee chair.

A Qualifying Paper Committee Form should be submitted to the PhD advisor by Friday of the 7th week of the 3rd semester. On this form, the student should obtain signatures from the committee members indicating their unanimous approval of the QP topic.

At the end of the 3rd semester, a progress report of no more than 2 pages should be submitted to all of the committee members. A first assessment of the project’s progress will take place at the end of the 3rd semester based on this report and the committee members’ evaluation of the student’s progress. A second assessment of progress will take place at the end of the 4th semester, which again will be based on the committee members’ evaluation of the student’s progress. It is the student’s responsibility to discuss specific expectations for demonstrating sufficient progress on this paper with each of the committee members. (The second assessment may be waived if the student successfully submits and defends the QP during the 4th semester.) If a student’s committee determines that insufficient progress has been made by the end of the 4th semester, the student will not be considered to be making acceptable progress toward the degree, and funding may be suspended until acceptable progress is made.

The QP itself must be submitted (again, to the PhD advisor) and defended before the end of the student’s 5th semester of doctoral studies.

The QP and defense will be graded as High Pass (HP), Pass (P), Low Pass (LP), or Fail (F). In order to successfully pass the QP, students must receive a grade of LP or higher from each committee member. (Students with grades of LP may be required to complete additional work on the paper within a reasonable amount of time.) Any student who has not completed the QP requirements by the end of the 5th semester may have their funding suspended or may be dismissed from the PhD program.