

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

All Ph.D. students must take the qualifying exam within three semesters (not counting the summer semester), unless they are identified as being in a dual-title degree. Dual-title Ph.D. students must take the qualifying exam within four semesters (not counting the summer semester).

The purpose of the exam is to assess competence in academic writing and ability to carry out research. The exam is given orally and is not to exceed 60 minutes. Prior to the exam [see below for details] students must submit two original research papers to the committee. In compliance with the purpose of the exam, these papers should demonstrate scholarly ability and thus point to likelihood of successful completion of the program. The exam will focus on the papers, the program of study, and research plans.

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

Students must demonstrate competency in one additional language other than your first language. Students whose first language is not English can use English to satisfy this requirement. Students whose first language is English may satisfy this requirement by completing one of the following: having an undergraduate or graduate degree with a major or minor in that language, passing an appropriate graduate-level course offered in that language at your previous institution or Penn State, submitting to the doctoral committee a course/research paper that involves an in-depth analysis of that language, or demonstrating intermediate-advanced speaking proficiency in that language to a relevant member of the graduate faculty at Penn State through an oral interview.

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 Applied Linguistics 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 Graduate Studies.

Comprehensive Examination

This examination is designed to assess the ability to interpret the theoretical assumptions and research findings in the student's area of concentration and their ability to do empirical research in that area. The exam will comprise two components: data analysis and a critical

theoretically grounded discussion of the existing research that addresses the topic of your contemplated doctoral dissertation.

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 defense 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.