



**Department of Linguistics**

**ADVISING HANDBOOK  
GRADUATE PROGRAM IN LINGUISTICS**

**FALL 2015**

This handbook is meant to serve as a guide for Linguistics faculty in advising graduate students through the various phases of their doctoral studies, but is likely useful to graduate students as well. When prospective graduate students first apply to the Department of Linguistics, they are given a description of the *Linguistics PhD Program*. This description then becomes their guide to the requirements they face between admission and graduation. This handbook supplements that basic description, giving a fuller account of each of the areas appearing in the program description given to students: admissions, advising, coursework, qualifying research paper, candidacy, language requirement, dissertation prospectus, and the dissertation committee and defense.

Faculty should be familiar with Rackham's policies and procedures as summarized on their website (<http://www.rackham.umich.edu/current-students/policies/academic-policies>) In Rackham's Office of Academic Records and Dissertations, the person directly responsible for Linguistics is Julia Thiel (OARD 763-0171, [juliat@rackham.umich.edu](mailto:juliat@rackham.umich.edu)), who certifies that our students have fulfilled both Rackham and Linguistics requirements at various milestones in their studies. As a first course of action, however, faculty should consult the Student Services Assistant, who is familiar with many Rackham requirements.

The present version of the handbook primarily elaborates on issues that arise in guiding students through graduate program requirements. The Graduate Committee invites suggestions on other topics that should be added.

## CONTENTS

	page
Admissions	2
Advising	3
Course requirements	5
Registration requirements	9
Qualifying research paper	10
Candidacy	11
Language requirement	12
Dissertation prospectus	13
Dissertation committee	14
Dissertation defense	15
Time to degree	16
Funding opportunities	17
Co-authorship issues	19
The graduate committee	20

## **ADMISSIONS**

New students are admitted to the doctoral program once each year to begin in the Fall term. Application materials for all potential students must be received by the Department no later than December 7.

Admission materials must include:

- (a) Completed Rackham application
- (b) Statement of Purpose
- (c) Personal Statement
- (d) Official transcripts of previous study
- (e) Three letters of recommendation
- (f) Sample of written work
- (g) TOEFL or MELAB scores for students whose native language is not English. A minimum score of 87 on the MELAB, of 95 on the internet-based TOEFL or of 620 on the paper-based TOEFL is required for admission. This requirement is waived for students who will have earned an undergraduate degree from an English medium university before they enter the PhD program.

## ADVISING

Graduate school presents students with important decisions that will permanently affect the course of their student and professional careers. Since typically they are not prepared to make them without considered input, advisors serve an important role. The Department's philosophy of advising is manifest in the use of two advisors for each graduate student. Advising requires both depth and breadth as well as diversity of perspective, hence the role of two faculty members in providing consultation to each graduate student. The A advisor is to be a faculty member with whom the student is working or will work on research, that is, an individual in a student's planned or declared field of specialization. The second or B advisor need not be a specialist in the student's field of interest although that is typically the case. The B advisor is another faculty member with whom the student has rapport and with whom the student wishes to discuss any matters associated with his/her graduate program. An A advisor is assigned to all incoming students; students are to select their initial B advisor by the end of their first semester here. Students are free to make changes in advisors at any time and do not need to seek permission of their current advisor(s) to do so. Students are to inform the Student Services Coordinator in the Department office when they make changes. Directly notifying faculty of changes is a courtesy but not a requirement.

For students in dual degree programs, a single Linguistics (A) advisor is assigned by the beginning of the Fall term on the basis of students' statements of interest in the application materials, and may be changed later. Advisors from the complementary department will be chosen or assigned following that department's procedures. After a dissertation committee has been approved, the Linguistics advisor will usually be a dissertation committee (co-)chair or member.

A advisors should meet regularly with their students by virtue of shared research interests; many advisors and advisees find biweekly meetings with an established agenda to be helpful. Advising first- and second-year students raises some additional considerations:

### **First year advising**

When possible, advisors of incoming students should meet with their new advisees in the week prior to the start of classes in the student's first term of enrollment. (Advisors should let the Department office know when they will be available in the week prior to the start of classes in the Fall.) Under virtually no circumstances should this first meeting occur later than the first week of classes. Advising appointments for incoming students should include not only a discussion of courses for the upcoming term, but long-term plans as well.

In addition to other meetings over the course of the year, A advisors should meet with first-year advisees before the end-of-year faculty retreat to discuss their progress; a post-retreat meeting is also encouraged.

### **Second year advising**

Prior to the beginning of the 3<sup>rd</sup> term, A and B advisors meet with their advisees to develop their remaining plan of courses. Prior to the end-of-year faculty retreat, A and B advisors of second-year students are expected to read materials of their advisees and meet jointly with advisees to discuss progress.

Advisors should work with students to ensure that basic Department requirements are met and to seek out various funding opportunities (see Funding). In addition, advisors are responsible for helping students work out long-term plans and re-evaluating them at regular intervals. The longest-term plan is of course that of preparing students for the job market; throughout, advisors should be guiding students in ways that best prepare them for the market (academic or not) they hope to enter (e.g., when and where to present their work at conferences, which professional organizations to join, and so on). Students often confront

non-academic problems during their graduate years and seek out their advisors for assistance or merely a friendly ear; faculty will want to make themselves available on those occasions too.

### **GSI Mentoring**

Gaining teaching experience by serving as a Graduate Student Instructor (GSI) is an important step in the preparation of students for their professional careers, and faculty offering courses to which GSIs are assigned provide very different, but equally active, mentoring from a student's A and B advisors. While the details of what this mentoring role involves will vary by individual faculty members and GSIs, the following guidelines should be followed:

- (a) The faculty instructor and GSI(s) are expected to meet regularly (usually weekly) to jointly discuss plans for sections, establish standards for grading, and so on. More generally, these meetings should serve as an opportunity for faculty to mentor students as *teachers* of linguistics.
- (b) The faculty instructor is expected to observe a section taught by each GSI in order to evaluate his/her teaching and provide constructive feedback. It is recommended that this observation be done early in the term (usually in the fourth or fifth week) so that suggestions for improvement can be incorporated. If the GSI is in his/her first semester of teaching, then a follow-up observation by the faculty member is recommended.
- (c) As appropriate, GSIs should be encouraged to present a lecture to the full class at least once during the term.
- (d) GSIs should be encouraged to take advantage of campus resources to improve their teaching. These include the many services offered by the Center for Research on Learning and Teaching (CRLT) which organizes teaching workshops, provides reference materials, and conducts in-class observations and evaluations at the request of instructors.
- (e) The Graduate Student Mentor, an experienced GSI, is available for consultation and as a source of help and advice to all GSIs. The GSM works in conjunction with the faculty member responsible for the GSI training workshop.

Regardless of individual practices, the faculty instructor should submit to the Student Services Assistant, a written evaluation of each GSI's performance. This evaluation should be submitted at the end of the term in which the course is taught.

## **COURSE REQUIREMENTS**

All required courses described below must be completed prior to advancing to candidacy with the exception of one of the advanced (600-level or above) courses, which can be taken any time during the student's graduate study.

### **Required Linguistics courses for students NOT in a dual degree program**

1. *Ling 740 (Research in Linguistics)*, taken by first-year students in the Fall semester.
2. *Ling 997 (Independent Study)*. Students take this course in their second semester. It provides an early opportunity to engage in research with a faculty advisor.
3. *Ling 750 (Research Writing)*. This course is typically taken by students while writing their QRP in their fifth semester. However, it may be taken as early as the third semester. If the student achieves candidacy prior to the start of the fifth semester, the Ling 750 requirement is waived.
4. *GSI Training*: Students entering their second year are required to participate in the Graduate Student Instructor Teaching Orientation offered by the Center for Research on Learning and Teaching followed by a 3-day GSI training seminar in late August. Students receive LING 993 credit for the training seminar.
5. *Ling 780 (Interdisciplinary Seminar in Linguistics)*. All second-year students are required to take this seminar, normally in the Fall term.
6. *"Core" courses*:
  - (a) *Ling 512 (Phonetics)*, *Ling 513 (Phonology)*, *Ling 515 (Syntax)*, and *Ling 516 (Semantics)*. Students normally complete these 4 courses by the end of their first year. They must be completed prior to candidacy.
  - (b) 6 additional courses, 4 in Linguistics and 2 cognate courses outside the Department (more on the cognates below). Two of the Linguistics courses must be outside phonetics, phonology, syntax, semantic or morphology (to add breadth to students' training). Two of the courses (at least one being in Linguistics) must be at 600-level or above.

### **Exemptions from required courses**

Students who have taken the required graduate courses previously may apply for exceptions to the requirements.

1. A student may request a waiver for any course or courses with the exception of Ling 740, Ling 750, Ling 997, Ling 780, and Ling 993.
2. A waiver will be considered under the following circumstances:
  - (a) The student received a grade of at least A- in the relevant course taken elsewhere.
  - (b) A faculty member who regularly teaches the relevant course at UM has evaluated the prior course, and has determined that the (i) content, (ii) workload, and (iii) evaluation standard of that course is comparable to the relevant UM course.

In order to facilitate this process, the student must provide all relevant materials to the UM faculty. These include, but are not necessarily limited to, (i) a syllabus for the course and (ii) representative samples of evaluated work.

### **Required Linguistics courses for students in a Student Initiated Dual Degree**

1. *Ling 740 (Research in Linguistics)*, taken by first-year students in the Fall semester.
2. *Ling 750 (Research Writing)*. This course is typically taken by students while writing their QRP in their fifth semester. However, it may be taken as early as the third semester. If the student achieves candidacy prior to the start of the fifth semester, the Ling 750 requirement is

waived.

3. *GSI Training*: Students entering their second year are required to participate in the Graduate Student Instructor Teaching Orientation offered by the Center for Research on Learning and Teaching followed by a 3-day GSI training seminar in late August. Students receive LING 993 credit for the training seminar.
4. *“Core” courses*:
  - (a) Ling 512 (Phonetics), Ling 513 (Phonology), Ling 515 (Syntax), and Ling 516 (Semantics). These four courses are preferably taken in the first year of graduate study and must be completed prior to candidacy.
  - (b) One course outside of phonetics, phonology, syntax, semantics, and morphology, to be chosen in consultation with student’s A advisor in Linguistics.

The course exemptions policy is the same as for students not in combined/joint degree programs.

### **Cognates**

Linguistics PhD students must take 2 cognate courses. For students in dual degree programs, coursework from the other unit may fulfill the Linguistics cognate requirement. The cognate requirement is partially a Rackham requirement: Rackham requires 4 pre-candidacy cognate credits, which must be completed with a grade of B- or better.

There is a variety of careers that a Ph.D. in Linguistics can support and the purpose of the cognate is to engage in coursework that enhances that career trajectory. For most students, cognates will come from a field closely related to Linguistics—often, Philosophy, Psychology, Anthropology, Statistics, Computer Science, or one of the language departments. Students could also fulfill the cognate requirement with courses outside of these fields depending on their career trajectory. Students must consult with their advisors about their cognate course selections.

With a few exceptions, cognate courses can be any graduate-level course approved for Rackham graduate credit that does *not* have the “Ling” prefix. (Most courses at the 400 level or above are approved for Rackham graduate credit; see Rackham’s listing.) The following are among classes that have been used by students in the Linguistics Department to satisfy the cognate requirement in recent years:

ANTHRCUL 578: Linguistic Anthropology III  
ANTHRCUL 673: Language Ideologies  
EECS 492: Introduction to Artificial Intelligence  
PHIL 550: Philosophy of Language: Presupposition and Information Structure  
PSYCH 613: Statistical Methods  
PSYHC 614: Statistical Methods  
PSYCH 745: Psychology of Language  
PSYCH 756: Language and Communication Skills  
PSYCH 808: Special Seminar

Frequently encountered exceptions to “any non-Ling graduate-level course”:

- (a) Many of our international students take ELI courses at the 400 level and above. However, students may not use these to satisfy a cognate requirement.
- (b) Some Linguistics courses are cross-listed with another department. Because the spirit of the requirement is for students to branch out, which cross-listed course can count as a cognate depends on how the course is taught (which in turn depends to some extent on who is teaching the course). For example, Anth 572 (=Ling 542) is usually taught by Linguistics faculty and cannot count as a

cognate. In contrast, Psych 445 (=Ling 447) has Psychology as its “home” department and counts as a cognate.

Note: a single course *cannot* do double duty as both a cognate and core course. On the other hand, one of the advanced (600-level or above) courses can be filled by a cognate course at the appropriate level.

The cognate requirement does not have to be met by UM coursework. The Department can decide that *graduate* coursework taken elsewhere satisfies some or all of the cognate requirement, although Rackham approval of this decision is also required. At the Department level, the decision needs the approval of the student’s advisors and the Graduate Committee; the faculty member who teaches a related course at UM would typically be consulted in making this decision. This decision is to be given *in writing*, along with an official transcript of the relevant coursework, to the Graduate Chair (who then passes the transcript plus her/his recommendation along to Rackham for approval). Credit for non-UM coursework does *not* have to be transferred to the student’s Rackham record to satisfy the cognate requirement.

### **900-level registration**

There are three 900-level enrollments in Linguistics: Ling 990 (Dissertation: Pre-candidacy), Ling 995 (Dissertation: Candidacy), and Ling 997 (Special Research I and II). Each of these enrollments may be taken more than once and each is taken under the direction of a particular faculty member. Students registering for any of the 900-level courses use the number (available from the Student Services Assistant) of the directing faculty member.

Ling 990 may be taken only by pre-candidates and is typically what students enroll in when working on their QRPs. Students should be encouraged to register for Ling 990 or Ling 997 if a faculty member is working closely with them on a research project. Ling 990 may be taken for 1-8 credits in a given term and is graded S-U. Ling 997 may be taken for 1-6 credits and is graded either A-E or S-U.

Ling 995 registration, graded S-U, is *only* for students who have advanced to candidacy. When students opt for Ling 995, they must register for 8 credits in Fall, Winter or Spring/Summer semester, or for 4 credits in Spring or Summer half-semester.

### **Expectations**

The usual course load for students in their first two years is 3 courses per term, although this varies from 2 to 4 courses depending on students’ teaching assignments, non-native language difficulties, and so on. Students should be *strongly* encouraged to complete the required Linguistics courses plus cognates within the first two years so that all coursework needed to advance to candidacy is completed within this time frame.

### **MA course requirements**

Although Linguistics does not admit students into an MA program, students who leave the doctoral program after 2 or more years (by their choice or at our request) often seek an MA in order to have a degree to show for their efforts. At the Department level, there are few fixed MA requirements, although students are typically expected to complete the required (pre-candidacy) courses. Exceptions to this need Graduate Committee approval. Rackham requires MA students to satisfactorily complete 4 credits of



cognate coursework. Rackham also requires a minimum overall GPA of 3.0 (= B average) to grant an MA.

## **REGISTRATION REQUIREMENTS**

### **Continuous enrollment**

Beginning Fall 2010, PhD students will register for each Fall and Winter semester from matriculation to degree completion, unless on an approved Leave of Absence or with Extramural Study status. Per Rackham requirements, students who do not register will be presumed to have withdrawn and will be discontinued from the program.

Students will register for the Spring or Summer semester when they are taking or auditing a course (or, for students in dual degree programs, when taking preliminary, comprehensive, or qualifying examinations). Students conducting the oral 15 of the dissertation or completing degree requirements outside of the Fall/Winter semesters, need to register for a full Spring/Summer semester. PhD students will have 12-month privileges for University services whether or not they register in the Spring/ Summer semester.

### **Candidacy registration**

Registered candidates must chose Candidacy enrollment, which is 8 hours of Ling 995 (4 hours of 995 in Spring or Summer half-terms, except in the Spring/Summer when the students defends his/her dissertation when a full 8 hours of 995 are required). Candidacy registration entitles students to one “free” course per term; students are charged additional tuition for any courses beyond this. (For details on “banking” free courses, see <http://www.rackham.umich.edu/current-students/policies/academic-policies/section5 - 552>).

### **MA registration requirements**

Linguistics students who seek an MA must complete a minimum of 30 hours of graduate-level, but not dissertation-level (i.e., not Ling 990 or Ling 995), courses. (Guideline: any course that has “dissertation” in its title cannot count towards an MA. However, if a student has Ling 990 credits and falls short of the 30-hour requirement, the faculty member who directed the 990 research may, under certain conditions, petition Rackham to count some or all of those credits towards the MA. Consult the Student Services Coordinator or Julia Thiel in Rackham concerning restrictions.)

Students seeking an MA may transfer up to 6 graduate-level credits from another institution. However, the transferred credits cannot have been used toward another degree; as a result, if a degree is indicated on the non-UM transcript, the credits to be transferred must be posted *after* the degree date. In addition, the grade(s) for the transferred credits must be B or better.

### **International students**

International students are usually aware of the registration requirements of their visa, but their A advisors should check Rackham’s guidelines to be certain that all requirements are being met. More information is available here: <http://www.rackham.umich.edu/current-students/policies/academic-policies/section3 - 31>.

## QUALIFYING RESEARCH PAPER

The Qualifying Research Paper (QRP) is a student's first opportunity to engage in an extended research project in close consultation with faculty. It is a Department requirement, usually the last completed prior to applying for candidacy. Per agreement with Rackham, Department policy is that students **are expected to advance to candidacy by the end of their fifth term** and the Department expects students to complete the QRP (or request an extension) by the end of the fifth term. The Research Writing course, normally taken in students' fifth term, is designed in part to provide structure to the process of writing the QRP.

A student who is unable to meet the deadline must appeal to the Graduate Committee for an extension, with an explanation of the circumstances that are slowing progress. The graduate committee will consider the appeal in consultation with the student's A and B advisors, and, if the appeal is granted, will make recommendations for overcoming obstacles to progress.

The QRP can be viewed as a formal opportunity for the student to evaluate whether she/he enjoys the detailed, labor-intensive type of research that will be essential when conducting the research for the dissertation. This paper also enables a student to explore whether a particular area within linguistics is the area in which the student will conduct dissertation research or to establish a second area of competence that will not be pursued in the dissertation. At the same time, the QRP provides the Department faculty with evidence of the student's preparedness for dissertation work, thus serving a gatekeeping function. Students who fail to successfully complete a QRP may not continue in the PhD program. (However, these students may be awarded an MA at this time if they meet course, credit hour, and GPA requirements; see sections on MA course and registration requirements.)

The QRP should show the student's ability to pose a linguistic question within a framework of current linguistic research, collect and marshal empirical evidence that bears upon that question, and write the results in a way that communicates successfully to other linguists. The QRP should be a substantial piece of research. Ideally, with revisions, the QRP will be of publishable quality; in such cases, students should be encouraged to submit the revision (which, under appropriate circumstances, might be co-authored with their QRP chair) for publication.

Students may elect 990 to work on their QRP although no such requirement exists. The QRP may be written as a separate paper or may grow out of a paper prepared for coursework. In either case, it should be planned in careful consultation with a faculty member. The QRP has two readers, one serving as the chair. If a student wishes to have an adjunct/visiting faculty member serve as a reader for the QRP, a formal request should be made to the Graduate Committee; in general, only faculty who will be available for the duration of the QRP are appropriate. The chair should meet regularly with the student to ensure that a well-conceived and carefully executed project ensues. Regular meetings about the QRP with the student will maximize the likelihood that both student and chair share the same conception of the project. The role of the second reader varies depending on the project and the chair. Some second readers are actively involved in the project; others participate in the later stages of completion. However, consultation with the second reader early in the process and periodically throughout is helpful in providing the student with dual perspectives as well as ensuring common goals. If a student finds it necessary to replace a reader, the student should inform the original reader of the change. When the final draft of the QRP has been submitted, both readers are to make independent assessments of it. In the event of a difference of opinion that cannot be resolved through discussion, the Graduate Committee will review the evaluations and make a final determination.

## **CANDIDACY**

A student advances to candidacy when:

- (a) Required courses have been satisfactorily completed.
- (b) Two cognate courses have been approved and completed (with a minimum grade of B in each).
- (c) A Qualifying Research Paper (QRP) has been written and passed by both the first and second readers.
- (d) Any additional requirements of the Rackham Graduate School have been satisfied.

The Department requires that the first and second QRP readers have approved the QRP. Upon receipt of the approval, the student's file is verified by the Student Services Coordinator for completeness. The Student Services Coordinator then submits the information online for approval by Rackham.

Rackham requires all doctoral students in good standing to advance to candidacy by the end of their third year. However, Department policy (set in consultation with Rackham) is that students must achieve this status by the end of their fifth term, unless granted an extension by the Graduate Committee in consultation with the student's A and B advisors. Students who do not advance to candidacy by the end of fifth semester, or have not been granted an extension, will be considered as being not in good standing.

Candidacy is a watershed event in the doctoral program, and has a number of consequences. One consequence is substantially reduced tuition costs. A second consequence is that, with the increased focus on their research that accompanies candidacy, students take fewer courses. Candidates registered for 8 credits of Ling 995 are entitled to only one "free" course for each semester of 995 registration. Advisors should meet with students to work out a plan for these. Possibilities include foreign language courses, courses that provide direct technical input or scholarly background (statistics, area studies), courses that broaden a student's employability (such as History of the English Language for those looking for a position in an English department), or courses that help a student get better acquainted with a potential committee member.

At this stage, advisors can serve an important role in helping students with the presentation and/or publication of their QRP or seminar research.

## LANGUAGE REQUIREMENT

Before graduation, a student must demonstrate proficiency in two natural languages other than English, or the ability to carry out specialized research on those languages. Students may satisfy both language requirements via a single option if they desire (e.g., 2 years of French and 2 years of Italian, in college).

Language proficiency will be judged as equivalent to two years of college level work in the language and can be demonstrated in one of four ways:

- (a) Passing an examination administered by a designated faculty member in the Department. The Department language exam is written and has the following format: The examiner provides the student with a scholarly article, written in the target language, on a subject of their area of specialization. The student reads the article in the week(s) prior to the exam. The written exam consists of questions in English to which the student responds in English. It is a sit-down exam of roughly two hours in length.
- (b) Spoken knowledge of a language that does not have a writing system may also count towards the language requirement. The exam format for such languages will be decided by the designated faculty member who administers the language exam.
- (c) Passing an examination set by the appropriate University foreign language department.
- (d) Completing four semesters of college level work in a foreign language with a minimum grade of B.
- (e) Native competence.

The ability to carry out specialized research on a language other than English may be satisfied by: Writing a research paper that proposes a substantial analysis of empirical phenomena from one or more languages other than English. This research can be done as a substantial part of the Qualifying Research Paper, a publication, or a chapter of the PhD dissertation. What counts as substantial analysis of a language will be decided by the faculty advisor or by the QRP/dissertation committee. The student needs to inform the relevant faculty in advance that he or she would like to have the research paper/dissertation chapter count for fulfillment of the language requirement.

Special cases that arise in the language requirement will be handled at the discretion of the Graduate Committee.

## **DISSERTATION PROSPECTUS**

The prospectus is an official document in the doctoral program. The prospectus, often 25-50 pages in length, should be tightly worded and argued. It typically contains the following elements:

- (a) An opening discussion of a relevant and worthwhile research area, issue or problem, interwoven with a critical review of the scholarship to date in the area.
- (b) An outline of data collection procedures and other methodological issues.
- (c) A demonstration, usually via some preliminary analysis, that the proposed study will be able to deliver answers to the research questions.
- (d) A timetable for the completion and defense of the dissertation.

In other words, the principal goal of the prospectus is to communicate clearly to the prospectus committee the background to the proposed dissertation research, and its goals, scope and methods.

The selection of a dissertation topic depends on many factors but, given the fact that expertise in multiple subfields is important in today's job market, advisors and students need to consider carefully whether the dissertation should be a distinct project from the QRP, rather than a (substantial) elaboration of that project.

Faculty roles in the creation of an acceptable prospectus are usually strong. Faculty have particular responsibilities for ensuring that the topic is worthwhile, suitable to the candidate's strengths and interests, and is "doable" within the time-frame and the resources available.

Within the frame of achieving candidacy by the end of students' fifth term, and completing the PhD by the end of their fifth year, the prospectus must be approved no later than the beginning (September 1) of the fifth year. The student submits a draft prospectus, which is discussed with the candidate at a meeting involving at least three faculty members. There is a strong presumption that the prospectus committee members will continue to serve as members of the dissertation committee. Faculty roles here are principally to help the student further define and refine the document and its stated outline of research. Once the committee approves the prospectus, the committee chair should send the Student Services Coordinator a message to this effect (listing the committee members) and the final copy should be filed by the student with the Student Services Assistant. As with the candidacy deadline, a student who is unable to meet the prospectus deadline must appeal to the Graduate Committee for an extension, and the graduate committee will consider the appeal in consultation with the student's A and B advisors.

## DISSERTATION COMMITTEE

During the preparation of the prospectus, the advisor and student will be discussing the ideal composition of the dissertation committee.

Faculty should consult Rackham's policies for details (<http://www.rackham.umich.edu/current-students/policies/academic-policies/section5#553>). The primary Rackham regulations for the constitution of the dissertation committee are:

- (a) The committee must consist of at least four members, three of whom must be regular members of the Graduate Faculty. At least two members must be from the Department. Students in dual degree programs are normally expected to have two committee members from each unit.
- (b) The committee must have a cognate member who is a regular Graduate Faculty member in a Rackham doctoral program and who must hold at least a 0.50 appointment in doctoral program/department outside of Linguistics.
- (c) The committee is led by a chair or by two co-chairs.
- (d) Emeriti professors may serve on committees, but they cannot serve as sole chairs or as cognate members except by special arrangement.

Rackham's *Dissertation Committee Form* lists the members. The form is submitted online by the Student Services Coordinator and approved by the Department or Graduate Chair. If there are doubts or queries about the composition of any committee, these will be raised by the Department Chair with the Dissertation Chair, possibly in consultation with the Graduate Chair or Graduate Committee. The nomination form needs to be approved by Rackham before the first format check, and Rackham recommends that the form be submitted for approval at least 6 months before the oral defense.

If difficulties arise in the course of committee work prior to the dissertation defense, the Graduate Chair should be informed. If an acceptable solution cannot be found with the intervention of the Graduate Committee, the matter will be referred to the Department Chair.

### Convening the dissertation committee

The first meeting of the dissertation committee is often the student's prospectus defense. Following approval of the prospectus, the entire dissertation committee is expected to meet with the student every six months to discuss substantive issues revolving around the dissertation, and assess more generally progress to date.

## DISSERTATION DEFENSE

During the defense term, the student must be registered under Ling 995. Because funding packages are guaranteed for no more than five years, students are expected to complete work on their dissertation during their fifth year so that they are ready to defend before the end of their tenth term.

The dissertation chair or co-chairs, often in consultation with the other committee members, work with the student to decide when the dissertation is ready to be defended. The student, with the chair's help if necessary, sets a defense date at least three weeks after the date the dissertation was submitted to the committee. (Individual committees may, of course, specify earlier submission.)

At least 10 working days prior to the oral defense, the student has to register for a so-called "pre-defense meeting" with a representative from Rackham's OARD. This meeting can be in person or happen remotely. Registration is done online at this link: <https://secure.rackham.umich.edu/OARD/predef>. The OARD then distributes the thesis evaluation forms electronically to the committee members. The evaluation forms must be submitted to Rackham no later 3 working days before the scheduled defense.

The student also has distribute to all committee members at least 10 working days before the scheduled defense a copy of the dissertation and dissertation abstract. A committee member who does not receive these at least 10 working days before the scheduled defense can request a postponement of the defense.

The *Final Oral Examination Report* form has to be submitted online by the committee chair within 48 hours of the defense, but no later than the final deadline for the term of enrolment (which may require submission in less than 48 hours). The *Certificate of Dissertation Committee Approval* form is submitted when all dissertation revisions have been completed. This form must be submitted no later than the final deadline for the term of enrolment.

### Conduct of the defense

The defense is public, and its time and place are posted in a case close to the entrance of the Rackham building. A popular locale for Linguistics defenses is Rackham's West Council Room; in requesting a room, the student should ask for a two-hour block of time. Faculty should encourage their advisees to attend at least one of the defenses of linguistics students who are preceding them.

Prior to the defense, the committee reads the evaluations and decides how the defense is to be conducted. The defense is usually run by the committee chair or co-chairs. One responsibility of the faculty member in charge is to ensure that the discussion focuses on the dissertation and does not degenerate into arguments between members on other matters. Although students may wish to begin the defense with long formal presentations of their research, the Department tends to discourage these in favor of short (10-15 minute) informal accounts. (The committee has just read the dissertation in any case.) Typically, this account may be followed by a first round of prepared questions from each committee member (perhaps 20 minutes' worth from each), followed by a more open forum. If time allows, an opportunity for questions from the audience may follow. The candidate and visitors then withdraw, the committee reaches its decision, and deals with the paperwork. It is a kindness to the candidate not to spend overlong on these tasks. Since there are always revisions to be done, in most cases, the real decision to be made comes down to whether those revisions are to be carried out to the satisfaction of the chair or co-chairs, or whether one or more of the committee members needs/wants to be involved.



## TIME TO DEGREE

Rackham's regulations are that students are to achieve candidacy within three years of first enrollment in the PhD program, and that all degree requirements are to be completed within seven years of enrollment. One-year extensions may be requested for childbearing and dependent care. Extensions for other reasons require student submission of Rackham's *Petition for Modification or Waiver of Regulation* form (<http://www.rackham.umich.edu/downloads/oard-petition-form.pdf>), describing the remaining work to be done and the proposed month and year of the dissertation defense; the petition must include a memo from the Dissertation or Graduate Chair indicating strong support for the extension.

However, these regulations do not capture faculty's obligation to help students move through their doctoral program in a yet more timely fashion. As noted in previous sections, under normal circumstances, students are expected to advance to candidacy by the end of their fifth term. This candidacy deadline has important consequences for the research (non-GSI) funding opportunities available to students (see Funding Opportunities section). For students who take longer than five years to complete their degree, there are again financial consequences, because no Linguistics student is admitted with more than a five-year funding package. Although other funding opportunities may arise, they are not guaranteed, and they are fewer in number (e.g., most Rackham fellowships do not extend to students who are beyond their sixth year of enrollment).

Aside from funding considerations and the Department's ranking within Rackham doctoral programs, it is clearly in the students' best interests for faculty to counsel students to withdraw from the doctoral program if their progress is excessively slow, and if there is little expectation that this situation will change.

### **Yearly review of graduate student progress**

Advisors should discuss degree progress with each advisee in their end-of-year meeting to discuss the student's annual report. In the subsequent final faculty meeting of the year, each student's progress is discussed. The A advisor of a student whose progress is not satisfactory will outline the obstacles that the student faces. (If a student has been granted a deadline extension, their progress is judged against the new deadline, not the original deadline.) The resulting faculty discussion should lead to recommendations for overcoming obstacles, as well as a concrete set of requirements that the student must meet to get back on track. These are included in the end-of-year letter that the Department and Graduate Chairs send to the student (copied to the student's advisors). Whether the student has met the requirements will be assessed by the Graduate Committee, in consultation with the A and B advisors, at the end of a specified period, usually six months.

At the end of the period specified in the letter, the Graduate Chair will contact the student's A advisor to determine what progress has been made. The faculty members of the Graduate Committee will meet to discuss these students' progress; A and B advisors will be invited to attend and/or to comment. The committee, in close consultation with advisors, will recommend action to the Department Chair. In extreme cases, where progress is not being made and there seems little prospect of future progress, the recommendation may include that the student not continue in the doctoral program. These students may qualify for a terminal MA (see MA requirements).

## **FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES**

All Linguistics graduate students new to UM are offered five-year funding packages. Under current funding packages, the first year is supported by a fellowship. Years two and three typically involve GSI support, although for some students one of these years may involve support as a GSRA. Years four and five include a combination of teaching and research support, with specific funding sources depending in part on the opportunities sought out by the students and the faculty with whom they are working. Importantly, all students will be required to apply, at various times during their graduate career, for other sources of support for which they are eligible. These additional funding sources are critical: our offers of multiple long-term funding packages depend on covering one or more years of funding through highly competitive fellowship awards (e.g., NSF, Rackham predoc, Barbour, or MMR fellowships), or research assistantships through faculty grants. Faculty advisors are expected to mentor students in the process of identifying appropriate funding sources, and preparing strong funding applications.

### **Student-initiated funding**

A fundamental responsibility of advisors is to prepare students to apply for research funding for their professional work. Students' introduction to the process of looking for funding sources—both for their graduate education and their research—should start in their first year. Opportunities include both UM-internal and external sources of funding, and advisors should be cognizant of sources of support. A Department-internal source of funding is the block grant; although most block grant awards are small amounts offered towards conference travel or research-related expenses, many other types of requests are funded as well. Non-Departmental UM-internal sources include the FLAS (Foreign Language Area Studies) fellowships and the International Institute, among others. (The Student Services Coordinator forwards to students various announcements about internal sources.) External sources (e.g., NSF) are also available. Because these funding sources often have early Fall deadlines, it is crucial that advisors begin working with their advisees well in advance.

### **Department-nominated competitive fellowships**

Four internal fellowship opportunities—the Rackham Predoctoral Fellowship, the (CEW) Mary Malcomson Rafael Fellowship, the Sweetland Fellowship, and the Barbour Fellowship—require Department nomination, which is handled by the Graduate Committee. For all but the Sweetland Fellowship, eligible students are invited in the Fall term to submit an application (e.g., a draft two-page description of their dissertation) for consideration by the Graduate Committee. Faculty are copied on the call for applications so they may encourage eligible advisees to apply; advisors should guide preparation of the initial application. The Graduate Committee identifies the strongest application(s), and the Graduate Chair and the students' advisors work with these students in crafting an application that presents their research interests to a broad academic audience.

### **Department-awarded fellowships**

Two forms of research support are guaranteed to the Department each year by Rackham: Humanities Candidacy Research Fellowships (3 per year) and One-Term Dissertation Fellowships (1 per year, often reserved for a student's defense term). A One-Term Dissertation Fellowship includes stipend for one semester, tuition, and GradCare. A Candidacy Fellowship includes stipend, tuition and GradCare for one academic (Fall or Winter) semester, plus stipend and GradCare (no tuition) for the flanking Spring-Summer (i.e., a total of 8 months stipend support). Candidacy Fellowships are restricted to students who advanced to candidacy by the end of their third year and are not past the sixth year of their doctoral program. Requests for applications are sent (via email) to all graduate students by the Graduate Chair; awards are made by the Graduate Committee.

## Faculty-initiated funding

Several internal sources of funding for research- and teaching-related projects are available to UM faculty and many of these include opportunities for funding graduate students. Funding sources include LSA, Rackham, the Office of Research (UMOR), the International Institute, CRLT, and LSA Instructional Technology Funds. Information about these sources include:

- (a) LSA research:  
<https://www-a1.lsa.umich.edu/eGif/>
- (b) UM research:  
<http://www.research.umich.edu/>
- (c) UMOR Funds for Research and Scholarship:  
[http://orsp.umich.edu/funding/um\\_sources/umor.html](http://orsp.umich.edu/funding/um_sources/umor.html)
- (e) Rackham faculty funding opportunities:  
<http://www.rackham.umich.edu/faculty-staff/awards/faculty-and-graduate-program-funding>
- (f) Center for Research on Learning and Teaching (CRLT) funding:  
<http://www.crlt.umich.edu/grants-awards/crlt-grants>
- (g) International Institute:  
<http://ii.umich.edu/ii/fellowshipsandgrants>

Faculty may also request that modest block grant funds may be used towards funding a graduate student. In all cases, it is expected that funds made available to faculty members for research, teaching, or journal assistance will be used to employ Linguistics graduate students if an appropriate student is available.

## CO-AUTHORSHIP ISSUES

Different disciplines have differing expectations about co-authorship, especially when it involves faculty and graduate students. There can even be differences within a discipline; in Linguistics, for example, graduate student-faculty co-authorship is more common on the Social Science flank than on the Humanities flank. Junior faculty who are (appropriately) concerned about how much a faculty-student co-authored paper will “count” in the tenure review process should discuss with the Department Chair co-authorship issues as they pertain to their specific area(s) of interest.

That said, there are clear circumstances when faculty-graduate student co-authorship should be encouraged. Such collaborations can clearly be helpful to students, as they will more easily achieve a publishable product, will “learn the ropes” of what article submissions involve, and will strengthen their CVs. Such collaborations have the potential for benefiting the faculty member as well, especially when the student’s specialization does not fully overlap with that of the faculty member, so that each is contributing his/her own expertise. In experimental work, the benefits of collaboration for the faculty member are even clearer, as the tasks of designing and conducting the experiment(s) can be shared.

Individual faculty members, in close consultation with their advisees will of course make their own judgments as to when co-authorship is and is not appropriate. However, the American Psychological Association Manual contains some guidelines that seem applicable to the Department:

Authorship is reserved for persons who receive primary credit and hold primary responsibility for a published work. Authorship encompasses, therefore, not only those who do the actual writing but also those who have made substantial scientific contributions to a study. Substantial professional contributions may include formulating the problem or hypothesis, structuring the experimental design, organizing and conducting the statistical analysis, interpreting the results, or writing a major portion of the paper (1994:294).

Note that faculty co-authorship would require something more substantial than providing some suggested readings, offering some methodological hints, and/or simply editing and commenting on a draft of the paper.

The order of the authors in a proposed publication is also an issue that needs to be discussed and agreed upon at an early stage in a project. One possible guideline is that in student-initiated projects, the student’s name should generally come first—as is likely in a seminar paper or QRP. The situation in faculty-initiated projects, as when the student works as a GSRA, will more likely depend on the quantity and quality of the individual contributions.

## **THE GRADUATE COMMITTEE**

The Graduate Committee consists of 3-4 faculty members and one or more graduate student representatives. The faculty members are selected by the Department Chair. One of the faculty members is the committee chair. The student representatives are self-nominated, with the Department Chair and Graduate Chair making the final selections.

The full committee (faculty and student members) is where policy discussions about the Linguistics graduate program are often initiated. When possible changes to the doctoral program are recommended by the committee, they are brought to the Department Chair and Executive Committee for further discussion. The full committee also more generally advises the Chair and Department faculty on the regulations governing the doctoral degree. (For example, the committee has been responsible for compiling this handbook, and will be primarily responsible for future revisions.) Moreover, it discusses and advises on general graduate student concerns, whether brought to the committee through the student representatives, or other channels. The committee meets at least once a month from September to May.

The faculty members also meet without the student representatives to consider individual student cases. The bulk of this work falls into two classes. One covers applications for fellowships and GSI positions, and for block grant money. The other concerns matters such as probation, the good standing of individual students, and appeals for special (re-)consideration, such as the waiving of some graduate program regulation. In urgent cases, the Graduate Chair can act on behalf of the committee, after consulting with any members who might easily be available.