An Overview of the Berkeley Linguistics Ph.D. Program - 2016

This document describes the Berkeley Linguistics program as it is planned for the incoming class of Fall, 2016. It outlines some expectations and procedures for the administration of the program. You should keep a copy of this for your future reference.

The usual timeline of a graduate career in Berkeley Linguistics looks like this.

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**Year 1** is devoted to establishing, or shoring up, your foundation in the basics of Linguistics. The course requirements for year 1 are listed below. At the end of year 1 students take the M.A. exam. **Year 2** is devoted to research training with advanced courses and training in research methods. During this year you are expected to write your first Qualifying Paper. Year 2 students also organize the annual Berkeley Linguistics Society (BLS) conference. **Year 3** is devoted to the second qualifying paper, and the year concludes with the Ph.D. Qualifying Exam. **Years 4 and 5** are devoted to writing the Ph.D. dissertation, and if necessary a sixth year of support is possible. The Dissertation Completion Fellowship (DCF) is provided by the Graduate Division for your “writing year” - the year when you have completed most of your dissertation research and need concentrated time to write the dissertation. This is usually in year 5, though it is possible to take the DCF in year 6 if you need to do so.

As the table illustrates, the department plans to provide financial support throughout our students' graduate careers and also expects some degree of departmental service as is generally expected of members of the university community.

**I. The M.A. Program**

All students in the Department of Linguistics graduate program, regardless of whether you hold a masters degree from another institution, must earn a Berkeley M.A. in Linguistics en route to the Ph.D. The M.A. requires one and a half to two years of coursework (30 semester units), an oral examination, and a qualifying paper. The faculty take a vote at the end of your M.A. program to decide if you will continue on into the Ph.D. If your performance at the M.A. level leads us to believe that you may not succeed in the Ph.D. program the faculty may vote to grant you a terminal M.A. instead of inviting you to continue on.
A. The M.A. Course Requirements

The required courses for the M.A., listed here, provide the broad foundation necessary for advanced work in Linguistics.

Proseminars, Ling 200 (1st yr students)
Phonetics, Phonology, Morphology, Ling 211A “Advanced Phonological Theory”
Syntax and Semantics, Ling 220A “Syntax and Semantics I”
Historical and Areal Linguistics, Ling 230 “Historical Linguistics”

Notes:
1) This curriculum assumes that you have taken the equivalent of Ling 110 “Introduction to Phonetics and Phonology”. If this isn't true you must take Ling 110 (before taking Ling. 211A).
2) If you have taken the equivalent of Ling 211A, you may take Ling 210 “Phonetic Theory”, Ling 211B “Topics in Phonological Theory”, or Ling 215 “Advanced Morphology”.
3) If you have taken the equivalent of Ling 220A, you may take Ling 205 “Advanced Cognitive Linguistics”, Ling 220B “Syntax and Semantics II”, Ling 221 “Advanced Logical Semantics”, Ling 222 “Linguistic Typology”, or Ling 225 “Construction Grammar”.
4) If you have taken the equivalent of Ling 230, you may take Ling 234 “Indo-European Linguistics”, or Ling 275 “American Indian Linguistics”.
5) The required courses listed above amount to 17 semester hours of the 30 hours required for an M.A. degree. Students are expected to fill out their program with additional courses in Linguistics or related areas, as approved by their adviser. It is recommended that you take at least one advanced seminar (Ling 290), and at least one methods class (Ling 240AB, Ling 160, Ling 113) as a part of your master's degree program.

B. The Oral M.A. Examination

The Head Graduate Adviser acts as adviser to new students. However, by the end of the first year, students should choose a research adviser. The adviser will help you on your M.A. qualifying paper and will usually chair your M.A. exam committee. This committee will have three members. Normally, all of the members are faculty in the Linguistics Department. However, as appropriate and with the permission of the Head Graduate Adviser, students may select one of the members from a department other than Linguistics. The M.A. committee administers the M.A. examination.

To receive the M.A., all students must take a two-hour oral examination. The M.A. exam is ordinarily taken at the end of the 1st year in the program. Its goals are to show (a) a good knowledge of the topics examined, appropriate for exposition in classes for our majors, and (b) a good ability to think creatively and speak articulately about matters of linguistic analysis and the relation between linguistic data and models or theories. The level of the exam is that of the required M.A. courses, and will cover three areas, chosen by the student, from the five areas covered by the core M.A. required courses:

- Phonetics, Phonology, Morphology
- Syntax and Semantics
- Historical Linguistics
- Language and Cognition
- Language in Social Context
Each member of a student's M.A. committee is designated as responsible for one of the three areas selected by the student.

With permission of the adviser it is possible to defer the exam to fall of the 2nd year. In this case, you should still select an M.A. exam committee and meet with them at the end of the 1st year to review your coursework and to make summer study plans.

It sometimes happens that a student fails the initial M.A. exam and needs to retake it. Only one retake is permitted; it is normally scheduled for the semester following the first try. A failed second M.A. exam means that the student must leave the program without a degree.

C. The M.A. Qualifying Paper

Among the requirements for the M.A. degree is an M.A. qualifying paper (QP). The M.A. QP is a written paper equivalent (in length, quality, style, and subject matter) to a good published conference paper in a volume such as the proceedings of BLS, CLS, NELS, SALT, WCCFL, etc. The M.A. QP must be approved by a committee of two readers. The committee of readers for the 3rd year QP (see below) may not intersect with the M.A. QP committee. You should give your committee time to read and respond to the paper and if you plan to finish on time (at the end of the second year) you should have the paper to your committee by April 30 of the second year.

D. Terminal M.A. degree

Passing the M.A. examination, fulfilling the coursework requirements, and approval of the M.A. qualifying paper qualifies a student to receive the M.A. degree. After all requirements have been satisfactorily completed, normally at the end of the second year, the Department will then recommend the degree of Master of Arts in Linguistics be awarded.

However, not all students are invited to continue on to pursue a Ph.D. When the M.A. degree is awarded, the Department's faculty will separately recommend for or against the student's continuation into the Ph.D. program based on overall performance on the M.A. requirements – exam, coursework, and qualifying paper. If the Department decides against continuation, the student will have a terminal M.A.

II. The Ph.D Program

All students in the Berkeley Linguistics Ph.D. program must earn the M.A. degree as described above. Soon after recommendation to continue in the Ph.D. program has been made, students should seek out a faculty member who will agree to serve as the doctoral adviser. This is the faculty member who will guide the student's work through the doctoral program, including the dissertation. In many cases, the Ph.D. adviser will be the same person as the M.A. adviser. It is possible to change advisers.

The requirements for the Ph.D. can be divided into two sets: those which a student must satisfy before advancing to candidacy, and those which they must satisfy afterwards. Advancing to candidacy is a very important milestone, because once you have advanced you are entitled to a year of funding from the Graduate Division's Dissertation Completion Fellowship.

To advance to candidacy, students must complete three requirements (a foreign language requirement, some coursework, and a qualifying paper) and then pass a qualifying exam. To receive the Ph.D., students must complete a dissertation prospectus and associated review, and must complete a
A. Requirements for advancing to candidacy

1. Courses (Year 3)

In Year 3, students complete their course requirements. The year long 'Field Methods' course (Ling 240A-B) is required for the Ph.D. If you didn't take it in Year 2, you must complete it in Year 3. If you did complete the field methods sequence in year 2 then you must take two other 2XX level courses in year 3. Ling 201 (“Advanced Graduate Proseminar”) is required of all students in Year 3. Taken in the first semester of the third year, Ling 201 is the course which launches students into the process of writing the year 3 Qualifying Paper.

2. The Foreign Language Requirement (Year 2 or 3)

Don't put this requirement off.

In accordance with the rules of the Graduate Division, the Department has a Foreign Language Requirement. Students should satisfy the requirement as early as possible in their graduate careers; you can't take the Ph.D. qualifying examination until you have satisfied the language requirement. This requirement can be satisfied by either of two options, both laid out in much fuller detail in the Graduate Division's Guide to Graduate Policy (http://grad.berkeley.edu/policy/). In sum, **Option 1** requires a reading knowledge of two foreign languages. Knowledge may be demonstrated in various ways, detailed in the Guide: by completing a two-year course of study at UC Berkeley; by petitioning to have a recent two-year course of study at another institution fulfill the requirement; or by taking an examination which involves translating a passage of at least 300 words into English within 90 minutes, with or without a dictionary. **Option 2** requires demonstration of an exceptionally thorough reading knowledge and an adequate knowledge of the grammatical structure of a single language, via a translation exercise involving a passage of at least 1,000 words in a subject related to the student's specialization, in a time frame of 3 hours without the aid of a dictionary. Native ability in a foreign language can fulfill the requirements of Option 2 so long as there is linguistic literature published in the language and the student can provide evidence of this to the Department. Full details are given in the Guide to Graduate Policy.

3. Qualifying Paper (Year 3)

By the end of Year 3, students should complete a Qualifying Paper (QP) of a quality suitable for publication in a peer-reviewed linguistics journal. The QP must conform to the style sheet of the journal that it is written for, and we strongly recommend that you submit the article for publication.

The QP must be approved by a reading committee consisting of two faculty members selected by the student and approved by the Head Graduate Adviser. The QP reading committee is usually chosen at the beginning of year 3, and the committee members may not overlap with the M.A. QP committee members. The members of a QP Committee are ordinarily regular faculty in Linguistics, but one member of a committee may be from elsewhere if approved by the Head Graduate Adviser. you should meet with your committee to discuss the course of revisions promptly after the completion of a first draft. For a QP to be accepted, both members of the QP Committee must agree that the QP is of publishable quality and shows a readiness for research at a doctoral level.

4. The Qualifying Examination and Advancement to Candidacy (End of Year 3)

The Qualifying Examination, which is required by the Graduate Council, is a three-hour oral
examination. For more information about the Graduate Division's policies for the qualifying exam and other detailed policies about graduate degrees see the policies web site: http://grad.berkeley.edu/policy/degrees-policy. The examination committee consists of four members, one of whom is usually the student's adviser and one of whom must be a UC Berkeley faculty member from outside the Department of Linguistics. The outside member is a regular member of the examining committee but also represents the Dean of the Graduate Division. The person who chairs the Qualifying Examination committee cannot later be the director of the dissertation.

The Qualifying Examination covers the following: linguistics in general, including three subfields specifically identified by the student in scheduling the examination; the broad area of the intended dissertation; the qualifying paper; and possible dissertation plans. As a substantial portion of the examination will be devoted to detailed discussion of the qualifying paper, it should be available to the members of the examination committee at least three weeks before the examination. See appendix 1 for more information about what to expect in the qualifying exam.

Should a student fail some parts of the Qualifying Examination, the chair of the QE committee will send a written report on the examination to the student, and a copy of the report to the graduate division. The report should "convey information about his or her performance on each of the three subject areas covered during the examination" and a plan for retaking the exam. The second examination may take place no sooner than three months (by Graduate Council ruling) and no later than one year (by department policy) after the first.

Upon satisfactory completion of the Qualifying Examination, the student forms a dissertation committee and acquires the status known as 'Advanced to Candidacy for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy.' It is especially important for international students to advance to candidacy by the end of year 3 because after advancing it is not necessary to pay non-resident supplemental tuition (out-of-state tuition). Most funding packages do not include a provision to cover this after year 3.

B. Dissertation Preparation

1. Bibliography and Dissertation Prospectus (Year 4)

In the first semester in residence after advancing to candidacy for the Ph.D. a student must submit an Annotated Bibliography and a Dissertation Prospectus to the members of the dissertation committee. As with the Qualifying Exam committee, the dissertation committee is selected by the student and must be approved by the Head Graduate Adviser.

The Annotated Bibliography and Dissertation Prospectus are due by the end of the tenth week of the semester. The bibliography and prospectus must be approved by the dissertation committee, which meets with the student for a one-hour Dissertation Prospectus Review, normally scheduled near the end of the same semester.

Both the Bibliography and the Prospectus are on a topic assigned by the student's Dissertation Committee, after discussion with the student about the intended dissertation area. The Annotated Bibliography is a detailed overview of the literature in that area, including bibliographic details as well as summaries and critical comments. The Dissertation Prospectus has two components: a general (5-10 page) overview laying out the material, problems, methods, and anticipated results of the dissertation, together with a tentative outline; and a chapter-length discussion of a specific problem or problems assigned for this purpose by the dissertation committee. Students should receive written instructions from their committees by the beginning of the semester in which the Bibliography and Prospectus are due.
2. The Dissertation (Years 4-6)

Upon successful completion of the Bibliography and Prospectus, students must write a doctoral dissertation. Students are strongly encouraged to work closely with their adviser and committee members throughout this process. The following activities are designed to guide students during this stage of their graduate career:

**Dissertation committee meetings.** Students in candidacy meet with their dissertation committee once a semester, starting in the semester after the one in which the Dissertation Prospectus Review takes place. Exceptions may be granted for students who are not resident in Berkeley in a semester. Meetings will focus on dissertation progress, publication strategies, and, for more advanced students, job search readiness. You should bring to each meeting a summary of the work you have completed since the last meeting (or, in the case of the first meeting, since the Prospectus Review) and an updated dissertation outline.

Once each year (usually in connection with the spring dissertation committee meeting) you should file an Academic Progress Report with the Graduate Division. Prior to the spring dissertation committee meeting you should visit the Grad Div web page and fill in your part of the report. [http://grad.berkeley.edu/academic-progress/advanced/academic-progress-report/](http://grad.berkeley.edu/academic-progress/advanced/academic-progress-report/). After the spring meeting your dissertation chair will fill out the faculty portion of the APR.

**Presentation of research.** Students are encouraged to present their ongoing dissertation research on a regular basis, at conferences as well as in the appropriate departmental research group(s).

**Job placement advising.** The faculty-staffed Job Placement Committee prepares students for the academic job market, holding workshops to advise students on such matters as the solicitation of outside letters, dossier preparation, and practicing for job interviews.

3. Human subjects research

If dissertation research involves human subjects - field data elicitation, psycholinguistic or phonetic experiments, sociolinguistic surveys, etc. - it is imperative to obtain permission from the Committee for Protection of Human Subjects before beginning the research. Research data obtained without CPHS approval cannot be used in the dissertation or publications. The CPHS website ([http://cphs.berkeley.edu](http://cphs.berkeley.edu)) has full details. Be sure to take the CITI online training course early in your graduate career.