

Graduate Student Handbook  
*of*  
Policies and Regulations

Linguistics Department  
University of Massachusetts

Fall 2009



# Calendar of Events

## First Year

- Fall*     • Classes: 601, 603, 610, 791A
- Spring*   • Classes: 604, 606, 791A, two electives

## Second Year

- Fall*     • Classes: 791A, 1–2 electives and proseminars  
          • Choose first DGC with GPD by end of November  
          • Attend DGC meeting
- Spring*   • Classes: 791A, 2<sup>nd</sup> Year Seminar, seminars/proseminars  
          • Submit first Generals to DGC by end of May  
          • Defend first Generals before end of classes  
          • Choose second DGC with GPD by end of May  
          • Attend DGC meeting

## Third Year

- Fall*     • Classes: 791A, 3<sup>rd</sup> year seminar, seminars and proseminars  
          • File first Generals by first day of classes  
          • Submit second Generals by end of November  
          • Defend second Generals before end of classes  
          • Attend DGC meeting
- Spring*   • Classes: 791A, 3-unit course and 6 units of independent study  
          • File second Generals by first day of classes  
          • Notify Kathy of Breadth paper  
          • Ask Kathy to prepare D-2 memo  
          • Attend DGC meeting

## Calendar of Events

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### Fourth Year

- Fall*
- Classes: seminar and/or Dissertation Credits
  - Write dissertation prospectus
  - By Doctoral Guidance Day, submit prospectus to Kathy
  - Attend DGC meeting
- Spring*
- Classes: seminar and/or Dissertation Credits
  - Form a dissertation committee
  - Ask Kathy to prepare D-3 memo
  - Submit approved dissertation Prospectus by May
  - Prepare D-4 memo

### Fifth Year

- Fall*
- Classes: program fee or Dissertation Credits
  - Check to see if your statute of limitations has expired
- Spring*
- Classes: Dissertation Credits or program fee
  - Set up defense by middle of April
  - Ask Kathy to prepare a D-5 memo
  - Defend dissertation by end of May
  - Submit a D-6 “defense results” memo

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# 1 General Matters of Responsibility

Familiarize yourself with these regulations and those of the Graduate School. (Some of the Graduate School requirements are repeated here, but not all of them, so read the Handbook the Graduate School sends you.) If there is something you are uncertain about or don't understand, consult the Graduate Program Director (GPD).

You are responsible for initiating all actions related to your progress toward the degree — submission of D-memos, submission of change-of-grade cards for grades of Incomplete, waivers of the statute of limitations, and so on. It is therefore essential that you become familiar with the various administrative requirements and their deadlines. There is no department internal monitor of your trajectory through these requirements.

## 2 General Information

### 2.1 Registration

You must register every fall and spring semester either by signing up for courses or by paying the Program Fee. (See 2.7 for an explanation of “Program Fee.”) It's wise to pre-register (in November for the Spring semester and in April for the Fall semester), although you can register just before the first day of classes of each semester. It's wise because it helps the department plan for classes and it ensures that the university treats you as an ongoing graduate student through the summer. If you are a foreign student traveling outside the U.S. through the summer, maintaining your status as a continuing student can sometimes be helpful at the border. If for some reason you haven't registered by the beginning of classes, you still have until the end of the drop/add period in which to register (although your paycheck may be delayed since the University will not pay you until you register). If you fail to register or pay program fee by the end of the drop/add period, you will be automatically withdrawn from the University and will have to reapply and, if your application is approved, pay a Readmission Fee.

### 2.2 Full-time and Part-time Status

The University defines full-time status as enrollment for 9 or more credits (audited courses do not count); part-time status is 8 credits or fewer.

## 2. General Information

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Students may nevertheless be certified by the department as full-time regardless of the number of credits for which they register, if they are working full-time on research. If you require this certification (for a loan or to maintain your visa, for instance), ask Kathy to prepare a memo for the GPD's signature.

### 2.3 Adding or Dropping Courses

You can add or drop a course during the first two weeks of the semester (known as the "drop/add period ") with no record on your transcript. After that, but within the first six weeks, of the semester, if you drop the course there is a "DR" notation on your record (which has no known consequences). With the help of the GPD, you can do a late drop, late add, or change your registration in a course from credit to audit up until the last day of classes.

### 2.4 Credit Requirements, Required Courses, and Course Load

According to University regulations, to receive a PhD, you must take at least 48 credits of graduate course work, of which at least 18 must be dissertation credits. "Graduate course work" means courses numbered 500 or above in the Linguistics Department, or 400 or above in other departments.

Required courses include: Ling 601 (Syntax), Ling 603 (Phonology), Ling 610 (semantics), Ling 604 (Syntax), and Ling 606 (Phonology). In addition, students must (at some point) take three courses from the following list: 605 (Typology), 611 (Psycholinguistics/Acquisition), 614 (Phonetics), 620 (Semantics), and any graduate field linguistics course. All students normally register for the colloquia course, 791A, every semester in which they have room for it in their schedules.

The normal course load is 12 credits per semester during the first year (the three required first semester courses are four credits each; all other courses are 3 credits), and 9 credits per semester during the second year and the first semester of the third year. Linguistics 791A, the colloquia course, does not normally count toward this load. Exceptions to the normal course load are possible in special circumstances, if approved by the GPD. Students in their sixth semester who have not yet advanced to candidacy must register for one regular course, but may make up the remaining 6

credits with independent study and 791A (colloquia course). Students may take the same course number more than once for credit (e.g. proseminars, seminars).

### **2.5 Colloquia and Linguistics 791A**

All students (and faculty) are expected to attend colloquia. Students receive credit for colloquium attendance through Ling 791A. Students are strongly encouraged to ask questions following colloquia and faculty are expected to allow students a chance to do so.

### **2.6 Independent Study**

In the first three semesters, you are allowed to take at most one independent study (of 3 credits) per semester, as long as it does not prevent you from taking required courses. You cannot take an independent study at the same time as the second-year seminar or the third-year seminar. You arrange to take an independent study with the instructor at or before the beginning of the semester, and you work out the requirements with him/her at that time. Technically, independent study can be from 1 to 6 credits, but 3 is usual. Note that an independent study is not a regular course taught for one person, but rather an independent plan of study designed by the student in consultation with the instructor. You can't register through SPIRE for an independent study; you must ask Kathy to register you.

### **2.7 Program Fee**

By University regulations, if you are not in residence or if you have fulfilled all of the credit requirements for the degree (including 18 dissertation credits), you do not need to register for courses. Instead, you may pay the cheaper Program Fee. You may do this every semester until the degree has been formally awarded. This fee is payable within the first five days of classes. Failure to pay the fee by the deadline means that you must apply for readmission. If your readmission application is accepted, then you will need to pay a Readmission Fee as well. You register for Program Fee on SPIRE by signing up for Grad School 999. (Unlike courses offered through

## 2. General Information

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the department, Kathy cannot register you for Program fee. Only you can do this.)

### 2.8 Grades

Most faculty members in the department give grades of “A” for satisfactory work in all graduate courses. A lower grade such as “A-” or “B” is a warning of a serious problem; if you receive one, you should consult with the instructor and the GPD about the reasons.

### 2.9 The Two-Paper Rule

Many advanced courses require a term-final paper, sometimes as their chief activity. This can create a debilitating bottleneck of work for students at the end of term. To address this problem, the department has a policy which allows students to replace a term-final paper with other work in semesters when the student would otherwise have three or more term papers. This policy applies to all students except those in their first-year, when term final papers are rare or of smaller magnitude. This policy goes by the name of “The Two-Paper Rule.” Thus, if you are taking 3 courses at once, all of which require a term paper, you may “two-paper” one of them, opting not to write a paper, if you inform the instructor of that course during the first two weeks of the semester that you will be invoking this privilege. Then you and the instructor work out a mutually agreeable substitute activity: a squib, a class presentation, or the like. Generals papers count toward the rule. Papers written to fulfill Incompletes and course requirements other than full term papers do not count toward this rule.

Sometimes, an unusually heavy combined workload in linguistics and another department (for instance, a generals paper and statistics in the same semester) may be grounds for invoking the two-paper rule even if you’re not writing more than two papers. If you feel that your workload justifies invoking the two-paper rule, you should negotiate this with the GPD and the instructor you would like to two-paper within the first two weeks of the semester.

## **2.10 Master's Degree**

PhD students can receive a Master's degree by request after the completion of both general papers and a minimum of 30 graduate credits. See Kathy or the GPD for more information.

Requirements for a terminal Master's degree are described in the Graduate School Handbook. The Linguistics Department requires in addition that the requirements described in the preceding paragraph be met, or that a portfolio of three papers be submitted by the Master's candidate, followed by a defense at which the contents of the portfolio are discussed with a committee of three faculty. See the GPD for more information.

## **2.11 Language Requirement**

The department does not have a language requirement for the PhD.

## **2.12 Teaching Requirement**

One of the requirements for satisfactory completion of the PhD degree in the Department of Linguistics is that you gain teaching experience, including demonstrating the ability to plan and conduct your own section of Linguistics 101 and/or 201 (and occasionally other courses). There is an orientation for teaching assistants put on by the University at the very beginning of the Fall term. (See the Handbook for Graduates which the Graduate School distributes for details.) TA's whose native language is not English are required to take a language exam that is conducted by the university at various times during the year. Ability to speak and understand English satisfactorily, as demonstrated by this exam, is a prerequisite for receiving an appointment as a TA at this University. See the Head or TA coordinator for details.

## **2.13 Outside Funding Application Requirement**

The Department is committed to providing full funding for all students making normal progress through to the end of their fifth year. This is done by pooling funds that the University provides to the department with grant and fellowship monies which students and faculty bring into the department

## 2. General Information

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from other sources. The revenue students bring into the department is a critical component to the department's ability to maintain these funding levels. It is essential that students aggressively pursue – that is, research and apply for – grants and fellowships offered by the University and other sources throughout their attendance in the graduate program. It is also essential that students notify the Head when they apply for a grant or fellowship (to help the Head with financial planning). Notices of grants and fellowships are periodically posted on the bulletin board in the Linguistics Lounge; and additional listings can be found at the Graduate Students Grant Service office in Goodell 517 (or visit their website at [www.umass.edu/gradschool/gsgs/](http://www.umass.edu/gradschool/gsgs/)). The GPD will be glad to assist you in finding and applying for grants and fellowships. Let the GPD or Head know of the grants or fellowships you apply for, and, of course, of those that you receive.

Student initiated funding is so important a part of the department's budget, that fifth year funding will be awarded to graduate students only if they demonstrate to the Head that they have sought funding outside the department. The Head makes funding decisions for the Fall on April 1<sup>st</sup>; so fourth year students must let the Head know what fellowships or grants they have applied for by the end of March to be eligible for fifth year funding.

### 2.14 Sixth Year Funding

The department recognizes that some areas of research (e.g. experimental work in psycholinguistics or phonetics) may require substantial course work outside the department or beyond the ordinary curriculum before any original research can be begun. For example, students specializing in adult psycholinguistics normally take the first year graduate sequence in Cognitive Psychology (Psych 617, 618, 640 and 641). When these circumstances exist, the department will consider petitions to specialize in the relevant area and receive an extra semester or two of funding. Since this additional course work is taken in the third or fourth year, students must petition for additional funding by the beginning of the fourth year. The petition should include a list of the courses that are creating the need for extra funding, and an explanation of the relationship of these courses to the students planned research. The department will evaluate the petition and respond as quickly as possible. Students should also consult with the GPD and their advisor as soon as it becomes likely that they will need a sixth year of funding. It should be recognized that sixth year funding is not automatic and will only

be granted if it does not threaten funding for the other students who expect to complete the program in five years.

### **2.15 Normal Progress Toward the Degree**

Continued funding through the five years of the program, as well continued enrollment in the program in those five years and thereafter, is dependent on a student's making "normal progress toward the degree". The faculty of the Department have responsibility for determining whether each student is making such "normal progress". This is determined partly on the basis of the student's performance in classes and partly on how successful the student has been in satisfying the other requirements of the program (e.g. writing general papers). In evaluating normal progress, the faculty gather information from the GPD, the student's instructors, and the student's DGC or dissertation committee, if any. They take into account faculty opinion of course work, letter grades and grades of incomplete, quality and on-time completion of term papers and general papers, and the relationship of course work to the student's research plans.

### **2.16 Student Progress Meeting**

On Doctoral Guidance Day, which is at the end of each semester, and at other times as necessary, the faculty holds a Student Progress Meeting to discuss how students are doing in the program. At this meeting, the faculty review student performance and evaluate, to the extent possible, where a student's relative strengths and weaknesses lie. Part of this evaluation involves determining whether students are making "normal progress" toward the degree. If serious problems in making normal progress are noted, they will be communicated to the student in writing as well as orally, and specific remedies or deadlines will be noted. Similarly, if in evaluating a student's progress the faculty determines that the student has particular strengths which indicate a direction for future studies or specialization, these will be conveyed to the student by his or her Advisor (the GPD, the chair of the Doctoral Guidance Committee, or the chair of the dissertation committee). In addition, a student may request an informative report of the results of the Student Progress Meeting by speaking to his or her Advisor.

### 3. Chronology of Progress

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#### 2.17 Faculty Availability Outside the Term

Faculty are not required by the conditions of their employment to be available during term breaks, the January inter-semester period, or the summer. It is commonplace for faculty to be away from campus during these periods. Students cannot assume that it is possible to schedule defenses, have regular meetings, or get papers read outside of the regular term. It may be possible to arrange meetings or defenses during the summer, but you must arrange this with individuals involved and you should not assume that it can be done.

## 3 Chronology of Progress

The following describes the expected progress of students from almost all backgrounds. Students who enter the Graduate Program with a strong background in linguistics are generally not permitted to skip steps in this progress toward the degree, although waivers of courses already taken elsewhere may sometimes be arranged in consultation with the instructor and the GPD.

### 3.1 First Year

#### Courses

During the Fall semester, you take Linguistics 601 (Syntax), 603 (Phonology), 610 (Semantics) and 791A (Seminar). (791A records the credits you earn by participating in department colloquia and workshops. There is no formal class meeting.) In the Spring semester, you are required to take Linguistics 604 (Syntax) and 606 (Phonology) and two additional courses (one can be an independent study designed to cover a program of reading in what will be the first generals paper area). It is normal to take one or two of the three courses required from the following menu: 605 (Typology), 611 (Psycholinguistics), 614 (Phonetics), and 620 (Semantics). Incoming students with substantial prior background in linguistics may be allowed to waive one of the Fall semester courses, but they are asked to audit it and take a substitute course. Decisions on waivers are made by the instructor and the GPD at the beginning of the semester. Students with substantially less background than their classmates or students with special problems who find the normal course load overwhelming should consult the GPD.

## Advisor

The GPD is your Advisor in the first year. The GPD serves as your Advisor until you form a Doctoral Guidance Committee in your third semester.

## 3.2 Second Year

### Courses

In the fall, students typically take a menu course (from the set 605, 611, 614, 620, and field linguistics) along with a proseminar in each of their two anticipated generals paper areas. However, a course outside the department or an independent study may also be appropriate. In the spring, students typically take a seminar in each generals paper area plus the second year seminar. It is very important to continue to take courses in both of the areas in which you plan to write generals papers until those papers are completed. From now until you have submitted an approved dissertation prospectus, you must register for 3 courses each semester, choosing various electives (which may include courses from other departments) with the advice of the GPD, your Doctoral Guidance Committee (once you've formed one), and other faculty.

### Doctoral Guidance Committee #1

By the end of the Fall semester, you form your first Doctoral Guidance Committee (DGC) in consultation with the GPD. The formation of this committee is a culmination of a process that starts upon your arrival in the department: through coursework, and other interactions, you should have developed a working relationship with one or more faculty members who specialize in the area of your first Generals Paper. Together, you and the GPD will select two specialists, taking into account your research plans, your preferences, and equitable distribution of the faculty's work-load. You will then approach them to ask them if they are willing to serve (this may have already come up in discussions with the specialist. The GPD also selects a non-specialist as permanent chair of your DGC. It is the chair's job to serve as your Advisor, conveying information to you from the committee, calling meetings, etc.

### 3. Chronology of Progress

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Further details on the formation, composition, and function of the DGC appear below in section 4.

Once you have formed this committee, notify Kathy of its composition by e-mail, with a cc. to the committee members and the GPD.

#### Generals Paper #1

The first of the two generals papers is to be written in the fourth semester – the second will be completed in the fifth semester. In connection with preparing this paper, you take the second-year seminar during the spring semester. In the second-year seminar (and in its third-year counterpart), students make frequent presentations of their work to receive feedback from their peers. Students also consult regularly with the members of their Doctoral Guidance Committee, and with other members of the faculty as the need arises. The first generals paper must be defended by the end of the fourth semester (by Doctoral Guidance Day, which is typically the day after the last day of classes). If the paper has not been successfully defended by that day, you are not making normal progress and your future status in the program will be determined by the faculty at the Student Progress Meeting on Doctoral Guidance Day. (See 6.2 concerning petitions for extensions of this deadline and the consequences of failure to complete the generals paper on time.)

Upon successfully defending your generals paper, notify Kathy and the GPD by e-mail of the date of the defense. After your DGC has approved the final version of your generals paper (including any required revisions), you must fill out a Generals Paper Approval Form (available from Kathy), have it signed by the DGC committee, and submit it with a file copy of the paper to the GPD via Kathy. The first generals paper must be filed before the end of the summer.

#### DGC Meetings

Once you've formed a DGC, and continuing until you have formed a dissertation committee, your DGC meets with you every semester on Doctoral Guidance Day (typically, the day after the last class day). Look for a schedule of these meetings outside the department office about a week before the last class day. Each DGC meeting is organized around the following schedule. First, there is a general discussion between you and the members of your committee about your work and your progress through the

past semester. The DGC chair will use this opportunity to get information from you about the courses you've taken, the projects you've worked on, the topics you plan for upcoming papers, and so on. You then retire briefly from the room, and the DGC discusses the information you have provided and other knowledge it has of your work. You are then invited back in and the DGC chair puts forward the committee's impressions of your progress, strengths and weaknesses, recommendations for future work, and any matters requiring the attention of the whole faculty at the Student Progress Meeting later the same day. If you have any questions or concerns, be sure to bring them up at this meeting.

### 3.3 Third Year

#### Doctoral Guidance Committee #2

In May of your second year you form, in consultation with the GPD, another DGC for the second paper. The chair (the non-specialist) remains the same, but the specialist members change to reflect the new topic of your second generals paper. The procedure for selecting the specialists is the same as with the first DGC, as is the procedure for notifying Kathy of the membership.

#### Generals Paper #2

In connection with preparing this paper, you take the third-year seminar during the Fall semester. This generals paper must be submitted and defended by the end of the Fall semester (your fifth semester in the program). If the paper has not been successfully defended by that day, you are not making normal progress and your future status in the program will be determined by the faculty at the Student Progress Meeting on Doctoral Guidance Day. (See 6.2 concerning petitions for extensions of this deadline and the consequences of failure to complete the generals paper on time.)

Upon successfully defending your generals paper, notify Kathy and the GPD by e-mail of the date of the defense so it can be recorded in the Student Progress database. After your DGC has approved the final version of your generals paper (including any required revisions), you must fill out a Generals Paper Approval Form (available from Kathy), have it signed by the DGC committee, and submit it with a file copy of the paper to the GPD

### 3. Chronology of Progress

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via Kathy. The deadline for filing the second generals paper is the first day of classes in the second semester.

#### Breadth Paper

In addition to the two Generals Papers, you must write a third paper in a general area distinct from those of the generals papers. Usually, you write this paper in conjunction with a seminar taken in the second or third year of the graduate program, but papers of seminar-level quality written for other courses are also acceptable. The DGC (in consultation with faculty in the area of the breadth paper) decides matters of distinctness and approves the Breadth paper. There is no special procedure for evaluating the quality of breadth papers; the mere fact that you have written and submitted it for a seminar course and it has received a grade is sufficient. When you have decided with the GPD which paper is to satisfy the Breadth Paper requirement, send Kathy and the GPD an e-mail with the title of the paper and the class you wrote it for.

#### Advancing to Candidacy

When you have fulfilled the course requirements, generals paper requirements, and breadth requirement, you are ready to advance to candidacy for the PhD. You do this by asking Kathy to prepare a **D-2 memo** with the Graduate Program Director's signature. Once you have done that, you can begin registering for dissertation credits. Only Kathy can register you for dissertation credits; you must let her know when you want to do that.

#### Course Load

Students in the sixth semester who have not yet advanced to candidacy are allowed an exception to the normal departmental course-load requirements. They are permitted to register for a single regularly scheduled course, with the balance of the schedule to be made up of independent study or other work as appropriate.

### 3.4 Fourth and Fifth Years

#### Courses

During the fourth and fifth years you will normally enroll in or audit seminars. Seminars are the central forum for discussing the research projects that faculty and students are engaged in. While they are typically organized around a topic or theme, they often range over a wider variety of issues than the course description may initially suggest. They are usually open to all members of the linguistics community: visiting scholars, exchange students, students from the first, second and third years, as well as faculty and students from other departments and colleges. They are the place where members of the linguistics community share ideas, explore new research agendas and generally do the business of pushing forward linguistic science. The participation of advanced graduate students is an important component to the success of these seminars.

#### Dissertation Credits

You must register for dissertation credits until you have amassed a total of 18 credits of dissertation research. After that, you are eligible to pay the Program Fee, an arrangement that may save you some money on other fees. Students who are registered for Program Fee or less than 9 hours of dissertation can still be regarded as “full-time” students if the GPD certifies to the Graduate School that they are working full-time on research. To do this, ask Kathy to generate a “full-time” memo.

#### Dissertation Committee

When you have a topic, but certainly no later than the end of the fourth year, you form a dissertation committee. You do this by first approaching the prospective chair and discussing your ideas for a dissertation topic. Like the formation of a Generals Paper committee, this should almost certainly take place in the context of an ongoing advising relationship. Faculty members may ask to see a draft of the prospectus before agreeing to serve as a chair. You should produce a prospectus in consultation with your prospective chair by the end of the Fall semester of your fourth year (see the following section). Let Kathy and the GPD know by e-mail when you have finished

### 3. Chronology of Progress

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the prospectus. You select the members of the committee in consultation with the chair and the GPD, and you approach the prospective members to ask whether they will serve. A dissertation committee must consist of at least a chair and one other member from the Linguistics Department and one outside member from another department at UMass (even if they are an adjunct in the Linguistics Department), or from any department at one of the other Five Colleges, or from one of the other UMass campuses (e.g. UMass Boston). Co-chairs of dissertation committees are discouraged by the Graduate School, but can be justified for interdisciplinary research with a special memo from the GPD. All members of the committee must be present at the defense, so the larger the committee, the more difficult it becomes to schedule the defense, especially when students have to defend in the summer due to a job. The graduate school discourages committees with more than five members. It is possible to get permission for faculty at other institutions to be members or even co-chairs (but these people do not count as outside members) with a special memo from the GPD to provide justification (and a CV and “letter of commitment” from that person). However, since all members, even ones from other institutions, must attend the defense and must do so at their own expense this is usually only practical for faculty at nearby universities. A preferable alternative is to make such faculty a consultant rather than a regular member of the dissertation committee: a consultant receives official recognition but does not vote and need not (but can) attend the defense and sign the dissertation. To add a consultant to a committee also requires a CV from that individual.

When both your chair and the GPD have approved your committee, you are responsible for initiating the submission of a **D-3 memo** (see Kathy), which is the GPD’s recommendation to the Graduate School of a dissertation committee. The Graduate Dean formally appoints the dissertation committee. If it becomes necessary to change the composition of your dissertation committee, you and the chair should discuss it and make a recommendation to the GPD, who will then write a memo requesting this change to the Graduate School.

#### Prospectus

By May of your fourth year, you must have submitted the dissertation prospectus you completed in your first semester to your dissertation committee for approval. The prospectus is a brief document that lays out a

research problem, the reason that it's interesting, and the method of investigating it. It provides background to the research that you will do in your dissertation (usually a short survey of previous research, with more detail on any relevant work of your own), and an overview of the outstanding issues you will pursue and how you will address them. The prospectus must be approved by all members of the dissertation committee, so you must be sure to plan ahead so you can get all signatures despite sabbatical leaves, vacation, etc. The approved prospectus is submitted to the Graduate School as a **D-4 memo** (see Kathy). Give Kathy a copy of your prospectus to be included in your file. Technically, the Graduate School approves a prospectus only after the Graduate Dean has appointed a Dissertation Committee; so the D-3 memo (see 3.4.3) needs to be submitted before the D-4 memo. An approved prospectus must be received by the Graduate School no later than 7 months before the dissertation defense.

### Statute of Limitations

According to the Graduate School regulations, no more than six years can elapse between the day you first enter the graduate program and the day you receive the degree. If you are in peril of exceeding this Statute of Limitations, the Graduate School will inform you by mail several months in advance. It is then your responsibility to initiate the process of requesting an extension (for a specific period, not to exceed one year). You do this by obtaining a **SOL Extension form** from Kathy. In the top section of the form you describe your progress, prognosis, and any reasons for delay. You give this form to the chair of your committee, who completes the middle section and makes a recommendation to the GPD. The GPD then approves and forwards the recommendation to the Graduate School, which may or may not grant the requested extension, may impose conditions, or may demand additional information or completion of tardy requirements. Extensions are not granted automatically by either the Department or the Graduate School. In making his/her recommendation, your dissertation advisor will seriously consider whether you are making progress on your dissertation. The Graduate School routinely refuses requests for extensions when basic paperwork is missing from the file (such as the student-initiated memos reporting advancement to candidacy, formation of a dissertation committee, or approval of a prospectus) or when the record contains more than one or two grades of Incomplete. They have also been reluctant to grant repeated extensions.

### 3. Chronology of Progress

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*Exception:* If you enter the program with a Master's degree, the Statute of Limitations is reduced by two years. Since we give no special credit to incoming students for having a Master's, we automatically ask for extensions to the full six years for students in good standing who are otherwise making normal progress toward the degree.

If your statute of limitation lapses, then you must apply for readmission to the program! Don't let that happen!!

#### Dissertation Defense

At least 6 weeks prior to the desired time for the defense, you submit a draft of the dissertation to the committee and ask their approval for a defense. If they approve, it is your responsibility to arrange for a mutually agreeable defense date when all members can be present and to collect signed Defense Approval Forms (available from Kathy) from all the committee members. After that, the procedure is:

- Ask Kathy to request a room for the defense. This takes 7-10 working days.
- When the scheduling office responds, Kathy will prepare a D-5 memo for the GPD's signature. The D-5 is sent to the Graduate School a minimum of 4 weeks before the defense. The Graduate School will send the official announcement to *The Loop* for publication. The defense must be announced in advance to be valid. During the summer *The Loop* is published less frequently – *so check with Kathy at the beginning of the summer if you plan to defend either during the summer or at the beginning of September.*

By University regulations, all of your dissertation committee members must attend the defense. The defense is open to all members of the Graduate Faculty. By Departmental custom, faculty and students attend all defenses, regardless of specialization. The defense consists of a 45 minute presentation of major results by the candidate, followed by questions, first from the committee members, then from the rest of the audience. At the end of the question period, the audience withdraws and the committee renders its judgment and then meets with the candidate to discuss what revisions are necessary for the final version of the dissertation. Once you have passed the

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defense, notify Kathy, who will prepare the necessary form (a **D-6 form**) for the Graduate School.

## 4 Generals Papers and the DGC

You must write two generals papers in two areas within the competency of the departmental faculty: phonetics, phonology, syntax, semantics, psycholinguistics, acquisition, and morphology. The function of this requirement is primarily to show ability to conduct research in linguistics and readiness to write a doctoral dissertation. Secondly, it, together with the breadth requirement, ensures that each student is acquainted with a range of linguistic knowledge. And finally, together with the breadth paper, it replaces the Comprehensive Exam given in other doctoral programs.

A generals paper is a more substantial undertaking than a term paper, although many generals papers do start out as term papers. A generals paper is also somewhat less than a published article in a major refereed journal, although many generals papers do end up as published articles. Somewhere between these two points lies the range of a successful generals paper. It should demonstrate an ability to discover an interesting topic of appropriate size, knowledge of the appropriate literature and the ability to work within a theoretical framework, clear exposition, and originality.

### 4.1 Forming Committees

The role of the Doctoral Guidance Committee (DGC) is to help lead the student to successful completion of the generals papers and to evaluate those papers. By the end of the third semester of the graduate program, you form a DGC in consultation with the GPD. The DGC is made up of three faculty members within the department; two function as “Specialists” and the third is the Chair. The Specialists are faculty with expertise in the area of the paper; they will function as the primary advisors for the paper. One of them is chosen by you and the other is chosen by you and the GPD jointly. The Chair is usually a faculty member who is not a specialist in either generals paper area. Once you and the GPD have decided on the members of your committee, you should then approach the Specialists and ask them to serve on your committee. (The GPD notifies the Chair.)

In May of your second year, you form a DGC for your second generals paper, again in consultation with the GPD. This committee will be made up

## 4. Generals Papers and the DGC

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of two new Specialists, one chosen by you and the other chosen by you and the GPD jointly. As before, the Specialists' area of expertise is relevant for the topic of your second paper. The Chair of your first DGC will normally continue to serve as Chair of the second DGC. Once the members of this second DGC are chosen, you should, as before, approach the Specialists and ask them to serve on your committee. The DGC's job is done and it dissolves when you advance to candidacy (with the submission of the D-2 memo).

In addition to evaluating the generals paper, the DGC is the final authority on questions of distinctness and suitability of the paper and on whether the papers come from different fields within the competency of the faculty. The DGC or the GPD can decide on whether a breadth paper is suitably distinct from the two GPs. The DGC chair, together with the DGC as a whole, assumes the role of your advisor, replacing the GPD's role as advisor. Thus, the DGC provides guidance and helps with problems. The chair of the DGC is responsible for communicating any decisions or discussion at the Student Progress Meeting that are relevant to your progress in the program.

### 4.2 Working With Your Committee

You will meet with your first DGC on Doctoral Guidance Day at the end of the third semester. At this first meeting, you and your committee will review the topic of your first generals paper and plan the course of your work on it during the following semester. It is a good idea to come to this meeting with as concrete an idea as possible concerning the topic of your first generals paper. And it is also wise at this time to discuss with the Specialists how frequently you will meet with them in the following semester, and perhaps even to schedule some of those meetings.

As you do the research and writing of your generals paper, you should meet regularly with the Specialists supervising it to consult about your work. You should also ask the Chair of your DGC how involved he or she would like to be in your work; be sure to keep the Chair informed of your progress. You are encouraged to get advice from any of the faculty in the department, whether they are on the committee or not. For some kinds of research (in psycholinguistics, for instance), it may be appropriate for you to consult extensively with faculty from other departments as well.

### 4.3 Finishing on Time

It is important to aggressively pursue the first generals paper early on, since a delay in its completion will put your status in the program in jeopardy. The timely execution of the generals papers is of special concern to faculty. To help students make good progress on the paper, and to ensure that they are getting timely and coherent advice from the Specialists, there is an optional meeting of Specialists and generals paper writers in the middle of the fourth and fifth semesters. This “Midterm meeting” is arranged by the GPD. It is helpful to have at least a preliminary draft of your generals paper, or significant portion thereof, done by this time. If you would like to schedule a midterm meeting, inform the GPD.

When the paper is finished, you submit copies to all three DGC members no less than ten days before the defense date. At the defense, the DGC will provide an evaluation of the paper as “pass,” “revisions required,” or “fail.” If you have revisions required, you should determine with the DGC when they will be done and who on your committee will deem the paper finished. Once completed, you must submit the final copy of your paper to Kathy, who updates your computer record and places the paper in your file. With the paper, you should submit the “generals paper approval form,” which you can get from Kathy, which your committee members must sign.

The first generals paper is to be defended by Doctoral Guidance Day of the fourth semester and filed by the beginning of classes in the fifth semester; and the second generals paper is to be defended by Doctoral Guidance Day of the fifth semester and filed by the beginning of classes in the sixth semester. (Doctoral Guidance Day is typically the day immediately following the last day of classes.) Failure to complete the generals papers on time indicates a failure to make normal progress in the program and places your funding and ability to continue in the program in jeopardy. (See section 6.2.)

## 5 Summary of Advising Mechanisms

In its efforts to ensure that students receive the best possible guidance, the Department has instituted a great many advising mechanisms. In fact, there are so many that their different functions can be confusing. This summary attempts to sort things out.

## 5. Summary of Advising Mechanisms

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Of course, in addition to the specific roles mentioned here, you should always feel free to approach any other faculty member with a problem or question.

### 1. **Graduate Program Director**

You should see the Graduate Program Director for course registration, questions about requirements, certification of status, and all matters requiring paperwork or interaction with the Graduate School. You can also see the GPD about personal, academic, or financial problems. The GPD also acts as your liaison with the faculty. For example, he or she reports to you, upon your request, the results of the faculty's Student Progress Meeting. (This last function is also borne by the head of your Dissertation or Doctoral Guidance Committee after your third semester.)

### 2. **Head**

You should see the Department Head about matters relating to employment by the Department, problems you may have with a faculty member, or matters that have to do with agencies beyond the department or Graduate School (such as immigration).

### 3. **TA Coordinator**

You should see the TA coordinator for all matters pertaining to courses you are TA-ing – except for scheduling issues, which go directly to Sarah, or employment issues, which go to the Head.

### 4. **Doctoral Guidance Committee**

You should approach the DGC with questions about appropriateness or distinctness of generals paper or breadth paper topics. The DGC provides advice on and approves your generals papers and your breadth paper. The chair of the Doctoral Guidance Committee is your representative in the Student Progress Meeting and, with the GPD, can report the results of that meeting to you.

### 5. **Doctoral Dissertation Committee**

This committee serves from the point of submission of the D-3 memo (which appoints the committee) until acceptance of the final version of the dissertation by the Graduate School. The Dissertation Committee provides advice on and approves the doctoral dissertation. The chair of this committee is your representative in the Student Progress Meeting and, with the GPD, can report the results of that meeting to you.

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## 6 Petitions

Things do not always go as planned. The department deals with the unexpected through petitions.

If you would be helped by a waiver or modification of a Departmental requirement, you should discuss your need and your reasons with the Graduate Program Director and/or your DGC, and then submit a petition to the GPD requesting the change. For relatively minor matters, the GPD can grant a waiver on his or her own authority. For more important matters, the GPD will convene a meeting of the faculty to seek departmental concurrence in granting or denying the waiver. The requests most commonly heard by the department as a whole are for extension of departmental deadlines, especially the deadlines for completing a generals paper, and for sixth year funding. It is wise to discuss these particular petitions in advance with your DGC.

The Department cannot waive or modify University regulations, although the GPD can present a case for waiver or modification on your behalf to the Graduate School.

Because petitions are designed to handle the unexpected, the faculty considers each in its own context. Nonetheless, certain trends or practices have emerged surrounding certain kinds of petitions which are described below. Bear in mind that these only describe how the faculty tends to respond when presented with these kinds of petitions; there is no way to anticipate all the specialness of future cases.

### 6.1 Leave of Absence

For personal, non-academic reasons (such as illness or family obligations), or for academic reasons (such as spending time at another university or doing fieldwork), you can request a temporary unfunded leave of absence from the graduate program. You do this by presenting a petition to the GPD which indicates the time during which you would like to take a leave and the reasons for doing so. The GPD, in consultation with the Department, then passes this along with a recommendation to the Graduate Dean, who makes the decision. Leaves are for a specified period, usually one semester or one year. All departmental deadlines are postponed by one semester for each semester's leave (or significant fraction thereof, at the discretion of the Department). Failure to return on time from a leave requires readmission to the program, which is not granted automatically. During a leave, you pay the program fee to the Graduate School rather than the usual tuition and

## 6. Petitions

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fees. If you want to be away from campus for an extended period because of fieldwork or for some other academic reason without taking an official unfunded leave, you should describe the circumstances and your plans to your advisor or the GPD.

### 6.2 Failure to Complete a Generals Paper on Time

If you have not completed your first generals paper by the end of your fourth semester (normally, the Spring of your second year), or the second generals paper by the fifth semester (normally, the Fall of your third year), you are not making normal progress toward the degree, and this places your funding and your ability to remain in the program in jeopardy. However, it is possible to petition for an extension of the deadline. Should you need such an extension, you must submit a petition specifying the reasons to the GPD, who will bring it to the Student Progress meeting for discussion by the faculty. The petition should report the current status your generals paper, what future work remains outstanding, and an estimation of the time involved in completing that work. If there are special hardships or difficulties you have experienced which have affected work on the generals papers – health problems, catastrophic equipment failure, etc. – these should be mentioned as well. It is recommended that you fashion this petition in consultation with the GPD. At the end-of-semester Student Progress Meeting, in consultation with your DGC, the Department will then consider your petition. If the faculty finds that the reasons stated in the petition for a first extension are sound and that you have previously been making normal progress in the program, it will grant your petition. The faculty will impose a new deadline for completion of the generals paper, taking into consideration your overall progress and the matters presented in your petition.

If the faculty does not think the reasons stated in the petition are grounds for extending the deadline and/or you are not otherwise making normal progress, they will make a decision based on the progress you have made on the paper and your performance thus far in the program. Depending on its evaluation of your case, the faculty could decide at this point to end your continuation in the program or to suspend your funding. It could also place you on probation, the conditions of which will be communicated to you in writing by the GPD. Typically, these conditions involve setting up

a deadline for the completion of the paper, the consequences for failure to meet that deadline, possible interim deadlines, and perhaps also scheduling other meetings of the faculty or your DGC to evaluate your progress. (If one of the consequences of failure to meet this deadline is a loss of funding, part of the consideration in setting that deadline will be the dates at which the head must make decisions regarding the staffing of Ling 101 and 201 sections.) The deadline for completion of the next generals paper (should there be one) will remain unchanged. You will remain in department-internal bad standing until you have returned to making normal progress.

If you fail to meet a deadline resulting in loss of funding, the faculty may also decide to convene an *ad hoc* meeting to discuss your case and determine whether your progress thus far and the potential you have shown warrants your continuation in the program. If the faculty does not decide in this meeting to terminate your enrollment, or if no *ad hoc* meeting is convened, then the faculty will review your case in the Student Progress meeting at the end of the term, and you may continue to work on the generals paper. If you should successfully defend the generals paper before the end of that semester and if at the Student Progress meeting the faculty judge your overall progress and performance to be satisfactory, then you will once again become eligible for funding (though it is unlikely that funds for the following semester will at this late date be available). If you have not successfully defended the generals paper by the end of that term, then you may once again submit a petition to the GPD for another extension, who will present it to the faculty. You should not, however, consider this petition to be very likely to be granted.

### 6.3 Help

If you believe that it is unlikely that you will meet any of the deadlines for either generals papers or extensions, you should immediately consult with both your Advisor (the Chair of your DGC) and the GPD. They may be able to help you diagnose the problem and take steps to solve it.

If you believe that seeking relief from course-work would be helpful in bringing your generals papers to completion, discuss this with the GPD who may be able to arrange a deviation from the normal schedule of classes. In general, it is very important to keep your Advisor and the GPD informed of the status of your generals paper should you fall behind.