

# GRADUATE STUDENT HANDBOOK

(Spring 2006)

## *INTRODUCTION*

The Department of German at the University of Iowa offers a comprehensive program in German Studies at the B.A., M.A., and Ph.D. levels. Our faculty guide students in the historical and interpretive study of German literature and culture, providing in turn a basis for intensive work in literary theory and critical method. Instruction in Germanic linguistics includes the linguistic analysis of Modern German, historical linguistics, and second language acquisition. Competitive financial aid packages and opportunities for teaching and study abroad also make graduate study in German at Iowa unique. These include:

1. teaching and research assistantships ranging from two to five years;
2. partial tuition scholarships;
3. The University of Iowa Fellowship;
4. teaching/study opportunities in Dortmund.

In addition, the University and Department recognize outstanding teaching and scholarship annually through financial scholarships:

1. The Council on Teaching's Outstanding Teaching Assistant Award;
2. The Erich Funke Memorial Award.

For more information on financial aid, please see below.

## *MAJOR ROLES OF THE DEPARTMENT*

The primary mission of the Department of German is to transmit to students, through teaching and research, a knowledge of the language, literature, and culture of German-speaking countries.

The department is a major center for study and research in German language and literature, and the only institution granting the Ph.D. in German in the State of Iowa. It provides language instruction at many levels and fosters research and scholarship in German literature, language, and culture from the Middle Ages to the present. The literature program treats poetry, drama, prose, literary theory, translation studies, gender studies, and the relationship of literature to other arts. The linguistics program covers modern and historical linguistics, as well as second language acquisition and instructional technology. These pursuits extend into other disciplines, and the department shares its interests and expertise with a number of other academic units: the School of Art and Art History; Cinema and Comparative Literature; the College of Education;

Foreign Language Acquisition, Research, and Education (FLARE); History; International Programs; Linguistics; Literature, Science, and the Arts; the School of Music; Political Science; Religious Studies; Rhetoric; Theatre Arts; and others.

### ***ADMISSION***

An applicant submits a dossier both to the German Department and to the Office of Admissions. The applicant's transcript and Graduate Record Examination (GRE) scores are considered in relation to letters of recommendation, other evidence of prior academic work, and documentation of German language proficiency. Occasionally, the student's academic record will be judged adequate except for a lack of certain courses required for a sufficient background in German language and/or literature, in which case the student will be required to make up these courses before or during the first year in the graduate program in German.

### ***ADVISORY COMMITTEES***

The department Chair will assign two faculty members to each graduate student at the beginning of the student's studies at Iowa. The student and the advisory committee will form a small unit within the department for the purpose of close supervision in coursework, academic advising, and course selection (see committee duties below). The makeup of each of these committees should be dictated insofar as possible by the areas of major interest of the student. In the case of students who do not yet have preferences in areas of study, committee members can be assigned randomly. Students are encouraged to take the initiative early in their course of study to determine which faculty members are best suited to the students' areas of interest in order to facilitate decisions about theses, dissertations, and examinations.

Changes in committee makeup may occur due to a variety of factors: a change in the student's major areas of interest, faculty leaves of absence, personality conflicts, a decision to write a thesis in an area that would suggest a faculty member who is not at the moment a member of the committee, etc. All changes are to be made in consultation with the department Chair and entered in the student's academic file.

One member of each committee will be appointed as coordinator of the committee, and will be responsible for informing the other committee member(s) of meetings, etc.

The duties of the committee will be:

1. to be available to the student throughout the academic year for consultation about any matters related to the graduate program, teaching, etc.; and specifically to meet with the student at least once each semester to discuss course work being done during the current semester and the student's registration for the coming term;
2. to keep informed of the record of the student's progress toward the degree, including the courses taken, number of credit hours, grades, research tools, and any other requirements for the degree (current transcripts will be made available to the committees);
3. to communicate committee decisions and directives to the Director of Graduate Studies;

4. to oversee progress towards completing the required reading on the M.A. reading list and towards compiling and completing the Ph.D. reading lists for the candidate's core and specialty areas; and
5. to inform the department whether normal progress is being made toward the degree.

### ***DIRECTOR OF GRADUATE STUDIES***

The department Chair will be the Director of Graduate Studies, who will perform mostly mechanical duties and will not be a member of any of the advisory committees (unless the student's area of interest corresponds to that of the Chair).

The duties of the Director of Graduate Studies will be:

1. to review decisions and directives from the committees to make certain that forms are filled out properly and that regulations are followed as they are set forth by the University;
2. to fill out and forward forms that are required by the Graduate College, such as plans of study, requests for graduate examinations, etc.; and also to write any necessary letters to various offices to request extensions for theses, changes in student status, etc., as these matters may be directed by the committees; and
3. to make initial committee assignments and coordinate any subsequent changes in assignments.

### ***COURSEWORK***

Graduate students who receive financial support from the department are expected to make **normal progress** toward their degree objective. This means that they will register for three graduate courses every semester until they have the required number of semester hours for their degree:

- M.A. -** = 33 s.h. of qualifying coursework;
- M.A. +** = 33 s.h. of qualifying coursework, followed by the production and successful defense of a thesis;
- Ph.D.** = minimum of 75 s.h., of which at least 27 s.h. must comprise coursework beyond the M.A. and no more than 12 s.h. shall consist of post-coursework dissertation credit.

The department offers courses in two broad categories: German literature (e.g., 13:227 German Novelle, 13:260 Cultural Studies Seminar, 13:295 German Literature from Naturalism to Expressionism) and Germanic linguistics (e.g., 13:241 History of the German Language, 13:254 Topics in Second Language Acquisition, 13:255 Semantics). For the M.A. in German, students may elect a concentration in either literature or linguistics as follows:

**M.A. in German Literature**  
7 literature courses (21 s.h.)  
4 linguistics courses (12 s.h.)

**M.A. in Germanic Linguistics**  
7 linguistics courses (21 s.h.)  
4 literature courses (12 s.h.)

Students pursuing the M.A. degree are expected to complete at least 24 s.h. of their coursework within the department. All extra-departmental courses must receive the approval of the graduate advisor.

At the Ph.D. level, students may elect a concentration in German literature, Germanic linguistics, or a combination thereof. Students are expected to complete an additional 27 semester hours of coursework beyond the M.A. For degrees in literature or linguistics, 12 of these 27 s.h. must be taken in the Department of German; for the combined Literature & Linguistics degree, 21 s.h. must be departmental coursework. A minimum of five courses (15 s.h.) must be taken in the concentration area. Students seeking the combined degree should pursue a balance of coursework in consultation with their advisory committee; generally, four courses will be in the student's dissertation area. As with the M.A., all Ph.D. coursework taken outside the department requires the approval of the graduate advisor. The following table provides a general overview of Ph.D. course requirements:

<b>Ph.D. in Literature</b>	<b>Ph.D. in Linguistics</b>	<b>Literature and Linguistics</b>
min. 5 literature courses	min. 5 linguistics courses	min. 4 courses in diss. area
min. 12 of 27 s.h. in dept.	min. 12 of 27 s.h. in dept.	min. 21 of 27 s.h. in dept.

Students who have teaching assistantships in the Department of German are required to take **13:221 Principles of Teaching and Learning Foreign Languages** in their first fall semester of teaching.

As students near the end of Ph.D. coursework, some adjustment may be made in regard to combining course hours with dissertation work. The student's advisory committee and the graduate advisor must approve any such changes in the normal course load.

The Department of German and other units of the University of Iowa regularly schedule academic events related to the study of German language and culture, such as lectures, readings, films, presentations by visiting scholars, etc. Such activities augment regular coursework and are to be regarded by departmental graduate students as part of their course of study.

## **GRADING**

The Graduate College recognizes grades of A, B, C, D, F, S, I, W, R, and U as follows:

- marks carrying advanced degree credit: A, B, C, and S (satisfactory);
  - marks carrying no credit for advanced degrees: D (poor), F (failed), I (incomplete), W (withdrawn without discredit), R (registered), and U (unsatisfactory).
1. R and W grades are assigned when a student registers for a course for zero credit. R is assigned if the student meets the instructor's requirements for the course, and W is assigned if the student fails to meet the requirements. German Department graduate students may audit courses in the German Department only under very special and unusual circumstances and with the approval of the advisory committee and Director of Graduate Studies.

2. The Graduate College rule on the assignment of the grade of I (incomplete) states that it “is to be used only when a student’s work during a session cannot be completed because of illness, accident, or other circumstances beyond the student’s control.” In addition, the Department of German will consider giving an incomplete only if the remaining work involves a small portion of the total course (final exam, final paper, etc.) and the student is otherwise in good standing in the course.  
The student must file with the instructor an “AGREEMENT FOR COMPLETION OF COURSEWORK” form before the grade of I will be granted. This form serves as an agreement between the student, the instructor, and the department that the remaining work will be completed by a specified date. The form must also include a clear description of the work that is to be done to satisfy the incomplete.  
Except in the case of extenuating circumstances such as those described in the Graduate College statement, all coursework, including papers, is to be completed during the semester in which the course is taken and must meet deadlines as determined by the instructor. A grade of I must be removed during the first session of registration after the semester for which it was given, or it will automatically become F.
3. S and U grading is used for thesis and dissertation credits. S (satisfactory) indicates that the student receives credit for the hours, U (unsatisfactory) indicates that the student does not receive credit. Neither of these marks is used in computing grade-point averages.

### ***FINANCIAL SUPPORT***

1. Financial support in the form of **assistantships** and/or **fellowships** can be counted on by students making good progress toward their degrees, as follows: two years for the M.A.; four years for the Ph.D. Further support may be provided as availability permits.  
Assistantships are subject to annual review by the department faculty.
2. In accordance with general University policy, students will be classified as residents for fee purposes for the terms during which they have at least a 25% appointment and for any adjacent summer session in which they are enrolled. Students holding such appointments receive partial tuition scholarships in accordance with university policies.
3. Qualified incoming graduate students may be nominated for the University of Iowa Fellowship, which provides up to five years of support and includes two service-free years. To be eligible for this fellowship, a student must have an undergraduate GPA of at least 3.5 and a percentile rank of at least 90% on any two of the three sections of the GRE. Selection of University of Iowa Fellows is made by the Graduate College.
4. The “Erich Funke Memorial Award” is a scholarship that is available to be presented to a graduate student who the faculty feels has shown excellence in teaching and scholarship and has contributed significantly to the study of German at Iowa.

### ***EVALUATION***

The academic and teaching record of each graduate student is reviewed each year by the entire faculty. If student achievement is not satisfactory in either or both areas, adjustments in appointments may be made. The Chair will inform students in writing of any changes in status or concerns of the faculty.

## **DEGREES**

### ***M.A.+ (with thesis) and M.A.- (without thesis)***

All new students will complete a minimum of 33 hours of qualifying coursework to complete the M.A. degree. M.A. candidates must declare either a major area of concentration in German literature with a minor in Germanic linguistics or a major area of concentration in Germanic linguistics with a minor in German literature. For each concentration, there is a reading list delineating the minimum primary readings required of candidates for the M.A. These readings must be prepared by each candidate before the M.A. examination.

By the end of the semester in which the M.A. exam is administered, the candidate must demonstrate a reading knowledge of a foreign language which his or her advisory committee determines is pertinent to the student's research interests, at a level equivalent to two years of college study or four years of high school study. Competence may be demonstrated either by submitting proof of having taken the required coursework with a GPA of 3.0 or higher, or by passing an exam at the fourth semester college level as determined by the appropriate language department.

The M.A. examination consists of four hours of written exams and a one-hour oral exam. Three of the four hours of written exams will be based on previous coursework and the Reading List in the student's major area of concentration; the remaining hour will be devoted to previous coursework in the student's minor area of concentration. The examining committee is made up of at least three faculty members, with at least one member from each of the two areas of concentration (literature, linguistics). Two members of the examining committee are ordinarily the members of the student's advisory committee. The third member should be selected by the student and the advisory committee, and will ordinarily be a faculty member who is familiar with the student's work. The committee, in consultation with the student, will name one of the committee members as chair of the exam committee, and the chair will coordinate the assembling and timetable of the exam and will inform the student of these details. Upon satisfactory completion of this examination, students may be offered teaching assistantships beyond the second year of support.

The M.A. without thesis is considered to be a terminal degree. Students may be permitted to write a thesis if they wish to be admitted to the Ph.D. program. A prospectus for the thesis must be submitted within a month following the M.A. examination.

In some cases a recommendation will be made to the faculty that a student not be admitted to the Ph.D. program. Such students may go on to complete the M.A. thesis, but can no longer expect to receive teaching assistantships.

It is expected that students will defend the completed thesis no later than eight months after the end of the semester following the M.A. examination. Upon successful defense of the thesis, the faculty will consider the student's application for formal admission to the Ph.D. program. (Students in the Ph.D. program will normally receive two years of support beyond the M.A., with the possibility of a third year being granted if circumstances warrant).

The candidate is responsible for deadlines, such as thesis deposits and submission of the Application for Graduate College Degree form.

It is the responsibility of the candidate to provide each committee member with a copy of the thesis at least **two weeks** prior to the final examination.

In the event a student does not satisfactorily defend the thesis by the deadline, the student will receive the non-thesis M.A. degree.

### ***Ph.D.***

Applications to the Ph.D. program are evaluated by the entire Department of German faculty. Once admitted, a Ph.D. candidate may pursue a concentration in German literature, German linguistics, or the combined Literature & Linguistics degree. The department requires a minimum of 75 semester hours of applicable coursework, of which no more than 12 s.h. may consist of dissertation credit. Successful completion of the Ph.D. also requires that the candidate actively develop an independent research program combining core and specialty areas within the chosen concentration. These areas form the basis for the student's qualifying examination, comprehensive exam, and subsequent dissertation. The timetable below gives an overview of the various steps towards the dissertation. It is followed by an explanation of exams and concentration requirements.

### **Timetable**

#### **1. By the end of the second semester in program**

During their first year in the Ph.D. program, candidates should consult with their advisory committee towards compiling reading lists in their core and specialty areas. These lists should be largely complete by the end of the second semester in the program so that students can engage in reading over the summer. The timely completion of both lists is dependent on advance planning and the utilization of semester breaks. Where applicable, students are encouraged to consult readings from both lists for seminar papers and other course assignments.

#### **2. Last semester of regular coursework**

During their last semester of regular Ph.D. coursework, customarily the third semester in the program, candidates must constitute their three-member qualifying exam committee and receive approval of their final core area reading list as well as the core questions that will form the basis of the qualifying exam. Students cannot enroll in 13:350 Pre-Comprehensive Registration in the subsequent semester without prior authorization by the chair of the qualifying exam committee. At this time, candidates should also consult with their advisory committee on potential topics for their review essay and research paper as required for the comprehensive exam.

#### **3. Pre-Comprehensive Registration (13:350)**

Upon the completion of 60 semester hours of approved graduate coursework and with the approval of the qualifying exam committee, candidates enroll in 13:350 Pre-Comprehensive Registration for 3 s.h. During the semester of 13:350 enrollment, candidates are expected to complete both their qualifying and comprehensive exams as discussed below. Should any portion of the exam process prove unsuccessful, re-enrollment in 13:350 for 1-3 s.h. is contingent on the approval of the candidate's qualifying exam committee.

#### **4. Qualifying Examination**

By the fifth week of 13:350 enrollment, candidates must successfully complete a qualifying exam in their core area of study. Guidelines for the written and oral components of this exam are explained below. If the first attempt at passing the exam is unsuccessful, it may be retaken at the end of the semester.

#### **5. Comprehensive Examination**

Upon the successful completion of the qualifying exam, candidates devote the remainder of 13:350 enrollment towards the comprehensive exam. Guidelines for the review essay, research paper, and oral component of this exam are found below. The exam may be retaken once.

#### **6. Language Requirement**

By the end of the semester in which the comprehensive examination is administered, the candidate must demonstrate a reading knowledge of two languages in addition to English and German, selected in consultation with the advisory committee according to the candidate's research interests. Competence in these languages may be demonstrated by the same methods as described for the M.A.

### **Qualifying Examination**

#### **1. Qualifying Exam Committee**

The qualifying exam committee consists of three faculty members of the Department of German. These are customarily the two members of the candidate's advisory committee, together with a third member of the candidate's choice. At least two members must represent the candidate's area of concentration; for candidates pursuing a Ph.D. in Literature & Linguistics, one faculty member from each concentration must serve on the committee. The chair of the committee is determined by the student and will customarily continue to serve as the chair of the candidate's comprehensive exam and dissertation committees; the other two members of the qualifying exam committee will also serve on these subsequent committees. The candidate must constitute the committee no later than the final semester of regular coursework, i.e., the semester prior to enrollment in 13:350 Pre-Comprehensive Registration.

#### **2. Exam basis: Core area reading list**

By the end of the second semester in the Ph.D. program (see above), the candidate should have compiled a core area reading list. The expectations for this list vary according to concentration:

##### **Ph.D. in German with a concentration in German Literature**

The core list in literature comprises 70-100 works covering at least three genres from a distinct historical period of German literature. Sample lists are available on request.

##### **Ph.D. in German with a concentration in Germanic Linguistics**

The core list in linguistics comprises lists 1 and 2 in all six areas of the departmental linguistics reading list. In addition, candidates must select one of the six areas as a specialty concentration for the qualifying exam and assemble a reading list of 10-20 titles from the relevant list 3 of the linguistics reading list. This list may be obtained from any linguistics faculty member.

##### **Ph.D. in German with a concentration in Literature and Linguistics**

The combined core list comprises 35-50 works of literature in at least two genres from a specific literary period, as well as all titles from lists 1 and 2 in three areas of the departmental linguistics reading list.

A final core area list must be approved by the qualifying exam committee chair and will be distributed to other committee members along with the proposed core questions prior to enrollment in 13:350 Pre-Comprehensive Registration.

**3. Written component: Core questions**

On the basis of the core area reading list, the candidate shall prepare five essay questions in consultation with the qualifying exam committee, which must collectively approve the final product. From these five questions, the committee will select three to be answered by the candidate in writing on the day of the exam, which should occur by the fifth week of enrollment in 13:350. Each question should be designed to elicit a nuanced response requiring approximately one hour of writing time; however, two hours will be allotted for each response. Candidates may type their responses on a computer, but no printed or electronic resources may be consulted.

**4. Oral exam**

Following completion of the written exam component, the committee chair will immediately copy and distribute the candidate's responses to all committee members. The candidate will also receive a copy for reference. At a mutually agreeable time approximately one week following the written component, the three members of the qualifying exam committee will convene for a one-hour oral examination of the candidate based on the core area reading list and written exam responses. Following the oral exam, committee members shall decide whether to permit the candidate to advance to the comprehensive exam. Two of three members must consider the qualifying exam satisfactory for the candidate to advance.

**Comprehensive Examination**

**1. Comprehensive Exam Committee**

Following the successful completion of the qualifying exam, the candidate must identify two additional faculty members to serve on the five-member comprehensive exam committee. At least one member of the committee must be from among the linguistics faculty and one from the literature faculty of the Department of German. Ideally, one further committee member should be from an outside department related to the candidate's field of study. The committee will supervise the candidate's progress on the review essay and research paper.

**2. Exam basis: Specialty area reading list; research paper**

By the end of the second semester in the Ph.D. program (see above), the candidate should have compiled a specialty area reading list. The expectations for this list vary according to concentration as follows:

**Ph.D. in German with a concentration in German Literature**

The specialty list in literature comprises approximately 40 works from a specific field of literary research: a genre, body of theory, major author(s), or second historical period.

**Ph.D. in German with a concentration in Germanic Linguistics**

The specialty list in linguistics comprises 10-20 titles from list 3 in one of the six areas of the departmental linguistics reading list. The specialty list for the comprehensive exam must be in a different area than that selected for the core area of the qualifying exam.

**Ph.D. in German with a concentration in Literature and Linguistics**

Based on a candidate's preference, the guidelines for the specialty area will follow the linguistics or literature model as found above. However, the specialty area concentration must be distinct from that of the research paper, i.e., if a candidate chooses literature as her or his specialty area, the research paper must concern linguistics, or vice versa.

In addition, the candidate should consult with the advisory committee prior to enrollment in 13:350 regarding a suitable topic for the required research paper.

**3. Written component: Review essay and research paper**

No later than two weeks prior to the oral exam, the candidate must submit two essays to the comprehensive exam committee: a) a review essay of 10-15 pages that analyzes key issues in a selection of works from the specialty area reading list, together with an annotated bibliography covering those titles from the list not addressed in the essay; b) a 25-35 page research essay of publishable quality written in consultation with the chair of the comprehensive exam committee. The essay may be based on a seminar paper of exceptional quality or a potential chapter of the candidate's dissertation. It must be signed and approved by the comprehensive exam committee chair before distribution to other committee members. A candidate may begin work on these essays prior to enrollment in 13:350 Pre-Comprehensive Registration, but they should be the focus of the candidate's activities following the completion of the qualifying exam.

**4. Oral exam**

A final two-hour oral examination focusing on the review essay and research paper will ordinarily occur during finals week in the semester of 13:350 enrollment. For a satisfactory outcome, the candidate's submitted materials and oral comments must demonstrate a capacity for independent research in her or his chosen field. Questions will address the candidate's specialty area, the methodology of the research paper, and its potential publication. The candidate will also be expected to speak on the basic topic of her or his dissertation. If the review essay or the research paper is directly related to the dissertation, as will often be the case, the candidate should explain how these essays relate to the overall plan for the dissertation.

At the close of the oral examination, the comprehensive exam committee will decide on the success or failure of the exam according to the following guidelines from the *Manual of Rules and Regulations of the Graduate College*:

The comprehensive examination will be evaluated by a convened meeting of the committee and reported as satisfactory, satisfactory with reservations, or unsatisfactory to the Graduate College office within fourteen days after the completion of the examination. Two "unsatisfactory" votes will make the committee report unsatisfactory.

In the event of a report with two or more votes of "satisfactory with reservations," the exact stipulations of the committee should be recorded with the report form. The statement must specify the time allowed for satisfying the stipulations, and must be specific in defining the area if further examination in a particular area is required, or in describing any additional courses or procedures that are required. The candidate will not be admitted to the dissertation defense until such stipulations have been satisfied. The executive of the major department should promptly send a written report to the Graduate College giving the date of removal of "reservations."

In the case of a report of unsatisfactory on a comprehensive examination, the committee may grant the candidate permission to present himself or herself for reexamination not sooner than four months after the first examination. The examination may be repeated only once, at the option of the department.

**Dissertation Prospectus**

Following successful completion of the comprehensive exam, the candidate must produce a written dissertation prospectus for approval by the exam committee. The format and due date of the prospectus will be agreed upon by student and committee. It normally consists of a 10-15 page discussion of sources, methodology, and expected results together with an appropriate

bibliography. The student must submit the prospectus to the committee for approval before the student may continue work on the dissertation.

### ***PH.D. DISSERTATION***

The German Department allows a student to earn a maximum of 12 semester hours for work on the dissertation. The number of hours for which the student registers in any semester should reflect the student's use of university resources, including faculty time, as realistically as possible.

Students are responsible for meeting all deadlines regarding thesis deposit, submission of degree application, etc. When the student is ready to defend the completed dissertation, the advisory committee will initiate a request for final examination, which the department Chair will approve before sending on to the Graduate College.

Since dissertation progress can often be drastically slowed by full-time employment, it is strongly recommended that students finish their dissertation while in residence if possible.

### ***FINAL EXAMINATION***

At the final examination the candidate will defend the dissertation before a committee made up of at least five members, one of whom must be from outside the department. Besides the outside member, the committee will be composed of the student's advisory committee and two other faculty members selected by the student and the advisory committee. The dissertation director will be the chair of the final examination committee.

It is the responsibility of the candidate to provide each committee member with a copy of the dissertation at least **three weeks** prior to the final examination.

The *Manual of Rules and Regulations of the Graduate College* (page 26) states:

The final examination may not be held until the next session after passing the comprehensive examination nor until the thesis is accepted for first deposit by the Graduate College; however, a student must pass the final examination no later than five years after passing the comprehensive examination. Failure to meet this deadline will result in a reexamination of the student to determine his or her qualifications for taking the final examination. The procedures to be followed are the same as those for the comprehensive examination. [...]

Final examinations for the doctorate are open to the public. Members of the faculty of the Graduate College are especially invited to attend and, subject to the approval of the chair, to participate in the examination.

The report of the final examination is due in the Graduate College office not later than 48 hours after the examination. The final examination will be evaluated as satisfactory or unsatisfactory. Two unsatisfactory votes will make the committee report unsatisfactory. In case of a report of unsatisfactory in the final examination, the candidate may not present himself or herself for reexamination until the next session. The examination may be repeated only once, at the option of the major department.