Calendar of Events

First Year

Fall • Classes: 601, 603, 610, 791A

Spring • Classes: 604, 606, 791A, two electives

Second Year

Fall • Classes: 791A, 2 electives/proseminars, area workshop
• Choose first DGC with GPD in September

Spring • Classes: 791A, seminars/proseminars, area workshop
• Submit first Generals to DGC by April 1
• Defend first Generals before end of classes
• Choose second DGC with GPD by end of May

Third Year

Fall • Classes: 791A, seminars and proseminars, area workshop
• File first Generals by first day of classes

Spring • Classes: 791A, seminars/proseminars, area workshop
• Submit second Generals by end of January
• Defend second Generals by March 15
• File second Generals by last day of classes
• Notify Michelle of Breadth paper
• E-mail Michelle with request to prepare Doctoral Candidacy Nomination Form

1. The usual course load in second year and first semester of third year is three courses per semester. The area workshop counts as half a course, so you could fulfill this requirement by taking 5 courses over the course of your second year. Similarly, in third year the year-long area workshop could substitute for one of your three fall courses. In spring of Y3 you must take at least one full course or seminar if you haven’t filed your second GP yet.

2. If you miss this deadline, submit a formal request for an extension to the GPD in the form of a short e-mail (cc. to Michelle), which must be received by midnight of the day before the Student Progress Meeting. Consult with your committee in yourJoint Advising Meeting about the contents of the petition (i.e. reasons for delay, plan for finishing).
Calendar of Events

Fourth Year

*Fall*
- Classes: seminar and/or Dissertation Credits
- Work on dissertation prospectus with faculty guidance
- Form a dissertation committee
- E-mail Michelle with request for Grad School committee memo

*Spring*
- Classes: seminar and/or Dissertation Credits
- Submit prospectus to committee for approval by March 1
- Prepare grad school cover sheet for prospectus with Michelle
- Submit prospectus to grad school by May

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
- Submit advisor-approved dissertation draft to committee by March 15th
- Submit request for oral examination to grad school by April 15th
- Defend dissertation by end of May
- Send an e-mail to GPD and Michelle asking for “defense results” memo
- Submit signed doctoral degree eligibility form — see grad school website

3. With cc. to all committee members and GPD.

4. Or at the very latest 7 months before planned defense date.

5. Decide with your advisor and committee how writing will proceed and who will see what when. Practices vary depending on faculty and students — it’s important that everyone be on the same page.

6. Or at the very latest one month before planned defense date. Again, make sure to plan ahead to give the committee time to OK the draft, which must happen before the request for a defense is sent to the grad school.
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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. Students may nevertheless be certified by the department as full-time re-
2. General Information

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 Michelle 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 take three courses from the following list: 605 (Typology), 611 (Psycholinguistics/Acquisition), 614 (Phonetics), 620 (Semantics), and any graduate field linguistics course. These are often referred to as the “menu” courses. New courses are sometimes added to the curriculum, so please consult with the GPD if you think another course might serve as a menu course. Ask the GPD to add a memo to your file if a substitution is approved. It should be emphasized that the menu course requirement need only be satisfied by the end of the program, so if a course happens not to be available in your second year, it can be taken in the third. 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

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 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 Michelle 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
2. General Information

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 the department, Michelle 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 for Doctoral Students

This section describes how students in the PhD program can receive a Master’s degree if they so wish. This should not be confused with the requirements for the MA program, which are different, and are not covered in this document.

PhD students can receive a Master’s degree by request after the completion of both generals papers and a minimum of 30 graduate credits. See Michelle 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 generals papers be finished, 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. General Information

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 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/). 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 1st; 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 coursework 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.

A sixth-year funding proposal should include a list of courses that have been or will be taken outside of the department, an approximate schedule
2.15. Normal Progress Toward the Degree

for completion of the courses, and a brief explanation of why these courses are important for the student’s research program. This proposal is to be submitted in the spring semester of the second year at the earliest (to allow sufficient time for the maturation of a research program and to permit consultation with the DGC) and the spring semester of the third year at the latest (to allow sufficient time to complete the courses and to facilitate financial planning by the Department). The proposal will be discussed by the entire faculty, usually at the December or May Student Progress Meeting. The applicant will be notified of the result in writing (with copies to the Head and the department administrator to allow these commitments to be tracked accurately). 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 generals 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 generals papers, and the relationship of course work to the student’s research plans.

2.16 Student Progress Meeting

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 stu-
3. Chronology of Progress

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.

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 and the area workshop. 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 area workshop. 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.
3. Chronology of Progress

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.

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

Once you have formed this committee, notify Michelle 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 third and fourth semester – the second will be completed in the fifth semester. In connection with preparing this paper, you take the area workshop in the relevant area. In the area workshop, students present 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).

Upon successfully defending your generals paper, notify Michelle 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 Michelle), have it signed by the DGC committee, and submit it with a file copy of the paper to the GPD via Michelle. 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 for a Joint Advising Meeting. Look for a schedule of these meetings outside the department office about a week before the last class day. Each JAM 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. 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 Michelle of the membership.

Generals Paper #2

In connection with preparing this paper, you take the area workshops throughout the year. This generals paper must be submitted and defended by the end of the Spring semester semester (your sixth 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. (See 6.2
3. Chronology of Progress

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 Michelle 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 Michelle), have it signed by the DGC committee, and submit it with a file copy of the paper to the GPD via Michelle. The deadline for filing the second generals paper is the first day of classes in the Fall of fourth year.

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 Michelle 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 Michelle to prepare a Doctoral Candidacy memo with the Graduate Program Director’s signature. Once you have done that, you can begin registering for dissertation credits. Only Michelle can register you for dissertation credits; you must let her know when you want to do that.
3.4 Fourth and Fifth Years

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. Area workshops serve similar purposes, and you are encouraged to attend. Do consult with your advisor, however, about what the best use of your time is, especially when you are writing the dissertation.

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 Michelle to generate a “full-time” memo.
3. Chronology of Progress

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 Michelle and the GPD know by e-mail when you have finished 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 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 memo to the graduate school (see Michelle), which is the GPD’s recommendation to the Graduate
3.4. Fourth and Fifth Years

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 with a memo (see Michelle). Give Michelle 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 committee formation memo (see the last section) needs to be submitted before the prospectus. 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 Michelle. 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
3. Chronology of Progress

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.

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 Michelle) from all the committee members. After that, the procedure is:

- Ask Michelle to request a room for the defense. This takes 7-10 working days.

- When the scheduling office responds, Michelle will prepare a request for oral examination memo for the GPD’s signature. This memo 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 Michelle 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 defense, notify Michelle, who will prepare the defense results memo 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. Secondarily, 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,
4. Generals Papers and the DGC

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 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 in a Joint Advising Meeting 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.

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 Michelle, 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 Michelle, which your committee members must sign.

The first generals paper is to be defended by the end 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 the end of the sixth semester and filed by the beginning of classes in the seventh semester. 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.

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 Tom, 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 committee formation memo 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.

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
6. Petitions

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 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 generals papers by the end of the 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. Depend-
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
6. Petitions

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.