

*Description Foreign Language Requirements for PhD Students
From the Graduate Student Handbook for the Department of History
Kansas State University*

Doctoral students must establish an intermediate-mid level of reading proficiency in a foreign language. Students will demonstrate their proficiency by one of the following methods:

- (1) A student may provide evidence that he or she passed a four-semester sequence, or the equivalent, in one foreign language at the undergraduate level with an overall grade point average of 3.0 or better. In addition, the student must have achieved a 3.0 or better in the fourth or final course in the sequence. In the case of students whose coursework makes it difficult to determine if they have met this standard, the Chair and the Director of Graduate Studies will, in consultation with the major advisor, determine the student's status. Or,
- (2) A student may provide evidence that he or she passed an equivalent graduate- level reading/translation examination at another accredited university. Or,
- (3) A student may pass a foreign language examination certifying reading/translation proficiency at the "intermediate-high" level, defined by the American Council for the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL) as follows:

"Able to read consistently with full understanding simple connected texts dealing with basic personal and social needs about which the reader has personal interest and/or knowledge. Can get some main ideas and information from texts at the next higher level featuring description and narration. Structural complexity may interfere with comprehension; for example, basic grammatical relations may be misinterpreted and temporal references may rely primarily on lexical items. Has some difficulty with the cohesive factors in discourse, such as matching pronouns with referents. While texts do not differ significantly from those at the Advanced level, comprehension is less consistent. May have to read material several times for understanding."

The reading comprehension examination shall be set by an appropriate expert in the Department of Modern Languages in consultation with the student. The examination shall be administered under the following conditions:

- a. The student will be permitted to use any dictionaries, verb books or other standard tools he or she deems necessary.
- b. The student will receive a copy of his or her submission from the

evaluator after it has been graded and given a copy of the evaluator's comments explaining his or her assessment of the student's performance.

In exceptional circumstances – including but not limited to, the possibility that the student's chosen language cannot be evaluated by the Department of Modern Languages – the doctoral committee, with the approval of the Director of Graduate Studies and the Chair of the Department of History, may devise a remedy satisfactory to all so the examination to proceed in a timely manner.

Supervisory committees may specify which of the three methods the student must use to demonstrate proficiency. Further, the supervisory committee may require that the student demonstrate a higher standard of proficiency in a foreign language, and/or additional specialized research skills, including an additional foreign language.

All Ph.D. students must complete the foreign language requirement and any other research proficiencies required by their supervisory committee prior to the taking of the preliminary examination.

The Chair of the Department of History will supervise procedures that will insure the orderly recording of the results of language proficiency examinations or the certification of other research proficiency requirements. [approved by Faculty vote, April 2007] (see: pertinent forms printed on pp. 17-18 of this Handbook)