

## **LANGUAGE & COGNITION PHD PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS**

*Submitted by J. Magnuson, 9/12/2016, with permission of the Language & Cognition Faculty*

### **Section 1: Course requirements**

1. All students must complete two core courses, ideally in their first two years, and prior to the qualifying exam: *Cognition* and *Psychology of Language*.
2. Students must complete at least four courses (inclusive of the two listed above) taught by L&C faculty.
3. As a department requirement, students must complete three breadth courses taught by faculty outside L&C
4. Students must complete a two-course sequence in statistics, including PSYC 5104 and PSYC 5105.
5. A total of 24 credits are required to complete the program.

### **Other requirements and recommendations:**

1. Students are expected to be engaged in research throughout the PhD program, and we recommend registering for at least three credits of 5800/5801 every semester with the major advisor (and register for additional credits with that advisor or other faculty as appropriate).
2. The Master's degree (see Section 2) requires that students register for at least 9 Graduate School credits GRAD 5950 (Master's Thesis Research). We recommend registering for 4 credits in Fall Year 2 and 5 Spring of Year 2 (but other combinations are possible).
3. The PhD requires students to register for at least 15 Graduate School credits of GRAD 6950 or 6960 (Doctoral Dissertation Research). The dissertation proposal cannot be submitted to the Graduate School until the ninth credit has been completed.
4. Students are expected to attend weekly Language & Cognition talks (currently not offered as a course).

### **Section 2: Milestones/paperwork**

#### **Master's of Science (MS):**

1. Students in our program complete the UConn "Plan A (with thesis)" Master's degree. This is formalized as our "Second Year Project." By Spring of Year 1 or Fall of Year 2, students must plan a publication-quality project with their major advisor. (This means a professional quality research project; it does not entail that the student obtain positive results, for example.) The research and analysis should be written up as a Master's thesis by the end of the Spring semester of the student's second year. The student then presents the project in an oral defense, typically in the Language & Cognition Workshop.
2. Master's Thesis Research credits. Note the Master's requirement above to register for a total of at least 9 credits of GRAD 5950 (ideally in Year 2).
3. The Master's requirement may be waived, but typically only under extraordinary circumstances, such as an advanced student transferring into the program. The Language & Cognition faculty will review and be the final arbiters of any requests to waive the Language & Cognition Master's requirement.
4. MS plan of study. Students in consultation with the major advisor should assemble an MS committee and file the MS plan of study by Fall of Year 2. The committee should consist (minimally) of the major advisor, two other Language & Cognition faculty, and one faculty member from outside Language & Cognition.

5. As per departmental recommendation, students should ensure that an email announcement of their Master's defense be sent to departmental mailing lists by a member of the Psychological Sciences staff 1-2 weeks prior to the defense.

### **PhD general exam**

1. Structure. The Language & Cognition general exam takes the form of two review papers written during the third year and presented at a public defense. Full details are available on the Language & Cognition website.
2. Timing. The papers should be completed by the end of the summer of Year 3, and the public presentation should be no later than Fall of Year 4.
3. Committee and evaluation. Each review paper will be graded by at least three Language & Cognition faculty members. Minimally, the committee should consist of the primary advisor and two additional faculty from Language & Cognition. Outside members are allowed but not required. Because the general exam takes the form of two papers, the student and major advisor may elect to assemble a larger committee, with some readers reading only one review paper. Both papers and the oral presentation must be graded as passing.
4. Prerequisites: All course and credit requirements must be satisfied before the General Exam can be scheduled.

### **PhD**

1. Committee. The committee must have at least 3 members: the major advisor and two associate advisors, one of whom must be from Language & Cognition and the other of whom must be from outside Language & Cognition.
2. Examiners. For the dissertation defense (not the proposal), the Graduate School requires at least 5 faculty examiners. The student and major advisor must ensure that at least 5 qualified faculty (including the committee) attend the dissertation defense.
3. Plan of study. No specific courses must be listed. Language & Cognition does not require additional credits beyond the minimum 24 required by the Graduate School.
4. Timing. The PhD committee may be formed any time, but should be formed no later than Fall of Year 4. The plan of study may not be filed until the general exam has been passed.
5. Dissertation Research credits. Note the PhD requirement above to register for a total of at least 15 credits of GRAD 5960 (over the course of Years 4 and 5).

### **Dissertation proposal**

1. Announcing. As per departmental recommendation, students should ensure that an email announcement of their dissertation proposal defense be sent to departmental mailing lists by a member of the Psychological Sciences staff at least 2 weeks prior to the defense.
2. Structure. The typical structure of a dissertation proposal defense in Language & Cognition a 20- to 30-minute presentation of the proposed research by the student, followed by questions from committee members, followed by questions from other faculty, followed by questions from anyone attending. Following questions, the proposer, the committee, and any faculty who wish to participate remain for a discussion of possible changes.
3. Evaluation. The student's PhD committee evaluates the written proposal and the oral presentation. The committee determines whether the proposal is accepted, accepted with revisions, or is not accepted.

4. Committee and reviewers. In addition the PhD committee, at least two readers must be identified by approximately one month prior to the defense. At least one reviewer should be from L&C. Reviewers agree to read the written proposal and attend the defense. Reviewers recommend to the committee whether the written proposal and oral presentation should be accepted, revised, or not accepted.

### **Dissertation defense**

1. Timing. The dissertation defense should be scheduled in the Spring semester of Year 5. As noted above, the Graduate School requires a total of 5 qualified faculty examiners (inclusive of the PhD committee) to be present and to sign the defense documents. We recommend that the 5 examiners be identified (and agree to attend the defense) at least one month prior to the defense.
2. Announcing. As per departmental recommendation, students should ensure that an email announcement of their dissertation proposal defense be sent to departmental mailing lists by a member of the Psychological Sciences staff at least 2 weeks prior to the defense.
3. Structure. The typical structure of a dissertation defense in L&C is a 40-50 minute presentation by the student, followed by questions from committee members, followed by questions from other faculty, followed by questions from anyone. Following questions, everyone is dismissed except for the committee and any faculty wishing to participate in the discussion of the document and the presentation.
4. Committee and evaluation. The committee and additional examiners determine whether the document and defense are accepted, accepted with revisions, or if one or the other is not accepted