

Language Exam Guidelines Th.D. Program



Th.D. Students must demonstrate reading competence in at least two modern languages (other than English) that have been carefully selected to support the student's research interests. Languages chosen for examination must be approved in advance by the Th.D. oversight committee. Please submit requests using the form below.

A student's area of concentration may require proficiency in additional languages as well. Students whose work focuses on Christian Scripture, for example, must demonstrate reading competence in ancient Hebrew and Greek.

Students who have passed relevant research language exams in other graduate programs within the last five years may have these results accepted as demonstration of reading proficiency.

Reading competence will be demonstrated by successful completion of written examinations in the languages selected. Students work with their advisor and the Th.D. administrative assistant, Diane Decker (ddecker@div.duke.edu), to schedule the examinations.

Normally, the principal advisor selects a passage for translation and delivers it to the Th.D. administrative assistant at least one week before the exam date. The passage should be approximately 1000 words in length, taken from recent scholarly books, peer-reviewed articles or classic works in the student's area of study. The text must have been originally composed in the foreign language being examined, and it should not be readily available in English translation. In no case should the passage, or the larger work from which it is taken, be made known to the student in advance of the exam.

Students have two hours to complete the examination. The translation may be handwritten or typed on a computer provided by the Office of Academic Formation and Programs. Students may use either a printed or an electronic dictionary during the examination. Use of translation software or other aids is prohibited.

Once the examination is completed and returned to the Th.D. administrative assistant, it is delivered to the grader, who evaluates the translation and assigns a grade of "Pass" or "Fail." Graders will take into account the difficulty of the passage, the amount completed, the accuracy of the translation, and the level of comprehension demonstrated by the translation.

A student who fails an exam must normally wait three months before retaking it.

**Modern Language Exam
Approval Form
Th.D. Program**



Student: Please submit the completed form to the Th.D. director

Student's Name _____

This is ____ an original request

____ a request to change selections previously approved on (date) _____

Modern Language 1: _____

Rationale:

Modern Language 2: _____

Rationale:

Student's Signature _____ Date _____

Advisor's Signature _____ Date _____

Th.D. Director's Signature _____ Date _____

(for the Th. D. Oversight Committee)