

University of Oregon
Department of German and Scandinavian

Graduate Degree Learning Outcomes

Graduating M.A. Students

1. Demonstrate mastery of the broader contours of German literary history in terms of genres, periods, as well as of relevant theoretical paradigms and critical traditions.
2. Demonstrate effective oral and written scholarly communication skills in English and German.
3. Demonstrate ability to conduct independent research and analysis in German studies, following professional standards of writing and citation.
4. Be able to present research in a professional setting, such as a colloquium or a conference.

Graduating Doctoral Students

1. Demonstrate mastery of the full range of German literary history in terms of genres, periods, as well as of relevant theoretical paradigms and critical traditions.
2. Demonstrate effective oral and written scholarly communication skills in English and German, as well as working knowledge in at least one additional language for research purposes.
3. Demonstrate ability to conduct independent advanced research and analysis in German studies, following professional standards of writing and citation.
4. Develop a professional profile through conference presentations and the submission of at least one article for publication.
5. Contribute substantive and original work in the field in the form of a dissertation.

Graduate Degree Assessment Plan

Student work is assessed in the following forms:

- **Graded oral and written work** in the context of coursework.
- Students continuing in the following academic year participate in a **self-assessment** process; they submit written self-assessments (“Spring Conversation Starter”) at the beginning of Spring term which are the basis for a follow-up meeting (“Spring Conversation”) with a group of advisors or (for advanced Ph.D. students) their dissertation committee.
- **Portfolio Papers** (one per year of coursework): For each year in the program, students revise and expand one of their seminar papers under tutorial supervision and, once approved by the professor directing the tutorial, submit it as "Portfolio" papers. Portfolio papers will be about 25-28 pages in length; the revision process aims to expand the depth of the original research paper and enhance the overall argumentation. The purpose of this requirement is twofold: to enhance scholarly research and writing skills, and to enable students to prepare accomplished writing samples for future use. Ph.D. students use one of their Portfolio Paper projects as a basis for an article submission to a scholarly journal before the defense of their dissertation.
- **Teaching Assessment:** While not a strict requirement for completion of the M.A. degree, graduate students in both the M.A. and the Ph.D. program usually also have GE appointments with instructional duties. As such, their teaching performance is regularly assessed by the Director of the Language Program, and continuation in that role is contingent upon satisfactory performance. For Ph.D. students, a minimum of one year of such teaching experience and its positive assessment is required to advance to candidacy.
- **Research Presentation (M.A.):** Students must make at least one public presentation of their research (such as reading a 20-minute paper) at the departmental Dissertation Writing / Work-in-Progress colloquium, at the annual Graduate Forum, or at an approved conference.
- **M.A. Thesis or Thesis Papers:** Students must submit and, at the final Oral Examination, successfully defend their M.A. Thesis (ca. 50-60 pages in length) or two M.A. Papers (25-30 pages each). Both thesis and M.A. papers may be based on Portfolio Papers, but must show further research and a broad scope. The thesis or M.A. papers are written under the guidance of the student’s examination committee.
- **Written Examinations (M.A.):** Students respond to one question from each of the following areas: one genre across different periods; one specific period; and one or more theoretical frameworks or philosophical discussions. Responses are expected to be drawn from both the reading list and the student’s completed coursework. The exam has two questions per category of which one must be answered; the student is allowed to take the exam home and complete it within eight hours. The examination is administered during the sixth week of the spring quarter of the second year.
- **Oral Examination (M.A.):** Within two weeks of the written exam, the student

takes a final 60-90 minute oral examination. Questions pertain to the final written exam, the reading list, and the M.A. thesis or papers. The examiners will approve the M.A. thesis or papers only upon the student's successful completion of the oral exam.

- **Comprehensive Exams (Ph.D.):** Students will take Comprehensive Exams by the end of Fall term of their fourth year (if entering with a B.A.) or Fall term of the second year (if entering with an M.A). The **written exam** consists of 3 eight-hour tests, each of which will focus on a critical literary-historical or literary-critical category. The student's reading list for the exam will be based on texts discussed in his/her courses and other texts agreed to by the committee to form three distinct areas of focus. These areas are also intended to form the basis for designating areas of specialization in research and teaching in the context of professional development. If one section of the written examinations is unsatisfactory, the committee may recommend that the student retake that section (with a new set of questions). If more than one section of the exam is unsatisfactory, the student will not continue in the program. Within two weeks of the written exam, the student must pass a 60-90 minute **oral exam**, which will explore further the topics on the written exam and other aspects of the reading list. This oral examination will conclude with the student's brief presentation of a preliminary dissertation topic.
- **Dissertation Prospectus (Ph.D.):** By the end of term following the passage of the exams (excluding summer) Ph.D. candidates must submit and defend a prospectus of the planned dissertation to their Dissertation Committee. All committee members must approve the prospectus before the candidate can proceed with the dissertation. The text of the prospectus should be approximately ten pages in length, and a bibliography must be appended to the text.
- **Work-In-Progress Presentations (Ph.D.):** Ph.D. candidates are expected to present portions of their work several times before the dissertation defense in the context of the departmental Dissertation Writing / Work-in-Progress colloquium; each student will usually present at least once a year while in the program.
- **Dissertation (Ph.D.):** The department recommends that the candidate defend the completed dissertation (ca. 200 pages) within two years after passing the written and oral examinations; the dissertation must be defended within 7 years from the first period of residency as a Ph.D. student. The dissertation is usually written in English, but students may petition the Graduate School for permission to write it in German, in which case an extended abstract in English is added.

The limited size of the graduate cohort in German (approximately 10 students at any given time) enables close mentoring, supervision, and assessment of individual student performance, including those components of the program that are not tied to graded course enrollments.

The Departments closely tracks M.A. student placement in Ph.D. programs or academic employment, as well as the placement of graduating Ph.D.s in teaching positions.