GRADUATE / DOCTORAL FOREIGN-LANGUAGE READING EXAMS

NEW GUIDELINES
IN EFFECT AS OF FALL 2016

CONTENT:

MEMORANDUM

TO: Departments Utilizing Doctoral Language Exam
         (Examination to Evaluate Foreign Language Reading Proficiency)
            Anthropology
            Art
            Classics
            English
            History
            Modern Foreign Languages and Literatures
            Music
            Philosophy
            Sociology

FROM: Dixie Thompson, Vice Provost and Dean, Graduate School

DATE: August 18, 2016

RE: Graduate/ doctoral foreign-language reading exams

In Fall 2012, the Graduate School convened three meetings involving representatives from departments who currently utilize and/or administrate the graduate/doctoral foreign language reading examination (hitherto referred to as "the exam"). These discussions were aimed at determining new administrative procedures to address issues raised by the faculty in the Department of Modern Foreign Languages and Literatures (MFLL). See APPENDIX 1 for details.

During these meetings, departmental representatives proposed changes to the practice of the administration of foreign language reading exams for graduate students, effective Fall 2013. In August 2016, Dixie Thompson updated the materials to match current practice.

1. BASIC INFORMATION.

   As of Fall 2013, MFLL will offer the following service to departments with a foreign language reading proficiency requirement as part of the degree programs: MFLL will administer what is referred to as "the doctoral language exam" to students whose departments have agreed to pay $40 per exam as compensation for administrative effort associated with the exam. The administrative effort will be provided by qualified MFLL lecturers who proctor and evaluate these exams and by Classics faculty who compose and evaluate the Latin exam. These exams will be administered in Fall, Spring, and Summer terms and the schedule will be set by MFLL and posted by the Graduate School

2. OPTIONS FOR DEPARTMENTS WITH FOREIGN LANGUAGE READING PROFICIENCY DEGREE REQUIREMENTS.

   a. OPTING IN TO RECEIVE THIS SERVICE.
      Departments that opt to receive this service for their students and MFLL (the department that provides the associated administrative effort) will sign a memorandum of agreement covering an academic year with three administrations of the exam (Fall, Spring, Summer sequence is the academic year). By January 30, the Graduate School will contact the departments to solicit a decision on participation for the upcoming year. By March 1 each year, the departments will respond with their decision regarding participation.

   b. OPTING OUT – DECLINING THIS SERVICE.
      Departments that opt <u>not</u> to receive this service for their students will indicate this option on the memorandum of agreement (MOA) covering an academic year. The Department will return the completed form to the Graduate School by March 1.

3. MEMORANDA OF AGREEMENT (MOA).
   MOAs will be used to regulate the process for all parties involved. The entities involved in creation of each department-specific MOA are the Graduate School (record keeper), MFLL (service coordinator), and each of the academic departments/units with a foreign language reading proficiency degree requirement.

4. RECORD KEEPING AND COMMUNICATION REGARDING THIS SERVICE.
   The Graduate School will maintain and update the list of departments/units engaged in the Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) for an upcoming academic year. By April 30, the Graduate School will publish the list of participating departments along with the exam dates and specific details for the following academic year in order to inform students about options. Important details about the exam are attached in APPENDICES 2 and 3.

5. REGISTRATION OF STUDENTS (FALL, SPRING, AND SUMMER) AND PAYMENT.
   Departments, which opt in, will register each student for whom they agree to pay the exam fee of $40 by submitting a registration form listing each student for the term. MFLL will prepare the internal transfer of funds for registrations received and will pass through directly to the Classics Department funds associated with composing and evaluating the Latin examination.

IMPORTANT NOTE: Students may not choose to pay the $40 service fee since no approval has been sought for assessing fees from students. This service is only available via an internal transfer of funds process from department to department. The $40 service fee is <u>not</u> a fee that can be collected from students. All student fees would need to be pre-approved through budget processes beginning at the department level and up through the Chancellor's Office. Establishing a student fee to cover this service was not in the interests of any department participating in the discussion on this matter.

6. ALTERNATIVE TO THE SERVICE SPECIFIED ABOVE.
   a. OPTIONS FOR ALTERNATIVE ASSESSMENTS OF FOREIGN LANGUAGE READING PROFICIENCY.
   Campus departments that decline this fee arrangement by "opting out" (see Point 2b, above) may seek other means to deal with the foreign language requirement for their graduate students, such as managing the exams internally (within their own departments); identifying foreign language courses (offered by MFLL or by the Classics Department) for which successful completion would suffice to demonstrate the appropriate level of competence; or using the Graduate School Foreign Language Test offered by the (national) Educational Testing Service.

   PLEASE NOTE: MFLL and the Classics Department will be happy to discuss with colleagues of other departments the determination of foreign language courses that would be appropriate for graduate students to acquire and demonstrate the necessary reading competence.

   b. TRANSFERRING RESULTS OF ALTERNATIVE ASSESSMENTS OF FOREIGN LANGUAGE READING PROFICIENCY ONTO STUDENT RECORDS.
   Departments that opt not to receive this service will advise and counsel their students of alternative ways to fulfill the language reading proficiency as outlined in their specific degree program descriptions. These departments assume the responsibility to communicate results of proficiency for their students on the Proficiency Documentation Form to the Graduate School along with the student's submission of the admission to candidacy application. By choosing to opt out, departments are acknowledging that their students may not take the exam.

APPENDIX 1
DETAILS ON AD HOC COMMITTEE MEETINGS

CALENDAR OF AD HOC COMMITTEE MEETINGS

October 19, 2012
November 16, 2012
November 30, 2012

DEPARTMENTS AND UNITS INVOLVED IN AD HOC COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Art
Anthropology
Classics
English
History
Modern Foreign Languages and Literatures
Music
Philosophy
Sociology
Graduate Council Academic Policy Committee
Graduate School

AD HOC COMMITTEE MEMBERS REPRESENTING DEPARTMENTS AND UNITS

Richard Aquila - Philosophy
Burman, Thomas – History
Craig, Christopher – Classics
Essif, Les – Modern Foreign Languages and Literatures
Haddox, Thomas - English
Hodges, Carolyn R. – Graduate School
Klippel, Walter – Anthropology
Nenz Detto Nenzi, Laura – History
Ohnesorg, Stefanie – Graduate Council Academic Policy Committee
Phillips, Denise – History
Reed, Sandra K. – Graduate School

OUTCOME

The group agreed upon the following: A draft for a memo regulating the new procedure will be prepared by Ohnesorg and Reed based on the input received from departmental representatives during the three meetings held in Fall 2012.

The ad hoc group also discussed that there is vagueness with regard to the proficiency level tested. The latter will be addressed by APC in 2013-2014 to provide a better framework for the exam as a graduate degree requirement.

APPENDIX 2
GRADUATE FOREIGN-LANGUAGE READING EXAMINATION PROCEDURES

1. Purpose of exam. Several graduate degree programs at UT require a demonstration of foreign language reading proficiency as part of the fulfillment of degree requirements. For graduate degree audit purposes, the proficiency must be recorded on the admission to candidacy application.

2. Limits to participation. Exam allows students, with permission of their home department, to document their ability to understand foreign language scholarly texts in their area of study by providing a translation of a foreign language text into English. For details on how to select a foreign language, see Graduate Catalog under "Degree Program Requirements/Doctoral Degree/Doctoral Language Requirement." Students choose one of the languages offered by the Departments of MFLL or Classics. Students who are required to document proficiency in two languages must take one language exam at a time. In cases where the student and academic department have chosen a language outside of those offered by the Departments of MFLL or Classics, the academic department should seek outside examination and proficiency documentation. The foreign language proficiency for those students must be communicated to the Graduate School by written letter. Foreign language in this context refers to languages other than English.

3. Setting Exam Schedule by Graduate School.
    a. Annual exam schedules and registration deadlines for the exam are published on the web by the Graduate School by April 30 prior to the academic year in question.
    b. An exam is scheduled each semester approximately four weeks before the last day of classes in that term. Exams are typically scheduled for October, March, June or July.

APPENDIX 3
EXAM DETAILS

1. Exam Details.
    a. Registration: Students must be registered for the exam by the registration deadline through the Director of Graduate Studies from their home academic department.
    b. Exam package: Each student will work from an individualized exam package, which is prepared by the administrative assistant in MFLL based on the information provided by the student home academic department.
    c. Length of translation passage: Approximately 200 words in all languages taught in MFLL and approximately 100 words in all languages taught in Classics.
    d. Time available for translation: The exam is timed and students are given 90 minutes to complete the translation.
    e. Aids allowed during exam: Students are allowed to use paper resources, such as dictionaries, grammar texts, verb charts, etc. during the exam.
    f. Aids NOT allowed during exam: Students are not allowed to use electronic resources during the timed exam period.
    g. Special accommodations: Students who need special accommodation should make contact with the Office of Disability Services and needed accommodations need to be communicated to the administrative assistant in MFLL at least four weeks prior to the exam date. The Office of Disability Services "Provision of Special Accommodation" reads as follows: "Any student who feels s/he may need an accommodation based on the impact of a disability should contact Office of Disability Services at 865-974-6087 in 2227 Dunford Hall to coordinate reasonable accommodations for students with documented disabilities. Accommodations are arranged and determined by the Office of Disability Services for students who are registered properly for services." (http://ods.utk.edu/)
    h. Feedback for students following the exam: The Director of Graduate Studies within the student's academic home department will receive the results and original exams from the MFLL Administrative Assistant no later than 6 weeks following the exam date. The Director of Graduate Studies then communicates the results to the student. Students who failed the exam do have the option of setting up an appointment with the grader to discuss their performance during the semester in which they took the exam in order to receive guidance for how to prepare for repeating the exam. Additional advising regarding possible alternatives to repeating the exam falls to the Director of Graduate Studies.
    i. Recording exam results on student record: The MFLL Administrative Assistant forwards a copy of all report sheet(s) to the Graduate School for recording in the student academic history record (Banner). These records will be on the student academic history by no later than the last of day of classes of the semester in which the exam was taken.

APPENDIX 4
INSTRUCTIONS FOR THE MFLL ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT (1):
PREPARING EXAM PACKAGES AND OTHER <u>PRE-EXAM</u> PREPARATIONS

Exam packages are prepared by the administrative assistant in MFLL for each student registered.

The exam package is

(1) An exam booklet, such as the "Green Book", is prepared for each student registered with the following information on the cover of the booklet: Student name, student ID number, student home department, and language of exam. Students are expected to write their translations into this booklet by hand.

(2) Passage individualized according to the language being tested. This passage must be labeled with the name of the student expected to translate it.

<u>Additional Explanation:</u>
For modern languages, this passage must be provided by the student's home department and will be solicited by the MFLL administrative assistant once the registration is received in MFLL.* The passage must be provided no less than two weeks prior to the exam date and must be in high quality, easy-to-read format. The source of the passage as well as the beginning and ending points of the text to be translated must be clearly identified on the document. For languages taught in the Classics Department, the Classics faculty member who composes and evaluates the examination will provide the MFLL administrative assistant with the appropriate passages.

*<u>Exception:</u>
MFLL provides the passage for students registered by the Dept. of English.

OTHER EXAM PREPARATIONS BY MFLL ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT

1. At least two weeks prior to the exam, the MFLL Administrative Assistant should ascertain that the scheduled room is acceptable for the purpose of the exam. Students need to have table space large enough for writing and additional paper materials on the desk for all students registered. The room should have a comfortable temperature and acceptable noise level. If a room change seems necessary, the Administrative Assistant should report problems to the Graduate School no later than two weeks prior to the exam so that remedial action can be taken.
2. At least two weeks prior to the exam, the MFLL Administrative Assistant, in collaboration with the Head and/or the Director of Graduate Studies in the Dept. of MFLL, will determine a proctor for the exam. The proctor will usually be selected from the group of lecturers who serve as graders for the exam.

APPENDIX 5
INSTRUCTIONS FOR THE MFLL ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT (2):
POST-EXAM INSTRUCTIONS FOR GRADING AND RECORDING PURPOSES

1. The proctor returns all completed and unused exam packages along with the Proctor Report Sheet to the administrative assistant in MFLL by no later than the Wednesday following the exam.
2. Upon receipt of the completed exam packages and no later than the Friday following the exam, the administrative assistant informs graders of each language that exams are ready to be graded. The graders have up to 15 working days to grade the exams and return exams to the administrative assistant.
3. Graders return the original exam packages to the administrative assistant and note on the exam package whether the translation receives a pass or fail evaluation, including a date and original signature across the front of each exam package.
4. Graders also sign the report sheet(s) prepared by the administrative assistant next to the student's name and grade for the exam.
5. Within a week of receiving the graded exams, the administrative assistant proceeds with the following tasks:
   a. Makes paper copies of the completed exam packages and report sheets for retention in MFLL or distribution to the Classics Department. These copies will be filed by MFLL or the Classics Department for at least five years.
   b. Forwards the original of all report sheet(s) and the original exams to the academic home departments of the students. These originals will be placed in the student file in his/her academic home department and retained for at least five years after graduation.
   c. Forwards a copy of all report sheet(s) to the Graduate School for recording in the student academic history record (Banner).

APPENDIX 6
PROCTOR INSTRUCTIONS

PROCTOR SELECTION.

At least two weeks prior to the exam, the MFLL Administrative Assistant, in collaboration with the Head and/or the Director of Graduate Studies in the Dept. of MFLL, will determine a proctor for the exam. The proctor will usually be selected from the group of lecturers who serve as graders for the exam.

BEFORE THE EXAM.

1. Proctor should check the room for any problems, such as temperature and noise. Proctor report sheet. 3 options – 1 – cancel – room environment intolerable and explain conditions – instruct students that within a week, students will be contacted with remedial plan. 2- bad environment, but okay to proceed with exam – record conditions and problems to report back to the schedulers what the problems were. 3- everything is fine. Report sheet – includes the presence and absence of test takers marked.
2. Five minutes after the announced time for the exam once students are settled at desks/tables, the proctor greets students and checks attendance and records it on the proctor report sheet.

PROCTOR ANNOUNCEMENTS PRIOR TO THE EXAM.

1. Proctor instructs students to clear the desk of electronic devices and confirms that no electronic devices are to be used during the exam. Students are told to turn off all noise making items, which would disturb other test takers. Students are asked to place ID cards on the desk for checking as the exam packages are distributed.
2. Proctor instructs the students that if they need to leave the room, they are to leave all test materials on their desks and no extra time will be added.
3. Proctor instructs students that once they are finished with the translation to hand in all test materials, place scrap paper in the test booklet when finished, identifying each piece with their name.
4. Proctor instructs students that they may leave before the examination time is over if they finish the translation prior to the 90-minute time period is over.
5. Proctor asks students if there are any questions about the exam prior to distributing the exam packages.

DISTRIBUTION OF EXAM PACKAGES AND PROCEDURES DURING EXAM.

1. The proctor distributes the test packages to the individual students and checks for photo id to confirm test taker identity.
2. After all students have received their exam package, students are instructed to open the exam package and begin the translation using only the aids allowed according to the "Graduate Foreign Language Reading Examination Procedures" (see Appendix 2).
3. The proctor begins the clock and confirms orally that the students now have 90 minutes to complete the exam. The proctor records the official start time on the Proctor Report Sheet and notes it on the classroom board for students to see.
4. Proctor issues orally a "30-minute remaining" warning and a "10-minute remaining" warning before stopping the exam.

FOLLOWING THE EXAM.

1. After all exam packages are collected, the proctor verified that all sections of the Proctor Report Sheet are completed and then signs the sheet.
2. The proctor returns all completed and unused exam packages along with the Proctor Report Sheet to the administrative assistant in MFLL by no later than the Wednesday following the exam.