

University of New Mexico  
Department of History  
Foreign Language Requirement  
(revised November 2011)

All graduate students in History should be able to use historical sources or literature in languages other than English. Consequently, all students in the M.A. and Ph.D programs in History at UNM must fulfill the following foreign language requirement:

- Master's students: One language other than English
- Doctoral students: One language other than English, and one additional language for Ph.D students preparing a Primary Field of Concentration outside of U.S. history (U.S. or American West)

### **Ways of Fulfilling the Language Requirement**

The Language Requirement may be fulfilled in two ways:

- (1) Passing a Departmental language examination;
- (2) Presenting either 12 credit-hours of course work in that language from an accredited institution, completed during the period of graduate study at UNM with grades of B or better; or completion of the fourth semester level course of a language with a grade of B or better. This option is strongly recommended for students with weak language skills, and **required** for those who fail the departmental language exam. Continuing language study does not exclude students from taking the departmental language exam a second or third time, and if such attempts are successful, no further language coursework is required.

All graduate students are expected to demonstrate progress toward fulfilling the Language Requirement within the first two semesters of graduate study, either by attempting the language examination or beginning course work in the language. The language requirement must be completely fulfilled before students are allowed to take their M.A. or Ph.D examinations.

### **Departmental Language Examination**

Language examinations are given four times a year, normally in September, November, February, and April. Each examination is a pass/fail translation exam consisting of an approximately 600-word selection from a modern scholarly text in the foreign language; Latin examinations will consist of approximately 400 words. Students may use a dictionary. Time limit is 2 hours.

Students are encouraged to consult with the Chair of their Committees on Studies to ensure that the choice of language(s) is appropriate to the specific program of studies, and for guidance in preparing for the language examination. Note in particular that previous examinations are available from the Graduate Secretary for student review.

The student may take the language examination three times. Students planning to take a language exam should sign up with the Department Secretary not later than three weeks before the examination date.

### **Native American languages**

Graduate students who wish to fulfill a Department language requirement using an American Indian/Alaska Native language will obtain approval of their COS & then inform the Graduate Coordinator (GC)

For languages taught at UNM, the requirement may be fulfilled via the conventional 12-credit course option. If the student elects or if the language is not taught at UNM, the student may fulfill the requirement by passing a special language exam. In this case, the student will provide the GC with the name & qualifications of a language instructor who can administer the exam. If the Credentials Committee determines that the instructor's qualifications are suitable, the GC will contact the instructor & invite him/her to assume this responsibility.

As much as possible, the exam will adhere to the departmental language exam guidelines, which require the student to demonstrate an ability to translate approximately 600 words of modern, scholarly text into English within two hours. If the language is primarily oral, then the instructor may examine the student orally, with the approval of the student's COS. The instructor will determine the proficiency of the student in the language on a pass/fail basis and inform the GC of the results in a timely manner.

### **MA Students Enrolled in the Teaching American History Program**

Students participating in the Teaching American History Program may substitute an equivalent skill for the language requirement, consisting of the presentation to the student's Committee on Studies of a portfolio of eight lesson plans reflecting coursework done in the M.A. program, accompanied by a five-page narrative explaining how the student used the coursework in his/her lesson plans. The portfolio must be accompanied by a letter of support from the COS chair, and submitted and approved by the Committee on Studies in the semester prior to the semester in which the M.A. comprehensive exams are administered.