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Overview

Second language acquisition (SLA) is a multidisciplinary field whose goal is to understand the processes that underlie non-native language learning. The doctoral program in Second Language Acquisition draws from varied academic disciplines, among them linguistics, psychology, psycholinguistics, sociology, sociolinguistics, discourse analysis, conversation analysis, and education.

The PhD in Second Language Acquisition, as an interdisciplinary field, is sponsored by the Foreign Language Acquisition Research and Education (FLARE) program as an organizational unit. The administrative home of the doctoral program is the Division of World Languages, Literatures and Cultures. FLARE faculty are drawn from various departments in the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences and in the College of Education.

This manual details the requirements of the SLA program and the policies of FLARE as its sponsoring unit. As a graduate program, the SLA program is also governed by the policies of the Graduate College and The University of Iowa. Students are encouraged to consult the Graduate College website (http://www.grad.uiowa.edu), which includes the Graduate College Manual of Rules and Regulations, the list of deadlines, and information on funding.

Application

Admission to the SLA doctoral program is a competitive process based on a comparative evaluation of all applications received. In order to be considered for admission, applicants should meet the minimum requirements described below. Because the process is competitive, fulfilling the minimum requirements for admission does not ensure admission to the program.

Initial review of graduate applications begins in the first week of January and continues on an ongoing basis thereafter as completed applications are received. In order to receive full consideration for financial aid, applications should be received by January 15 for the following academic year (that is, starting in fall). Applications to start the program in spring semester cannot be considered.

Minimum Requirements: Applicants must have completed the equivalent of an MA in a related field with at least a 3.5 grade point average. Examples of related fields include foreign languages (with an emphasis in either literature or linguistics), applied or theoretical linguistics and language education. Applicants must also speak and write both English and one other language at a professional level.

English Proficiency Requirements for International Students: For international students whose native language is other than English, admission to the Graduate College requires a score
of 550 or higher on the paper-based (PBT) TOEFL, a score of 213 or higher on the computer-based test (CBT), or a score of 81 on the Internet-based test (IBT). Applicants with scores below these cut-off points will not be admitted. Newly admitted graduate students who present TOEFL scores below 600 on the PBT, below 250 on CBT, or below 100 on the IBT are required to complete an English Proficiency Evaluation on campus before their first registration for classes. Students are required to complete any English as a Second Language course work specified as a result of this evaluation (typically within the first year of study). The TOEFL is given worldwide throughout the year. There is a fee for the examination and payment must accompany your order or it will be returned to you. The University’s TOEFL school code is 6681.

As an alternative to the TOEFL, the Graduate College also accepts the International English Language Testing Service exam (IELTS), based in the UK. It covers the same four basic skill sets as the TOEFL (speaking, listening, reading, writing) and is graded on a scale of 1-9. A minimum aggregate score of 7 is required with no subscore being below 6. See [http://www.uiowa.edu/admissions/graduate/international/english-grad.htm](http://www.uiowa.edu/admissions/graduate/international/english-grad.htm) for more information.

*However, FLARE accepts only the results of the Internet-based test for the purpose of determining an admitted student’s eligibility for a teaching assistantship, which is our primary form of financial aid. An overall IBT score of 100 or higher, with a minimum score of 26 on the speaking component, is required before an offer of financial aid can be made.*

**Application Procedure:** The application procedure for the program requires the submission of (1) the University of Iowa Graduate College application form, (2) official transcripts from all universities and/or colleges attended, (3) the Graduate Record Examination (GRE) scores, (4) the IBT TOEFL score, when necessary, (5) three letters of recommendation from faculty members familiar with the student’s record, (6) a one- to two-page clearly articulated statement of purpose, and (7) a writing sample. The writing sample, typically a paper written for a previous graduate course, should demonstrate the applicant’s ability to synthesize and analyze information from academic sources using standard academic English. The statement of purpose should contain information about the applicant’s background and the motivations for pursuing doctoral study in general and second language acquisition at The University of Iowa in particular, with some description of possible areas of specific interest.

The Admissions Committee meets through February and March. Only completed applications can be considered. **Applicants will be notified about admission and financial aid no later than April 15.**

**Advising**

The advising relationship between student and faculty advisor is an integral part of graduate education. The Director of Graduate Studies (DGS) initially advises each graduate student in the SLA doctoral program. However, students will be assigned a specific faculty advisor as early as possible, and no later than the middle of the second semester in the program, in accordance with their interests as expressed in the statement of purpose in their application to the program and faculty members’ areas of research expertise. Students should meet with their assigned faculty advisors at least once a semester for course and exam planning. In addition, a student may consult at any time with the DGS. A student may request a change of advisor at any time by
consulting with the DGS; the DGS has the responsibility of requesting of faculty members that they serve as advisors. Assignment of any new advisor will again be made in accordance with the student’s areas of interest and the faculty member’s areas of research expertise. That is, at all times the selection of an appropriate advisor should be guided by academic concerns and reflect the student’s chosen areas of focus. All students are also encouraged to consult informally with other members of the FLARE faculty as they develop particular areas of interest.

In a student’s first year of study in the SLA program, the main focus of student-advisor meetings is to select appropriate courses for each semester and develop a plan of study. After consultation with the advisor, each student must submit an updated Plan of Study once a year, no later than week 5 of the spring semester. In the second year of study, in addition to continued course planning, students work with advisors to develop a plan for the comprehensive examination which generally takes place in the third year in the program. More information on possible timelines and on the comprehensive examination process is given below.

The FLARE faculty meets in the spring semester, no later than the last week in March, to evaluate the academic standing of all graduate students in the program.

On page 17 this Graduate Manual can be found a section on “Principles of Good Practice Relating to Mentoring of Graduate Students”, from the University of Iowa Graduate College, and on page 18 a section on “Professional Ethics and Academic Responsibility: Responsibilities to Students”, from the University of Iowa Operations Manual.

Registration

A normal full time course-load for graduate students who hold a 50% teaching assistantship is three graduate courses a semester, that is, 9 s.h. for a total of 18 s.h an academic year. Minimum course registration is 2 s.h. (See the Graduate College rules below regarding registration for students who have completed all requirements but the dissertation.) Students who fail to register for a period of 12 months or more must apply for readmission to the Graduate College.

Maximum registration is 15 graduate s.h. for fall or spring semester and 12 graduate hours for the 12-week summer session. Teaching assistants appointed for one-quarter or one-third time are permitted to register for the maximum 15 s.h. per semester and 8 s.h. during Summer. Half-time assistants may register for no more than 12 s.h. in the regular semester or 9 s.h. in the 12-week summer session. Additional hours require approval of the Graduate College.

Students who are preparing for and presenting the comprehensive exam and who have fewer than three courses left to fulfill the degree requirements may register for fewer than 9 s.h. In such cases the student must file a short hours form, available from the FLARE Administrative Assistant.

Continuous Registration after Completion of the Comprehensive Examination: The student is required to register each semester after passing the doctoral comprehensive examination until the degree is awarded. If a student fails to register, he or she may not be readmitted to doctoral candidacy unless the adviser and the Director(s) of FLARE approve the readmission.
In order to maintain continuous registration, a doctoral student may register (1) for required and/or elective courses, research, and thesis hours to complete the plan of study, or (2) for Doctoral Continuous Registration (GRAD:6002). Doctoral Continuous Registration requires a 1 s.h. tuition and fees payment. If a temporary lapse in a student’s academic program is required due to military service, medical leave, maternity leave, or personal/family leave, a student may petition the Graduate College to be allowed to register for PhD Postcomprehensive Registration (GRAD:6000), which allows for the assessment of a special minimum fee.

All registrations should accurately reflect the amount and type of work undertaken, the use of University facilities, and the amount of consultation with the faculty. **Students who are actively working on their dissertations are strongly encouraged to register for 2 s.h. of thesis hours each semester with their dissertation director.**

**Reapplication:** If a student’s enrollment is interrupted for any reason so that s/he is not enrolled for three consecutive academic sessions (including the Spring, Summer, and Fall sessions but excluding the Winter session), the student must apply for readmission. The readmission application form must be used. The Graduate College does not require new letters of recommendation, a new Personal Statement section, a written explanation of the reasons for the absence, or a plan for degree completion. However, FLARE requires that a graduate student whose enrollment has lapsed for any reason should reapply to the Director(s) of the program with a letter of intent that states the student’s goals in pursuing a graduate degree in Second Language Acquisition at The University of Iowa. The student should also request a letter of support from his or her advisor, who should address the student’s prospects for completion of the degree program. The FLARE admissions committee will advise the Director(s) on readmission.
PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS

The PhD degree in Second Language Acquisition is a research-oriented degree which requires a total of 72 semester hours (s.h.), of which 33 s.h. may be counted from previous graduate-level work here or elsewhere (assuming acceptance of those credits by the University of Iowa Graduate Admissions Office). There are 14 required courses; beyond these 14 courses students may also elect to take elective coursework. All courses taken toward fulfilling the program requirements must be taken on a graded basis; no graduate credit is awarded for a grade lower than C-. To remain in good standing in the Graduate College, PhD students must maintain a cumulative grade-point average of 3.00.

In addition, the PhD requires successful completion and defense of a dissertation representing original research in second language acquisition.

**Course Work**

**Foundation courses: Both are required**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course</th>
<th>Title</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SLA:6901</td>
<td>Second Language Acquisition Research and Theory</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SLA:6920</td>
<td>Multimedia and Second Language Acquisition</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Research Methods: 3 total**

**REQUIRED:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course</th>
<th>Title</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PSQF:6243</td>
<td>Intermediate Statistical Methods</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**CHOOSE 1:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course</th>
<th>Title</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>EDTL:7405</td>
<td>Research Methods in Second Lang Teaching &amp; Learning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHIN:7405</td>
<td>Teaching Chinese as For Lang V: Seminar Research Design</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**3RD COURSE:** according to planned dissertation research

**Language Learning: Choose 2**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course</th>
<th>Title</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SLA:6501 / EDTL:6484</td>
<td>Reading in Second Language</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SLA:6960</td>
<td>Topics in SLA: Speaking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SLA:6965</td>
<td>Topics in SLA: Writing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EDTL:6400 / SLA:6503</td>
<td>Fundamentals of Second Language Assessment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EDTL:6409 / SLA:6970</td>
<td>Cultural Curriculum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SLA:6506 / EDTL:6483</td>
<td>Second Lang Classroom Learning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SLA:6502 / EDTL:6497</td>
<td>Principles of Course Design for Second Language Instruction</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Linguistics: Choose 2**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course</th>
<th>Title</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>LING:3005</td>
<td>Articulatory and Acoustic Phonetics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LING:5010</td>
<td>Introduction to Syntax</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LING:5020</td>
<td>Introduction to Phonology [prereq: LING:3005]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LING:6010</td>
<td>Syntactic Theory [prereq: LING:5010]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SPAN:4100</td>
<td>Introduction to Spanish Phonology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SPAN:4150</td>
<td>Introduction to Spanish Syntax</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Spanish Phonology [prereq: previous course in phonology]
SPAN:6110

Spanish Syntax [prereq: previous course in syntax]
SPAN:6120

* The 2-course requirement can be met either by taking one introductory level course each in phonetics/phonology and syntax, or by taking a 2-course sequence in one of those areas. For students whose language of research is Spanish, it is strongly recommended that the courses be chosen from Spanish whenever possible.

**Specialization area: 5 courses** (chosen in consultation with the advisor and the DGS)

SLA:7030 Thesis (3-15 s.h.)

**Specialization areas:** There are two broad areas of specialization in the SLA doctoral program: (i) Language learning and post-secondary education (including here the possibility of focusing on technology in language learning and teaching) and (ii) linguistic and/or psycholinguistic approaches to SLA, with possible foci on phonetics/phonology or syntax, generally also focusing on a specific language. Below are examples of courses in these areas; however, each student’s specific specialization area and set of courses will be determined in consultation with the advisor.

**Language learning and post-secondary education**

Any of the courses not taken to satisfy the requirement of two courses in Language Learning

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course Code</th>
<th>Course Title</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PSQF:6205</td>
<td>Design of Instruction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PSQF:6208</td>
<td>Designing Educational Multimedia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PSQF:6215</td>
<td>Web-Based Learning [recommended PSQF:6208]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PSQF:6265</td>
<td>Program Evaluation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EDTL:6402 / SLA:6504</td>
<td>Second Language Program Management</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EDTL:6403</td>
<td>Second Language Planning in Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EDTL:6480 / SLA:6500</td>
<td>Issues in Foreign Language Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EDTL:7015</td>
<td>Seminar in Language Literacy &amp; Culture (if topic is applicable)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHIN:7401</td>
<td>Teaching Chinese as For Lang I: Theories &amp; Research</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHIN:7403</td>
<td>Teaching Chinese as For Lang III: Classroom Inst/Practicum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHIN:7404</td>
<td>Teaching Chinese as For Lang IV: Testing &amp; Assessment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHIN:5024</td>
<td>Teaching Chinese as For Lang VII: Pedagogical Grammar</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Linguistic/Psycholinguistic approaches to SLA**

Any of the courses not taken to satisfy the requirement of two courses in Linguistics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course Code</th>
<th>Course Title</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>LING:6020</td>
<td>Phonological Theory</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LING:7010</td>
<td>Advanced Syntactic Theory [prereq:LING:6010]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LING:6101 / PSY:6101</td>
<td>Cognitive Science Proseminar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PSY:3085</td>
<td>Language Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PSY:3670</td>
<td>Language Processes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SPAN:3190</td>
<td>Psycholinguistic Aspects of Bilingualism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SPAN:4100</td>
<td>Introduction to Spanish Phonology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SPAN:4150</td>
<td>Introduction to Spanish Syntax</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SPAN:4170</td>
<td>Linguistic Aspects of SLA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SPAN:6150</td>
<td>Topics in Spanish Language Acquisition</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Satisfaction of course work requirements by previous work:** Students may request that courses from their previous graduate study be accepted for fulfilling some of the course work requirements listed above. At the time of the initial advising session, the student and the DGS should identify such courses. The DGS will then consult with the appropriate FLARE faculty (that is, the faculty who typically offer those courses) to determine whether the previous course work is acceptable for a given requirement, and will make the final decision. It must be the case that the previous course work in question is included in the credits accepted by the Graduate College as transfer credit from the student’s previous institution, if the MA work was not completed at the University of Iowa.

All course work in the specialization area must be completed at The University of Iowa. By Graduate College rules, at least 39 s.h. of the total 72 s.h. required for the doctoral degree must be University of Iowa credits (including thesis credits). It is recommended that students whose MA preparation has included many of the required courses for the SLA program avail themselves of the opportunity to pursue more elective courses, in both their chosen area of focus and in related areas.

**Doctoral Comprehensive Examination**

The purpose of the PhD Comprehensive Examination is to determine whether the candidate has gained sufficient breadth and depth of research knowledge in second language acquisition to conduct original research and to be an active educator in the field.

**Structure of the examination.** The examination consists of three parts:

1. **The issues paper:** This is a paper on a particular topic of SLA research, ideally, a topic which is closely related to the student’s intended dissertation topic. The paper must identify a particular research topic in SLA, define (briefly) the theoretical framework in which the student plans to carry out his/her dissertation research, and review the previous work on that topic (i.e., what is known as a literature review). The topic is decided in consultation between the student and his/her advisor(s). It is typically 25 to 35 pages in length.

2. **Two written exams:**
   a. **Theory exam.** This exam is common (based on the same reading list and consisting of the same questions) to all students who take the comprehensive examination in a given semester. The faculty who teach the theory and the multimedia courses write the exams and are responsible for the reading list. The relevant reading list is available on the program web page.
   b. **Specialization exam.** The topic and reading list are decided by the student and advisor(s) together. It should be different from the topic of the issues paper, but can be related to it. It may, for example, focus on an area of SLA theory or research practice not included in the common theory exam, and/or focus on a particular topic of acquisition in the L2 in which the student works.

3. **The oral exam:** This is based on the written exams and, to a lesser extent, the issues paper.
Procedures and deadlines

1. The comprehensive examination committee: The examining committee is comprised of five members of the FLARE program, or four members from the program and one from a closely related department or program. By Graduate College rules, at least four of the committee members must be tenure-track faculty at The University of Iowa, and at least two must be members of the student’s program. Typically in SLA examination committees at least four of the committee members are faculty members affiliated with FLARE, and often all five. Current Graduate College policy allows emeritus faculty to serve as sole chair of an examination or dissertation committee for one year after retirement; after that point such faculty must have a co-chair.

The student and his/her advisor should consult on the possible composition of the examination committee, and agree on whether the student or the advisor will contact the proposed faculty members to see if they are available to serve on the committee. It is required that all five members of the examining committee have areas of expertise related to some aspect of the exam, and all of the areas of the exam must be represented by a faculty member who is competent to evaluate the area. Once the committee is constituted, the student should fill out the proposed committee form, obtain the signature of the advisor and of the DGS, and submit the form to the FLARE administrative assistant. Submission of this form means that the committee members listed have confirmed their willingness to serve. The comprehensive examination committee must be constituted no later than the fifth week of the semester before the semester of examination.

2. Deadlines:

Issues paper: The final version of the paper must be given to the members of the examination committee no later than the beginning of week 9 of the semester of the examination. Ideally, work on this paper should begin the preceding semester so that the student can give the advisor earlier drafts to discuss.

Reading lists: The reading list for the common theory area should be available at the beginning of the previous semester. The reading list for the specialized area should be finalized by the student and the advisor no later than the end of the previous semester (ideally, earlier).

Written and oral exams: The two written exams are given on Tuesday and Thursday of week 11 of the semester. The oral exam is typically about 2 weeks following the written exams, although this can vary depending on committee members’ schedules.

An overview of the deadlines and chronology for comprehensive examination planning is given at the end of this section.

3. Procedures: It is the student’s responsibility to deliver copies of the issues paper to the committee members. In many cases a committee member will indicate that he or she only needs an electronic version, but if a hard copy is requested, it is the student’s responsibility to provide it.

Students have 4 hours for the theory written exam and 3 hours for the specialization area exam. Individual faculty members who are supervising the exam have the prerogative to allow that the student have access to notes during the examination or not. Access to electronic sources is not allowed.

Students will not receive feedback on the written exams during the time between the written exams and the oral exam. The oral exam is a maximum of two hours in length. The advisor or the
DGS will determine the time of the exam, based on the schedules of the individuals involved. It is advisable that this be done as early in the semester as possible.

Typically, at the start of the oral exam that chair of the examination committee will ask the student to step outside for a few minute while the committee discusses in general terms the quality of the exam. Students are permitted to bring their exams into the room with them, their notes, and anything else they want. However, excessive dependence on these sources in answering the questions of the committee will not reflect favorably on the student’s preparation. Often in these exams the students will be asked if there is anything in the written exams that they would like to add, delete, or change, which gives them the opportunity to address the weaknesses that they have already discovered. If the written exams presented choices, the student may be asked to answer the question(s) that were not selected for the written exam. There will also be follow-up questions on the issues paper. At the end of the exam, the student is again asked to leave the room while the committee discusses the quality of the exam.

The official evaluation of the examination as reported to the Graduate College is satisfactory, reservation, or unsatisfactory. By Graduate College regulations, four of the five committee members must determine that the examination is satisfactory for the student to pass the exam. If reservations are imposed, the examination committee must send a letter to the student specifying the reservations to be met and the deadline for removal, with copies to the student's file, the DGS and the Graduate College.

Students must be registered during the semester of the comprehensive examination. If all course work has been completed prior to that semester, then the student should register for 2 semester hours of special work (SLA:7020, Readings in Second Language Acquisition) with her/his advisor, on a satisfactory/unsatisfactory basis. Students may not register for thesis credits (SLA:7030) during the semester of the comprehensive examination.

**Chronology: Comprehensive Examination**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Deadline</th>
<th>What has to be done</th>
<th>Who is involved/Preparation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>by beginning of previous semester</td>
<td>reading list for common exam (theory/technology) available</td>
<td>list drawn up by faculty of theory and multimedia courses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>by end of week 5, previous semester</td>
<td>have Comprehensive Exam committee constituted/submit form to administrative assistant</td>
<td>advisor or student, as agreed between them, asks faculty members to serve on the committee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>by end of previous semester</td>
<td>reading lists for specialization area finalized</td>
<td>list drawn up in consultation between student and advisor (the faculty member supervising the area) during the course of the semester</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>by week 9 of exam semester</td>
<td>issues paper is submitted to committee</td>
<td>paper should be started in advance to allow various drafts to be reviewed by advisor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>week 11 of exam semester (Tues, Thurs)</td>
<td>two written exams</td>
<td>faculty must submit questions to administrative assistant Friday of previous week</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>by end of week 13</td>
<td>oral exam</td>
<td>advisor or DGS sets up time of exam</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Timelines (pre-dissertation)**

Students who enter without any previous course work which satisfies specific requirements in the program and who take 3 courses a semester will finish the required 14 courses in fall of the third year, and will present the comprehensive examination in spring of the third year. Students who have some previous course work, or who take some course work in the summer, or who take 4 courses during some semesters, can be ready to present the comprehensive examination in fall of the third year. This can be advantageous for maximizing opportunities to receive funding for the dissertation research period (see below, section on post-comprehensive funding).

**The Dissertation**

**Dissertation Committee:** After the PhD comprehensive examination, the candidate requests that one member of the FLARE faculty serve as the dissertation director, in accordance with the proposed topic of the dissertation and faculty expertise. In consultation together the dissertation director and the candidate propose a dissertation committee of five members and agree upon whether the dissertation director or the candidate will contact the faculty members to request their participation on the committee. At least four members of the committee are FLARE faculty members and should be chosen in accordance with their areas of expertise. The fifth member may also be from the FLARE faculty or may be from outside the program, or from another university (subject to approval by the Graduate College). A professor on phased retirement can serve as a co-director of a dissertation or as a committee member. A retired faculty member may serve as sole director of a dissertation for up to one year following retirement, and after that date may be a co-director. The entire committee, including the dissertation director, must be approved by the DGS. The dissertation director also serves as the student's advisor during the dissertation period.

**Dissertation Prospectus:** The first step in the dissertation process is the submission and defense of the dissertation prospectus. Minimally, the prospectus must include a narrative which describes the dissertation topic, summarizes the existing research on this topic, identifies the specific research question(s) to be addressed in the dissertation, and describes the research methodology and/or theoretical approach to the topic. The prospectus should also include a preliminary description of chapter divisions, a preliminary bibliography, and a timetable for completion of the research and writing of the dissertation. Expectations about the structure and length of the prospectus vary according to the disciplinary area in which the research is to be carried out and should be established in consultation between the dissertation director and the candidate. Examples of past prospecti in the SLA program can be consulted in the office of the FLARE Administrative Assistant.

The prospectus should ideally be defended by the end of the semester following the comprehensive examination semester. Prior to the defense, the prospectus should be handed in to the dissertation director. After the dissertation director has given preliminary approval of the prospectus, he or she will schedule the prospectus defense. The defense is a meeting of the dissertation committee at which the candidate gives a brief oral presentation of the prospectus and answers questions that the committee members may have. The committee members should receive the written prospectus at least **two weeks** prior to this meeting. Once approved, a copy of
the prospectus and the prospectus approval form are handed in to the FLARE Administrative Assistant by the dissertation director, to be placed in the student's file.

**Postcomprehensive Registration:** Graduate College regulations require that students be registered during each semester after passing the comprehensive examination until the degree is awarded, excluding summers (but, students who take a degree in the summer session must be registered that summer). Students must take at least 3 and as many as 15 semester hours of thesis credits (SLA:7030), to complete the required 72 s.h. for the PhD. The earliest semester in which registration for SLA:7030 is possible is the semester following the semester in which the comprehensive examination was taken. After completing 72 s.h., in order to maintain continuous registration, a doctoral student may register for Doctoral Continuous Registration (GRAD:6002), which requires a 1 s.h. tuition/fee payment. In the final semester, doctoral students may register for Doctoral Final Registration (GRAD:6003), which requires a 2 s.h. tuition/fee payment. However, as noted in the section of this manual on Registration, students who are actively working on their dissertations and consulting with their dissertation committee should continue to register for thesis credits. Students who fail to register for a period of 12 months or more must apply for readmission to the Graduate College.

**Presentation of the Dissertation and Final Examination:** One electronic copy of the dissertation, complete and in final form, must be presented at the Office of the Graduate College before the final examination (dissertation defense), and no later than four weeks before the graduation date on which the degree is to be conferred. (See “Theses and Dissertations” on the Graduate College website for submissions guidelines and help.) Graduate College regulations regarding preparation of the dissertation copy must be strictly followed. In planning a timetable for the final semester of study, the student and his/her advisory committee should keep in mind the following filing dates on the Graduate College calendar: Application for Degree, PhD Plan of Study, Request for Final Examination, First Deposit (of the dissertation), Final Examination Reports, and Final Deposit (of the dissertation). The candidate should provide the final copy of the dissertation to committee members sufficiently in advance of the defense date so as to allow committee members time for a careful reading (minimally, three weeks). It is expected that prior to distribution of the final draft to the entire committee the dissertation reader and the two close readers have indicated that the dissertation is adequate for defense.

**Progress Toward Degree, Post-comprehensive Examination:** Assuming that the PhD comprehensive examination is completed in the fifth semester (Fall semester of Year 3 in the PhD program), subsequent typical and expected progress toward the PhD is as follows:

**Year 3:**
- Semester 5: completion of comprehensive examination
- Semester 6: defense and approval of prospectus; research and work on dissertation; application for post-comprehensive research awards

**Year 4:**
- Semester 7: research and work on dissertation
- Semester 8: research and work on dissertation; application for dissertation year fellowship (early spring)
Year 5:
Semester 9  writing of final drafts of dissertation, job search
Semester 10  draft of dissertation complete, defense of dissertation; degree awarded

If the comprehensive examination semester is Semester 6 (spring of Year 3), then the dissertation writing period is shortened by one semester.

At least once every semester after passing the comprehensive examination, students must show progress on their dissertation by submitting their work to their dissertation director and preferably at least one other member of the dissertation committee. They will then evaluate the student’s progress as adequate or inadequate. If the student’s progress is deemed to be inadequate, this will be reported to the DGS. If at the annual review of graduate students a majority of the faculty concurs with this evaluation, the student will be warned in writing and a meeting of the committee, the DGS and the student will be convened. Failure to report dissertation progress to the dissertation director or 3 semesters of progress deemed inadequate will lead to a special meeting of the dissertation committee and the DGS, who may act to dismiss the student from the program.

Post-comprehensive research funding (Graduate College): The Graduate College offers three possible sources of internal funding for graduate students who are in the dissertation stage: the Post-Comprehensive Research Award, Graduate College Summer Fellowships, and the Ballard-Seashore Dissertation Fellowships. Interested students apply directly for the Graduate College Summer Fellowships; for the other two awards a student must be nominated by his/her graduate program.

There are specific requirements from the Graduate College on the timing of these awards. The Post-Comprehensive Research Award is intended for students who have just passed the comprehensive examinations. Nominations for awards for spring semester are due to the Graduate College by October 15, and nominations for fall semester are due to the Graduate College by March 15. Only students who passed the comprehensive examination in the semester immediately preceding the semester of nomination are eligible. This research award provides full funding for one semester. The Ballard/Seashore Dissertation Fellowship provides one semester of support for the final year of dissertation work; a student can be nominated for either fall or spring of that year. However, a student who may have held a Post-Comprehensive Research Award cannot have a Ballard/Seashore Dissertation Fellowship in the immediately subsequent semester. For example, if a student has a Post-Comprehensive Research Award in the spring of a given year, that student would not be eligible for a Ballard/Seashore Dissertation Fellowship until the following spring. Nominations for Ballard/Seashore Fellowships, whether for fall or spring of a given academic year, are due on March 1 of the preceding academic year. All post-comprehensive students are eligible to apply for the Graduate College Summer Fellowship. The only restriction is that students who are awarded a Ballard/Seashore Dissertation Fellowship cannot apply for a Graduate College Summer Fellowship for the summer following the academic year in which they receive the dissertation fellowship.

The requirements on this research funding is subject to change, and for the most current information students should consult the relevant section of the Graduate College web page (http://www.grad.uiowa.edu/internal-fellowships).
Policies and Procedures

Program Policies and Procedures

All policies and procedures elaborated in this manual for the PhD program in Second Language Acquisition have been approved by a vote of the FLARE-affiliated. Changes approved by the faculty during an academic year go into effect the following fall semester and are included in the Graduate Program Manual on the program web site. Graduate students are expected to fulfill the requirements in effect the semester they entered a graduate degree program. If there are changes to the requirements, the student is given the option of completing new requirements or staying with the requirements in force at the time of entering the degree program.

Dismissal Procedures

If a student is failing to meet program standards, the program shall warn the student of this fact in writing. The notification shall specify in what way(s) the student is failing to meet the standards. The student shall be provided a reasonable amount of time to meet the standards prior to departmental dismissal. If conditions such as conditional admission or probation are imposed, the department shall give at the time of its imposition written explanation of this status and its time limits.

A student who will not be permitted to re-register for failure to meet standards shall be notified of this fact in writing with reasons for the action provided. Such dismissal may follow failure to meet conditions of admission, conditions of probation, preannounced departmental grade-point requirements or other standards, or failure of a regularly scheduled examination or formal evaluation.

In the event that a student is dismissed from the graduate program for academic reasons, he or she may request a formal review of the dismissal. The Director(s) of FLARE will name a grievance committee to review the student's case, with the proviso that no member of the committee may be a member of the student's comprehensive examination or dissertation committee. As with other formal grievance procedures (see below), the student may appeal the recommendation of the program to the Graduate College.

Academic Grievance Procedure for Graduate Students

Graduate students are associated in various ways with both the University of Iowa and the Iowa City communities, and therefore may share characteristics and responsibilities of many other groups. Within the University, graduate students are first and foremost students, but many will, at some time in their graduate career, be employed as Teaching Assistants (TAs) or Research Assistants (RAs). A TA or RA works under the supervision of a faculty member and may be assigned duties such as teaching classes, supervising laboratories or studios, advising and counseling undergraduate students, grading course work, obtaining and analyzing data, etc. Other graduate students find employment in a surprisingly large array of university programs
and offices (not always related to their academic programs or goals) or in the community. Still other graduate students may not be employed nor have responsibilities aside from those required by their department and degree program.

As members of the University of Iowa community, the University of Iowa Code of Student Life, published each year, governs personal behavior of students (including graduate students). The Graduate College Manual of Rules and Regulations contains general rules and procedures governing graduate education. There may also be College Academic Policies/Handbooks with information concerning the role of graduate students, particularly the instructional roles they may play.

The University has a collegial system of governance. This implies a shared interest among faculty, staff, and students (the University community), which is manifested in common interests and ways of debating issues and of internally resolving differences. The collegial system attempts to resolve issues at the lowest possible level and in a manner most consistent with the shared interests of all members of the community. Open and free communication is a hallmark of this system, which is meant to prevent issues from evolving into conflict or dispute. However, conflicts and disputes may develop, and students are encouraged to seek advice as soon as they occur. The collegial system of resolving difficulties and conflicts includes a set of informal steps: discourse between the involved individuals, followed, if necessary, by consideration by the department(s), the college(s), and finally an appropriate administrative officer. A complainant also may elect to proceed by one of several formal procedures, generally by filing a written grievance alleging a specific violation, misinterpretation, or improper application of specific rules, regulations, or procedures.

Although most students proceed without difficulty through their graduate degree program, others may experience difficulties with another student, faculty member, staff member, or supervisor; or with departmental rules or procedures. Because graduate students may serve in several possible roles, several different University rules and regulations, each with its own set of procedures for resolving complaints or grievances, may at times apply. It is important to note that those various formal procedures may have different time frames within which they must be filed.

The University of Iowa Operations Manual contains University rules, regulations, policies, and procedures, along with references to some of the procedures established by the Board of Regents which govern all of the Regents' institutions. Procedures for handling violations of the Operations Manual rules are codified under Section II, Ch. 29. Some of these rules are directly applicable to graduate students: For example, Section III, Ch. 30 contains the Student Employee Grievance Procedure governing non-academic employment of students (including graduate students); Section III, Ch. 15 governs Professional Ethics and Academic Responsibility of Faculty. (This section applies to graduate students both as students and as teachers. Conflicts between graduate students and faculty under this section are administered by the Office of the Provost.) Section III, Ch. 12.4 includes the Graduate Assistant Dismissal Procedure. In addition, the Office of Equal Opportunity & Diversity maintains procedures for handling complaints and grievances related to sexual harassment and discrimination. The Graduate College maintains the Graduate Academic Grievance Procedure (AGP) for resolving complaints and grievances relating to general academic issues.

For a graduate student, the particular grievance procedure to employ for a complaint will depend upon the area involved (student life, academic difficulties, employment, etc.). Generally,
graduate students first explore how to pursue a grievance with their advisor or with an appropriate program administrator (for FLARE, the Director of the program or the DGS). However, if students are uncomfortable or dissatisfied using this route, the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs of the Graduate College will counsel them on the options available. In addition, the Counseling Service, the Office of the Ombudsperson, and the Office of Equal Opportunity & Diversity will counsel graduate students on a confidential basis and will assist them in selecting an appropriate grievance procedure.

The Graduate College administers the Academic Grievance Procedure (AGP) for pursuing resolution of complaints and grievances for most academic aspects of a graduate student's program. This includes issues related to the program of study and research, scholarship, or artistic production, which comprise the core of graduate degree programs. The objective of the AGP is to achieve a fair and equitable resolution of complaints or grievances at the earliest possible time and at the lowest possible level. A graduate student who elects to pursue a complaint or grievance through the Graduate College AGP is first advised by the Associate Dean of the different possible ways to proceed. The student then elects whether first to pursue a complaint using an informal process or whether to file a grievance and to proceed by a more formal process.

Informal Academic Complaint Procedure of the Graduate College

Academic complaints generally involve students experiencing difficulty in their academic program, or disputes concerning students’ status or progress in their academic programs. Generally, graduate students should bring complaints to the Graduate College only after attempts have been made to resolve them in a collegial manner at the department/program level. However, if for any reason a graduate student feels uncomfortable pursuing a complaint through his/her department/program, the complaint may be brought directly to the Graduate College.

Students should always seek resolution via the Informal Academic Complaint Procedure before initiating the Formal Academic Grievance Procedure. To begin the informal process, the student should approach the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs of the Graduate College, who will serve as a mediator. S/he will work diligently to help the parties resolve the complaint in a mutually-agreeable fashion. This process may take an indeterminate time. Generally, the Associate Dean provides information to the parties on the progress of the negotiations at regular intervals.

If the student decides to file a grievance, a formal procedure is used to obtain information and to reach a decision.

Formal Academic Grievance Procedure (AGP) of the Graduate College

A Formal Academic Grievance is filed only if the Informal Academic Complaint Procedure has failed. When a Formal Academic Grievance is filed, a formal procedure is used to obtain information and to reach a decision. A grievance is a written allegation that there has been a violation, misinterpretation, or improper application of University, Graduate College, or Department/Program rules, regulations, or policies governing a graduate academic program. No grievance may be filed later than two years from the event that gave rise to the complaint.
Step 1: The AGP is initiated by a statement of allegations submitted to the appropriate department/program, with a copy to the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs of the Graduate College. This statement should clearly and completely state the allegation(s), including times, places, and individuals concerned, and must be signed and dated by the complainant. The information provided should form the basis for a thorough investigation of the allegation(s). The statement should also contain a preferred remedy. The program (SLA/FLARE) will be asked to respond to the allegations within ten working days (excluding break periods between academic sessions). If the complainant is dissatisfied with the response of the Department, he/she can appeal the decision to the Graduate College. The appeal should be a written statement to the Associate Dean indicating the basis on which the student believes the Departmental response is unsatisfactory, and must be filed within 25 working days of the Department response.

Step 2: The Associate Dean for Academic Affairs in the Graduate College, who should already be familiar with the case as a result of the Informal Academic Complaint Procedure, or an appropriate designee, will undertake to ensure that all relevant information pertinent to the AGP has been collected into a file. Depending upon the exact situation, the Associate Dean may need to summarize the results of his or her discussions with the concerned individuals. This must be done without prejudice. The Associate Dean will then submit the file to the Dean of the Graduate College. Step 2 will ordinarily be completed within ten days.

Step 3: The Dean will review the contents of the file. The Dean will ordinarily appoint an Inquiry Committee, although s/he may render a decision without appointing a committee if s/he feels that the case is sufficiently clear cut. If the Dean renders a decision without appointing an Inquiry Committee, the student may appeal within twenty days and request an inquiry (Step 4).

Step 4: The Dean appoints an Inquiry Committee composed of at least two faculty members and at least one graduate student (often members of the Graduate Council). The Inquiry Committee will review the report of the investigation, request any additional documents the Committee believes germane to the inquiry and conduct a hearing to receive any additional testimony the student may wish to present or the Committee may wish to solicit. The student may have the assistance of another person while presenting to the Committee. If the student is assisted by counsel, the Office of the General Counsel will assist the Committee in the conduct of the hearing. The first meeting of the Inquiry Committee may be convened by either the Dean or the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs. After that, the Committee will organize its own activities.

The Committee may rule on the relevance of information or testimony and otherwise conduct the hearing. The Committee may close part or all of the hearing, so as to (1) ascertain the truth, (2) conserve time, and (3) protect confidentiality and privacy of members of the University community. The Committee will make a record of the hearing. The Inquiry Committee will report to the Dean on progress at intervals of about ten working days, and will ordinarily make a recommendation to the Dean within twenty-five working days (excluding break periods between academic sessions). The Dean may accept or reject the recommendation, or may request the Inquiry Committee to explore other issues surrounding the grievance.

The decision of the Dean is final unless appealed to the Provost within twenty working days.
Principles of Good Practice Relating to Mentoring of Graduate Students

1. Departments should have procedures which facilitate the process of students becoming acquainted with faculty and research areas and the process for selecting a mentor. Students should receive information and be involved in these processes as soon as possible and practical after entering the graduate program.

2. Departments should have admissions processes which carefully assess the potential of students to conduct research in the areas represented in the department as well as the likely match between students’ expressed interests and the expertise of the faculty. Students accepted on these bases should be made aware early in their program that they have the primary responsibility for making an informed selection of a research mentor and that they must obtain the agreement of the faculty member to serve in this capacity. Provided the student has a satisfactory record of work in the department and is willing to work in areas represented by the faculty, there should not be a problem in reaching an agreement on selection of a mentor. There also may be instances in which it is possible to establish arrangements acceptable to the department for the student to work in areas outside the primary areas of expertise of department faculty through a co-chair arrangement with a qualified faculty member in another unit. In cases in which the student's performance in the program does not meet expected standards, or in which the student insists upon working in an area not represented among the faculty's expertise, the department is not obligated to appoint an unwilling mentor.

3. Faculty have the right and obligation to clearly inform potential advisees of their expectations before the student makes a choice of research mentor. They should also be informed of departmental policies regarding authorship, ownership of intellectual property, work commitments, etc., to which all members of the department must adhere.

4. Once the selection of a research mentor has been agreed to, both parties have an obligation to work in good faith to accomplish the student's educational goals and the research required for the degree.

5. There must be provision for a student to change a mentor and/or research area for valid reasons or for incompatibility. Neither the department nor administrative officials can coerce professional relations between persons who are incompatible. In establishing departmental policies for changing mentors, careful consideration should be given to what constitute valid bases for either students or mentors to request approval for a change, and to include documentation of agreements to make such changes.

6. When a change of mentor and terms of severance of the relationship are agreed to, both parties must abide by the agreement. Retaliation by either party would almost certainly constitute a violation of University Policy on Professional Ethics and Academic Responsibility (Operations Manual, 20.290) or other applicable policies, and could constitute the basis for a grievance.
As a teacher, the faculty member has the responsibility for creating in his or her classroom or laboratory a climate that encourages the student to learn. The faculty member should exemplify high scholarly standards and respect and foster the student's right to choose and pursue his or her own educational goals.

(a) The faculty member must make clear the objectives of the course or program, establish requirements, set standards of achievement, and evaluate the student's performance.

(b) The faculty member has the responsibility to meet classes as scheduled and, when circumstances prevent this, to arrange equivalent alternate instruction.

(c) The faculty member has the responsibility to teach courses in a manner that is consistent with the course description and credit published in the catalogue and with the announced objectives of the course. He or she must not intentionally interject into classes material or personal views that have no pedagogical relationship to the subject matter of the course.

(d) In order to facilitate student learning, faculty members should present the appropriate context for course content. While challenge is essential to good teaching, challenge is ordinarily most effective when students are adequately prepared to deal with course materials. On controversial issues within the scope of the course a reasonable range of opinion should be presented. When the faculty member presents his or her own views on such issues, they should always be identified as such. Wherever values, judgments, or speculative opinions constitute part of the subject matter, they should be identified as such and should not be offered as fact.

(e) The faculty member owes to the student and the University a fair and impartial evaluation of the student's work. Such evaluation should be consistent with recognized standards and must not be influenced by irrelevancies such as religion, race, sex, or political views, or be based on the student's agreement with the teacher's opinion pertaining to matters of controversy within the discipline.

(f) Every student is entitled to the same intellectual freedom which the faculty member enjoys. The faculty member must respect that freedom. Restraint must not be imposed upon the student's search for or consideration of diverse or contrary opinion. More positively, the faculty member has an obligation to protect the student's freedom to learn, especially when that freedom is threatened by repressive or disruptive action.

The classroom must remain a place where free and open discussion of all content and issues relevant to a course can take place. While students remain responsible for learning class material and completion of course requirements, faculty should respect reasonable decisions by students, based on their exercise of their own intellectual freedom, to not attend part or all of a particular class session.

(g) The faculty member has obligations as an intellectual guide and counselor to students. He or she has a responsibility to be available to students for private conferences. In advising students, every reasonable effort should be made to see that information given to them is accurate. The progress of students in achieving their academic goals should not be thwarted or retarded.
unreasonably because a faculty member has neglected his or her obligation as adviser and counselor.

(h) The faculty member should conduct himself or herself at all times so as to demonstrate respect for the student. He or she should always respect the confidence deriving from the faculty-student relationship.

(i) The faculty member must avoid exploitation of students for personal advantage. For example, in writings and oral presentations due acknowledgment of their contributions to the work should be made.