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# The University of Georgia

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University Council  
Athens, Georgia 30602

March 10, 2008

UNIVERSITY CURRICULUM COMMITTEE – 2007-2008

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Dear Colleagues:

The attached proposal for a MA non-thesis option in German will be on the agenda for the March 21, 2008, Full University Curriculum Committee meeting.

Sincerely,

Mr. David E. Shipley, Chair  
University Curriculum Committee

cc: Dr. Arnett C. Mace, Jr.  
Professor Jere W. Morehead

Executive Committee, Benefits Committee, Committee on Facilities, Committee on Intercollegiate Athletics, Committee on Statutes, Bylaws, and Committees,  
Committee on Student Affairs, Curriculum Committee, Educational Affairs Committee, Faculty Admissions Committee,  
Faculty Affairs Committee, Faculty Grievance Committee, Faculty Post-Tenure Review Appeals Committee,  
Faculty/Staff Parking Appeals Committee, Strategic Planning Committee, University Libraries Committee, University Promotion and Tenure Appeals Committee  
An Equal Opportunity/Affirmative Action Institution



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The University of Georgia

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Franklin College of Arts and Sciences  
*Department of Germanic and Slavic Languages*

November 30, 2007

Senior Associate Dean Hugh Ruppensburg  
Franklin College of Arts and Sciences  
University of Georgia  
Athens, GA 30602  
Campus

Dear Dean Ruppensburg,

Enclosed please find the department's proposal for a non-thesis M.A. degree option in German. The proposal includes a description of current degree requirements, the rationale for proposing the option, an outline of the changes we propose to make to the current M.A. requirements, and the exact language we would add to the current description of M.A. requirements. We appreciate your consideration of this request and ask you to forward it to the appropriate university committee.

The department voted unanimously in favor of adopting this new degree option at its faculty meeting of November 30, 2007. In our opinion, it is a timely change that will strengthen the program and help with our recruiting efforts.

Sincerely,

Martin Kagel  
Department Head

Cc: Dean Garnett Stokes

## Proposal For a Non-Thesis M.A. Degree Option in German

### Introduction

The *Department of Germanic & Slavic Studies* would like to request adding a non-thesis option to its current M.A. degree offering. Non-thesis M.A.s are already common in many fields in the humanities around the country as well as in programs at the University of Georgia, such as Journalism and Classics. We anticipate that providing this choice in our program will not only benefit current students intellectually and professionally but also serve as an effective recruiting tool and likely increase enrollment in the program. Adding a non-thesis option would not eliminate the current thesis requirement. Rather, it would allow graduate students to choose between a conventional thesis-based and the proposed non-thesis form of examination, depending on their academic and career goals.

### Current M.A. Requirements

Degree requirements for graduate students receiving an M.A. in German from the department currently include at least 30 hours of graduate work (divided into 24 hours of course work plus a maximum of six hours of thesis research credit), a written exam based on a core reading list in either literature or linguistics, and a lengthy thesis that is defended by the candidate in an oral exam in front of a committee of three (the thesis director and two readers).

### Rationale for Adding the Non-Thesis Option

A substantial number of recent students in the department who received a M.A. degree sought professional careers in government or private business or aimed to become teachers in secondary schools. This represents a significant shift from previous generations of graduate students whose career aims were tied more closely to academic goals and for whom the completion of a lengthy thesis represented an important educational step toward achieving these goals. Lately, it has become apparent to our faculty that students entering professional or teaching careers would be better served by completing additional course work and having additional exposure to the target language they are studying. The non-thesis option we are proposing would allow students to broaden and deepen their education in this way.

### Outline of Non-Thesis Option Requirements

The written Master's examination would continue to be required of all graduate students in the department. Following the written exam, however, students selecting the non-thesis option in lieu of the conventional thesis would prepare a portfolio to be critiqued and evaluated in the oral exam. This portfolio will consist of research papers from at least three graduate seminars taken in our program, a reflective essay as to the research conducted, and materials related to the student's achievements in research and/or teaching. Graduate students selecting the non-thesis option would also be required to complete an additional nine credit hours of course work in our program, excluding courses normally taken in connection with the thesis, such as GRMN 7000 *Master's Research* or GRMN 7300 *Master's Thesis*. In terms of actual classes taken in the program, this would amount to an increase from 24 hours (or 8 classes) to 33 hours (or 11 classes).

### Impact on Current Program

Providing a non-thesis option would not require additional resources of any kind, lead to a lowering of standards, or lessen the rigor of examination. Since it would not eliminate the thesis requirement, offering this option would have no negative impact on students currently enrolled in the program.

## Description of Current M.A. Requirements (proposed amendments in bold):

### M.A. REQUIREMENTS

#### Residency

Teaching assistants must be in full-time residence for at least two semesters. Completion of the M.A. normally requires two years.

#### Required courses

GRMN 8410, GRMN 4001/6001 (or test), GRMN(LING) 7500 (if a TA), ~~GRMN 7300~~.

Competency in an additional modern foreign or classical language (GRMN 2002, GRMN 2500 or equivalent, with a grade of B or better).

Students with an emphasis in Literature must take at least one course in linguistics (this requirement may be fulfilled by GRMN(LING) 7500).

Students with an emphasis in Linguistics must take at least one course in literature or film (this requirement may be fulfilled by GRMN 8410).

No more than one Directed Readings/Projects (GRMN 8160, 3 hours) may count towards the total number of hours required for the M.A. degree.

#### General requirements

Credits required by the Graduate School for M.A. degree: 30 (min. 24 in course work/max. 6 thesis or research). **Students pursuing the non-thesis option are required to complete a minimum of 33 hours of course work in German Studies or Linguistics, excluding courses normally taken in connection with the thesis, such as GRMN 7000 *Master's Research* or GRMN 7300 *Master's Thesis*.**

### ~~EXAM AND THESIS-THESIS OPTION~~

The final examination for the Master's degree consists of a written exam and a written thesis followed by an oral defense. The thesis will be written under the direction of a faculty member, whom the student should select in the course of the third semester of study in the program. In addition to the major professor (thesis director), the M.A. Committee will consist of two readers, whom the student should appoint in consultation with the thesis director by the end of the third semester of study. The major professor and readers are also charged with the evaluation of the written exam.

#### The Written M.A. Exam

The purpose of the M.A. exam is to test the student's knowledge of German literature or Germanic linguistics as well as of a self-selected area of expertise. The exam is based on:

(a) a core reading list provided to the student upon acceptance into the program. The reading list is meant to be studied independently and should be prepared in full by the student for the exam. Students prepare the list that reflects their area of concentration in either literature or linguistics.

- \* Core reading list in literature
- \* Core reading list in linguistics

(b) a supplemental reading list in an area of specialization of the student's choice, preferably related to the student's thesis topic. This reading list should be compiled by the student in consultation with the major professor and be distributed to all members of the M.A. Committee upon completion of the third semester of study.

The exam is comprised of questions from the three different professors serving on the student's M.A. Committee. It is three hours in length. Two hours of exam time should be devoted to questions concerning the core reading list (a), and one hour to questions concerning the supplemental reading list (b). The major professor will be responsible for questions related to the supplemental reading list.

Further specifications for the M.A. exam are as follows:

The exam

- . will be given in the department on the first Thursday in February
- . may be written by hand or on a computer
- . may be written in either English or German

The student's M.A. Committee will vote on the entire exam. A two-thirds majority constitutes a pass.

The M.A. Thesis

The purpose of the M.A. thesis is to apply advanced research skills and demonstrate the ability to analyze a given subject critically and in-depth.

Specifications for the thesis are as follows:

The M.A. thesis

- . focuses on a topic in German Literature, German Studies, Germanic Linguistics, or Pedagogy.
- . may be the result of a substantially revised research paper or an independent project agreed upon in consultation with the faculty member directing the thesis.
- . must be at least 30 pages in length (in accordance with graduate school guidelines for formatting), excluding bibliography, dedication, table of contents, and appendices not belonging to the body of the thesis.
- . must be turned in to readers at least seven (7) days before the scheduled defense and fourteen (14) days before the student's submission of the thesis to the graduate school.
- . may be written in either English or German.

**Students writing a thesis must complete at least 3 credit hours of GRMN 7300 *Master's Thesis*.** The student must defend the thesis in an oral defense. While the Graduate School requires only a pass/no pass decision for thesis and oral defense, the department will internally evaluate the quality of the student's work in the following three categories: pass with distinction, pass, and no pass. This evaluation shall be announced to the student at the end of the oral defense.

## NON-THESIS OPTION

The department offers graduate students the option of a non-thesis M.A. Students who select this option will have to submit a comprehensive portfolio in lieu of the thesis and complete an additional nine credit hours of coursework in German Studies or Linguistics, excluding courses normally taken in connection with the thesis, such as GRMN 7000 *Master's Research* or GRMN 7300 *Master's Thesis*. Further specifications are as follows:

In principle, graduate students selecting the non-thesis option shall abide by the rules and adhere to stipulations given for the exam and thesis (as outlined above), including the timeline.

Accordingly, following their first year of study in the program, students will select an examination committee consisting of three faculty members, one of which shall serve as chair of the committee. The two other committee members shall be appointed by the student in consultation with the committee chair.

Students will undergo the written examination in their area of specialization in accordance with the M.A. exam guidelines, preparing for an examination in either German literature or linguistics. However, the examinee's supplemental reading list shall be comprised of extended bibliographies from three graduate seminars taken in the program instead of a single list related to the student's thesis topic.

At least fourteen (14) days prior to the scheduled oral defense, the examinee will submit to the committee members a portfolio consisting of three seminar research papers, a critical essay of 6-8 pages reflecting on the research conducted, and materials related to achievements in research and/or teaching.

The student must defend the portfolio in a one-hour oral defense which will serve to evaluate and critique the student's work. While the Graduate School requires only a pass/no pass decision for the defense, the department will internally evaluate the quality of the student's work in the following three categories: pass with distinction, pass, and no pass. This evaluation shall be announced to the student at the end of the oral examination.