

FOREIGN LANGUAGE REQUIREMENT

The foreign language requirement must be completed before taking the Comprehensive Examination. All applicable advanced courses taken previously must have been completed within five years prior to the first semester of doctoral study at Iowa to be eligible to fulfill the language requirement. Since the aim of this requirement is to assure competence in reading a foreign language, courses in translation or on writing are not applicable. Native-speaker fluency does not ordinarily fulfill the requirement in itself; it should be combined with formal instruction, for example, during study abroad or with testing. Please consult with the DGS in order to ensure the acceptability of other options, including intensive or accelerated language study courses.

Students generally elect one of the four options below:

1.) Students must earn a grade of B or above in one upper-level undergraduate literature class; courses in modern languages should be taught in the language of study. Normally this comprises the fifth semester of undergraduate instruction, after students have taken two semesters of introductory and two semesters of intermediate training. The introductory and intermediate courses may be taken S/U, but upper-level courses (usually numbered 3000 or higher) should be taken for a grade.

2.) Students who have an undergraduate major or minor in a literature other than English, awarded within five years of first enrollment at Iowa, or who have completed the five-semester sequence at another institution within five years of first enrollment at Iowa have satisfied the requirement.

3.) Students may also have the opportunity to fulfill the foreign language requirement by completing a three-course sequence with grades of B or above in Elementary Old English, Beowulf, and any single graduate-level course on Middle English literature, should they be offered while the student is in coursework. Courses may be taken in any sequence. These should provide sufficient knowledge of the development of English to constitute the equivalent of learning a foreign language.

4.) For several languages, students can also satisfy the requirement with standardized tests:

(a) For Italian, Spanish, French, German, Portuguese, and Russian, students can take the Reading Test for Professionals, “a standardized, computer-delivered test for the global assessment of reading ability in a language” (<http://www.languagetesting.com/reading-proficiency-test-rpt>).

For Latin, students can take the ACTFL Latin Interpretive Reading Assessment (ALIRA)

(<https://www.languagetesting.com/actfl-latin-interpretive-reading-assessment>). Students must score at the intermediate level.

(b) For Chinese and Japanese, students can take a test at the UI Placement Exam Portal (<https://teach.uiowa.edu/placement-exams>). A passing score on one of these World Languages Placement Tests certifies competence at a level equivalent to four years of high school language instruction. They are multiple-choice adaptive tests that take about an hour to complete. A score appears at the end of your test, which you should save and print. For information about taking the tests, see: <https://newstudents.uiowa.edu/placement-tests>