

Modern Language Proficiency Requirement – Approved Sept 28, 2018 for ALL JDP Students

Students in the Joint Ph.D. Program are required to demonstrate proficiency in one modern research language other than their first or primary language. Typically French, German, or Spanish for native English speakers, and English for all others, this language allows each student to undertake research in the study of religion through the ability to read scholarship in that language.

English as the Modern Research Language

Students for whom English is not their first or primary language and who have not already acquired a college degree from an accredited English-language institution in the U.S.A. are required to pass the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) with a minimum score of 100 (internet) or 600 (paper) or the International English Language Testing System (IELTS) with a minimum score of 7.0. Students for whom English is not their first or primary language and who submitted a U.S. transcript with evidence of degree completion at the time of admission will be considered to have satisfied their language proficiency requirement.

Other Languages

Students who speak English as their first or primary language normally satisfy the language proficiency requirement in one of three ways:

- 1) passing a language examination at DU's [Center for World Languages and Cultures](#) (complete information about the examinations, including languages, fees, dates, registration and practice examinations, may be found [here.](#));
- 2) receiving a grade of "B" or higher in the last quarter or semester of the second year of language study at the college/university level within the past five years (submit the transcript to JDP office);
- 3) submitting a transcript not more than ten years old showing successful completion of a degree or major in a modern research language.

Please take note:

- Language courses taken to meet this requirement will not count toward the 90 credits needed for the Ph.D. degree and are not covered by program-awarded financial aid.
- Language classes may be taken at a community college or other university.
- Students may not defend their dissertation proposal until the language proficiency requirement has been met.
- The CWLC allows students to take the language exam a maximum of three times.
- Students who use a language approved by their advisor that CWLC does not test may petition to have a faculty person fluent in the language examine them, but the examination and results must meet the normal CWLC level of competence.
- Any exceptions to these ways of satisfying the language requirement must be approved by the Director before work begins, and the student must work with the JDP office to record results.

The following advice will help students determine the most efficient way of preparing to meet this requirement through the exam:

- Students with at least two years of college/university language study or who are bilingual are encouraged to brush up their skills and take the CWLC language examination in the first or second quarter of their first year of study. Students who fail the first or second attempt are strongly encouraged to enroll in the appropriate level language course sooner rather than later so as not to delay satisfaction of this requirement and therefore delay progress toward completion of their degree (the dissertation proposal may not be defended until such time as this requirement is satisfied). If a student fails the language exam after the third attempt, the student must enroll in a language course in order to complete the last quarter or semester of the second year of that language and receive a grade of “B” or higher.
- Students with less than two years of college/university language study (or its equivalent) should take a placement exam to determine which level of language class they should begin taking and enroll as soon as possible so as not to delay satisfaction of this requirement.
- Those without any formal academic study of an appropriate foreign language should begin taking language classes immediately so that they can complete two years of coursework in order to satisfy this requirement in a timely manner.