

Senate Bill No.: 0506-23

UNIVERSITY SENATE

UNIVERSITY AT ALBANY
STATE UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK

Introduced by: Graduate Academic Council

Date: May 2006

**PROPOSAL TO AMEND UNIVERSITY POLICY PERTAINING
TO THE DOCTORAL RESEARCH TOOL REQUIREMENT**

IT IS HEREBY PROPOSED THAT THE FOLLOWING BE ADOPTED:

1. That the University Senate approves the attached amendment to University policy pertaining to the doctoral study research tool requirement, as approved by the Graduate Academic Council.
2. That subsequent to Senate approval, the proposal be forwarded to the President for consideration and final action.

Rationale/Summary

Existing policy prohibits credits earned in graduate course work completed as all or part of the doctoral research tool requirement from being additionally eligible for application toward program credit requirements. Various programs have suggested that this prohibition should be revised, as it likely dated back to a period when general research tool/skill courses were expected to be offered outside the specific discipline. In light of the fact that many programs now integrate the development of research skills within discipline based study/courses, it is proposed that the applicability of associate course credits should be a program matter, not necessarily prohibited by campus policy.

Research Tools

Programs leading to the Ph.D., ~~D.A., or Ed.D.~~ and Dr.P.H. require the demonstration through examination at this University of a reading knowledge of at least one foreign language and/or the demonstration at this University of competence in another appropriate research tool.

Refer to the descriptions of individual programs for the requirements ~~which~~ that apply.

General Regulations Governing Research Tool Requirements:

Foreign Language: A knowledge of an appropriate foreign language is a communication skill required in several graduate programs as a scholarly tool essential to research in the major field. In other programs it is an optional research tool. The requirement may call for a *reading knowledge* or for a *high degree of competence* in the language. In either case, a basic knowledge of the structure and vocabulary of the language is required in addition to a knowledge of the vocabulary of the field or discipline. A high degree of competence in a language requires, in addition, a knowledge of the language as a humanistic study and a sensitivity to it developed through a wide reading of its classics.

Responsibility for the level of competence required, for the nature of the examination to be taken by the student, and for the standards utilized in the evaluation rests with the department which offers the program. ~~However, the development of a competence in a foreign language must be in addition to the formal coursework required for the degree.~~

General regulations and procedures governing the satisfaction of foreign language requirements follow. Description of individual programs should be consulted for departmental regulations and procedures. Information concerning schedules of examinations, reading lists, nature of examination, standards, and general procedures may be obtained from the appropriate academic department.

1. Depending on the program, a foreign language requirement may be met in one or more of the following ways:
 1. By local examination constructed, administered, and evaluated by the student's major department;
 2. By completion of an appropriate Graduate School Foreign Language Test of the Educational Testing Service (E.T.S.) (available in French, German, Russian, and Spanish);
 3. By local examination conducted by the appropriate foreign language department;
2. Unless otherwise specified by the department, there is no limit on the number of times a graduate student may take a language examination;
3. English may not be used to satisfy a foreign language requirement;
4. With the approval of their major department, foreign students may present their native language in meeting a requirement for one foreign language;
5. In programs in which the E.T.S. examination is an authorized option, the passing score varies by department but may not be lower than 500. Consult individual program descriptions for requirements;
6. In the programs in which the E.T.S. examination is an authorized option, a score on an E.T.S. test taken prior to admission to a program may be applied to the satisfaction of a foreign language requirement at the discretion of the department;
7. The limit of time between the satisfaction of a foreign language requirement and admission to candidacy for a graduate degree is at the discretion of the department;
8. Graduate students may not be required to take a language course. However, students may be encouraged to audit or take a regular language course, or to take a language course especially designed to assist them, if this seems to be the best way to build language competence to the desired level;
9. Official designees of a department may certify the language competence of candidates for advanced degrees who have completed graduate study in the language or who otherwise present superior qualifications in the language. This evaluation will be accepted by the Dean of Graduate Studies in place of the required examination upon proper substantiation. This authorization does not include acceptance of a foreign language requirement completed at another college or university;
10. Successful completion of a foreign language requirement is recorded on a graduate student's transcript. Examinations failed are not recorded on the transcript.

Other Research Tools: A competence in quantitative techniques, a knowledge of statistics, or mastery of other special tools for research and investigation, apart from a foreign language, is considered essential in many disciplines and for many kinds of research. ~~Such a competence is required in the Ed.D. program and in several Ph.D. programs. In many other programs, it is an optional research tool.~~

Descriptions of individual programs should be consulted for departmental requirements in these research tools and their evaluation.

Responsibility for the evaluation of a student's competence in such techniques rests with the student's major department. The department may, however, require the student to be examined, or otherwise meet standards of accomplishment in another appropriate department.

~~The development of a competence in a research tool (other than a foreign language) must be in addition to the formal course work required for the degree.~~

~~Academic credit associated with courses taken for meeting the tool requirement may not be used as credit to be applied to the graduate program.~~