

CMLL: M.A. in Foreign Languages

COMPREHENSIVE EXAMINATION

All Master's students are required to complete a comprehensive examination during their last semester of study. The comprehensive examination includes a written section, with the student completing questions provided by their committee, and an oral examination, which the student completes in person before their committee. The comprehensive examination includes works from a departmental reading list (specific to the student's field of study), and all coursework completed while working toward the M.A. Students completing the thesis option will also be expected to defend their thesis during the oral examination.

Students will receive a copy of the reading list for their area of study from the graduate coordinator or their major professor at the beginning of their first semester of study in CMLL, or soon thereafter. Should a student need a new copy of the reading list, they are encouraged to inform the graduate coordinator or a professor in their area of study to obtain a new copy in a timely manner. The reading list is ultimately the student's responsibility, and students should be actively working through the list as they progress through their degree program.

The examination committee is composed of at least three professors, with at least two of those professors being from the student's major area (i.e. graduate faculty in CMLL). Any student completing a minor is required to include a professor from the minor area. The composition of the examination committee includes a major professor, who will oversee the examination and coordinate with the other members of the committee. All members of the committee are chosen by the student, and are to be declared and approved by the Office of the Graduate School shortly after the beginning of the student's final semester of study. As of Spring 2020, the graduate coordinator must turn in, to the Graduate School, the Committee Request Form at least two weeks before the date of the oral defense.

Students should consult the [academic calendar](#) to determine the date by which the comprehensive examination (written and oral) must be completed. As of Spring 2020, this date is the last day of classes.

THESIS

A master's thesis is a substantial written project related to a specific area within a student's field of study. The thesis is not required for the M.A. degree in CMLL, though all CMLL master's students have the option of completing a thesis. In particular, the department recommends a thesis for students wishing to pursue a Ph.D. in the same or a similar field of study as the M.A.

Given the scope of the thesis, students are encouraged to begin consideration of whether to complete the thesis or non-thesis option in their first two semesters of graduate work in CMLL. Students should also begin to determine the professor they would like to work with as their major professor at this time, and to begin planning out the thesis through close consultation with that professor. Students wishing to complete a thesis are encouraged to work with their major professor through DIS courses and thesis writing, in order to complete the thesis in a timely manner.

Along with working closely with the major professor, students should maintain contact with the other members of the examination committee to ensure that all committee members are aware of the student's progress, and will have a chance to read the thesis prior to the thesis defense.

The Office of the Graduate School requires that the thesis be completed and approved by the comprehensive examination committee at the time of the comprehensive examination (around the middle of the student's final semester of study). Students should consult the [academic calendar](#) to determine the date by which the thesis defense must be completed.

If a student chooses to switch from the thesis to the non-thesis option, the student will need to work with the graduate coordinator to file new paperwork with the Office of the Graduate School, in order to allow the student to graduate on time by completing the comprehensive examination instead of the thesis defense.