UK University of **KENTUCKY**

Department of English
1215 Patterson Office Tower
Lexington, KY 40506-0027

859 257-7008
fax 859 323-1072

www.as.uky.edu/English

To: Graduate Council
From: Jeffory Clymer, Chair
        Andy Doolen, Director of Graduate Studies
Date: December 4, 2014
Subject: English Department PhD Program Language Proposal

The English Department submits this memo in support of the department's proposal to eliminate its foreign language requirement as a component of the PhD degree program.

Ours is a progressive proposal that admittedly sets us apart from our benchmark institutions: each of our eleven benchmark English doctoral programs does currently have a foreign language requirement.

Although a level of competency in a foreign language is a noble goal, it is nonetheless vestigial to most modern fields of English literary and cultural studies. The discipline has evolved at the graduate research level over the last thirty years into a highly theoretical field that also requires deep historical knowledge of a student's period of study. Thus, the relatively cursory foreign language training required by most graduate programs, including our own, has been rendered nearly meaningless to most students' potential for success.

Further, for the students who are unable to waive the requirement because of prior coursework, the requirement puts them at a disadvantage relative to their peers. The requirement burdensomely detracts from the time they have to learn the essential and necessary material of their fields and ultimately increases their time to degree.

Certainly, we have no intention of eliminating foreign language training for those students whose research fields require language competency. Largely, these are medieval or early modern (pre-1700) fields of study in which a strong knowledge of Latin is mandatory. At the same time, students in these fields need far *more* language knowledge for success than is required by our current required minimum; for this subset of students, the requirement is thus also rendered meaningless. We feel it is much more appropriate and beneficial for these particular students to work closely with their advisors to set competency minimums, rather than to have a universal requirement.

CHANGE DOCTORAL DEGREE PROGRAM FORM

GENERAL INFORMATION

College:	Arts and Sciences	Department:	English
Current Major Name:	English	Proposed Major Name:	English
Current Degree Title:	PHD	Proposed Degree Title:	PHD
Current Formal Option(s):	N/A	Proposed Formal Option(s):	N/A
Current Specialty Fields w/in Formal Option:	N/A	Proposed Specialty Fields w/in Formal Option:	N/A

Date of Contact with Associate Provost for Academic Administration[1]:	6/3/2014	
Bulletin (yr & pgs): 2013 pp 187-190	CIP Code[1]: 23.0101	Today's Date: 9/11/2014
Accrediting agency (if applicable):		
Requested Effective Date: ☒ Semester following approval.	OR ☐ Specific Date[2]:	
Dept Contact Person: Andrew Doolen	Phone: 859-257-1488	Email: avdool2@email.uky.edu

CHANGE(S) IN PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS

	Current	Proposed
1. Number of transfer credits allowed:		
(Maximum is Graduate School limit of total of 9 hours (or 25% of the credit hours needed to fulfill the pre-qualifying residency requirement.)		
2. Residence requirement:		
(Minimum of one year before and after Qualifying Exams.)		
3. Language(s) and/or skill(s) required:	reading knowledge of one foreign language required	*no foreign language requirement*
4. Provisions for monitoring progress and termination criteria:		
5. Total credit hours required:		
6. Required courses:		
7. Required distribution of courses within program:		
8. Minor area or courses outside program required:		
9.Distribution of courses levels required (400G-500/600-700):		
10. Qualifying examination		

[1] Prior to filling out this form, you MUST contact the Associate Provost for Academic Administration (APAA). If you do not know the CIP code, the APAA can provide you with that during the contact.

[2] Programs are typically made effective for the semester following approval. No program will be made effective until all approvals are received.

Rev 8/09

requirements:		

11. Explain whether the proposed changes to the program (as described in numbers 1 through 10) involve courses offered by another department/program. <u>Routing Signature Log must include approval by faculty of additional department(s).</u>

The courses that currently fulfill this requirement are housed in the Modern and Classical Languages Department. This change was approved through email on September 12th, 2014, by Dr. Jeanmarie Rouhier-Willoughby, Chair of the Department of Modern and Classical Languages, Literatures and Cultures (the note is copied below and the email is attached to this document):

Catherine, MCLLC approves the change.

Jeanmarie

****
Jeanmarie Rouhier-Willoughby
Professor of Russian, Folklore and Linguistics
Chair, Department of Modern and Classical Languages, Literatures and Cultures
Division of Russian and Eastern Studies

12. Other requirements not covered above:

13. What is the rationale for the proposed changes? If the rationale involves accreditation requirements, please include specific references to those requirements.

The Ph.D in English wishes to drop the foreign language requirment for completion of this doctorate. The contemporary study of literature and culture at the doctoral level is an intense program that emphasizes theoretical and historical methodologies. A low-to-moderate proficiency in a foreign language is not as pertinent in most sub-fields of English literature and cultural studies. The average time-to-degree for our 2013-2014 doctoral graduates was 9.4 years. With our students being required to move from a 2-1 to a 2-2 teaching load, starting fall 2014, a requirement that is, in most cases, tangential to their field of study is an unnecessary impediment to their already strained progress in the program. ~~While many students come into the program already meeting the foreign language requirement (out of the 13 doctoral students in our Fall 2013 cohort, only 2 of them had not already fulfilled the requirement), those who do not have, to date, been required to take a foreign language course, for which the credit hours do not count toward their graduate course hours.~~

In our program, a strong knowledge of a foreign language is only necessary in the subfields of Medieval and early Modern literature. However, students in those subfields have received language training prior to entering the PhD program. The admissions application, including prior coursework, letters of recommendation, a statement of purpose, and writing sample, provides ample evidence of a student's language training. If they didn't have it, they would not have been admitted in the first place. Moreover, only a tiny number of students actually pursue research in these subfields, since we have only two faculty members in Medieval and early Modern literature. No doctoral student is currently doing research in Medieval literature and we offer no graduate courses in that subfield.

We acknowledge the possibility that it may be necessary, in exceptional cases, for a student in these subfields to pursue further language training. Should this occur, the student's director and advisory committee will determine if this is necessary. If further training is deemed necessary, then the committee members will oversee the course of study and assess the student's proficiency.

Many students come into the program already meeting the foreign language requirement (out of the 13 doctoral students in our Fall 2013 cohort, only 2 of them had not already fulfilled the requirement). To date, those who have not met the requirement, and hence have been required to take a foreign language course, cannot apply the foreign language credit hours toward their graduate course hours.

CHANGE DOCTORAL DEGREE PROGRAM FORM

Signature Routing Log

General Information:

Proposal Name: _____

Proposal Contact Person Name: <u>Andy Doolen</u>   Phone: <u>257-6979</u>   Email: <u>avdool2@uky.edu</u>

INSTRUCTIONS:
Identify the groups or individuals reviewing the proposal; note the date of approval; offer a contact person for each entry; and obtain signature of person authorized to report approval.

Internal College Approvals and Course Cross-listing Approvals:

Reviewing Group	Date Approved	Contact Person (name/phone/email)	Signature
English Department Graduate Committee	10/22/14	Andy Doolen- DGS / 7-6979 / avdool2@uky.edu	Andy Doolen
ENG, Chair	10/22/14	Jeff Clymer / 7-2901 / jeff.clymer@uky.edu	Jeff Clymer
Education Policy Committee	12/4/14	Anna Bosch / 7-3966 / anna.bosch@uky.edy	Anna Bosch
		/ /	
		/ /	

External-to-College Approvals:

Council	Date Approved	Signature	Approval of Revision[3]
Undergraduate Council			
Graduate Council	5/7/15	*Roshan Nikou*	
Health Care Colleges Council			
Senate Council Approval		University Senate Approval	

Comments:

[_____   ]

---

[3] Councils use this space to indicate approval of revisions made subsequent to that council's approval, if deemed necessary by the revising council.

Rev 8/09