

Department of East Asian Languages and Literatures

Graduate Student Handbook

I. Overview

The aim of the MA program in East Asian Studies is to prepare students to be specialists of East Asia who are knowledgeable about the history, culture, and language of the region. The normal time to completion of the MA degree is two years.

This document describes the rules, requirements, and responsibilities of MA students during their residency in the Department of East Asian Languages and Literatures. It is expected that all students in the MA program become familiar with the material in this document and agree to abide by the rules, requirements, and responsibilities as described below. Students also agree to abide by all University of Pittsburgh academic regulations for graduate students as set forth in the University's Regulations Pertaining to Master's Degrees.

The Director of Graduate Studies (DGS) works with members of the Department's Graduate Committee to certify the completion of graduate student requirements and to resolve any graduate program problems or disputes. The Graduate Office coordinates all administrative work of graduate studies.

The Graduate Committee consists of all graduate faculty members in EALL. The DGS chairs this committee.

Students should feel free to contact the Director of Graduate Studies, the Graduate Committee, or the Graduate Office regarding any problem they are having with the graduate program. Problems unrelated to the graduate program should be brought to the attention of the EALL Department chair.

II. Advising

The DGS and the Graduate Committee will provide counseling and guidance in the first semester. An agreed-upon faculty member will then become the principal advisor for each graduate student, who has agreed to supervise their work when admitted. He or she will advise the student about their course of study, project topic, and other academic matters. The principal advisor will serve as the chair of the student's MA committee.

III. Thesis Committee

The three-member MA committee will be constituted by the end of the first year, at the student's request and in consultation with the principal advisor.

Students must choose a topic for their culminating project (thesis, portfolio, or translation project—see Section IV) in consultation with their academic advisor and two additional graduate faculty members.

IV. Requirements for the MA Degree

The IDMA program requires a minimum of 30 credits of course work in two or more departments, excluding language credits. Students work with a faculty advisor to plan a coherent academic program.

- Students must satisfactorily complete *Critical Approaches to East Asia* (EAS 2005), offered in the Department of East Asian Languages and Literatures, and *Approaches to Asian History* (HIST 2400), offered in History department, preferably during their first year.
- All 30 credit hours must be earned from courses numbered 2000 or above.
- Applicants must have completed two years of college-level study in Chinese, Japanese, or Korean to be considered for admission to the IDMA, and must continue their language study as part of their graduate work. Three years of college-level language study, or its equivalent, is necessary to fulfill the language requirement for the degree. Language credits do not count toward the 30 required credit hours. Students

must demonstrate the ability to carry out research using East Asian language materials and show such evidence in the culminating project.

- Students who specialize in one country (China, Japan, or Korea) must take at least one 3-credit course on either of the other two countries. For example, students who specialize in Japan must take at least one 3-credit course on China or Korea.
- Students must complete a culminating Master's-level project in consultation with their academic advisor and two additional graduate faculty members. These three faculty members serve as the student's thesis committee. There are three options for the project:
 - **A conventional Master's thesis.** The thesis must be approved by the committee and demonstrate the student's ability to carry out research using East Asian language materials.
 - **A portfolio of three papers, in lieu of a thesis.** The papers may be rewritten and improved versions of work completed in seminars taken over the course of the master's program. The papers are expected to be of high quality, totaling 50 to 60 pages for the portfolio.
 - **A translation project with critical commentary.** The translation must be approved by the advisor in advance and must be appropriate for the master's level. The commentary must include a critical introduction; information positioning the author's work; information about genre and stylistic conventions important to the piece; reflection on why the work is important or intellectually interesting; and personal reflection on the challenges involved in the translation. While many students choose a work that has never been translated into English, retranslation is possible but requires an explicit comparison with earlier translations.
- In preparation for the culminating project, each IDMA student must give a talk on their topic in the EALL Colloquium series.
- When course work and the culminating project have been completed, the student must pass an oral examination centered on the chosen topic.

V. Learning Outcomes

IDMA students are regularly assessed in the following skill areas to ensure that graduates are able to perform competently:

1. Students will acquire expert knowledge and key research skills in their chosen discipline and convey such knowledge in professional, academic writing.
2. Students will demonstrate an ability to conduct research in Chinese, Japanese, or Korean and use that skill to gather information and conduct a critical and nuanced analysis of their topic, acceptable within the discipline of the student's choice.
3. Students will be able to speak and understand the target language appropriately and accurately in social and professional situations.
4. Students will be able to read the target language appropriately and accurately in social and professional situations.

VI. Timeline for Completion

The normal timeline for completion of the requirements, for students pursuing the conventional Master's thesis option, is as follows. Students who choose the portfolio or translation-project option should establish an analogous schedule of deadlines in consultation with their advisor.

	Coursework	Culminating Project	Administrative Tasks
Fall semester, first year	• Take 9 credit hours (including EAS 2005), in consultation with		

	Coursework	Culminating Project	Administrative Tasks
	the Director of Graduate Studies and the Graduate Committee. Continue language study as needed.		
Spring semester, first year	- Take 9 credit hours, in consultation with the Director of Graduate Studies and the Graduate Committee. - Continue language study as needed.	- Identify the topic of study and choose the supervisor. - Propose the topic to the supervising faculty by the end of the spring term.	Choose the supervisor.
Summer, first year		Complete and submit draft bibliography to the advisor by August 1.	
Fall semester, second year	- Take 9 credit hours, in consultation with the advisor. - Continue language study as needed.	Submit half of the project and submit it to the supervisor by December 1. The supervisor will return it with comments by January 1 for revision.	- Constitute the three-member MA thesis committee. - Schedule the EALL Colloquium for the spring term.
Spring semester, second year	- Take 3 credit hours, in consultation with the principal advisor. - Continue language study as needed.	- Submit the complete draft to the supervisor by March 1; the supervisor will return the draft with comments by the second week of March. - Give an oral presentation of the project (EALL Colloquium). - Submit the final draft to the supervisor and committee members by mid-March; allow at least two weeks before the defense. - Defend by March 31. - Complete and submit the final draft for approval by the supervisor by April 7.	- Schedule the final oral defense. - Submit the completed project to the University in mid-April.

VII. MA Culminating Project Defense

The defense of the culminating project (thesis, portfolio, or translation project) is conducted by the student's committee and chaired by the student's advisor. It consists of an oral presentation (i.e., the EALL Colloquium presentation), which is open to the public, and a final oral examination, which is closed to the public. All members of the committee must be present at the final oral examination. The final oral examination primarily consists of the candidate's defense of the culminating project, though the examination may not be limited to materials contained in it. One final draft of the project must be provided to each member of the committee at least two weeks prior to the date set for the final oral examination.

VIII. Guidelines for Satisfactory Progress

Students must meet the requirements specified in Section VI above.

A. Academic notice

If the overall GPA falls below 3.00, the student will be automatically placed on academic probation. In addition, any student who is not making satisfactory progress toward completion of the degree, as defined above, may be placed on probation by the department. The student will be informed in writing of such action.

B. Dismissal

Students should follow Academic integrity code, as specified by the university:

<https://www.as.pitt.edu/faculty/policies-and-procedures/academic-integrity-code>

IX. Financial Aid

Every year a small number of financial awards are given to the most highly qualified students. The amount of the award is equal to the difference between out-of-state and in-state tuition. Students who have received this financial aid may not receive the same award in the second year of their study; all students who wish to be considered for financial aid are expected to apply in March of their first year. Inquire with the DGS for the application procedure.

Other Fellowships and Funding Sources

Other fellowships are available. Some are listed below.

Dean's Tuition Scholarships are awarded by the A&S Graduate Studies Office to continuing graduate students who demonstrate academic achievement and have exhausted their departmental funding. The award provides tuition only, for one semester, and is typically awarded to students who need to be enrolled in order to graduate. Application and further details are available from the graduate administrator.

- Summer Foreign Languages and Area Studies Fellowship
- Foreign Languages and Area Studies Fellowship
- Japan Studies Graduate Student Conference Travel
- Mitsubishi Graduate Fellowship in Japanese Studies
- Japan Summer Language Study Scholarship
- China Studies Graduate Student Conference Travel
- Chinese Summer Language Study
- Chinese Studies Tuition Remission Scholarship
- Chancellor's Graduate Fellowship (Chinese)

More information on the resources listed above (except the first) is available from the Asian Studies Center (<https://www.ucis.pitt.edu/asc/students/graduate-students/funding>). For a list of further funding opportunities, see the A&S Graduate Studies Office financial assistance website at <https://www.asgraduate.pitt.edu/financial-support>.