

Foreign Language Requirements

May 2005

All History graduate students are required to have had experience in the serious study of at least one foreign language. Students in fields where the primary research materials are in languages other than English must command those languages. Ordinarily, students must be able to demonstrate their proficiency in their primary research language within the first academic year of their enrollment in the department.

The field committee in the student's major field(s) may require students to demonstrate competence not only in reading, but also in speaking, writing, and paleography, if such proficiency is necessary for their professional work. Fields may require competence in **one or two** foreign languages. Students should check with their major field committees concerning the language requirements for their area of specialization.

Students may demonstrate competence in a **primary research language** by:

- a. Native speaker status; or
- b. Coursework at KU or elsewhere through the intermediate (second year) level, coupled with extensive use of the language in seminar and colloquium papers; or
- c. Coursework at KU or elsewhere through the advanced (third year) level; or
- d. A test of language skill (reading only, or reading, speaking, and writing, as appropriate) designed by the field and graded in consultation with the appropriate foreign language department.

Students may demonstrate necessary experience in a foreign language that they are **not** using for primary research by:

- a. Native speaker status; or
- b. Coursework at KU or another university; or
- c. A test of reading skill (usually, a passage to translate) designed by the field and graded in consultation with the appropriate foreign language department; or
- d. A graduate reading knowledge course taken at KU.

When students have attained the required level of proficiency in a foreign language, they should fill out the History Department Foreign Language Certification Form and submit it with the necessary documentation first to their advisor, and then to the Graduate Director.

Should any difference of opinion arise between students and their field committees concerning the language requirement, they should consult with the Graduate Director. If the disagreement cannot be resolved that way, students may petition the Graduate Board.

History Department Foreign Language Certification Form

Name _____ Date _____

Major field _____ Advisor _____

Minor fields _____

Prospective dissertation area _____

Foreign language to be certified _____

Primary research language? (y/n) _____

For language used in primary research:

Skills needed: reading _____ writing _____ speaking _____ paleography _____

Competence demonstrated through:

_____ Native speaker status.

_____ Coursework through intermediate (2nd year) level, with use in a graduate seminar or colloquium paper (submit transcript and paper).

_____ Coursework through advanced (3rd year) level (submit transcript).

_____ Test of language skill (submit report).

For language used intermittently:

_____ Native speaker status.

_____ Coursework (submit transcript).

_____ Test of reading skill (submit report).

_____ Graduate reading knowledge course (submit transcript).

Approved (signatures):

Advisor _____ Graduate Director _____