M.A. in Cognitive Linguistics

Information for Current Students

See the general bulletin for information about required courses.

A visual guide to help you plan

The canonical timeline for completing the program is four semesters. This guide is based on a four semester (two-year) timeline, but longer or shorter periods of study are possible.

YEAR ONE		
FALL	SPRING	SUMMER
406 (Theory I, 3 credits).	407 (Theory II, 3 credits).	Attend conferences, workshops, get research experience.
408 (Workshop I, 3 credits).	409 (Workshop II, 3 credits).	Choose two committee members (in consultation with committee chair). Prepare proposal, be ready to submit proposal by start of fall semester. Learn about forms and deadlines.
Elective (3 credits).	Elective (3 credits).	If your project requires IRB approval, get IRB approval before fall classes start.
Learn about the research, get to know faculty	Decide on thesis topic. Choose committee chair, meet with chair to get agreement to serve	IGS students approaching what would normally be your senior year of undergraduate work: Check in with your supervisor to make sure that you want to proceed with the MA, rather than graduating with a BA.
YEAR TWO		
FALL	SPRING	
651 (6 credits) Recommended: Attend 408	651 (6 credits) Recommended: Attend 409	SUMMER
First week of classes or earlier: Submit proposal to supervisor. Research, writing, meetings with supervisor. Strategize	Set date for defense. As you write, adhere to guidelines for final version. Submit application for graduation.	Enjoy your new MA! Note: If you miss the deadlines set by the School of Graduate Studies, or if your thesis is not successfully defended, you

with supervisor about post-grad plans. Applications for most PhD programs due in December.	DEFENSE (first half of March for spring graduation). After midterm, following successful defense, submit all forms and completed thesis for graduation.	must register for 651 again in the fall. This may cost money. Please pay careful attention to the deadlines and formal processes.

The Planned Program of Study

The Planned Program of Study requires you to specify how and when you will complete the degree requirements. Filling out the PPoS helps to answer many questions.

FAQ about MA timeline

1) **What about IGS students**? Integrated Graduate Studies students who have completed the requirements for their major usually follow the typical two year timeline. As part of the application process, IGS students fill out a Planned Program of Study, which should clarify how and when requirements will be fulfilled.
   a. Note: Admitted IGS students can elect to withdraw from the program and receive a BA if all BA requirements have been completed. If you are struggling with your thesis, your supervisor can help you decide if this may be the best path.
2) **What about students who want to do the degree in one year**? Students who want to complete the degree in one year must work extremely closely with a supervisor to ensure all requirements and deadlines are met. In such cases, students take the required courses and the thesis course concurrently.
3) **What about students who want to do the degree part-time**? We're happy to work with students to design a program of study that allows for part-time completion of the degree. Be aware that you must be registered for courses during the semester in which you graduate. Also be aware that all the requirements for the MA must be completed within five consecutive calendar years after matriculation as a graduate student, including any leaves of absence.
4) **What about students who want to graduate in Fall semester**? Work with your supervisor to make sure all graduation requirements are met, and see the School of Graduate Studies calendar for deadlines.
5) **What if my thesis is not successfully defended**? Your supervisor will work with you to plan for the necessary changes. You will have to register for 651 in the semester during which you plan to defend again. You must be registered for courses during the semester in which you graduate.

Funding for MA students

The department **does not offer funding** for MA students. MA students sometimes serve as teaching assistants (for which they earn a stipend), but these opportunities are very limited, and students must be qualified. Direct inquiries about serving as a teaching assistant to the Program Director. The department offers small amounts of funding to support research.

Completing the MA Thesis in Cognitive Linguistics

The School of Graduate Studies website is your essential guide to policies, procedures, and resources.

While completing a thesis in Cognitive Linguistics, students must be continuously enrolled in COGS 651 up to and through the oral defense. Students must complete a minimum of 12 credit hours of COGS 651. As a supervisor, the faculty member will be responsible for:

1. Evaluating the student's progress each semester by issuing a grade of "S" or "U";
2. Producing a brief written evaluation for the student's file each semester along with a final evaluation of the project and defense;
3. Advising and approving a 1-page abstract of the thesis project, which is to be sent to the MA Program Director, who will archive it in the student's file. This abstract typically serves as the thesis proposal, though your supervisor may request a more elaborated proposal;
4. Assisting the student in the constitution of the faculty committee, which consists of the supervisor (as committee chair) and two members of the faculty of the university.

What are the content requirements for the MA Thesis in Cognitive Linguistics?

A defendable thesis must accomplish the following:

1. Articulate a clear and original project in the area of Cognitive Linguistics, broadly construed (see FAQ #4 below for examples);
2. Consist of a sustained argument of approximately 50 double-spaced pages, not including references;
3. Supply a complete reference list and proper in-text citations according to either the citation and style guidelines provided by the APA 7th edition or the journal *Cognitive Linguistics* (though the student may adopt a different citation system in consultation with the thesis supervisor).

What are the formatting requirements for the thesis?

The School of Graduate Studies specifies the requirements for the final electronic version of the thesis. Earlier versions of the thesis should follow these guidelines to avoid having to reformat.

What happens during the oral defense?

All thesis defenses are public and must be arranged according to the guidelines set by the School of Graduate Studies.

1) **Defense is set**: The thesis supervisor has ultimate and discretionary authority on determining whether a thesis is ready for defense. This decision can be made without consulting the committee, or it can be made by consulting all or select members of committee.
2) **Format is communicated**: The supervisor determines the format of the defense, communicates the agenda to both the committee and the candidate well in advance of the public defense. Cogling MA thesis defenses typically run one hour.
3) **Presentation by candidate**: It is typical, but not obligatory, that a defense begins with a short presentation by the MA candidate, summarizing the project and its significance.
4) **Question period**: It is typical, but not obligatory, that each member of the committee is allotted time to question the candidate directly. The thesis supervisor determines the order of questioning.
5) **Deliberations**: Final deliberations of the committee occur after the committee has finished questioning the candidate. The examining committee must agree unanimously that the candidate has passed the thesis examination. These deliberations are conducted privately, with the candidate outside the room but remaining nearby.
6) **Result**: The supervisor calls the candidate back into the room to deliver the results.

Revisions

If there are any required revisions, the committee determines the process, which can include vesting the supervisor with complete authority to oversee and assess all revisions (the default for minor revisions); or, each committee member can ask to assess and approve the revisions (the default for significant revisions).

Unsuccessful defenses

Supervisors generally don't let candidates defend if the defense is not likely to be successful. In rare cases, the committee may decide that the thesis does not meet the requirements for the MA. In such cases, the candidate will work with the supervisor to determine how to proceed.

FAQ

1. **Can I change thesis supervisors in the middle of my project**? It is possible, but not advisable, to change thesis supervisors during the course of the project.
2. **Who can serve as my thesis supervisor**? Any primary faculty member from the Department of Cognitive Science can serve as a thesis supervisor.
3. **When should I put my committee together**? See the information in the visual guide above.
4. **How can I get information about previous topics**? Go to the Electronic Thesis and Dissertations Center, perform a search limited to CWRU School of Graduate Studies, Master of Arts, and Linguistics.