PORTLAND STATE UNIVERSITY
Department of World Languages and Literatures

GRADUATE PROGRAM FAQs

What Master’s degrees are offered?
We offer MAs in French, German, Japanese, and Spanish. This is the Master of Arts in World Language.

We offer a Master of Arts in World Languages and Literatures. This is an MA with a primary language of focus (French, German, Japanese, or Spanish), a secondary language of focus (Arabic, Chinese, French, German, Japanese, Russian, or Spanish), and a focus in linguistics.

How long is the degree? / How long does it take to complete the degree?
Full-time students typically complete the degree in two years. Half-time students can complete the degree in three to four years, depending on their summer coursework. This is a rigorous degree; it is not feasible to complete the degree in less than two years. You should complete the degree in a timely, deliberate manner. Graduate credits are valid for seven years.

Can I take courses online? / Is there an online option? / Can this degree be completed online?
We do not have a distance or online learning option for our master's programs.

Is financial support available? / Can I get financial support? / Do you offer financial support? Yes. The most common form of support is the GTAship (Graduate Teaching Assistantship). GTAs receive a tuition waiver up to 12 graduate credits and a stipend of $2,317 - $3,577 per term. There are three terms in the academic year (Sep-Dec, Jan-Mar, Apr-Jun). The tuition waiver is for in-state, out-of-state, and international students. You are responsible for university fees and insurance costs. Fees can be found at: http://www.pdx.edu/financial-services/tuition-fees.

Scholarships are available. Here are helpful links:
PSU’s general scholarship site: http://www.pdx.edu/scholarships/
PSU’s scholarship database: https://www.sa.pdx.edu/scholarships/ —very easy to use!
There are also graduate student loans. PSU’s Financial Aid website: http://www.pdx.edu/finaid/

What is a GTAship?
Applicants to the MA programs may also apply to be a Graduate Teaching Assistant (GTA). GTAs are trained by faculty to teach 100- and 200-level language classes, and teach classes during the academic year. GTAs receive a tuition waiver up to 12 graduate credits and a stipend of $2,317 - $3,577 per term. The exact amount of the stipend will be specified to you in writing, usually in March. There are three terms in the academic year (Sep-Dec, Jan-Mar, Apr-Jun). The tuition waiver is for in-state, out-of-state, and international students. You are responsible for university fees and insurance costs. Fees can be found at: http://www.pdx.edu/financial-services/tuition-fees. GTAships are only for full-time graduate students.
How do I apply for a GTAship?
GTAships are available to qualified applicants on a first-come, first-serve basis. To apply for a GTAship, just check the GTAship box on your application to the MA program. There is not a separate application for the GTAship (unless you are admitted to a graduate program in a different department).

When do the MA programs start?
French, German, and Japanese have rolling admissions, and students may begin course work in any quarter. Spanish admits for Fall term only, and students may begin course work only in Fall.

Students must enroll for at least 1 credit hour during the term for which they are admitted.

What are the deadlines for French, German, and Japanese? / When is the application due?
These are the recommended University deadlines for Admission for Domestic and International Graduate Students:

Term Priority Filing Dates:
Fall (September start)         April 1
Winter (January start)        September 1 of the prior year
Spring (March start)          November 1 of the prior year
Summer (June start)           February 1

What are the deadlines for Spanish? / When is the application due?
The Spanish program admits for Fall term only. The application is due February 2nd. All GTAships in the Spanish program start in Fall.

How do I apply to a PSU WLL graduate program? / Where is the application?
Instructions and application are available at http://www.pdx.edu/wll/node/282.

What is required in the application? / What goes in the application?
The application requires: 1) a personal statement or essay, 2) a writing sample, 3) transcripts, 4) two letters of recommendation, and 5) TOEFL or IELTS results for applicants whose first language is not English:

The personal essay or statement should serve as a tool for helping the admissions committee get a good idea of who you are, what your background is, and why you wish to pursue a graduate degree in your chosen language(s). It should be written in English.

The writing sample should be in the target language, such as a copy of an essay completed for a recent university course.

Transcripts from the schools where you have studied must be official copies sent directly to PSU.

Letters of recommendation from professors who can describe your intellectual potential, knowledge, and skills are best. Your letters of recommendation may be from other sources as well. You may include more than two letters of recommendation.
TOEFL and IELTS official results must be sent directly to PSU Admissions.

For admission to any of our MA programs, you must have a BA or its equivalent in the target language (language, literature, linguistics, or philology). You may demonstrate the equivalency of the BA in two ways: (1) by means of an academic transcript, showing that the equivalent number of courses and/or credits have been taken; or (2) by pursuing a post-baccalaureate degree. (It’s important to see an adviser for details before beginning Post-bacc studies.)

For admission to the Master’s in World Languages and Literatures (this is the Master’s degree in a primary language, a secondary language, and linguistics), you must hold a BA in the primary language (French, German, Japanese, or Spanish) and have third-year proficiency in the second language (Arabic, Chinese, French, German, Japanese, Russian, or Spanish).

Do I need to take the GRE? / Is the GRE required?
The GRE is not required.

Do I need to take the IELTS or TOEFL? / Is the TOEFL required? / What TOEFL score do I need?
All graduate students whose first language is not English must meet the English language proficiency requirement prior to enrolling in classes. Please note that this requirement applies to all students, including resident aliens and citizens. Information about the requirements is available at www.pdx.edu/admissions/english-language-proficiency-requirements-graduate.

You should take the exam as soon as possible if you are applying for a GTAship. GTAships are available to qualified applicants on a first-come, first-serve basis.

Do I have to write a thesis? / Can I write a thesis? / Is a thesis required?
There is a thesis option and a non-thesis option for completion of the Master of Arts in World Language (MA in French, German, Japanese, or Spanish). Theses in our department are critical studies of literature or linguistics, and generally they are continuations of projects begun in courses in the program. Students who write a thesis have an oral defense of the thesis; their examination committee is comprised of two WLL professors (the thesis director and the second reader) and one professor from another department who acts as a Graduate School representative. Students who follow the non-thesis option submit two article-length research papers written with two different professors (usually continuations of papers begun in their coursework), take written exams based on their program of study, and take oral exams which are drawn from the research papers, written exams, and/or program of study. The examination committee for non-thesis students is comprised of the two professors for whom the revised papers were written and one additional WLL professor.

The Master’s in World Languages and Literatures (this is the Master’s degree in a primary language, a secondary language, and linguistics) is a non-thesis degree program. The examination committee for this program is comprised of two WLL professors from the primary language (one of whom will have supervised the paper written in this language) and one professor from the secondary language (who will have supervised the paper written in this language).
How do I check on my application? / What is the status of my application? / When will I know? For departmental applications, email world@pdx.edu. For information on university admissions, domestic students should contact askadm@pdx.edu. International graduate students should email intladm@pdx.edu.

Additional questions should be directed to a graduate adviser. Contact the Department of World Languages and Literatures at world@pdx.edu or 503-725-3522 for adviser contact information.