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 also 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. 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, following the indications of the adviser assigned to you when you are admitted to the MA program. 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.

Are courses offered in Summer? / Can I take courses in Summer?
WLL doesn’t offer graduate courses in Summer.

Do I have to take courses every term? / Is there an enrollment requirement?
Students must enroll for at least 1 credit hour during the term for which they are admitted. They must also enroll in at least 1 credit hour during the term in which they graduate.

You should complete the degree in a timely, deliberate manner, following the indications of the adviser assigned to you when you are admitted to the MA program. Graduate credits are valid for seven years.

What are the admission requirements? / Am I ready to apply?
For admission to the MA in French, applicants should have a Bachelor of Arts or equivalent preparation. For admission to the MA in German, applicants should have a Bachelor of Arts or equivalent preparation. For admission to the MA in Japanese, applicants with any Bachelor of Arts or Bachelor of Science degree are welcome to apply. For admission to the MA in Spanish, applicants should have a Bachelor of Arts or equivalent preparation.

For French, German, and Spanish, you may demonstrate the equivalent preparation by means of academic transcripts, showing the equivalent number of relevant courses or credits, or showing a degree or equivalent course work in a closely related field, or by pursuing a post-
baccalaureate degree—please see an adviser for details before beginning post-bacc studies.

If you have finished or are about to finish your bachelor’s degree, you are welcome to apply. You must have a bachelor’s degree at the time you begin the MA program.

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) or have equivalent preparation, and have third-year proficiency in the secondary language (Arabic, Chinese, French, German, Japanese, Russian, or Spanish).

Is financial support available? / Can I get financial support? / Do you offer financial support? Yes, depending on the available funding/budget in the Department of World Languages and Literatures. The most common form of support is the GTAship (Graduate Teaching Assistantship). GTAs currently receive a tuition waiver for up to 9 graduate credits per term, a portion of their mandatory fees, and a stipend for teaching per term. The terms and conditions of employment for this appointment are governed by a collective bargaining agreement between Portland State University and the Graduate Employees Union of PSU, which may be found at the following web addresses: http://pdxgeu.org/ and at https://www.pdx.edu/academic-affairs/collective-bargaining-at-psu. 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 remaining university fees and insurance costs. Fees can be found at: https://www.pdx.edu/student-financial/tuition-and-fees.

Scholarships are available. Here are helpful links:
PSU’s general scholarship site: http://www.pdx.edu/scholarships/
PSU’s scholarship database:
https://portlandstate.scholarships.ngwebsolutions.com/scholarx_scholarshipsearch.aspx
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 and teach 100- and 200-level language classes during the academic year.

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. You must have or receive your bachelor’s degree by the end of Summer term in order to be a GTA starting in Fall. It is recommended that you have a bachelor’s degree or receive it by the end of Spring term.

When do the MA programs start?
See application deadlines below.

What are the application deadlines? / When is the application due? You may apply to any WLL MA program at any time. The priority deadlines for all languages are: February 1 in order to
begin in Fall term; May 1 in order to begin in Winter term; November 1 to begin in Spring term.
To be considered for a GTAship, the priority deadline is February 1.

**How do I apply to a PSU WLL graduate program? / Where is the application?**
Instructions and the 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. **Letter of intent/personal statement.** The letter of intent/personal 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). For the French MA program, this letter should be French. For the German MA program, this letter should be English. For the Japanese MA program, this letter should be English, regardless of your first language. For the Spanish MA program, this letter may be in Spanish or English.
2. **Writing sample.** The writing sample should be about 10 pages long and would preferably be academic (e.g. a copy of an essay completed for a recent university course). For the French MA program, this sample should be French. For the German MA program, this sample should be German. For the Japanese MA program, this sample should be in English, regardless of your first language. For the Spanish MA program, this sample should be Spanish.
3. **Unofficial transcripts.** Official transcripts will be requested upon admission to the program.
4. **Two letters of recommendation.** These should be from professors who can describe your intellectual potential, knowledge, and skills. Your letters of recommendation may be from other sources as well. You may include more than two letters of recommendation.
5. **Proof of English Language Proficiency** through the submission of TOEFL or IELTS exam scores. These must be uploaded with your application.

**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 https://www.pdx.edu/graduate-admissions/english-language-proficiency.

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 (the 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 article-length papers written with their professors (usually continuations of work begun in their courses), take written exams based on their program of study, and take oral exams which are drawn from the research, written exams, and 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 for language) and one professor from the secondary language (who will have supervised the paper written for 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.

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.