

Department of Linguistics
ASSESSMENT REPORT
2004-2005

R. Blust
Professor and Chair

A. Undergraduate Assessment by Degree/Certificate Program

The Department of Linguistics at the University of Hawai'i offers no undergraduate degree or certificate.

B. Graduate Assessment by Degree/Certificate Program

1. List in detail your graduate SLOs for each degree/certificate offered.

The M.A. The Master's Degree in linguistics may be completed through one of three routes. *Plan A* requires a thesis (12 credit hours) and a maximum of 18 hours of course work. A final oral examination covering the thesis and related areas is also required. *Plan B* requires a minimum of 30 credit hours and a final seminar presentation, the topic and format of which must be approved in advance by the Graduate Chair. At least 18 hours of coursework must be at the 600 level or above, including 3 hours of a 700-level seminar. Students may choose between three "streams": Linguistic Analysis, Language and Cognition, and Language Documentation and Conservation. For all streams there is a Core List from which different numbers of courses are to be selected. *Plan C* (rare) requires two semesters of full-time course work in addition to a final examination with both written and oral portions. Plan C is open to select students who have had some previous work in linguistics and who show both a high potential for scholarly development and the motivation and discipline necessary for an independent course of study. A committee of faculty is appointed for each prospective student for Plan C. The committee administers a general examination during the student's first semester of study to determine the appropriateness of Plan C, advises the student in developing a program of study, and administers the oral portion of the final examination.

The Ph.D. Applicants to our program may enter either as M.A. students or as Ph.D. students. Those who enter as M.A. students may transfer to the Ph.D. program once they have passed the Preliminary Examination on the Ph.D. level. The Preliminary Exam is thus the first of a series of 'learning hurdles' beyond required coursework for moving on to the Ph.D. program.

I. Learning hurdles. The Dept. of Linguistics uses four sequential evaluation measures for students who pursue the Ph.D. degree: 1) the Preliminary Examination, 2) the Working Paper requirement, 3) the Comprehensive Examination, and 4) the dissertation.

I.1. The Preliminary Examination (PE). The first of the four ‘learning hurdles’ is the Preliminary Examination. This examination is required of all students in the Ph.D. program. The PE tests a student’s basic mastery of three core areas in linguistics: 1) phonology, 2) syntax, and 3) historical linguistics. In addition, a fourth component (the ‘General Exam’) is designed to be a ‘surprise question’ for which no preparation is possible. It is intended to test a student’s ability to use creative thinking in addressing linguistic issues. Each of these exams takes a full day, with a morning session from 8:00-11:00 and an afternoon session from 1:00-4:00, sitting in a classroom with a faculty proctor. The PE is given just before the beginning of the semester. The results are graded by a committee of four or five faculty members, most of whom specialize in the area being tested. The committee must meet, discuss the exams being graded, and resolve any major discrepancies in grading before the results are released to our students.

If a student passes at the M.A. level and has no desire to pursue a Ph.D. no other learning hurdle need be passed (for course requirements, etc. to complete the M.A. in linguistics see the Program Description on our department website). If a student passes at the M.A. level but desires to pursue a Ph.D. the PE may be taken up to a maximum of twice after the first attempt. Retakes of the PE may be done piecemeal, since it is not uncommon for a student who is interested in, say, syntax, to pass the syntax exam the first time around, but not the exams in phonology or historical linguistics. Three failed attempts to pass at the Ph.D. level normally means that the student cannot enter our Ph.D. program (special intervention of one or more faculty would be needed to overrule this requirement).

I.2. The Working Paper (WP). For students who have passed the PE at the Ph.D. level the next requirement is to write a paper that is accepted for publication in the UH Department of Linguistics Working Papers in Linguistics (published irregularly, when sufficient contributions are to hand). Acceptability is based on evidence of a) judgement in selecting a topic worthy of attention in a professional journal, b) analytical ability in addressing the topic, c) basic skill in writing up results in a manner that is both clear and concise, and d) awareness of the relevant literature, as reflected in the references cited.

Papers are refereed, partly by faculty within the department and partly by faculty outside the Department of Linguistics (although many of these are affiliate faculty elsewhere on campus). Although the UH Working Papers in Linguistics is not a refereed journal, the purpose of this requirement is to demonstrate an ability to produce publishable work in the field of linguistics. Since the majority of our graduate students are not native speakers of English the WP also is a first test (outside the classroom) of the student’s ability to express him/herself in formal academic English. In rare cases a student has already succeeded in publishing in a refereed journal before the WP requirement arises, and in such cases a published article may substitute for the WP requirement.

I.3. The Comprehensive Examination (CE). Once the WP requirement has been met the student is advised to begin forming a committee for the Comprehensive Examination. Before doing this the student must choose three areas of specialization within the field of linguistics. This is normally done in consultation with an advisor, whose role is to see

that the combination of areas is well-planned. The choice of areas then narrows the choice of appropriate faculty members for the CE committee.

The CE committee consists of four faculty members, one for each area of specialization, plus an outside member from another department. In unusual cases where special expertise is needed a scholar from outside the UH may be invited to join a CE committee. The Comprehensive examination itself consists of three take-home questions. These questions are generally broad, and are designed to require extensive research and synthesis. Their content ideally should force the student to begin thinking about fundamental issues that must be confronted in the kind of research contemplated for the dissertation. The student has exactly two weeks to return the answers (timed by the department secretary from the hour of pick-up). Once the answers have been turned in the committee members have two weeks to read them and prepare questions for the oral Comprehensive Exam. The oral examination, which is conducted by the chair of the CE committee, usually takes about three hours. Each member of the committee is invited to question the examinee (unlike dissertation defenses, Comprehensive Exams are not open to the public). The length and intensity of questioning naturally varies with the individual examiner. Some examiners may spend the better part of an hour grilling the student on his/her answers. Others may spend only a few minutes. This is often the case for the outside member, whose connection to the committee may be based on areal rather than disciplinary relationship (e.g. a Chinese literature person on a committee concerned with Mandarin syntax).

When all members of the committee have had an opportunity for questions the student is asked to leave the room, and the performance is discussed in private. After 5-10 minutes the student is then allowed back into the examination room and the decision (almost always positive) is announced. The student may then choose to separately present a dissertation topic for the committee's reaction. This may be done at a later time, but for obvious reasons of convenience and economy of time and effort, students are encouraged to present a dissertation topic at the end of the Comprehensive Examination. If a topic is presented critical reaction is given on the spot, and any further feedback is left to the dissertation chair to provide over the next few days or weeks. In most cases the chair of the CE committee automatically succeeds as the chair of the dissertation committee. Where this is not the case a dissertation chair must be chosen after the work of the CE committee is completed.

I.4. The Dissertation. The work of writing a dissertation probably is fairly similar from one academic discipline to the next. In accepting students into our Ph.D. program we routinely stress that admission is critically dependent on matching the academic interests of the candidate with those of a faculty member who is available and willing to supervise a dissertation. In a general way incoming Ph.D. students are thus parcelled out to faculty members from the time of their acceptance into the program. Dissertations in linguistics average perhaps 300 double-spaced typed pages. Writing time varies enormously, depending on the need for prior data collection, and on individual personality.

The oral defense is scheduled at the discretion of the dissertation supervisor, and is open to the public. It is common for less advanced graduate students in the Department of Linguistics to attend oral dissertation defenses, as this provides them with an opportunity to observe what they themselves will have to face when the time comes.

II. Beyond the classroom/department. Needless to say, on the graduate level learning and the assessment of learning are not limited to the classroom. Rather, the goal of graduate education is to gradually enculturate dedicated students into the culture of academia. This begins in the classroom, but does not end there, since at some point students must cross the line between the dependent role they have as absorbers of knowledge and the more active role they begin to develop as creators of knowledge. For many of our students this begins with conference presentations.

II.1. Conference presentations. The Department of Linguistics at UH has a weekly seminar that is open to the public. It is coordinated by a graduate student (rotating position), who contacts speakers and works out the schedule of talks. We try, generally successfully, to have a different speaker every Tuesday throughout the semester. Meetings are held in a sizeable lecture hall (in recent years St. John's 11), and usually draw an audience of 30-40 people, but sometimes as many as 60-70.

Many of the speakers are faculty, either from our department or visitors, but it is not uncommon for graduate students to speak at this forum. Talks usually last about 50 minutes, and we have ten minutes (sometimes more) for questioning, which often provides valuable critical feedback. This is an excellent way for our graduate students to prepare themselves for the challenge of public speaking to a much larger audience of unfamiliar persons in international conferences. For this reason, students who are preparing papers for conferences outside Hawaii often present them first at the department's 'Tuesday seminar'.

In addition to the general department seminar there are several special interest groups that meet on a periodic basis throughout the semester to present talks and allow discussion. The oldest of these is the 'Austronesian Circle of Hawaii' (ACH), a group of faculty and students who share a special interest in the native languages of the Austronesian language family, which includes most of the languages of the Pacific apart from Australia and interior New Guinea, as well as island Southeast Asia. The ACH meets during the evening at a faculty member's home, where food and drink are available, followed by a talk of 50-60 minutes, and perhaps 20 minutes of questions. Both faculty and students present talks at these meetings. For students who are still intimidated by the more formal atmosphere of the departmental seminar, which is held on campus, the ACH provides a more relaxed atmosphere in which to explore ideas with other members of the department who have similar specialized interests.

More recent special interest groups include a Cognitive Science Research Group that attempts to integrate the insights of scholars working in cognitive linguistics with those of scholars working in information technology, psychology, anthropology and other

fields, and a Sociolinguistics Research Group. Both of these groups hold meetings on campus, generally in the department conference room.

In addition to these department-level organizations, students from the Department of Linguistics have been active annually in the LLL student conference.

All of these department level public forums for academic talks can be seen as preparation for the big step of moving on to presentation at international conferences. Several of our graduate students have made that important transition, either alone or in tandem with a faculty advisor. Student conference presentations during the past two years known to the writer include the following:

II.1.a) Conference papers

- 1) October 2005. N WAV-34 (New Ways of Analyzing Variation, 34th annual meeting), New York University: three graduate students (Enyo, Miller, Hiramoto)
- 2) October 2005. 15th Japanese-Korean Conference, University of Wisconsin, Madison: one graduate student (Hiramoto)
- 3) September 2005. Australian Linguistics Society, Monash University, Melbourne: one graduate student (Hiramoto)
- 4) August 2005. International Symposium on Korean Linguistics (ISOKL), Harvard University: two graduate students (Hwang, Mijung Lee)
- 5) July 2005. Cognitive Science Society Conference, Italy: one graduate student (Tseng)
- 6) July 2005. International Cognitive Linguistics Conference, Korea: two graduate students (Maruyama, Tseng – 2 papers)
- 7) April 2005. Symposium on Language and Society, 13th annual meeting, University of Texas, Austin: one graduate student (Hiramoto)
- 8) April 2005. CLS-29 (Chicago Linguistics Society, 29th annual meeting), University of Chicago: one graduate student (Hiramoto)
- 9) January 2005. Annual Meeting of the Society for Pidgin and Creole Linguistics, Oakland, California: one graduate student (Inoue)
- 10) December 2004. Inaugural Conference on Generative Approaches to Language Acquisition – North America, UH Manoa: two graduate students (Shin, Tran)
- 11) October 2004. N WAV-33 (New Ways of Analyzing Variation, 33rd annual meeting), University of Michigan, Ann Arbor: one graduate student (Inoue)

- 12) October 2004. Conceptual Structure, Language and Discourse Conference: one graduate student (Tseng)
- 13) July 2004. COOL 6 (International Conference on Oceanic Linguistics, 6th annual meeting, University of the South Pacific, Vanuatu): two graduate students (Hattori, Inoue)
- 14) June 2004. Biennial meeting of the International Gender and Language Association, 3rd meeting, Cornell University: one graduate student (Hiramoto)
- 15) May 2004. SEALS-14 (Southeast Asian Linguistics Society, 14th annual meeting), Bangkok: one graduate student (Tran)
- 16) February 2004. BLS-30 (Berkeley Linguistics Society, 30th annual meeting): one graduate student (Kozasa)
- 17) January 2004. Annual Meeting of the Linguistic Society of America (LSA): one graduate student (Inoue)
- 18) August 2003. Summer Conference of the Society for Pidgin and Creole Linguistics, Imin International Conference Center, UH Manoa: two graduate students (Hiramoto, Inoue)
- 19) May 2003. SEALS-13 (Southeast Asian Linguistics Society, 13th annual meeting), UCLA: one graduate student (Hiramoto)
- 20) March 2003. AFLA-10 (Austronesian Formal Linguistics Association, 10th annual meeting), UH Manoa: two graduate students (Ballantyne, Hiramoto)
- 21) February 2003. Georgetown University Round Table in Linguistics, one graduate student (Ballantyne)

II.1.b) Conference posters

- 1) January 2005. Linguistic Society of America, annual meeting, Oakland, California: one graduate student (Ballantyne)
- 2) December 2004. Inaugural Conference on Generative Approaches to Language Acquisition – North America, UH Manoa, seven graduate students (Guerin, Ilic, Kim Jae Yeon, Ko, Kozasa, Lee, Nomura – 2 posters).
- 3) March 2005. 18th Annual CUNY Conference on Human Sentence Processing, Tucson, Arizona: two graduate students (Lee, Shin)
- 4) June 2004. 9th Conference on Laboratory Phonology, University of Illinois at

Urbana-Champaign: one graduate student (Kozasa)

- 5) March 2004. Speech Prosody 2004, Nara, Japan: one graduate student (Kozasa)

II.2. Publications.

- 1) To appear. Proceedings, 29th Boston University Conference on Language Development: two graduate students (Shin, Tran)
- 2) To appear. Proceedings, Inaugural Conference on Generative Approaches to Language Acquisition – North America: one graduate student (Tran)
- 3) To appear. Proceedings of Speech Prosody 2004: one graduate student (Kozasa)
- 4) December 2004. *Oceanic Linguistics* 43.2, a 29-page article by one graduate student (Lobel)
- 5) June 2004. *Oceanic Linguistics* 43.1, a 24-page article by one graduate student (Ballantyne)

II.3. Research grants. Applying for major research grants is an important learning experience for budding academics, and success in obtaining them on a competitive basis is evidence that something important to a future career in teaching and research has been learned. Several of our students were successful in obtaining substantial grants for linguistic fieldwork during the past academic year. The most outstanding of these are:

- 1) NSF/NEH (joint) Documenting Endangered Languages Fellowship of \$40,000 awarded for linguistic fieldwork in northeastern Luzon, Philippines (Laura Robinson, ‘Linguistic documentation of Eastern Cagayan Agta’). Laura will depart for fieldwork in the Philippines in January, 2006.
- 2) FULBRIGHT award of \$27,549 for a linguistic survey of the central Philippines (Jason W. Lobel, ‘Central Philippine dialectology’). Jason is currently in the Philippines, beginning fieldwork and awaiting his award money, which is late in arriving.
- 3) HANS RAUSING ENDANGERED LANGUAGES PROJECT, Endangered Languages Documentation Programme (ELDP), School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London award of £12,292 (Valerie Guerin ‘Discovering Mafea: Texts, grammar and lexicon’)
- 4) GSO award for research on sign language at Gallaudet University in Washington, D.C. (Meylysa Tseng)

II.4. Special honors and other activities. A group of graduate students from the Department of Linguistics decided on their own last year that they would start a language documentation workshop on campus. They searched for speakers of poorly documented

languages from the student population at UH, and organized weekend workshops in which they trained native speakers of endangered languages in the basics of developing a practical orthography, writing a mini-grammar, and starting a dictionary. The project was a smashing success.

- 1) It won the NAFSA Association of International Educators Partnership in Excellence National Award from among projects submitted all over the United States, and Valerie Guerin was invited to present a description of the project and its results at the annual NAFSA conference in Seattle in June, 2005.
- 2) It received a Student Equity, Excellence & Diversity (SEED) scholarship from UH Manoa in Spring, 2005.
- 3) It won an award for the best small business at the UH Business Plan Competition in April, 2005.

The Language Documentation and Conservation group plans to continue its activities during the coming year, although this competes with time needed for studies toward a degree, and may decrease in intensity without some kind of support.

II.4. Jobs. Sites of jobs obtained by our graduates within the past year or two include:

1. University of Florida: one graduate
2. Mahidol University, Thailand: one graduate
3. Cisco Systems (and from there to a New York firm): one graduate
4. Defense Language Institute, Monterey: one graduate
5. Fresno State University: one graduate
6. University of Maryland: one graduate
7. Transpacific Hawaii College: one graduate
8. Hanyang University, Seoul (one of top 10 universities in Korea): one graduate
9. Ehwa University, Korea: one graduate
10. Pohang Institute of Technology, Korea (Korea's MIT): one graduate
11. Internship in the Quality Assurance Department, DataHouse given to one of our graduate students (Maria Faehndrich) in connection with programming work she was doing on an NSF grant received by Dr. Joseph Grimes, one of the Adjunct Faculty in Linguistics at UH

Assessment Report 2004-2005
College of Languages, Linguistics and Literature
August 2005

Name of Department and Level	Dates of Activity	Population(s) Covered	Sample Size	Assessed Aspects of Program (Focus of Assessment) (Where are the outcomes published/available?)	Types of Instrument (Data Gathering Approach)	Results/ Response Rates
Department of Linguistics— MA and PhD	ongoing (since 1980s)	students in all courses	300+ per semester (see attached documents)	teaching and course quality (data is kept on file in the department office)	written course evaluation survey (see attached sample)	Response rate approach 100%; Responses indicate a high rate of satisfaction with courses and quality of instruction
	from Fall 2004	students in Foundation courses— Ling 410, 420, 421, 422, 615, 645	approx. 60 per semester	level of satisfaction with foundation courses relative to their stated objectives as a part of a larger program of graduate study	written course survey (see attached sample)	n/a
	ongoing (since 1970s)	students in Ph.D. program	10-15 per semester	students' mastery of the foundations of the discipline; success of foundation courses	written examination (two in grammar, two in phonology, two in historical linguistics, and one or two in general linguistics); administered over a four-day period at the beginning of each semester	All Ph.D. students typically take these examinations. The initial pass rate is usually between 50 to 60%; results are used for mentoring students, directing them toward additional coursework, and modifying the content of foundation courses

Narratives concerning "Defined learning outcomes" and "How the assessment was used to improve/evaluate program quality" should be attached.

Evaluation Questionnaire
Department of Linguistics

SPRING 2005

Course _____

Instructor _____

Your considered responses to these questions will be appreciated, but do not feel obligated to answer any question on which you have no particular opinion. Everyone must, however, return an evaluation questionnaire.

PART I: Please read each statement and circle the extent to which you agree or disagree with it.

SD = STRONGLY DISAGREE
D = DISAGREE
N = NEUTRAL
A = AGREE
SA = STRONGLY AGREE
DK = DON'T KNOW

THE INSTRUCTOR:

- | | | | | | | |
|--|----|---|---|---|----|----|
| 1. was easy to talk with and available for consultation | SD | D | N | A | SA | DK |
| 2. was well-organized for each session | SD | D | N | A | SA | DK |
| 3. was prepared for each session | SD | D | N | A | SA | DK |
| 4. was able to explain the subject matter clearly and effectively | SD | D | N | A | SA | DK |
| 5. stimulated me to think about the subject matter | SD | D | N | A | SA | DK |
| 6. gave fair and consistent grades | SD | D | N | A | SA | DK |
| 7. demonstrated interest in students and their understanding of the material | SD | D | N | A | SA | DK |
| 8. was tolerant of differences and welcomed exchanges of ideas and opinions | SD | D | N | A | SA | DK |

THE COURSE:

- | | | | | | | |
|--|----|---|---|---|----|----|
| 1. broadened my understanding and grasp of the subject | SD | D | N | A | SA | DK |
| 2. was well-organized | SD | D | N | A | SA | DK |
| 3. the course objectives were clear | SD | D | N | A | SA | DK |
| 4. the course objectives were achieved | SD | D | N | A | SA | DK |

PART II: Please state your reactions to each item.

1. What did you find most valuable and helpful about:
 - a. the COURSE

b. the INSTRUCTOR

c. the READING MATERIALS

2. What did you find **least valuable and helpful** about:

a. the COURSE

b. the INSTRUCTOR

c. the READING MATERIALS

3. What would you recommend:

a) to students considering taking this course with this instructor.

b) to the instructor for improving future offerings of this course.

PART III: Please respond to the following items.

1. a) at the **beginning** of the course, my interest in the subject matter was (circle one)

LOW MEDIUM HIGH

- b) at the **end** of the course, my interest in the subject matter was (circle one)

LOW MEDIUM HIGH

2. What two or three words best describe this instructor:

3. What two or three words best describe this course:

4. **Global Appraisal:** Considering everything, how would you rate this COURSE? (Circle one)

VERY POOR POOR AVERAGE GOOD EXCELLENT

5. **Global Appraisal:** Considering everything, how would you rate this INSTRUCTOR? (Circle one)

VERY POOR POOR AVERAGE GOOD EXCELLENT

6. **Self-Evaluation:** How would you rate your own effort and commitment to this course? (Circle one)

VERY POOR POOR AVERAGE GOOD EXCELLENT

PART IV: Please provide any additional comments which you think might be helpful to the instructor.

Course: Ling 410 (Articulatory Phonetics)

Objectives: The purpose of this course in our program is to introduce students to the types of speech sounds found in the world's languages, and to give them the tools and skills to transcribe and analyze speech in linguistic fieldwork or clinical settings.

Specifically, students:

- ❖ Learn about human vocal tract anatomy and how it functions in making speech sounds;
- ❖ Receive training in describing, transcribing, recognizing and producing these sounds;
- ❖ Learned what *phonemes*, *allophones* and *natural classes of sounds* are, and learn to observe basic phonological processes that govern allophonic alternations; and
- ❖ Gain knowledge about the acoustic correlates of different types of articulations.

Assessment: In your experience did this course meet it's objectives? Yes _____ No _____

Comment and/or suggestions for improvement:

Course: Ling 420 (Morphology)

Objectives: The purpose of this course in our program is:

- ❖ To familiarize the student with morphological analysis.
- ❖ To provide a theoretical background to improve the student's skills of data analysis.
- ❖ By the end of this course, the student is expected:
 - To understand the major morphological phenomena;
 - To understand how morphology interacts with syntax;
 - To understand how morphology interacts with phonology; and
 - To be able to give a morphological sketch of a language.

Assessment: In your experience did this course meet it's objectives? Yes_____ No_____

Comment and/or suggestions for improvement:

Course: Ling 421 (Introduction of Phonological Analysis)

Objectives: The purpose of this course in our program is:

- ❖ To provide the students with an understanding of the basic tools of phonological analysis;
- ❖ To illustrate the application of those tools to representative grammatical phenomena in a diverse set of languages;
- ❖ To prepare students with unfamiliar phonological data on their own; and
- ❖ To provide students with tools required in the production of a research paper.

Assessment: In your experience did this course meet it's objectives? Yes_____ No_____

Comment and/or suggestions for improvement:

Course: Ling 422 (Introduction to Grammatical Analysis)

Objectives: The purpose of this course in our program is:

- ❖ To provide students with an understanding of the basic tools of grammatical analysis;
- ❖ To illustrate the application of those tools to representative grammatical phenomena in a diverse set of languages;
- ❖ To prepare students for the analysis of unfamiliar grammatical data on their own; and
- ❖ To train students in the preparation of a research paper.

Assessment: In your experience did this course meet it's objectives? Yes_____ No_____

Comment and/or suggestions for improvement: