

MELC Requirements At-a-glance

⇒ Forms to complete

General Coursework Requirements

All students must complete, at a minimum, 30 hours of MELC coursework. This requirement is also called the “core coursework.”

- At least 9 of these must be in graduate-level language seminars, although up to two undergraduate upper-division language courses may count with the permission of the supervisor and Graduate Adviser.
- Conference courses *can* count towards this requirement with Graduate Adviser and supervisor approval.
- MES 398T (and its cross-listed equivalents) *does not* count towards this requirement.
- Comps hours *do not* count towards the 30-hour requirement.
- Language sequence courses *do not* count towards this requirement. Advanced language content courses, however, can count with Graduate Adviser and supervisor approval.
 - Graduate seminars conducted in a foreign language always count towards core coursework.
- Generally, the core coursework is comprised of MES/MEL courses (including courses in other departments cross-listed with MES or MEL) but exceptions can be made by track.

⇒ Audit forms ensure progress is being made

Each track may have its own requirements for the specific courses that their students must take in order to satisfy the general coursework requirement

- Tracks are empowered to waive their own requirements pending internal discussions/agreements, but any waiver of MELC core coursework is under the purview of the Graduate Adviser and GSC.
- Courses can be “double-dipped” between track requirements and MELC core coursework requirements, but likely cannot be double-dipped amongst internal track requirements.

Language Exams

Students must pass their language exams before starting (i.e. writing) their comprehensive exams. The student’s supervisor must submit written notification to the Graduate Coordinator and Graduate Adviser once students have successfully passed their language exams. The Graduate Coordinator then updates the student’s milestones in EASI.

Primary Middle Eastern Language: This is administered by the faculty in the relevant track and should be taken in person. Other than that, the nature of the primary Middle Eastern language exam is determined by the student’s supervisor in consultation with the other faculty in the student’s track.

Secondary Research Language: This is administered by the faculty in the relevant track and should be taken in person. Current requirements are that students choose either French or German as their secondary research language. A second Middle Eastern language may be substituted for French or German with supervisor and Graduate Adviser approval.

The examination usually consists of a text that the student must translate into English. The text is commonly selected from a book chapter or journal article. The use of a hard-copy dictionary is permitted; no electronic

devices are allowed. The nature of the text, the time allotted for the exam, and the type of dictionary permitted are all set by the faculty in the track.

Comprehensive Exams and Defense

Students should take their comprehensive exams after all language exams and coursework have been completed, and they normally begin their examination prep during the third or fourth years of the doctoral program. In the semester that students take their comps, they must be registered for MEL 393.

⇒ [MEL 393 Registration Form](#)

A comps committee generally consists of three members, two of whom must be members of the MELC Graduate Studies Committee (GSC). Before taking the written exam, the student will work on preliminary reading/study lists approved by their committee members. Lists typically range between 100-150 items all together (200 at the most) and take the form of lists of key concepts, articles, books, etc., that are important in the field. They may include texts in the student's primary and/or secondary research languages. The purpose of the exams is to ascertain whether students possess a breadth of knowledge outside the dissertation specialization to participate in professional discussions in their area and be at the level expected of a new assistant professor. These exams test a student's analytical and research skills through the completion of a series of essays, timed or untimed, followed by an oral defense.

Normally, students will take three exams, although four may be taken with the permission of the supervisor and Graduate Adviser. Students are given 30 days to complete the written exams. Questions will be sent to the Graduate Coordinator no less than 24 hours ahead of the exam start date and the Graduate Coordinator will disseminate all questions to the student at the same time.

⇒ [Comps Scheduling Form](#)

During the written examination process, they may be asked to prepare any of the following: analytical reviews, answers to synthesis questions, response papers, definitions of key terms, conceptualizations of particular events, or discipline knowledge. Students will submit work to the Graduate Coordinator and their committee.

Two to three weeks after the submission of the written exam, an oral examination is held in which the student defends before the committee the research, analyses, and arguments presented in their written exam. The committee will assign a grade of pass, fail, or pass with conditions. Any conditions imposed must be met before the student advances to candidacy.

Dissertation Prospectus

For the semester following the successful oral defense of comps, students should continue to enroll in MEL 393 while they do research for the prospectus.

The completion and defense of the prospectus should take place no more than 90 days after the successful oral defense of the comprehensive exams. Only days in a term during which a student is enrolled count towards the 90-day deadline. The prospectus committee is composed of faculty whose area or research methodology align with the proposed dissertation topic. The Graduate School requires three members to be from the MELC GSC and one member not to be affiliated with the department.

Prospectus formats vary widely and depend on the field and project, but most committees request a document of 15-20 pages that conforms to the standards of scholarly writing in the field and includes footnotes, references, and bibliographies.

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All dissertation committee members must attend the prospectus defense. However, with Graduate Adviser approval, any member may be excused, provided it is not a supervisor, or, if applicable, co-supervisor. Members may attend electronically, including the supervisor/co-supervisor. If a regular committee member is absent, they must read and approve the prospectus prior to the prospectus defense.

⇒ [Prospectus Defense Committee Report](#)

Dissertation

⇒ [Degree Candidacy Application](#)

The dissertation committee is usually the same as the prospectus committee, consisting of at least 4 members—three from the MELC GSC and at least one who is unaffiliated with the department. Students are required to maintain regular contact with their committee members and meet all deadlines set forth by the supervisor and/or committee. Students in the dissertation phase will still undergo yearly reviews by the MELC GSC. Students must be continuously enrolled in the appropriate dissertation course while in the candidacy phase; the exact course (MEL 399W, MEL 699W, MEL 999W) is determined in consultation with the Graduate Coordinator.

⇒ [Request for Change in Committee \(if necessary\)](#)

⇒ [Continuous registration required](#)

Students and supervisors, in consultation with the dissertation committee members, should determine a time and date for the defense. The dissertation defense should be scheduled with the Graduate School at least two weeks prior to the defense date by completing the Request for Final Oral Examination form, located on the Graduate School's website. All members of the committee must sign the request form indicating their intent to be present at the defense. The Graduate Adviser must also sign this form to indicate the student has been approved to defend. All members of the committee are expected to attend the defense, either in person or electronically. Doctoral students' defenses are open to all members of the University community and public unless their attendance is restricted by the Graduate Studies Committee. The student must provide their dissertation committee with the completed dissertation no later than four weeks before the dissertation defense. Defenses are required by the Office of Graduate Studies to take place no later than two weeks before the submission deadline.

⇒ [Format check/digital submission requirements](#)

⇒ [Restricted Regions research form](#)

⇒ [Apply to graduate \(different deadlines each semester\)](#)

⇒ [Final Oral Examination Form \(2 weeks prior to defense date\)](#)

With respect to any discrepancy between this "At-a-Glance" sheet and official publications such as the CDMES Graduate Handbook and the Graduate Catalog, the policy in the official publication always takes precedence.