

Second Language Acquisition, PhD

FLARE stands for Foreign Language Acquisition Research and Education, and it is the name of the interdisciplinary unit that sponsors the second language PhD program. Students are able to take a variety of courses taught by affiliated faculty members from a number of departments and programs across campus.

The second language acquisition (SLA) doctoral program emphasizes theory, research, and classroom-based teaching and learning. All students take courses in SLA theory, multimedia, research methods, language learning, and linguistics. In addition, each student defines an area of specialization, in consultation with an SLA advisor. The two broad areas of specialization are language learning and postsecondary education, and linguistics and psycholinguistics.

Students in the language learning and postsecondary education specialization area demonstrate an interest in issues where SLA and pedagogy converge. This includes classroom discourse, assessment, and the acquisition of grammatical knowledge in the classroom context. Students also may focus on aspects of technology and how it facilitates second language acquisition.

Students in the linguistics and psycholinguistics specialization area exhibit interest in areas of formal linguistics (e.g., syntax, phonology, morphology) and/or applied linguistics issues that relate to their particular second language focus. Student projects include the acquisition of the syntactic structures and/or phonological features of a second language, and generative and cognitive approaches to explaining acquisition. Students who work in psycholinguistics also may focus on the relationship between language processing and language acquisition.

Requirements

The Doctor of Philosophy in second language acquisition is a research-oriented degree. This interdisciplinary program, which focuses on languages other than English, requires 72 s.h., including a maximum of 33 s.h. earned in work toward a master's degree. Students must earn a minimum of 61 s.h. at the University of Iowa. Those interested in pursuing the PhD must hold a master's degree in an appropriate field (e.g., linguistics, foreign language education) or have equivalent academic experience.

A course may be used to fulfill only one requirement. All courses taken to fulfill program requirements must be taken on a graded basis; no graduate credit is awarded for a grade lower than C-minus. To remain in good standing, PhD students must maintain a cumulative grade-point average of at least 3.00.

The required curriculum includes 14 courses, including two foundation courses, three courses in the area of research methods, two courses in the area of language learning, two courses in the area of linguistics, and five courses in a student's area of specialization. Students may specialize in language learning and postsecondary education, which includes a focus on technology in language acquisition and learning; or in linguistics and psycholinguistics, with a focus on phonetics/phonology or on syntax in a particular second

language. In addition, the PhD requires successful completion and defense of a dissertation representing original research in second language acquisition.

Students may extend their interdisciplinary interests by taking relevant elective coursework offered by the departments of Asian and Slavic Languages and Literatures, Communication Sciences and Disorders, French and Italian, German, Linguistics, Psychological and Brain Sciences, Rhetoric, and Spanish and Portuguese in the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences and the departments of Psychological and Quantitative Foundations, and Teaching and Learning in the College of Education.

The PhD in second language acquisition requires the following coursework.

Course #	Title	Hours
	Foundation Course	3
	Research Methods Courses	9
	Language Learning Courses	6
	Linguistics Courses	6
	Specialization Courses	15
	Elective Courses	
	Thesis	2-15

Foundation Course

Current students will have taken SLA:6920 to fulfill this requirement.

Research Methods

Course #	Title	Hours
This course:		
PSQF:6243	Intermediate Statistical Methods	3
One of these:		
CHIN:7405	Teaching Chinese as a Second Language V: Seminar in Research and Design	3
EDTL:7405	Research Methods in Literacy, Culture, and Language Education	3

And:

A course to complement dissertation research (consult advisor)	3
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Language Learning

Course #	Title	Hours
Two of these:		
EDTL:6400	Fundamentals of Second Language Assessment	3
EDTL:6409	Cultural Curriculum	3
EDTL:6483	Multilingual Education and Applied Linguistics	3
EDTL:6484	Bi/Multilingual Literacies	3
EDTL:6497	Principles of Course Design for Second Language Instruction	3

Linguistics Courses

Course #	Title	Hours
These:		
Two courses (chosen in consultation with advisor)		6

Specialization Courses

Each student selects one of two specialization areas—linguistics and psycholinguistics or language learning and postsecondary education—and takes five courses (total of 15 s.h.) in one area, not including courses taken above to satisfy requirements. Each student's specific specialization area and set of courses are determined in consultation with the advisor.

Courses that may be used in the specialization areas are listed below.

Linguistics and Psycholinguistics

Course #	Title	Hours
LING:6020	Phonological Theory	3
LING:6080	Topics in Second Language Acquisition	3
LING:7010	Advanced Syntactic Theory	3
PSY:3670	Language Processes	3
SPAN:4170	Second Language Acquisition	3
SPAN:6150	Topics in Spanish Language Acquisition	3

Other courses (chosen in consultation with advisor)

Language Learning and Postsecondary Education

Course #	Title	Hours
CHIN:5024	Teaching Chinese as a Second Language VII: Pedagogical Grammar	3
CHIN:7401	Teaching Chinese as a Second Language I: Theories and Research	3
CHIN:7403	Teaching Chinese as a Second Language III: Instruction and Practicum	3
CHIN:7404	Teaching Chinese as a Second Language IV: Testing and Assessment	3
EDTL:6402	Second Language Program Management	3
EDTL:6403	Language Policy and Planning	3
EDTL:6480	Graduate Seminar in Multilingual Education	3
EDTL:7015	PhD Seminar in Language, Literacy, and Culture	arr.
PSQF:6205	Design of Instruction	3
PSQF:6208	Digital Media and Learning	3
PSQF:6215	Online Instruction: Design and Facilitation	3
PSQF:6265	Program Evaluation	3

Other courses (chosen in consultation with advisor)

Elective Courses

Students also may take elective coursework relevant to their research interests, including the following independent project courses.

Course #	Title	Hours
SLA:7020	Readings in Second Language Acquisition	arr.
SLA:7025	Special Projects in Second Language Acquisition	arr.

Thesis

Students must complete a thesis (maximum of 15 s.h., with a minimum of 2 s.h.)

Course #	Title	Hours
SLA:7030	PhD Thesis	arr.

Admission

Admission is for fall semester; students are admitted only for full-time study. Applicants must meet the admission requirements of the Graduate College; see the Manual of Rules and Regulations on the Graduate College website.

Strong applicants hold a master's degree in a related area, have a cumulative grade-point average of at least 3.50 in master's degree work, and speak and write English and another language at a professional level. Applicants must submit a writing sample that demonstrates their ability to synthesize and analyze information using standard academic English.

Financial Support

Teaching assistantships are available to qualified students. Assistantships usually involve teaching elementary or intermediate language courses. Visit the FLARE website for details.