

Literary Translation, MFA

Requirements

The Master of Fine Arts program in literary translation requires 48 s.h. of graduate credit, including a thesis. Students must maintain a cumulative grade-point average of at least 2.75. They typically complete the program and graduate in two to three years.

Translators in the program focus on creating works that can convey the distinctness of the original languages and the immediacy of contemporary languages, whether poetry, fiction, or drama. Students consider ideas of literariness, style, cultural politics, authority, and how these come into play in the relationships between authors and their texts, authors and translators, translations and readers, and in the media landscapes in which these circulate.

At the core of the MFA program are the workshops, TRNS:6555 Translator-in-Residence Workshop and TRNS:7460 Translation Workshop, which every student must take for a minimum of 12 s.h. of credit. Depth in the literature and culture of the source language, creative writing (translation is considered a writing art), translation theory and history, and contemporary literary theory are basic curricular requirements, supplemented with elective courses in which students may develop an area of special interest in consultation with their advisors.

During the first year, each student has an advisory committee of two faculty members: one from the translation program, who is the student's primary advisor; and one from a department in the Division of World Languages, Literatures and Cultures or from one of the MFA writing programs. A third member joins the committee during the second year when a student submits the thesis proposal. At least one member of the committee should be competent in the student's source language.

The MFA with a major in literary translation requires the following work.

Required Courses

Course #	Title	Hours
All of these (36 s.h.):		
TRNS:6000	The Craft and Contexts of Translation (taken three semesters for 1 s.h. each semester)	3
TRNS:6459	Issues in Translation	3
	Courses in literature and culture of the source language, or specific genre aspects of the target literature	9
	Courses in creative writing (chosen in consultation with advisor)	6
	Additional course in theory (chosen in consultation with advisor)	3
	Workshop courses, consisting of a mix of TRNS:6555 (usually taken once) and TRNS:7460 (usually taken three times)	12

Electives

Course #	Title	Hours
Students earn 9 s.h. in electives of their choice, or from additional coursework in translation:		
TRNS:4040	Topics in Translation	3-4
TRNS:4480	Literature and Translation	3
TRNS:5491	Translation Internship	1-2
TRNS:5500	Advanced Translation Practice	1-3

Thesis and Examination

Course #	Title	Hours
One of these:		
TRNS:6400	Thesis	3
TRNS:6444	Thesis Workshop	3

Students earn 3 s.h. for the thesis, which is a translated collection of poems, literary essays, short stories, a short novel, or a drama with an introduction that sets the work in appropriate context. The introduction should include a critical discussion of issues and problems related to the translation; it should present a rationale for the translator's approach and strategies, based on interpretation, analysis of the leading features, structure, style, or authorial objectives of the source text. The source text should be a work that has not been translated previously or, at the discretion of the advisory committee, a work whose previous translation is judged to be outdated or inadequate in some respect. An oral defense of the thesis examines the student's translation and the introductory essay in detail.