Students must complete 12 credits of courses distributed over three programs. These courses must include one seminar in which a research paper is written on a topic approved by the major professor. The student must demonstrate a working knowledge of one language of Eastern Europe or the former Soviet Union before beginning the second year of Russian, East European and Central Asian Studies and will be expected to write the seminar paper utilizing original source material in the target language(s). Students should contact the program office for specific information regarding these requirements.

Candidates for the graduate/professional certificate in Russian, East European and Central Asian Studies must complete at least two years of language study (or the equivalent) in one of the region's languages. At UW-Madison, Czech, Finnish, Kazakh, Persian, Polish, Russian, and Turkish/Azeri are offered regularly during the academic year. Other regional languages may be available during the summer session (e.g. languages of Central Eurasia through CESSI (https://cessi.wisc.edu/)).