SECOND LANGUAGE ACQUISITION, PHD

Second language acquisition (SLA) is the systematic study of learning, using, and sometimes losing any form of language beyond the mother tongue. SLA is a burgeoning research field because today there are more people on the planet who use at least two languages than there are monolinguals. For individual learners and for every community in diaspora, second language acquisition is an experience that challenges their knowledge of language, their understanding of different cultures, and their personal identities. The experiences and challenges surrounding SLA are studied by scholars whose training is in a variety of fields—linguistics, psychology, sociology, education, anthropology, and communication arts—a variety that makes the study of SLA richly interdisciplinary.

The PhD Program in Second Language Acquisition at the University of Wisconsin–Madison is a rigorous interdisciplinary academic program that embodies the university's mission to foster the study of globally important issues. In their coursework, students in the program learn from and collaborate with experienced and distinguished faculty in many departments and, through their original dissertation research, students generate and contribute new knowledge to the field. Students develop a thorough understanding of the scope of SLA as a field of inquiry, and develop and refine research skills that will serve them as they define and pursue their own research agenda. A PhD in SLA opens the door to scholarly and professional careers as university faculty, directors of foreign language programs, educational policy makers, and multilingual specialists.

ADMISSIONS

ADMISSIONS

Please consult the table below for key information about this degree program's admissions requirements. The program may have more detailed admissions requirements, which can be found below the table or on the program's website.

Graduate admissions is a two-step process between academic programs and the Graduate School. ***Applicants must meet* the minimum requirements (https://grad.wisc.edu/apply/requirements/) *of the Graduate School as well as the program(s).*** Once you have researched the graduate program(s) you are interested in, apply online (https://grad.wisc.edu/apply/).

Requirements	Detail
Fall Deadline	December 15
Spring Deadline	The program does not admit in the spring.
Summer Deadline	The program does not admit in the summer.
GRE (Graduate Record Examinations)	Not required.
English Proficiency Test	Every applicant whose native language is not English, or whose undergraduate instruction was not exclusively in English, must provide an English proficiency test score earned within two years of the anticipated term of enrollment. Refer to the Graduate School: Minimum Requirements for Admission policy: https://policy.wisc.edu/library/UW-1241 (https://policy.wisc.edu/library/UW-1241/).
Other Test(s) (e.g., GMAT, MCAT)	n/a
Letters of Recommendation Required	3

The PhD Program in Second Language Acquisition requires a master's degree in a foreign language, English, applied linguistics, linguistics, or education. Please refer to the Second Language Acquisition website (https://sla.wisc.edu/admissions/) for application deadlines, required application materials, and required modes of submitting these materials. In addition, general requirements for admission stipulated by the graduate school (e.g., evidence of English proficiency for certain international students) apply.

FUNDING

FUNDING

GRADUATE SCHOOL RESOURCES

Resources to help you afford graduate study might include assistantships, fellowships, traineeships, and financial aid. Further funding information (https://grad.wisc.edu/funding/) is available from the Graduate School. Be sure to check with your program for individual policies and restrictions related to funding.

PROGRAM RESOURCES

Students in the SLA program, depending on their qualifications, may receive financial support through several departments, programs, and institutes. Students with a background in foreign language or English teaching may work as graduate teaching assistants (TAs) in departments in which those languages are taught. Other students work as graduate project assistants (PA) for the Language Institute or other units on campus. In addition to these TA and PA positions, select SLA students receive university fellowships (including the Advanced Opportunity Fellowships) upon entry into the program or when working on their dissertations. If they meet the specific eligibility criteria, students may also compete, with the program's support, in other grant and fellowship competitions, such as Foreign Language and Area Studies (FLAS) Fellowships. Additional funding opportunities are included in the information for current students on the SLA website (https://sla.wisc.edu/content/funding-resources/).

REQUIREMENTS

MINIMUM GRADUATE SCHOOL REQUIREMENTS

Review the Graduate School minimum academic progress and degree requirements (http://guide.wisc.edu/graduate/

#policiesandrequirementstext), in addition to the program requirements listed below.

MAJOR REQUIREMENTS

MODE OF INSTRUCTION

Face to Face	Evening/ Weekend	Online	Hybrid	Accelerated
Yes	No	No	No	No

Mode of Instruction Definitions

Accelerated: Accelerated programs are offered at a fast pace that condenses the time to completion. Students typically take enough credits aimed at completing the program in a year or two.

Evening/Weekend: Courses meet on the UW–Madison campus only in evenings and/or on weekends to accommodate typical business schedules. Students have the advantages of face-to-face courses with the flexibility to keep work and other life commitments.

Face-to-Face: Courses typically meet during weekdays on the UW-Madison Campus.

Hybrid: These programs combine face-to-face and online learning formats. Contact the program for more specific information.

Online: These programs are offered 100% online. Some programs may require an on-campus orientation or residency experience, but the courses will be facilitated in an online format.

CURRICULAR REQUIREMENTS

Requirement	Detail
Minimum Credit Requirement	51 credits
Minimum Residence Credit Requirement	45 credits
Minimum Graduate Coursework Requirement	26 credits must be graduate-level coursework. Refer to the Graduate School: Minimum Graduate Coursework (50%) Requirement policy: https://policy.wisc.edu/library/UW-1244 (https://policy.wisc.edu/library/UW-1244/).
Overall Graduate GPA Requirement	3.00 GPA required. Refer to the Graduate School: Grade Point Average (GPA) Requirement policy: https://policy.wisc.edu/library/UW-1203 (https://policy.wisc.edu/library/UW-1203/).
Other Grade Requirements	Incompletes must be resolved by the end of the next fall or spring term in which the student is enrolled. In addition, all incompletes must be resolved before students may take any portion of the preliminary examination.
Assessments and Examinations	Students must take preliminary exams within one semester of completing coursework. The dissertation proposal must be approved by the student's dissertation proposal committee no later than one calendar year after the student becomes a dissertator. The last step in completing the PhD in Second Language Acquisition is the successful defense of a doctoral thesis or dissertation, followed by its deposit with the Graduate School.
Language Requirements	Typically, the student must demonstrate an advanced level of academic oral and reading proficiency in two languages prior to taking preliminary exams. A plan for meeting this requirement is developed by the student and advisor during the student's first semester in the Program. The plan must be approved by the advisor and the Second Language Acquisition steering committee by the end of the first academic year.
Graduate School Breadth Requirement	Because of the broad, interdisciplinary nature of the Second Language Acquisition program course requirements, a doctoral minor or graduate/professional certificate is not required. A minor or certificate is optional, and, in some cases, may be strongly suggested. Students must submit a short statement (2-3 pages) at the end of their third semester, discussing how the courses that they have taken so far, as well as those that they plan to take in the future semester(s), inform their dissertation research and their envisioned career path.

REQUIRED COURSES

Code	Title	Credits
Core		
Students must complete the following courses.		
ENGL 318	Second Language Acquisition	3
ENGL 711	Research Methods in Applied Linguistics	3
Quantitative Research Methods		**3**
Students must complete one of the following pre-approved courses.		
ED PSYCH 760	Statistical Methods Applied to Education I	
ED PSYCH 761	Statistical Methods Applied to Education II	
SOC/ C&E SOC 360	Statistics for Sociologists I	
Qualitative Research Methods		**3**
Students must complete one of the following pre-approved courses.		
AFRICAN 926	Seminar in Research Methods in African Cultural Studies	
CURRIC 714	Research and Evaluation Paradigms in Curriculum and Instruction	
CURRIC 715	Design of Research in Curriculum and Instruction	

CURRIC/ COUN PSY/ ED POL/ ED PSYCH/ELPA/ RP & SE 719	Introduction to Qualitative Research	
CURRIC 916	Smr: Special Topics in Research & Evaluation in Curriculum & Instruction	
ENGL 703	Research Methods in Composition Studies	
Electives		**30**
Students choose courses in consultation with advisor.		
Dissertation		**9**
Students must complete at least 9 dissertation credits or three semesters. In most cases, students complete four or more semesters. Students enroll in credits in their advisor's department. Departmental authorization likely needed to register. With advisor approval, students may replace three dissertation credits with another three credits of a graduate course that directly support the dissertation.		
Total Credits		**51**

POLICIES

GRADUATE SCHOOL POLICIES

The Graduate School's Academic Policies and Procedures (https://grad.wisc.edu/acadpolicy/) provide essential information regarding general university policies. Program authority to set degree policies beyond the minimum required by the Graduate School lies with the degree program faculty. Policies set by the academic degree program can be found below.

MAJOR-SPECIFIC POLICIES

PRIOR COURSEWORK

Graduate Credits Earned at Other Institutions

With program approval, students are allowed to transfer up to 6 credits of graduate coursework from other institutions. Coursework earned ten years or more prior to admission to the Second Language Acquistion Program is not allowed to satisfy requirements.

In addition, typically, students with prior graduate coursework at UW-Madison may only transfer up to 6 credits toward the Second Language Acquistion Program.

Undergraduate Credits Earned at Other Institutions or UW-Madison

Prior coursework from the undergraduate career may not be transfer.

Credits Earned as a Professional Student at UW-Madison (Law, Medicine, Pharmacy, and Veterinary careers)

Refer to the Graduate School: Transfer Credits for Prior Coursework (https://policy.wisc.edu/library/UW-1216/) policy.

Credits Earned as a University Special Student at UW–Madison

Prior coursework from the UW–Madison University Special student career may not transfer.

PROBATION

Those students not meeting satisfactory progress requirements (found in the Graduate Program Handbook) may be put on probation for a semester.

ADVISOR / COMMITTEE

Students are required to meet with their advisor at least once each semester to review their progress, select courses, and to discuss any outstanding issues or questions.

CREDITS PER TERM ALLOWED

15 credits

TIME LIMITS

Students must submit plans for completing the emphasis requirement and the language requirement for approval by the steering committee within their first year of the program.

Students typically complete all of the coursework requirements within two years of enrolling in the Program. Students are required to complete all coursework and fulfill the language requirement before taking the preliminary examinations.

Students must take the preliminary examination within one semester of completing coursework.

Graduate School regulations require PhD candidates to defend their dissertation five years from the date of passing their preliminary examinations.

GRIEVANCES AND APPEALS

These resources may be helpful in addressing your concerns:

- Bias or Hate Reporting (https://doso.students.wisc.edu/bias-or-hate-reporting/)
- Graduate Assistantship Policies and Procedures (https://hr.wisc.edu/policies/gapp/#grievance-procedure)
- Hostile and Intimidating Behavior Policies and Procedures (https://hr.wisc.edu/hib/)
  - Office of the Provost for Faculty and Staff Affairs (https://facstaff.provost.wisc.edu/)
- Employee Assistance (http://www.eao.wisc.edu/) (for personal counseling and workplace consultation around communication and conflict involving graduate assistants and other employees, post-doctoral students, faculty and staff)
- Employee Disability Resource Office (https://employeedisabilities.wisc.edu/) (for qualified employees or applicants with disabilities to have equal employment opportunities)
- Graduate School (https://grad.wisc.edu/) (for informal advice at any level of review and for official appeals of program/departmental or school/college grievance decisions)
- Office of Compliance (https://compliance.wisc.edu/) (for class harassment and discrimination, including sexual harassment and sexual violence)
- Office Student Assistance and Support (OSAS) (https://osas.wisc.edu/) (for all students to seek grievance assistance and support)
- Office of Student Conduct and Community Standards (https://conduct.students.wisc.edu/) (for conflicts involving students)

- Ombuds Office for Faculty and Staff (http://www.ombuds.wisc.edu/) (for employed graduate students and post-docs, as well as faculty and staff)
- Title IX (https://compliance.wisc.edu/titleix/) (for concerns about discrimination)

Students should contact the department chair or program director with questions about grievances. They may also contact the L&S Academic Divisional Associate Deans, the L&S Associate Dean for Teaching and Learning Administration, or the L&S Director of Human Resources.

OTHER

Students in the Second Language Acquistion program are typically funded through campus teaching assistantships, project assistantships or through fellowships. Contact the program for more details.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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GRADUATE SCHOOL RESOURCES

Take advantage of the Graduate School's professional development resources (https://grad.wisc.edu/pd/) to build skills, thrive academically, and launch your career.

PROGRAM RESOURCES

Students in the SLA program benefit from a variety of professional development opportunities organized by students, faculty, and staff. A speaker series offers students the chance to interact with top scholars in the field. In addition, the program organizes workshops in such topics as designing research, publishing, and preparing to go on the job market. An annual graduate student symposium, organized in partnership with students in related programs on campus and other institutions, allows students to gain professional experience organizing a conference and presenting their research before audiences of peers and faculty members from the three institutions and across the country. In addition, Summer Research Partnerships provide opportunities for core faculty and students to work collaboratively on research projects. These collaborations have led to conference presentations and/or co-authored journal publications.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

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1. Demonstrate a strong overall understanding of the scope of the discipline of SLA (e.g., the theories on which research in the field is based; the types of questions that researchers in SLA address; and the variety of techniques used to answer these questions). Demonstrate an in-depth understanding of theories and research findings related to their focal areas of interest.
2. Develop an original research plan that advances a specific area of SLA. Retrieve, evaluate, and interpret academic publications, and use this information to identify a gap in the extant research and to develop theoretical frameworks and research designs for their own research projects. Learn to design realistic and feasible research projects and to prepare necessary protocols.
3. Collect data following relevant protocols and analyze/interpret the resulting data. Reflect on the procedures and results of their own projects to identify strengths, limitations, and implications.
4. Develop skills for disseminating their research in a variety of professional venues and domains through both presentations and manuscript preparation.
5. Participate in and communicate effectively as members of a professional community. Seek opportunities to engage in service to the program, the university and/or the wider community.

PEOPLE

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SLA Steering Committee: The interdisciplinary SLA Steering Committee (https://sla.wisc.edu/steering-committee-members/) is comprised of members from the units listed below.

African Cultural Studies: Professor Katrina Thompson

Asian Languages and Cultures: Associate Professor Naomi Geyer, Associate Professor Byung-Jin Lim and Professor Junko Mori

Curriculum and Instruction: Professor Margaret Hawkins, Associate Professor Mariana Pacheco, Assistant Professor Diego Roman, Professor Francois Tochon and Professor Kate Vieira

English: Assistant Professor Jacee Cho

French and Italian: Associate Professor Heather Allen

German, Nordic, and Slavic: Professor Monika Chavez and Professor Karen Evans-Romaine

Language Institute: Director Dianna Murphy

Spanish and Portuguese: Associate Professor Cathy Stafford

Staff: Kristin Dalby (Graduate Coordinator) and Skender Jahiu (Financial and Payroll Specialist)