

Committee on the Study of Religion

Language Requirements

All doctoral students—in consultation with their advisors – are required to achieve at least intermediate reading competence in two modern languages of secondary scholarship relevant to their course of study (such as French, German, Japanese), *in addition* to whatever primary source languages are required in their fields.

The requirement in modern languages of scholarship commonly taught and examined at Harvard Divinity School (French, German, Spanish, etc.) can be met either by achieving a grade of B+ or better in two semesters of a second-year language course (taken either at Harvard Divinity School or in FAS); by achieving an A- or better in the Harvard Divinity School one-semester advanced intermediate language courses in French and German; or by achieving a “high pass” on a language examination. Students whose first language is not English may meet the requirement with a “pass” on the language exam. Please consult the Divinity School Director of Language Studies for the schedule of exams and for samples of previous exams.

There is also an option to do a private reading course (consult PhD Student Handbook, “Guidelines for Foreign Language Certification Course,” or program administrator.)

In the case of modern languages of scholarship not commonly offered or examined at Harvard Divinity School (Arabic, Japanese, Korean, etc.), the number of years required to achieve “intermediate reading competence” and the equivalent of “high pass” on language examinations will be determined by faculty in the relevant field.

The modern language requirements must be fulfilled before taking general examinations.