

# USC SLAVIC DEPARTMENT

## GRADUATE GUIDELINES

We the faculty in the Slavic Department, as well as you the graduate students, are governed by current university rules as presented in the *University of Southern California Catalogue* (available in print version as well as on-line through the University's website, [www.usc.edu](http://www.usc.edu)). Students will benefit greatly by reviewing the sections of the *Catalogue* entitled "Academic Policies and Procedures" and "Graduate School Policies and Requirements" thoroughly and early in their program. The following guidelines are meant to orient you in certain university and departmental procedures, but do not replace them or exhaust all possible situations and issues.

Explanations of the academic policies at USC, copies of some of the forms you will have to fill out, and other useful advice can be found on the website of the Graduate School, at <http://www.usc.edu/dept/GRADSCHL/currentstudentsmain.html>

### TABLE OF CONTENTS

- I. Master's Degree Procedures
  - 1. Russian Language Proficiency Exams
  - 2. Master's Exam
  - 3. Thesis Option
  
- II. Ph.D. Degree Procedures
  - 1. Screening Procedure/Secondary Field
  - 2. Language Exams and Requirements
    - a. Two of: French, German, second Slavic language
    - b. Russian Language Exam
  - 3. Guidance Committee
  - 4. Format of Qualifying Exam
  - 5. Approval of Dissertation Topic
  - 6. Ph.D. Dissertation Committee
  - 7. Dissertation Defense and Submission Procedures.
    - a. Dissertation Review
    - b. Scheduling Considerations
    - c. Defense Procedures and Paperwork
      - 1. At the Defense
      - 2. After the Committee Accepts your Thesis
  
- III. Appendix: The Bureaucratic Gauntlet, or  
The Paper Trail Leading to the Ph.D.

**Please note: Failure to complete the procedures outlined below may jeopardize your standing in the program as well as your funding.**

### I. MASTER'S DEGREE PROCEDURES

1. **RUSSIAN LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY EXAMS.** A Russian language proficiency exam is administered to all non-native speakers of Russian at the start of the first semester of graduate study and again before the completion of the degree. A demonstration of minimum ability as determined by the department or of sufficient progress in spoken and written Russian on this exam is a prerequisite for taking the Master's Exam, and should be completed at least four weeks prior to it to allow time for a re-take if necessary. The proficiency exam must be passed before the master's exam may be taken.

2. **THE MASTER'S EXAM.** A student must formally inform the department early in the semester in which s/he wants to take the Master's degree exam. At this time students should ask the department's administrative assistant to approve their masters' courses on-line. Exams are normally scheduled during the exam period at the end of each semester.

The M.A. exam is a *comprehensive exam* at the master's level. It is based on material covered in courses and on the Master's Reading List. The file of previous exams available in the department may provide useful information in terms of general scope and format of the exam, but students should keep in mind that there is no such thing as a "typical" exam, and that new questions are incorporated into each new set of exams. The format of the exam is the following: 1) a written exam (4 hours); and 2) an oral exam (1 hour). The two parts are usually given on different days; progress to the oral exam is not automatic. If on the written examination the judgment of the committee is such that an oral examination cannot counterbalance a poor performance, the committee is not obliged to give an oral examination and the report to the Graduate School will be one of failure. A student must pass both the written and oral parts in order to pass the examination. A student who fails the master's exam may be permitted to take it a second time, at the discretion of the faculty (see the *USC Catalogue*).

Students are not usually expected to take extra time off to prepare for the master's exam.

Advancement from the Master's to the Doctoral program is not automatic, and depends in part upon satisfactory completion of the M.A. exam or thesis. *The decision concerning progress to the Doctoral level is made at the time of the M.A. exam, or upon completion of M.A. coursework for those writing a thesis.* Students will be informed in writing if the decision is negative. Whether or not you are proceeding to the Ph.D, you must file the "Change/Addition of Major, Minor, or Degree Objective" form with the Degree Progress department (JHH basement) in order to receive the M.A. (for "present degree objective" indicate M.A. and enter the postcode 195).

3. **Thesis Option.** With permission, it is possible to substitute the writing of a thesis for the M.A. exam. The thesis is considered an honors option, although even the best students may be asked to take the exam instead (also, see above regarding progress from M.A. to Ph.D.). The departmental Graduate Committee will consider written proposals to write a thesis on the basis of a student's performance in graduate courses, units completed, and individual background in Russian literature. The thesis option may be taken in lieu of 4 units of course work (see next paragraph). Students who take the thesis option are still required to pass the M.A. Russian language exam.

A student writing a thesis signs up for 594a and then 594b (supervised thesis writing courses, 2 units each, taken over two semesters; if the student wishes to complete the thesis in one semester, s/he may petition the Graduate School to enroll concurrently in 594a and b). 594a and b are usually taken simultaneously with other coursework. Taking 594a/b reduces one's M.A. coursework by one course; it is usually taken in place of the M.A. elective. If necessary, thesis writing may be continued by registering for 594z (no unit credit; costs two units of tuition). However, for students who wish to go on for a Ph.D., such extensions may jeopardize financial support (note however that 594 satisfies the minimum enrollment of 6 units required of TA's).

Note that if you want to take the thesis option and enroll in 594, you must get started early, i.e., if you want to take 594a and b during your second year in the program, you must have your thesis proposal approved at the end of your first year or at the very start of the second.

University regulations for the thesis option, its format and submission, may be found on the Graduate School's website (under "Current Students") and in the information packet available in the Graduate School itself.

## **II. P h. D. P R O C E D U R E S**

**1. Screening Procedure/Secondary Field.** According to university rules, you must go through a "screening" procedure before completing six courses or 24 units toward the Ph.D. In the Slavic Department "screening" means officially formulating a Statement of Secondary Field and presenting it for approval to the department's Graduate Committee, which will then administer an oral exam on the basis of your statement. Because the secondary field is meant to play a significant role in focusing your advanced studies with us, the department strongly urges you to formulate it as early as possible. In any event the screening procedure/exam must be completed by the end of your first year of post-M.A. coursework toward the PhD.

The secondary field delineates an area of particular emphasis and expertise within your graduate curriculum. It may lead into the dissertation topic but this is not mandatory. The field must be chosen from the following, as they relate to the Russian context: visual arts, performing arts, intellectual and social history, gender studies, linguistics, history. Students are encouraged to include a course from outside the department. The Statement of Secondary Field consists of 2-3 pages of text defining three graduate courses the student has taken or plans to take as a coherent field, accompanied by a bibliography of 20-30 works essential to work in that field. The Graduate Committee either accepts this document or returns it with a request for revisions. The Graduate Committee will then administer an oral exam on the basis of your statement.

A second part of the Screening procedure is to resolve any questions which may remain about credits from other institutions that you wish to apply toward your USC degree. They should already have been evaluated by the University when you were admitted, and listed on your "Graduate Credit Statement" as logged on the USC computer system (the Slavic Department also has the capacity to

download this information into a "Graduate Credit Statement"). It is up to the department to decide which of these credits will apply toward the 60 unit Ph.D. requirement. USC will accept up to 30 outside credits—the equivalent of an M.A.—but the department may decide not to accept all of your transfer credits, and may require that you take some additional coursework.

**2. Language Exams and Requirements.** All language exams must be passed *prior to requesting permission* to take the Qualifying Exam. The "Request to Take the Qualifying Examination" form should be filed during the semester before the one in which you wish to take the Qualifying Exam, and no less than a month before you take the exam (see section 4 below), so you must plan to take your language exams well in advance, leaving extra time should it prove necessary for you to re-take any of them.

A) **Two of: French, German, a second Slavic language.** Traditionally, the department has required a reading knowledge of both French and German of its Ph.D. candidates. This requirement may be satisfied by passing the exams offered by the French and German Departments, given as final exams in those departments' intensive reading courses. Students at a more advanced stage in their language study are encouraged to take an upper level literature course taught in French or German, which will also satisfy the requirement in that language. Native speakers of French or German automatically satisfy the language requirement in their language. Occasionally the department is able to offer a Slavic language other than Russian, or students may find it possible to study one via our credit-exchange agreement with UCLA, or may have studied in the country in question. In such cases, if sufficient reading knowledge of that language can be demonstrated, it may be substituted for either French or German. *Please note:* this option requires prior approval from the department and is intended only for students who want to take, or have taken, a formal course of study of another Slavic language.

B) **Russian Language Exam.** Before the Qualifying Exam may be taken, all doctoral candidates except native speakers must pass a Russian language exam to demonstrate their ability to function at a professional level in Russian, i.e., to read, write, and discuss matters related to the field comprehensibly and with firm control of Russian grammar and the relevant vocabulary. The exam consists of two parts: 1) excerpts from a scholarly text or texts, about which the student must answer written questions in Russian without the aid of a dictionary (one hour); and 2) an oral interview in Russian based on the written exam (half an hour).

To arrange to take the exam, inform the department's Language Program Coordinator, who will establish an *ad hoc* faculty committee to write and administer it. The exam is administered should be taken at least a semester before the Qualifying Exams to allow time for a retake if necessary.

**3. Guidance Committee.** According to the *Catalogue*, the Ph.D. Guidance Committee "has the responsibility for supervising the student's program of studies and preparation for the qualifying examination, and [its] administration and evaluation . . . and continues to serve until the qualifying examination has been passed, the dissertation topic approved, and the student is admitted to candidacy." If you have completed all coursework and are not otherwise registered during the semester you plan to take your Qualifying Exams, you must register for GRSC 800 (no unit credit;

costs one unit of tuition).

The Guidance Committee is responsible for administration and evaluation of the Qualifying Exams, so you will want to organize your committee and consult with its members as soon as you can so as to know how best to prepare. The Guidance Committee consists of five tenured or tenure-track USC professors; at least three must be from the Slavic Department, and at least one from another department which offers a Ph.D. program. (Consult the *Catalogue* and the Graduate School's website for additional rules on choosing your committee, including the downloadable "Role of the Outside Faculty Member of Guidance and Dissertation Committees".)

To set up a Guidance Committee, you must file an "Appointment of Committee" form, at least two semesters prior to taking the Qualifying Examination, with your home department that will be signed by the Department Chair and forwarded to the College Dean of Graduate Studies for approval. A "Request to Take the Qualifying Examination" form should then be filed with your home department during the semester before the one in which you wish to be examined, and no less than a month before you take the exam. The home department Graduate Advisor will verify that you have completed at least 24 units in residence and have at least a 3.0 GPA and send the form to the Dean's office for signature. Once the home department receives the approval from the Dean's office, the Graduate Advisor will download a "Report on Ph.D. Qualifying Examination" from the Graduate School web site and present it to the committee chair prior to the examination.. The committee members indicate Pass or Not Passed on the form and sign and date it. The Report form is returned to the Graduate Advisor within two days and the Graduate Advisor sends a copy of the form to the Graduate School within five days. The Graduate School will enter the Date of Candidacy on the student's record if the student has passed.

Note that to file your "Request to Take the Ph.D. Qualifying Examination," you must have completed the Screening Procedure, including approved Secondary Field (statement and oral defense), and you must also have passed all language exams (see section 3 above).

If you wish to make changes in your Guidance Committee, you may file a "Change of Committee" form; any changes, however, must be made in advance of the Qualifying Exam, and are not permitted between the written and oral portions of the exam. Further, the committee may not be altered prior to the administration of the second exam in case of failure. If a faculty member is unable to serve on the committee (for example, in cases of serious illness, retirement or transfer to another institution), the College Dean of Graduate Studies must be notified in writing in advance of the rescheduled exam and a "Change of Committee" form must be filed and approved.

**4. Format of the Qualifying Exam.** In the Slavic Department the Qualifying Exam is scheduled during the exam period at the end of the semester. It consists of three written exams and an oral exam. The written exams cover: 1) Early Russian literature and culture through 1881, plus linguistics (four hours); 2) Russian literature and culture, 1881 to the present (four hours); and 3) your dissertation proposal (three hours; see further detail below). The exams will usually be scheduled two or three days apart.

The qualifying exam is meant to be *comprehensive*, that is, to survey the student's knowledge in all areas of Russian literature and culture. It is meant to test not only the student's ability to synthesize material, to discuss and apply basic ideas and issues, but also his or her grasp of the fundamental factual body of material covered. For the purposes of this exam, this body of material is roughly defined as a combination of the works on the department's Ph.D. Reading List and those areas covered by graduate courses offered in the department. Students are encouraged to consult copies of old exams on file in the department to familiarize themselves with the format and type of questions that are asked.

The written examinations in the primary fields contain both short-answer questions and essays. Essay questions fall into the following categories: early-Russian through eighteenth-century literature; linguistics (including history of Russian and contemporary morphology, phonology, etc.); eighteenth- and nineteenth-century poetry and drama; nineteenth-century prose and drama; turn-of-the-century culture (including literature, art, aesthetics, drama, cinema, etc.); twentieth-century prose and drama; twentieth-century poetry; history of criticism and theory. The written examination on the dissertation proposal consists entirely of essay questions. Additional information and advice for study should be obtained from the Guidance Committee.

In principle the oral exam covers all the material for which you were responsible on the writtens, but usually focuses on questions raised by the written exams. All members of the Guidance Committee must be present and must render a judgment on the Qualifying Examination. If a member is not able to attend the oral portion, the exam must be postponed.

Progress to the oral exam is not automatic. If on the written examination the judgment of the committee is such that an oral examination cannot counterbalance a poor performance, the committee is not obliged to give an oral examination and the report to the Graduate School will be one of failure.

A student must pass both the written and oral portions of the Qualifying Exam in order to pass the examination. It may not be reported as being passed if there is more than one dissenting vote; it may not be passed conditionally, nor be made contingent on completing additional tasks (coursework, papers, etc.). Both portions of the exam must be administered at USC. The Qualifying Exam may be retaken—once (see the relevant sections in the *Catalogue*), unless the Guidance Committee deems termination from the program appropriate after the first exam.

**5. Approval of the Dissertation Topic.** During the semester preceding the Qualifying Examination, but not later than one month before it, the doctoral candidate must submit a formal proposal for the dissertation to the Committee. This should include: a description of the proposed topic; a discussion of current scholarship on the question, and the original contribution the given thesis will make; a discussion of the project's proposed methodology and materials; and a selected bibliography. Suggested length of the proposal is 7-10 pages. The Committee decides on the appropriateness of the dissertation topic for the given student and provides guidance concerning questions of methodology and research strategies. The Guidance Committee may also make suggestions about who should serve on the Ph.D. Dissertation Committee (see below). The dissertation proposal serves as the basis for the third of the written exams taken as part of the Qualifying Examination.

**6. Ph.D. Dissertation Committee.** The semester after passing the Qualifying Exam you should register for two units of Dissertation 794a (you will do this each semester, excluding summers, after passing the Qualifying Exams, signing up for 794 a,b,c,d,z—minimum two semesters—until your dissertation is approved for final typing). At the same time, you should also take the necessary steps to create your Dissertation Committee and file an “Appointment of Committee” form. The Dissertation Committee is composed of three tenured or tenure-track USC professors, two from your department, at least one of whom must be tenured, and the ‘Outside Member’ who must be from some other department. This form should be filed with our department and approved by the College Dean of Graduate Studies.

Since not all of the people you want on your Dissertation Committee may have served on the Qualifying Exam Committee that approved your dissertation topic, the prospective chair of your Dissertation Committee may request a meeting of all of the prospective Dissertation Committee members in person in order to review your proposal with you and to sign the “Appointment of Committee” form. The purpose of this meeting is both to help determine what direction your further work should take, and to decide on the optimal composition of the committee itself.

You should take steps to form your Dissertation Committee as soon as possible after passing the Qualifying Exam. Undue delay may result in putting your funding in jeopardy.

**7. Dissertation Defense and Submission.** Early in the semester in which you will be completing the dissertation, obtain the information packet concerning theses and dissertations from the Graduate School (see <http://www.usc.edu/dept/GRADSCHL/PacketsInfo.html>). The graduation paperwork included in the submission packet is available from the Graduate School or on the Graduate School website and includes the following:

- ⊙ ‘Approval to Submit Defended & Final Copy of Doctoral (or Master’s) Work’ form [this replaces the green Final Typing Card and is signed by your committee when all required changes to your manuscript have been made]
- ⊙ ‘Verification of Completion of the Requirements for the Doctoral (or Master’s) Degree’ form [this replaces the white Triple Card and is signed by the Graduate Advisor and Department Chair indicating that all requirements have been met to graduate]
- ⊙ Signature Page of the manuscript (signed by the committee after all changes have been made)
- ⊙ Survey of Earned Doctorates (Doctoral students only)
- ⊙ Graduate School Document Checklist form

"Submission" means uploading a pdf of the final version--the version that has been successfully defended and signed off on, and which has then had incorporated all corrections and changes the committee has asked for (it is the responsibility of the chair of your committee to oversee this and give final approval for submission). The submission copy --which must be in the form of one pdf file--must also meet all of the university’s editing and format specifications. (See the USC Grad School web site: <http://www.usc.edu/dept/GRADSCHL/>.)

**A. Dissertation Review.** Your committee chair has the prerogative of asking you to hold an unofficial Dissertation Review of the entire dissertation prior to the Defense. This is a highly recommended procedure that provides an opportunity for your committee to meet with you and

discuss the final complete draft of your dissertation as a group, without the pressure of having to make a yes or no decision on the spot. There are many other good reasons for this too, including: to force your committee members to decide as a group what re-writing they expect of you by the time of the defense (rather than making individual--perhaps even contradictory--demands). It gives them, and you, a chance to consider the thesis as a whole (rather than chapter by chapter, as has presumably been the case thus far). In the case of a dissertation that is still very much a rough draft, the Dissertation Review also alleviates unfair pressure on committee chairs of having to give final approval to extensive changes in the manuscript (and then having to review them) on their own.

**B. Scheduling Considerations.** With the approval of your dissertation committee, you may schedule your Dissertation Review and final Defense whenever it is convenient--but unless you plan ahead you may not be able to receive your degree during the semester in which you defend. Hence when thinking about scheduling your Defense, and planning to complete your degree in a given semester, you need to keep in mind the time that may be needed between Dissertation Review, defense, and submission. If you schedule your defense too close to the submission deadline, you very well may not have enough time to submit that term. Registration in 794 is required until the dissertation has been *submitted* to the Graduate School. In order to avoid registration in a semester, your graduation paperwork *and* your manuscript must be submitted to the Graduate School by the Add/Drop date of that semester.

Working backward from the submission deadline and defense, you also need to give your committee members a reasonable amount of time to read the full text of the thesis that you will be defending. (3-4 weeks is about the minimum; of course this depends on how much of the thesis your committee has already read, what changes they have wanted you to make, and how busy they are. In any case, you should get their agreement on this question!)

Counting back from the submission deadline, then, it seems necessary for you to get the full final draft of your thesis to your committee members at or near the start of the semester in which you want to receive your degree. All in all, the minimum amount of time between getting the thesis to your committee and final submission is about three months, especially if you are to have a Dissertation Review.

To get your degree in a given semester, you must meet the university's submission deadline --on or about Nov. 1 (in the Fall), April 1 (in the Spring), and July 1 (in the Summer); you should check and make sure exactly when it is for the semester you plan to submit.\* It is recommended that the Dissertation Review be held late in the semester *before* the semester in which the defense will be held. It takes at a minimum about two months between the Dissertation Review and submission, and you need to add onto this the time for your committee members to read the thesis before the Dissertation Review (say, about another month) = three months. Hence for a Nov. 1 submission you must have your draft thesis to your committee by August 1; for an April 1 deposit - by January 1; and a July 1 deposit - by April 1. (Dates are approximate.)

Further, the Grad School does not guarantee the degree will be granted in the semester of submission, insofar as editing or other changes required by the university's editor may slow down the acceptance process. An earlier submission obviously allows more time for this. In addition, if

---

\* These and all dates cited in these Guidelines are approximate, and may change from year to year; for the exact ones see the current "Thesis/Dissertation Submission Deadlines."

it takes you more than three months to complete the editing required by the University Thesis Editor, the university charges a *\$100 late fee for each month delay* thereafter; of course this can also delay your degree posting date.

Note that you may defend at any time before the ADD/DROP date of a given semester without paying tuition or being registered for that semester if you were enrolled during the previous semester. Hence, for example, someone who was registered and finished the dissertation in the Fall semester could:

- 1) give the finished thesis to the committee members by late November;
- 2) hold a Dissertation Review in December;
- 3) defend at the start of the Spring semester (before the ADD/DROP date, usually in late January),
- 4) incorporate the necessary changes and deposit by April 1 (deposit date), and graduate in the Spring.

With good planning, hard work, and an amenable committee, one may do it all in one semester (although you will still have to turn in the initial draft during the previous semester). Here are some possible scenarios, but as you can see, they are tight.

#### FALL DEFENSE (Sample Schedule)

Full Thesis to your committee - August 1

Dissertation Review - Sept. 1

Revised Thesis to your committee – Sept. 30

Defense – Oct. 15

Deposit (University Deadline) – November 1

Graduation – December

#### SPRING DEFENSE (Sample Schedule)

Full Thesis to your committee - December 1

Dissertation Review - Jan. 15

Revised Thesis to your committee – Feb. 15

Defense – March 10

Deposit (University Deadline) – April 1

Graduation – May 15

#### SUMMER DEFENSE (Sample Schedule)

Full Thesis to your committee - March 1

Dissertation Review - April 15

Revised Thesis to your committee – May 10

Defense – June 1

Deposit (University Deadline) – July 1

Graduation – degree posted end of Summer

### **C. Defense Procedures and Paperwork.**

**1. At the Defense.** The defense takes place. If...

a) You do not pass, no forms are signed.

b) You pass, and your thesis is found to be 100% complete, all of the necessary forms, including the “Approval to Submit” and “Verification of Completion” of degree requirements, may be signed and then submitted. You get permission to upload, the Thesis Editor gives approval (possibly after further changes and a second upload), and everything is done. (Time restrictions for making changes demanded by the Thesis Editor apply; see below.)

c) You pass, but (as in almost all cases) the committee demands changes. No forms are signed (in some cases, the committee members may agree to sign if the Chair does not, taking responsibility for the thesis’ appropriateness for submission; this depends on the committee and the situation). Move on to step 2.

**2. How to get approval for submission if the Committee requires changes:**

a) When you have completed the changes demanded by the committee, and when the dissertation has been approved for submission, get the signatures you need on the “Approval to Submit” form. NOTE: the date on the “Approval to Submit” form should be the date on which the committee is satisfied that all changes have been made, NOT the date of the defense—otherwise, you will have less time to make the changes, if any, demanded by the Graduate School’s Thesis Editor (see below).

b) You complete the on-line Thesis Submission Profile and additional paperwork. These include: a copy of the “Approval to Submit” form; a copy of the latest “Appointment/Change of Committee” form; the original signature page of the dissertation; the original signed document checklist. Note: The Graduate School requires that these be submitted to them in person.

c) After submitting all graduation paperwork, you get approval to upload the manuscript by the Graduate School Thesis Editor. This must be done by the appropriate deadline, if the degree is to be granted that term.

The paperwork and upload should be carried out as soon as possible after the “Approval to Submit,” since you have 3 months from the signing of the “Approval to Submit” form to make any possible changes demanded by the Thesis Editor and to get the Thesis Editor’s final approval. Thereafter a \$100 fee is charged per month until the corrected thesis has been uploaded and approved.

*Financial consequences:* You are required to be registered for 794 until the time that the paperwork is completed and the thesis is uploaded (unless both are done before the Add/Drop deadline).

d) You must then make sure that the Dissertation Committee Chair\* completes the “Verification of Completion” form, which may be downloaded from the Graduate School site (it is

---

\* According to Graduate School instructions this is done by the Graduate Advisor, but in our department the Dissertation Committee chair substitutes.

also in your original packet). This form requires a thorough check of SIS or the student's STARS report to confirm that there are no outstanding requirements on your record. This form is then signed by the Department Chair and submitted to the Graduate School within 3 weeks of the upload. This form goes to the Thesis Editor, who signs off on it.

e) If the Thesis Editor requires changes to the thesis, a corrected version must be uploaded (i.e., a second upload). To repeat from above: you have 3 months from the signing of the "Approval to Submit" form to make any changes demanded by the Thesis Editor and to get the Thesis Editor's final approval. Thereafter a \$100 fee is charged per month until the corrected thesis has been uploaded and approved.

\* \* \*

Your comments, questions, and suggestions how to make these guidelines more useful are welcome. Send them to the Graduate Advisor, Dept. of Slavic Languages and Literatures.

Revised 7/92; updated 6/93, 9/94, 5/95, 5/97, 4/01, revised 11/01, 2/05, 10.06.

### III. The Bureaucratic Gauntlet, or the Paper Trail Leading to the PhD

The following provides an overview of the most important forms and procedures you will need to complete during your graduate studies at USC. Please note, though, that this list is intended as a useful summary only. Complete and authoritative information is available in the University *Catalogue* and from the Graduate School website (<http://www.usc.edu/dept/GRADSCHL/>)

Where indicated, forms are downloadable from: <http://www.usc.edu/dept/GRADSCHL/downloadstudents.html>  
N.B.: Students should enter the program under the 781 (Ph.D.) postcode.

#### **To arrange to take the M.A. Exam**

Early in the last semester of M.A.-level coursework, typically your 4th semester at USC

Inform the department that you intend to take the M.A. exam

Pass the Russian language proficiency exam (native speakers exempt)

Ask Administrative Assistant to approve M.A. classes for degree credit

{*For thesis only*: File "Appointment of Committee" form\*}

#### **To get your degree upon passing the M.A. exam or successfully completing the M.A. thesis**

File signed "Verification of Completion of the Requirements for the Master's Degree" form with the Graduate School certifying completion of M.A. requirements

{*For thesis only*: complete signature page and "Approval to Submit Defended and Final Copy of Master's Work"}

File "Change/Addition of Major, Minor, or Degree Objective" form indicating M.A. postcode, 195 (available from Susan)

#### **Stages on the way to the PhD**

▶ During your first post-M.A. semester of coursework at USC.

Formulate Secondary Field and pass oral exam on it.

▶ 2 semesters before the Qualifying Examination

Organize your Guidance Committee and file an "Appointment of Committee" form (downloadable)\*  
See also: "The Role of the Outside Faculty Member of Guidance and Dissertation Committees" (downloadable)

▶ Before your Qualifying Exam you also must Pass Ph.D.-level language exams in Russian; and two of: French, German, a second Slavic language.

Ask Administrative Assistant to approve Ph.D. courses for degree credit. Make sure transfer courses are credited by Degree Progress

---

\* To change an already established committee, file a "Change of Committee" form (downloadable).

- ▶ 2 months before Qualifying Exam                      Set test dates, in consultation with your advisor and Guidance Committee
  - ▶ 1 month or more before Qualifying Exam                      Submit formal Dissertation Proposal to your Guidance Committee
  - ▶ 1 month or more before Qualifying Exam                      File "Request to Take the PhD Qualifying Examination" form (downloadable)
  - ▶ 2 weeks before Qualifying Exam                      Confirm dates and availability of all committee members
- After passing the Qualifying Exam create your Dissertation Committee.**
- File an "Appointment of Committee"\* form (downloadable). See also: "The Role of the Outside Faculty Member of Guidance and Dissertation Committees" (downloadable)

**To complete the PhD thesis and get your degree**

Familiarize my yourself with the

- 1) "Thesis/Dissertation Submission Deadlines" and
- 2) "Thesis/Dissertation Format and Presentation Guidelines," both available from the Graduate School web page ([http://www.usc.edu/dept/GRADSCHL/thesis\\_diss.html](http://www.usc.edu/dept/GRADSCHL/thesis_diss.html)) plus 3) The packet of required documents downloadable from: <http://www.usc.edu/dept/GRADSCHL/PacketsInfo.html>

After your Dissertation Defense, and after you have made revisions to the dissertation as required by your committee, follow procedures for final submission of the dissertation according to the Graduate School website, as discussed in the "Defense Procedures and Paperwork" in the Guidelines above.

\* \* \*

---

\* To change an already established committee, file a "Change of Committee" form (downloadable).