Annual Outcomes Assessment, MA/PhD Program in Linguistics, May 2019

Prepared for the Office of Institutional Research and Effectiveness

Master’s Programs (except for Master’s programs who are new to GC this year):

To complete this year’s assessment process, please answer the following questions in a 1–2 page report, to be submitted to the Office of Institutional Research and Effectiveness:

1. Specify which area of assessment you are reviewing in this cycle. This review will examine how effectively an assessment helps you to determine whether students have learned or achieved what you want them to learn or achieve at a given stage in the program, based on the outcomes you have set for them.

2. What learning outcomes do you hope are achieved through the exam or activity under review? Use your 2017–2018 assessment worksheet (attached) to find a complete list of your learning outcomes, as well as information on which outcomes best apply to this year’s assessment.

3. Gather evidence to help you evaluate how well your assessment/activity demonstrates successful attainment of its related learning outcomes. Your 2017–2018 assessment worksheet will be helpful in selecting the evidence you will examine. Ideal evidence would be examples of student work; other forms of evidence include publication data, job placement data, exam grades or pass rates.

4. Report your findings. Is the assessment (and preparation for it) effective? If it is, provide the evidence for its effectiveness. If it is not, describe what changes you plan to make to ensure this form of assessment is more effective.

5. What further changes could be made to the assessment or to the learning outcomes associated with it, or to the curriculum/preparation for the assessment?

6. What other next steps will your program take as a result of this review, in terms of program planning and decision making?

This assessment reviews the MA thesis for the General Linguistics MA and the Computational Linguistics MA of the MA/PhD Program in Linguistics.

The stated learning outcomes for the MA thesis are as follows:

1. The ability to professionally discuss and generally assess research in a variety of topics within their area of specialization, both orally and in writing
2. The ability to be conversant in the literature concerning broad topical areas from which they draw specific research problems
3. The ability to formulate research projects to answer specified questions, write proposals for the project, and carry out the proposed research

Evidence for successful attainment of the learning outcomes:
We reviewed data related to MA theses for 2 consecutive academic years: 2016-2017 and 2017-2018.

In AY 2016-2017 a total of 10 MA theses were successfully completed and deposited. Of these, 4 were written in the area of Computational Linguistics, and 6 in the area of General Linguistics: 2 in Syntax, 1 in Neurolinguistics, 1 in First Language Acquisition, 1 in Anthropological Linguistics, and 1 in Sociolinguistics.

The average time to degree for this cohort was 4.1 semesters, well under the 8 allowed by the GC. Three graduates went on to pursue PhD degrees in Linguistics; all CLMA
graduates obtained employment related to their area of specialization (e.g. data analyst; software engineer; research engineer); 5 of the 6 general linguistics MAs obtained employment in a field for which the study of linguistics is relevant (language teaching; publishing).

In AY 2017-2018 a total of 10 MA theses were successfully completed and deposited. Of these, 4 were again written in CL and 6 in General Linguistics: 2 in Semantics; 2 in Phonology; 1 in Language Acquisition; and 1 in Sociolinguistics. Average time to degree for this cohort was 5.1 semesters, one semester longer than the previous cohort, but still well under the maximum permitted by the GC. Three graduates (2 Gen Ling, 1 CL) went on to pursue PhD degrees in Linguistics; the remaining CLMAs obtained employment in a related area (data scientist, software engineer, web designer); 2 of the remaining Gen Ling graduates are currently employed in a field related to linguistics (language teaching).

As the majority of our MA students are part-time, we consider both the time to degree and the outcomes (employment/further studies) to be excellent.