

SLaT Graduate Handbook

Second Language Teaching M.A.

Center for Language Studies

BYU

**BRIGHAM YOUNG
UNIVERSITY**

The Center for Language Studies
Brigham Young University
Second Language Teaching M.A. Program

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Welcome

Welcome to the Second Language Teaching (SLaT) M.A. program at Brigham Young University. I am delighted to have you as part of our program. The next two years will be an exciting, challenging, and rewarding time as you adjust to life as a graduate student. I encourage you to seek out other graduate students for advice and support. The graduate student community will be invaluable as you adjust to the rigors of graduate-level courses and empirical research.

As a graduate faculty, we are committed to providing you with the best graduate education possible. We want you to succeed in our program and are therefore committed to excellence in graduate teaching and mentoring. Our goal is to assist you in finishing your degree and developing into a confident and capable second language teacher. It is our hope that your graduate research will result in meaningful contributions to the language-teaching profession. We look forward to working with you during this significant period of professional development.

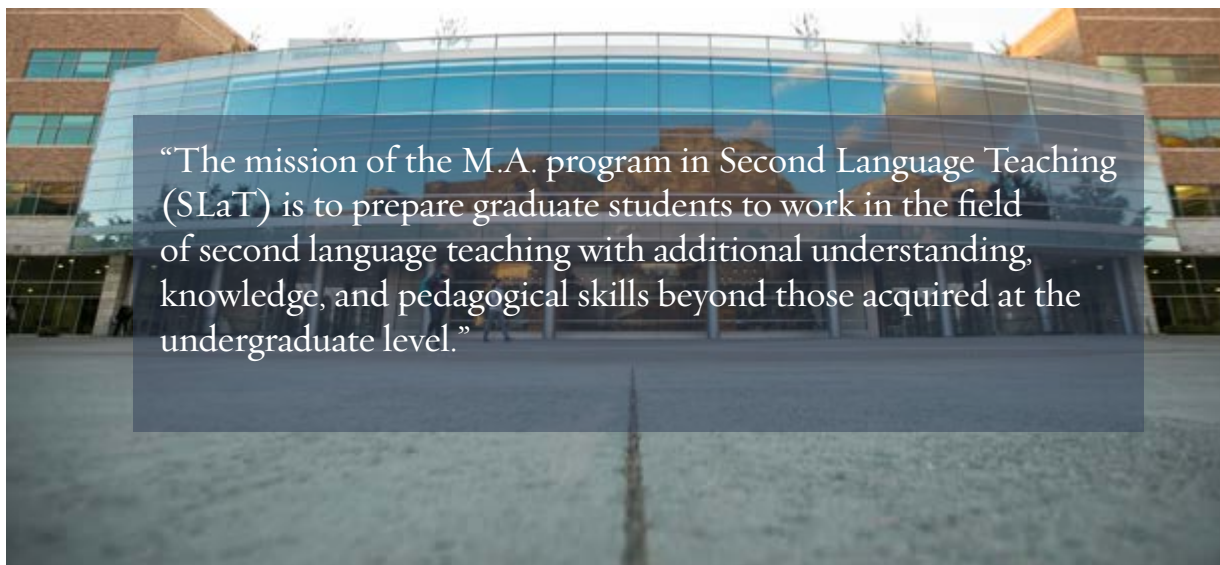
The success of your graduate program ultimately rests with you; therefore, we encourage you to be an active learner. Immerse yourself in the learning process and you will experience intellectual growth that can only be obtained through graduate studies. Do not be afraid to seek out mentors and graduate faculty to further your learning.

We have compiled this handbook to assist you throughout your program and encourage you to read it carefully and follow its instructions.

Sincerely,

Dr. Gregory L. Thompson, Graduate Coordinator
Second Language Teaching M.A.

Overview



“The mission of the M.A. program in Second Language Teaching (SLaT) is to prepare graduate students to work in the field of second language teaching with additional understanding, knowledge, and pedagogical skills beyond those acquired at the undergraduate level.”

When you complete the Second Language Teaching (SLaT) program, you will have studied the following:

Methodology and Approaches

Summarize and evaluate major theories, historical trends, and published research regarding second language teaching methodology and approaches.

Courses that contribute: SLAT 601, SLAT 603, SLAT 604, SLAT 610, SLAT 611, SLAT 612, SLAT 613, SLAT 614R, SLAT 680R, SLAT 698R, SLAT 699R

Target Language

Demonstrate knowledge of the target language as a system and how the language is linked to the culture.

Courses that contribute: SLAT 602, SLAT 604, SLAT 613, SLAT 680R

Effective Application

Explain and apply principles, practices, and appropriate technology for effectively teaching and assessing second language and culture learning.

Courses that contribute: SLAT 601, SLAT 604, SLAT 610, SLAT 611, SLAT 612, SLAT 613, SLAT 614R, SLAT 680R, SLAT 698R, SLAT 699R

Research Skills

Design second language research studies, collect and analyze data, and report the findings.

Courses that contribute: SLAT 601, SLAT 603, SLAT 604, SLAT 614R, SLAT 680R, SLAT 698R, SLAT 699R

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Graduating in Two Years



If you plan to graduate within two calendar years, you need to establish a plan that leads you to your anticipated graduation date. As you plan, please keep the following in mind:

I.

What are the deadlines associated with your graduation date? In graduate school, deadlines are *very* different from those in your undergraduate program. Visit gradstudies.byu.edu for current dates and deadlines.

2.

At the end of your first year, determine how much time you will need for your comprehensive exam and thesis writing. It is a good idea to finish all your classes by the end of your third semester if possible. You will be surprised by how little time you have to finish everything, even without classes .

If you wish to graduate in two years, you will need to begin thesis or project work (IRB paperwork, prospectus writing, data collection, etc.) during the Spring and Summer terms following your first academic year or earlier. If you were admitted provisionally and are required to take additional coursework, such as a methodology course, you may need to allocate time to begin thesis work during your first Spring and Summer terms.

3.

What worked well for previous students? Your fellow classmates and alumni are your very best resource when planning effective strategies.

Course Selection

We have included a sample academic planner that can help you as you schedule your next two years. Since most of the core courses are taught only once a year, we suggest you follow a schedule such as the one following:

Foundation Courses

SLAT 601—Survey of Second Language Teaching and Acquisition: Theory and Practice (3 cr.)
SLAT 602—Linguistics for Language Teachers (3 cr.)
SLAT 603—Conducting Research in Second Language Teaching (3 cr.)
SLAT 604—Assessing Language Skills (3 cr.)

Advanced Core

SLAT 610—Using Media and Technology in Second language Teaching and Research (3 cr.)
SLAT 611—Teaching, Listening, and Speaking Skills (3 cr.)
SLAT 612—Teaching, Reading, and Writing Skills (3 cr.)
SLAT 613—Teaching and Learning about Culture (3 cr.)
SLAT 614R—Seminar in Second Language Teaching (3 cr.)

Electives

SLAT 680R—Directed Studies (in language of specialization) (1-3 cr.)
Language Elective Course: Graduate-level language, linguistics, or literature course in the language of specialization
General elective—Additional graduate-level, language-specific course, or graduate-level pedagogy course approved by your graduate committee.

Master's Thesis or Project

SLAT 698R—Master's Action Research Project (3 cr.)
SLAT 699R—Master's Thesis (1-6 cr.)

Examinations

Written comprehensive exam
Final oral defense of thesis or project

REMEMBER:
Spring and Summer terms are just as important as Fall and Winter if you want to graduate in a timely manner.

*Course descriptions and learning outcomes can be found online in the BYU Graduate Catalog.

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Additional Requirements

Occasionally, if you have not met all prerequisite requirements, you may be required to complete one or all of the following additional requirements in addition to the program requirements outlined above. Your admittance documents will indicate if any of these additional requirements are mandatory.

LING 501—Advanced Research and Writing Techniques for Second Language Writers (3 cr.)

A language methodology course from the following list:

ARAB 377—Arabic Language Teaching Methods
CHIN 377—Chinese Language Teaching Procedures
FRENCH 377—Introduction to French Language Teaching
GERM 377—Methods in Teaching German
JAPAN 377—Japanese Language Teaching Procedures
KOREA 377—Korean Language Teaching Methods
FLANG 377R—Foreign Language Teaching Methods

Obtaining Advisement

You will also meet with the Graduate Coordinator once per year. You will also have periodic meetings with the CLS Assistant Director, who serves as the Program Manager. During these meetings, we will review your graduate progress report, your career goals, and help you make plans for successful semesters.

We also encourage you to meet regularly with your chair and committee members throughout the duration of your program. Normally, these meetings will become much more frequent as you approach your defense date.

*Course descriptions and learning outcomes can be found online in the BYU Graduate Catalog.

Sample Roadmap to Graduation

Summer of Acceptance



1) Begin SLAT Reading List, 2) Contact the Graduate Coordinator, 3) Plan for Fall orientation, 4) Register for classes

Fall I



SLAT 601, 602, Elective I



1) Get to know faculty and ask about their research interests, 2) Establish a study plan for comprehensive exam, 3) Complete program of study, 4) Choose a committee chair and committee members, 5) Meet with faculty advisor within the first month to discuss and plan the program of study, 6) Develop thesis topic and problem statement with committee chair, 7) Write down questions about research interests



1) Explore career options, 2) Start a professional portfolio



<https://gradprogress.sim.byu.edu/>

Winter I



SLAT 603, Advanced Core I, Advanced Core 2



1) Finalize thesis topic, 2) Journal about thesis topic and gather information from the web and classes relevant to thesis topic, 3) Meet with an HBLL research librarian and compile possible sources for literature review, 4) Continue study plan for comprehensive exam



1) Determine career goals, 2) Plan for Spring/Summer, 3) Draft a resume/CV



<https://gradprogress.sim.byu.edu/>



Paperwork
Due



Written
Project







Contributing
Courses







Career
Milestone

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Spring/Summer 1

-  Optional (SLAT 698R or 699R)
-  1) Determine data collection requirements and recruit research participants, 2) Journal data collection observations, 3) Write prospectus, 4) Schedule prospectus meeting with committee, 5) Study for comprehensive exam
-  1) Participate in professional/extracurricular academic activities, 2) Explore Ph.D. programs, 3) Start professional networking
-  SLaT Thesis Prospectus Form, IRB Application, and <https://gradprogress.sim.byu.edu/>.




Fall 2


-  SLAT 604, Advanced Core 3, Elective 2
-  1) Finish prospectus (by Oct 15), 2) Collect and analyze thesis data, 3) Study for comprehensive exam
-  1) Finalize resume/CV, 2) Apply to Ph.D. programs and visit Career Services
-  SLaT Thesis Prospectus Form

Winter 2

-  SLAT 698R or 699R
-  1) Complete comprehensive exam, 2) Finish writing thesis, 3) Oral defense (at least two weeks prior to defense date), 4) Apply for graduation (by the end of Jan.)
-  1) Apply to jobs, 2) Finalize Ph.D. plans, 3) Prepare for the next phase of life!
-  <https://gradprogress.sim.byu.edu/edu/>


Spring/Summer 2

-  SLAT 698R or 699R
-  Finalize Winter 2 milestones as needed
-  <https://gradprogress.sim.byu.edu/edu/>

 Paperwork Due

 Written Project

 Contributing Courses

 Career Milestone

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Financial Assistance

Scholarships

New and continuing students are automatically considered for scholarship funding. Monies received from the College of Humanities and the Office of Graduate Studies have allowed us to fund between 30% and 80% of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints member graduate tuition. We hope that second-year awards prove to be commensurate with the amounts received during a student's first year. However, students should understand that second-year awards are not automatic and may be reduced or denied based on an unsatisfactory student evaluation—although these cases are rare. Please note that fourth-semester assistance is lower since students normally only have 6 credits left to complete at that time. Additionally, second-year awards may fluctuate according to the money that CLS receives from the College of Humanities and the Office of Graduate Studies.

Scholarships are dispersed only four times during a student's program (i.e., during the four Fall and Winter semesters). This requires that students carefully consider both their academic and financial plans to ensure timely completion of the program and wise management of financial assistance. This is particularly true for students whose academic plans require them to take classes during the Spring and Summer terms. Additional questions about scholarship funding can be directed to the CLS Assistant Director.

Professional Conference and Travel Funding

Limited funds may also be available for participation in professional conferences. If your research work is selected for presentation at a conference, you will be eligible to apply for travel assistance by applying to the CLS Assistant Director in 3086B JFSB. The application is available at slat.byu.edu.

Student Instructorships

We encourage you to include student instructorships as part of your academic experience. Most students pursue these opportunities as a way of supporting themselves financially. Because we are an interdisciplinary program, our students teach in a variety of departments in the College of Humanities, and each department has its own policies and deadlines for student instructors. Newly admitted students will be contacted regarding teaching opportunities and application procedures.

Teaching assignments normally require that you have already completed a methodology course. Additionally, salary levels vary according to several factors (e.g., credit hours, type of course taught, previous experience, etc.). Please note that while it is very common for students to get instructorships, no guarantees can be made, as each department's staffing needs fluctuate from semester to semester.



Research Assistants and Mentoring Grants

Individual faculty members frequently apply for and receive funding to hire research assistants or to involve student mentees in their research. For more information on these opportunities, you should consult with individual faculty members.

University Sponsored Awards

Additional graduate student awards may be available through the BYU Graduate Student Society, the ORCA office, or other university entities. Visit their websites for more information. Below are a few of the most popular awards.

Professional Presentation Award

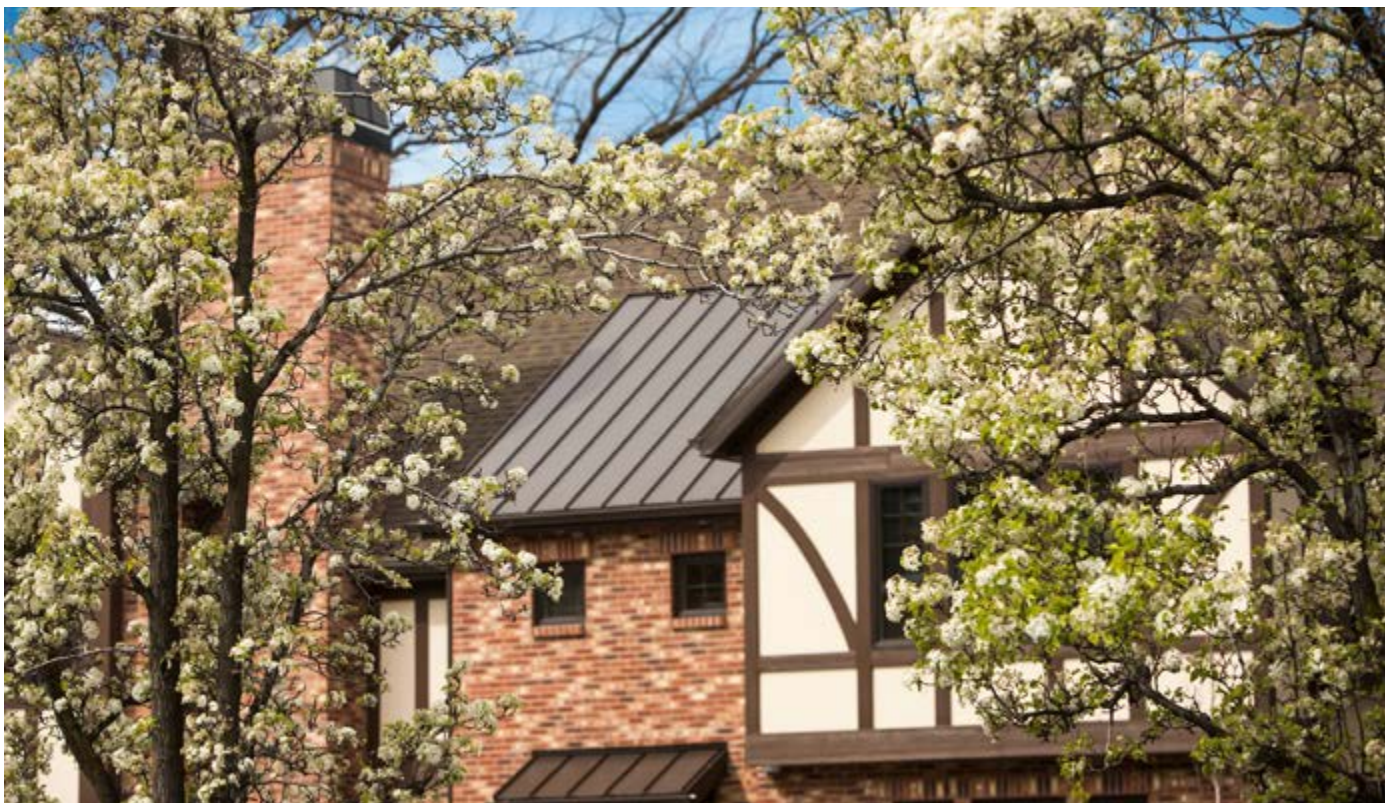
The Professional Presentation Award (PPA) is specific to the BYU Graduate Student Society for graduate students who present original research at professional conferences and averages around \$500 per award. For more information, visit <https://gradstudies.byu.edu/page/professional-presentation-award>.

BYU Honors Program

BYU Honors Advisement offers national scholarships for graduate students. These include the Fulbright U.S. Student Program and the Rhodes Scholarship. For more information on these scholarship programs, visit honors.byu.edu or email honors@byu.edu.

Three Minute Thesis

The Three Minute Thesis Competition (3MT) is an international research presentation competition. The College of Humanities holds an initial competition in mid-February, with the winner advancing to the university level. University awards range from \$1,000 to \$2,000. Visit <https://gradstudies.byu.edu/page/3mt-three-minute-thesis> for more information.



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Get Involved

BYU offers a variety of opportunities for students. While you will likely be very busy as a graduate student, we encourage you to seek for balance and take advantage of the social and academic activities on campus. We have offered a few highlights below.

Graduate Student Society

The purpose and mission of the BYU Graduate Student Society (GSS) is to enrich the BYU graduate student culture by providing events that promote intellectual growth, professional development, spirituality, and social interaction; to enhance the BYU graduate student experience by providing a campus-wide voice for graduate student needs and concerns; and to encourage scholarly and creative contribution by promoting innovative research and field-preparation opportunities.

GSS hosts several events throughout the year, including barbecues, workshops, the Faith and Scholarship Symposium, and the Women Faculty and Student Forum. They also host several research activities, such as the 3 Minute Thesis competition, the Grad Expo, and the Research Presentation Award.

More information on GSS can be found at gss.byu.edu.

Foreign Language Student Residence

Students who desire a more intensive language study experience and practical application of the language under the direction of faculty and native-speaker residents may apply to live in the FLSR. All activities in the individual apartments in the residence are conducted in the foreign language being studied. Housing is available for men and women in the Arabic, Chinese, French, German, Italian, Japanese, Portuguese, Spanish, and Russian languages. You may participate in this program as a student or as a native-speaker resident facilitator.

If you have specific questions about the Foreign Language Student Residence, please contact the FLSR Program Office at 801.422.3765 or flsr-dept@byu.edu. Visit flsr.byu.edu for more information.



BYU Language Certificate

As a graduate student, you may qualify for a BYU Language Certificate. The BYU Language Certificate is official proof of your foreign language proficiency.

Your BYU transcript will include official notation of your language proficiency (visit our website for ratings details). You will receive a BYU Language Certificate endorsing your completion of advanced coursework and official certificates of your proficiency ratings from ACTFL for speaking and writing.

Please visit certificate.byu.edu or reach out to the Center for Language Studies for more information and specifics on the requirements for a BYU Language Certificate. Note that this program does not cover all languages offered at BYU.

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BYU Language Fairs

BYU organizes several language fairs for junior high and high school students currently studying either Chinese, French, German, Russian, or Spanish. These fairs offer a fun way for you to add professional service to your CV. The 2021 Language Fairs are scheduled for April 15 (the second reading day between the end of classes and beginning of final exams). It is your responsibility to contact the department of your emphasis language to find out more details about volunteering. Visit languagefair.byu.edu for more information.



Religion Course

If you are registered for at least two credit hours per semester or one credit hour per term, you are eligible (on a space-available basis and with instructor approval) to attend religion courses without incurring any additional tuition costs.

The registration ADV Form 6 is available at gradstudies.byu.edu. Note: Because this is a no-credit option, you will not register for the course through AIM. For more information contact the CLS Assistant Director.

Lectures and Cultural Activities

The College of Humanities hosts various academic lectures and events that can supplement your graduate experience. The BYU Humanities Center offers distinguished lectures and research groups that are available to graduate students, as well as faculty. Visit humanitiescenter.byu.edu for more information.

The BYU International Cinema has free weekly screenings of films from all over the world in foreign languages. These are great supplements for both you and your students. Visit ic.byu.edu for more information.

There are many other campus entities that host cultural lectures and activities, such as the following:

- Kennedy Center for International Studies
kennedy.byu.edu
- BYU Museum of Art
moa.byu.edu
- College of Fine Arts and Communications
cfac.byu.edu
- Harold B. Lee Library
lib.byu.edu/events

You can subscribe to an email newsletter highlighting upcoming events for most of these organizations.

Free Transportation

After receiving a federal grant, the cities of Provo and Orem now provide access to the dedicated UVX bus line for all persons. This free transportation will last until the end of 2020. You do not need any pass to ride the UVX buses.

BYU provides access to the UTA FrontRunner train line and Salt Lake City Trax lines. Newer BYU ID cards feature an embedded chip that can be scanned as you get on and off the trains.

BYU also provides local shuttle service to several of the main residence hubs around the Provo campus area. For more information on the shuttle services, visit <https://www.rideuta.com/Fares-And-Passes/Pass-Programs/UTA-School-Pass-Programs/Brigham-Young-University>.

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Resources



SLaT Website

This newly updated SLaT website has information for current SLaT students including hyperlinks to resources, a digital version of this handbook, the SLaT Reading List, and course information. We hope you find this resource helpful and we are open to your constructive feedback to help make it better. Please visit slat.byu.edu for more information.

GradProg

GradProg is the online workflow system that you will use to track your progress throughout your program. It includes all of the needed steps including your prospectus, program of study, thesis defense, and other items. It can be accessed at <https://gradprogress.sim.byu.edu/>.

BYU Copyright

The Copyright Licensing Office supports faculty, students, and staff by providing copyright education, online and in-person training, and policy advisement, as well as assuring effective and appropriate copyright and licensing practices. They provide online and in-person copyright tutorials, individual consultations, and helpful checklists. Visit copyright.byu.edu for more information.

Resource Librarians

BYU's Harold B. Lee Library has a variety of research librarians who are available to help you as you prepare to compile references for your literature review. They can help you refine your online searches and compile dozens of potential references. You should make an appointment ahead of time and come with well-defined research questions. You can access librarian information at lib.byu.edu/directory by searching for your department, (normally education), linguistics, and your language of emphasis.

BYU Graduate Studies Website

This is a very important website for you as a graduate student. It includes all official academic forms, information, and deadlines regarding your program. It also includes a list of your university privileges, funding opportunities, and specific information about submitting your thesis. We encourage you to visit this website often. Visit gradstudies.byu.edu for more information.

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Office of Research and Creative Activities

This office supports faculty and students in efforts related to research, creative activities, and other areas of academic scholarship. It also houses the compliance committee responsible for approving human-subject-IRB research. You will need to apply through this office before doing any research involving students, teachers, etc.

More information and the IRB application can be found online at orca.byu.edu.

Office of Information Technology

BYU's Office of Information Technology offers free mini-courses to train you on various software including Excel, Photoshop, and Illustrator. More importantly, they will train and prepare you for the electronic thesis and dissertation (ETD) publication process. You can register for these trainings at lib.byu.edu/services.

Humanities Technology & Resource Support Center

Students in the Second Language Teaching program may use facilities in the HTRSC for computer-assisted language instruction and research. The HTRSC computer facilities are located on the north side of the JFSB on the ground floor.

Center for Collaborative Research and Statistical Consulting

This center offers statistical support to the university community while providing training to students in the Department of Statistics. You should initially visit the center with your advisor during the planning stages of your quantitative research. They can help you with experiment design and analysis. You are entitled to two free hours of consultation. As a graduate student, you may receive an additional free hour of consultation if CLS was involved in the planning of your research. Cost reductions are given to graduate students when their advisor is present at the initial consultation. Beyond that, an hourly fee is charged.

Visit <https://statistics.byu.edu/consulting-center> for more information.

LinkedIn Learning

LinkedIn Learning is an online service that provides thousands of hours of professional training and software training. BYU provides free access to LinkedIn Learning through learning.amazon.byu.edu. You must have a BYU NetID to access the site.



Research & Writing Center

The Harold B. Lee Library offers access to the Research & Writing Center (3340 HBLL) to all undergraduate and graduate students free of cost. Certified writing consultants come from a wide variety of fields and welcome general academic writing as well as application materials, grant proposals, and other forms of written work. Consultations are limited to one hour per day, with online consultations limited to once per week. Writing consultants are available to help at any point in the writing process but will not write your work for you. To find more information and to schedule an appointment, visit <http://writingcenter.byu.edu/>.

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Graduate Student Thesis Committees

The Second Language Teaching M.A. program uses a committee system for thesis evaluation. There is a separate graduate committee for each student, and the role of the committee is to advise, guide, and mentor you through the process.

All committee members share in the responsibility of advising and directing you concerning course work, degree requirements, and thesis research. For example, all will participate in prospectus meetings and thesis defenses and will be responsible for the evaluation of your performance. Committee formation should occur no later than at the time of submission of the student's Program of Study (<https://gradprogress.sim.byu.edu/>), which should occur in the first semester of study.

Academic Sponsor

Once accepted into a graduate program, you are assigned a faculty sponsor, who guides your first registration and individual study until you select your graduate committee during the first semester.

Committee Chair

You should begin immediately to consider the graduate faculty member with whom you would like to work. This faculty member (referred to as the advisor, the thesis advisor, the graduate advisor, or the committee chair) will be your primary mentor and the faculty representative most responsible for guiding you through the thesis or project.

Although you will be asked to choose your thesis advisor soon after beginning the M.A. program, this decision should not be made arbitrarily. You should consult with multiple professors about possible thesis topics and appropriate advisors for your area of interest. It is highly recommended that you choose a thesis topic closely related to faculty members' areas of expertise. The graduate coordinator is another important mentor and can answer your questions and address your concerns about this process.

You should understand that there are several factors that might prevent a professor from being able and willing to accept a position to be your chair. Department policies, for example, often limit the number of graduate candidates each faculty member may take on. In addition, faculty may take a leave of absence or retire and, as a result, may not be present for your scheduled defense.

Therefore, when choosing a thesis advisor, be wise. Take the necessary time to make a good decision and consider the following questions:

- Is this a person with whom I get along well?
- Is this person planning on retiring or going on leave during my program?
- Does this person prefer qualitative or quantitative analysis (something that may be more important than your topic)?
- Will this person be available to meet with me as needed?
- Will this person help me set realistic goals and accomplish them?
- Overall, do I feel this person is a good choice for me?

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Your committee chair serves as your mentor, both academically and professionally, but you are ultimately responsible for your progress. Please take advantage of the opportunities this relationship presents.

In the end, you may not have complete control over who your thesis chair will be. Still, you can greatly influence this important relationship based on how you manage your thesis project.

For more information, see the chapter, “Managing Your Supervisor,” in the book, *How to Get a Ph.D.: A Handbook for Students and Their Supervisors* by Estelle Phillips and Derek Pugh.

Committee Members

Committee members are a necessary part of your thesis committee. Normally, you will have two committee members, in addition to your chair. Choose individuals who have a specific expertise relevant to your research topic. For example, one professor may be very experienced in qualitative analysis while another may be familiar with your topic. In the end, it is important to choose individuals with whom both you and your thesis chair can work well. Many times it is a good idea to ask your thesis chair for suggestions.

Committee members must have graduate faculty status. If a faculty member desired for your committee does not hold an appointment on the graduate faculty, you can file a petition through the CLS Assistant Director.

In those cases where a student declares a minor, one member of the committee must be from the minor department.

Changing Your Committee

It is important that you assemble the best possible committee to assist you in your thesis writing. Therefore the occasion may arise where you may need to make changes to your committee. Changing your thesis chair is the most consequential of these changes, as it may delay your program timeline or impact your relationship with that person. If you do feel strongly that you need to change your chair, ensure you have an appropriate replacement faculty member in mind and speak with the Graduate Coordinator before so he or she can mediate the change.

Changing thesis committee members is less consequential but should still be carried out in a professional manner. First, consult with your Committee Chair regarding the change, and then obtain the consent of the new faculty member(s) you would like to have serve on your committee. You then need to file a request for “Program of Study Change” through GradProg (<https://gradprogress.sim.byu.edu/>). Notify any committee members who are being taken off of your committee.

Reasons why it may become necessary to change a committee chair or certain committee members include the following:

- You become interested in a new area of scholarship or a research project and the new area is more closely aligned with a different faculty member’s expertise.
- You wish to make a substantial change in anticipated professional goals.
- A faculty member’s leave or other duties interfere with serving on the committee.



Progressing Through Your Program

GradProg

The GradProg is the online system through which you will track your progress throughout your program. It can be accessed at gradprogress.sim.byu.edu.

It consists of the following elements which are described in more detail in this handbook:

1. [Committee Selection \(see pp. 17-18\)](#)
2. Program of Study (see below)
3. [Comprehensive Exam \(see p. 21-22\)](#)
4. [Prospectus \(see p. 23\)](#)
5. [Prepare for Defense \(see p. 23-26\)](#)
6. [Thesis Defense \(see p. 23-26\)](#)
7. [ETD \(Electronic Thesis/Dissertation\) \(see p. 23-26\)](#)

Program of Study

Your Program of Study is a carefully considered outline of how you plan to fulfill the degree requirements. On the Program of Study form, you list all the classes you plan on taking during your graduate program, as well as each member of your thesis committee. List every class (foundation, advanced core, electives, and thesis) you plan on taking throughout your time in the program. You need to take 33 credit hours to complete the degree. (Please note that you must register for two credits of SLAT 699R or 698R during the semester in which you defend your thesis and graduate.)

After you have planned your classes, review your plan with your committee chair and the other two members of your committee, and then submit it through the GradProg system. All three members of your committee must show their approval of your plan by approving through the GradProg system.

The Program of Study approval is due by February 1. If you do not provide a Program of Study by this deadline, you may incur a hold on your account, preventing registration for future semesters, and will most likely not be considered for financial assistance until the Program of Study is submitted. Changes in your program can be made when authorized by your committee and are also submitted and approved through the GradProg system.

Graduate Progress Report

Your Progress Report is an official academic document that records your academic progress. It can be accessed at gradprogress.sim.byu.edu and should be referred to frequently. It is important that you verify the accuracy of this document as you track your progress toward graduation. Three times a year, at the beginning of Fall, Winter, and Spring terms, the Assistant Director and/or Graduate Coordinator will review your progress report. We will compare your individual Program of Study with the courses taken and summarize your progress: classes completed, current registration, classes still needed, and current grade point average. In addition, we will address any deficits with your academic status GPA (Grade Point Average), prerequisites needed, minimum registration requirements, time limits, and completed courses. This can also be a great opportunity to review your career goals and make plans to progress in these areas.

Student Evaluations

Twice a year, toward the end of the Fall and Winter semesters, your progress is formally evaluated by your thesis chair and committee, as well as SLaT Advisory Committee members, including the Graduate Coordinator. Your performance and progress will be rated as satisfactory, marginal, or unsatisfactory. These evaluations may consider, among other things, your progress toward graduation, academic achievement, and citizenship in the department. You will be notified in writing of your rating.

If you receive a marginal or unsatisfactory rating, it is expected that you comply with all the stated conditions in order to remain in the program. If you disagree with your rating, you should write a formal letter to the Graduate Coordinator. If you receive a marginal rating one semester and do not make acceptable progress the following semester, you will receive an unsatisfactory rating. You cannot be rated as marginal twice in a row. In other words, failing to correct marginal progress is unsatisfactory. According to official university policy, students who do not receive satisfactory ratings for two consecutive semesters (i.e., marginal to unsatisfactory; unsatisfactory to unsatisfactory) are subject to program termination. If you receive an unsatisfactory rating, you are unable to receive financial aid.

In extenuating circumstances, the SLaT Advisory Committee may choose to support the student in a petition to the Office of Graduate Studies. This petition would include a contract listing student and faculty responsibilities and an appropriate timeline for degree completion.

PLEASE NOTE:

Carefully review the information contained in the Graduate Catalog under the heading, "Academic Standards."

The following is a summary of some of the reasons for the various ratings:

Satisfactory:

1. Meeting deadlines for Program of Study, prospectus, and other timely action items
2. Establishing a graduate committee by February 1 of your second semester
3. Making adequate progress on research and thesis writing
4. Maintaining regular communication with thesis chair and committee members
5. Demonstrating excellence in course work
Involvement and good citizenship within the College of Humanities
6. Professional and respectful communication with fellow students, faculty, and the Center for Language Studies
7. Ethical and professional conduct at all times

Marginal:

1. Failure to submit Program of Study
2. Failure to establish a graduate committee
3. Registering for thesis hours and completing little or no thesis work during that term or semester
4. Failure to submit an approved thesis prospectus
5. Minimal, disrespectful, or unprofessional contact with chair or committee members
6. Unapproved prospectus or thesis draft
7. No marked progress with Program of Study requirements
8. Poor performance in student instructorship or college-held positions
9. Poor performance in research or graduate coursework

Unsatisfactory:

1. Failure to resolve any problems or fulfill any requirements indicated in a previous marginal or unsatisfactory review
2. Course grade below B-
3. Failure of written comprehensive exam
4. Unethical or unprofessional behavior

Written Comprehensive Exam

The Written Comprehensive Exam aims to test your understanding of and ability to apply concepts and information either presented in courses completed or discussed in readings from the Reading List. During the exam, you are not allowed to consult any form of notes, books, websites, or individuals. You should begin reading and studying publications in the Reading List (available online or from the Assistant Director) the summer prior to your first semester. It is recommended that you form study groups to review the works on the Reading List beginning several months before the scheduled exam.

You are required to take your Written Comprehensive Exam on the first week of February during your fourth semester of study. Only under extenuating circumstances will you be allowed to submit a petition for an exception to this schedule. The petition must be submitted no later than two weeks prior to the designated exam date. The petition must include the reasons for the exception and a suggested deadline for taking the exam. Approval—which is not automatic—must be granted by the SLaT Graduate Coordinator in collaboration with the student's Committee Chair. A student who does not take the exam during the designated exam period (or on the alternate exam date granted by petition) will be given a failing grade and will be subject to termination as an MA candidate.



The Reading List

The SLaT M.A. Reading List gives you broad exposure to some of the most influential research and texts in the area of language teaching. You need to read and carefully consider all of the works on the list.

You can access this list on slat.byu.edu or you can get a copy from the Assistant Director. It is imperative that you retrieve this list upon your admission so that you can begin your study immediately.

Preparing for the Exam

You should meet with your committee chair during your second semester to discuss preparations for this exam. At the end of your third semester, you should remind your committee chair of the approaching exam.

One of the best ways to prepare for this exam is to pace your reading throughout the entirety of your program. It is helpful to obtain the Reading List upon your acceptance to the program and immediately create a reading schedule for yourself. It is advisable to read the articles and books during the courses that correspond with the content, as they will be more relevant and create cohesion in your studies. Normally, you should have finished all of your reading by the end of your third semester so that you can spend a month reviewing the material in preparation for the exam. Techniques such as study groups, flashcards, and others are immensely helpful.

For more ideas on preparing for the exam, reference *Make It Stick: The Science of Successful Learning*, by Peter C. Brown, Henry L. Roediger III, and Mark A. McDaniel.

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Exam Format

The Graduate Coordinator leads the writing of the specialty exam for each student, creating questions that primarily reflect the Reading List, your graduate coursework, and your thesis or project area. During this process, the Graduate Coordinator requests input from your instructors and members of your committee.

The specialty exam is designed to last 3 hours, although you may take up to, but not more than, 4 hours to complete it. We encourage you to bring a snack and water to the exam. The exam includes two separate sections as follows:

- Section 1 (2 hours): shorter essays, normally a combination of 15- and 30-minute questions.
- Section 2 (1 hour): 1 or more longer essays.

In each section, you receive a number of essay topics from which you may choose. This exam is proctored by CLS staff and takes place in a computer classroom. As mentioned previously, you may not use any notes, online resources, or other individuals during the exam. You will be given a 15-minute break approximately halfway through the exam.

Scoring the Exam

The exam will be scored by at least two faculty readers/ graders as “pass” or “fail,” and you will be notified via Y-Message of your score. Normally, your exam will be scored within two weeks after your exam date.

If a student’s performance on the exam is considered substandard and a “fail” grade is assigned, two courses of action may be taken:

1. The faculty graders can deem the entire exam inadequate and require the student to retake the complete exam with new questions, or
2. The graders can decide that the student’s performance on only one or more questions warrants retesting. In this case, the student would be retested only on the area(s) in question.

For each option, the Committee Chair and the Graduate Coordinator will be responsible for deciding an appropriate deadline for retaking the exam.

A second failure normally results in the student’s termination from graduate candidacy.

Written Component: Thesis or Project

The Master's Thesis or Project serves as a capstone experience and helps you to round out your educational experience. Through this process students also demonstrate their competence in the field of study as they identify an important topic of interest and plan, conduct, and report on a study in the area. The first step in this process is to decide upon a topic. Students should consult with various members of the Department to find out more about their specific research interests. Students are highly encouraged to do research that supports or enhances current research being conducted by their faculty mentors.

WHICH ONE?

You must complete either a thesis or an action research project. It is important to consult with your thesis chair about the appropriateness of each option.

Thesis

Traditionally, the thesis has been the primary way SLaT M.A. candidates have fulfilled the writing requirement. The thesis is a significant research project that develops one primary topic. It is normally divided into about five chapters, plus an introduction and a conclusion. Reasons to complete a thesis include preparation for a Ph.D., the opportunity to enrich and deepen your understanding on a particular subject, and increased opportunities for publication.



Project

The project is the less-common route for fulfilling the writing requirement, but it can be valuable for specific students. The project is developmental in nature and requires the preparation and evaluation of a significant body of coursework, teaching materials, or other suitable resources which are tested and evaluated. Examples of successful projects could include computer-assisted instruction (CAI) programs, course materials for specialized language programs, and integrated curriculum designs. If you are currently teaching at the K-12 level and do not intend to pursue a Ph.D., you may find this option more suited to your professional goals. Projects are subject to the same rigorous assessment procedures as theses, including the formal oral presentation and defense.

The Prospectus

After your chair and committee have been selected, you and your chair will work together to formulate a prospectus. A prospectus is your formal research proposal and serves as an agreement between you and your committee. This allows you to proceed with confidence as you begin your research. The prospectus represents a valuable opportunity to plan your thesis or project with your entire committee. You will receive valuable guidance and feedback on your research plans. The more complete your prospectus, the greater the potential for success.

Please note: You should not begin in-depth work on your thesis or project until your prospectus has been presented and approved.

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The prospectus is normally 5+ pages in length. You could include the following information:

- Title page
 - Working title
 - Your name
 - Program name
 - Date
- Committee members
- Table of contents
- Proposal
 - Statement of the problem
 - Purpose/relevance of the study
 - Research focus/questions
- Preliminary bibliography
- Proposed research design and methods
 - Rationale for current study
 - Context for current study
 - Participants
 - Data sources, collection, analysis, etc.
 - Other
- Timeline
- References
- Appendices

You will be required to prepare a written prospectus and meet with your committee to discuss the terms of your prospectus.

You will work on your prospectus during your second semester in the program, while enrolled in SLAT 603. Your prospectus should be completed and presented by October 15th of your third semester.

When your prospectus is complete, provide copies to all members of your thesis committee and the Graduate Coordinator. After consulting with your committee, schedule a time and place for your prospectus presentation through the Assistant Director.

After your prospectus is approved, obtain signatures from your committee and the Graduate Coordinator on the SLAT Thesis Prospectus Approval Form, which can be found at <http://cls.byu.edu/programs/slat/current-students/forms/>. Return the completed form to the Assistant Director via email.

Thesis

A thesis involves original research designed to answer a question or solve a problem related to second language teaching. A thesis has the following, although your chair will help you with specific details:

- Title page
- Abstract
- Acknowledgements
- Table of Contents
- List of tables and figures
- Chapter 1: Introduction
 - Statement of problem
 - Purpose of study
 - Study overview
- Chapter 2: Review of relevant literature
- Chapter 3: Research design and methods
 - *Rationale for study design (e.g., case study, action research, quantitative methods)
 - Context for current study
 - Research questions
 - Participants
 - Data sources/collection/analysis
- Chapter 4: Findings and discussion (this can be split into two chapters)
- Chapter 5: Conclusion
 - Limitations of the study
 - Pedagogical implications
 - Suggestions for future research
- References
- Appendices

Thesis Format and Style

There are strict guidelines for both the format and writing style of your thesis. Format guidelines can be found online at gradstudies.byu.edu. Your thesis should follow the most recent APA Style Guide. Copies are available online, at the HBLL, at the BYU Store, and at local and online retailers.

Although your committee members will give you much feedback on format and style, it is your responsibility to ensure that all editing, spelling, and grammatical conventions are followed. All thesis drafts should be typed, double-spaced, and set on 8.5-by-11 white paper or sent as an electronic attachment. Bring clean and accurate drafts to all of your consultations and meetings. Feel free to utilize the University Writing Center, experienced editors and proofreaders, and other resources to help you.

Deadlines

The deadlines and procedures for the writing component are very specific. Failure to meet the requirements and deadlines set by the Office of Graduate Studies, the College of Humanities, and the Center for Language Studies will most likely delay your defense, your graduation, or both. Although your chair is a valuable resource, it is your responsibility to meet all deadlines and obligations. Individual faculty are not authorized to and may not contradict university, college, or Center policies. You should visit gradstudies.byu.edu and talk to the Assistant Director at the very beginning of the semester you intend to defend or graduate or earlier.

Note: See respective “Graduation Deadlines for Humanities Graduate Students” for specific deadlines that coincide with your actual graduation date.

Final Oral Defense

With the approval of your chair, and when your thesis is complete, you are ready to schedule your oral defense.

Remember:

- You must apply for graduation prior to scheduling your oral defense.
- You must be enrolled for two thesis credits during the semester/term of your defense and/or graduation.
- You must schedule your defense no less than two full weeks prior to your intended defense date.
- You must give your committee members at least two weeks to review your written component prior to scheduling your defense. This means that your writing should be submitted to the entire committee at least one month before your defense. Your committee members and chair will indicate approval through the GradProg system to schedule your defense. Be advised that coordinating a day and time when all committee members are available is normally a complicated and time-consuming process. Please plan accordingly.

Please note that you will have to accommodate faculty schedules. You may have more time in the Spring and Summer, but faculty often do not.

Once your thesis defense day/time are approved, e-mail the Assistant Director, who will schedule a room for you.

Oral Defense Format

Each chair may have a preference as to the format of your defense. However, a typical defense adheres to the following format:

1. Welcome by thesis chair
2. Prayer
3. Candidate and guests are excused from the room while committee discusses the defensibility of the thesis or project
4. Candidate and guest return; candidate gives a 15-minute presentation summarizing key points (see below)
5. Committee members ask questions (normally in reverse order of committee member standing)
6. Candidate and guests are excused again while committee makes final deliberations on the results of the thesis or project
7. Candidate and guests return and final results are communicated to candidate

July and August Defenses

Please be aware that many faculty members are away from campus during Spring and Summer terms. It is preferable, therefore, that you defend during Winter semester. Regardless, you should consult with all members of your committee and anticipate the delays caused by the unavailability of faculty mentors during this period. Faculty absence does not excuse you from meeting university- and program-level graduation deadlines.

Presentation guidelines

The 15-minute presentation is often accompanied with a PowerPoint of approximately 5 slides. It should include a brief overview of the rationale, design, results, and conclusions of your study. Remember that your committee has already read your writing, so this is intended only to remind them of key information.

Results

Possible results of the oral defense are:

1. Pass
 - Indicates that a student performs satisfactorily and that no major revisions are required.
2. Pass with qualifications
 - Indicates that the committee requires revisions of the thesis or project document. When these qualifications are cleared, and the committee chair has recorded the clearance with the Office of Graduate Studies via the Assistant Director, the student is judged to have passed the exam.
3. Recess
 - This means that at least two of the examiners want the candidate to prepare more thoroughly. The defense is recessed for at least one month, at which point the student may reschedule a second or final oral defense.
4. Fail
 - Indicates that two or more examiners felt that a student's performance was significantly below the standard. A student who fails is immediately dropped from the graduate program and may not graduate.

It is most common that students pass with qualifications, meaning that you will pass as soon as you complete the revisions mandated by the committee.

Attendance

Your defense is a public event and an announcement will be sent out to the entire university community. We encourage you to attend at least one oral defense prior to your own. All are welcome to attend any of the university's oral defenses. It is important that you and your guests arrive promptly at all defenses.

Electronic Thesis and Dissertation

The final draft of your thesis will be submitted as a searchable PDF and will eventually be housed on the university's electronic thesis and dissertation website. Because of this, there are very specific formatting requirements. Visit <http://etd.byu.edu> to view these guidelines.

Project

Your final project report will look slightly different than a traditional thesis. However, there will be many similar components, including introduction, literature review, conclusion, etc. The main difference is that you are producing a body of work (such as computer-assisted instruction program, course materials, curriculum, etc.) rather than conducting quantitative or qualitative research. You will receive more specific instructions from your chair on the format of this written component.



Graduation



Applying for Graduation

You should apply for graduation approximately 3 months before you intend to graduate. You must have a current ecclesiastical endorsement and be registered during that semester or term for at least two thesis or project hours (SLAT 699R or 698R). Please note that you cannot defend your thesis or project unless you have already applied for graduation.

You should contact the Assistant Director immediately upon applying for graduation to ensure that all your requirements are accounted for and that your proposed timeline is feasible. The Assistant Director will give you a current list of detailed deadlines from the College of Humanities.

Official graduation dates occur in April, June, August, and December.

You can see current university deadlines and application instructions on gradstudies.byu.edu/page/graduation.

Graduation Ceremonies

Ceremonies are held in April of each year for all graduating students. BYU has a two-part graduation ceremony. Thursday's ceremony is called Commencement and is a combined, formal ceremony for all the graduating students in the university and includes speeches by the University President and a General Authority.

Friday's ceremony is the individual Humanities College Convocation, which includes the awarding of diplomas and speeches by the College Dean, a faculty member, and a distinguished student representative. Neither event requires a ticket, and you may invite any family or friends to attend.

Students who successfully defend after the graduation deadlines for April but before the end of the semester may petition to walk early in the current ceremony. Please note that when you walk early, your name does not appear in that graduation program, but will appear in the subsequent ceremony. Walking in a graduation ceremony does not equate official graduation. See the Assistant Director for more information.

Please visit gradstudies.byu.edu/page/graduation for a list of current ceremony dates.

Missed Graduation Deadlines

Graduation deadlines are firm and non-negotiable. If you miss any of these deadlines, you must register for 2 additional thesis or project credits and you will graduate the following semester or term.

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Congratulations and Best of Luck!



Continuing Our Relationship

As the network of SLaT graduates continues to grow, we hope that all graduates will keep in touch with us in a mutually beneficial relationship. Many former students continue their friendships with other students and with faculty members. Some continue to publish or to work in collaboration with faculty, and assistance may be provided in locating initial job opportunities and to otherwise aid in career advancement. Feedback from graduates is also used to improve the program, and information about your post-graduation accomplishments can strengthen the program's reputation.

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Directory

All SLaT-affiliated faculty appear in this directory. Where applicable, you will see the individual's title, department, email address, phone number, and office location.

JFSB refers to the Joseph F. Smith Building, which houses the College of Humanities.



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