**HEBREW AND YIDDISH SUBDIVISION**

The Hebrew and Yiddish subdivision offers a PhD program in Jewish Languages and Literatures. The program offers a philological, historical, and critical approach to Yiddish and Hebrew literatures.

**COURSES AND SEMINARS:**

The program requires that all students take at least four graduate seminars (or their equivalent) within the section of Hebrew and Yiddish in the department of Modern Languages and Literatures. In addition, students are required to take at least four Jewish Studies courses offered in other departments (e.g., History, Near Eastern Studies). By the end of their second year, students will have completed 12 seminars for credit. If needed, students will continue to enroll in advanced language courses.

**ABD REQUIREMENTS:**

**Qualifying Examination**

(new format, updated August 2024)

The purpose of the Qualifying Examination is to develop and demonstrate an informed, panoramic and critical perspective on primary and scholarly sources in the field of Jewish Languages and Literatures.

At the beginning of their fourth semester, students will identify two areas (guidelines below) and write an abstract (around 1 page) of each. After the abstract has been discussed with program faculty and finalized, the student and the faculty examiner will both write one question or prompt for each abstract. Abstracts will be submitted in the middle of the fourth semester to the faculty examiner. Students then will (at their own pace) write four separate essays (12-15 pages long) responding to and elucidating each one of the four questions/prompts. All essays must be submitted at the beginning of the student’s sixth semester. In order to write these essays, students will undertake a wide-ranging examination of primary and secondary sources. The essays are not meant to demonstrate rote mastery of the sources; instead, they should demonstrate facility with the foundational skills of scholarship, that is identifying, learning, and knowing the sources, methods, and ideas needed to answer a question or elucidate a problem.

The definition of an area should be reached in discussion with program faculty. There is no set requirement for this definition, except that it should not be a research or dissertation proposal. That is, it should not depend on as yet undiscovered or unknown sources. Its purpose is, rather, to prompt a consideration of the field as it stands, through substantive engagement with a wide body of primary and secondary literature. The area may take its shape from established taxonomies (e.g., period, genre, geography) and frameworks (e.g. social history, literary history, or politics) or from new ones and it may pivot on a question, a keyword, or a problem, and so on. The area should reflect the student’s interests, but should be neither too narrow nor too deep; in other words, it should amount to the basis on which a specialized research agenda is built.

The essays will be read and assessed by two members of faculty from MLL, including the student’s primary advisor. The examiners will pass the student if a high degree of familiarity with and mastery of the sources is demonstrated, together with an ability to marshal the sources in a way that connects directly with the framework devised by the student. Students will be offered one opportunity to retake the examination should they fail.

**PROSPECTUS**

The dissertation prospectus should be 5-8 pages long, offer a statement of the problem to be addressed and a rationale for its importance, situate the dissertation within existing scholarship, and provide a brief sketch of the chapters as well as a first bibliography.

**DISSERTATION REQUIREMENTS**

See pages 17-18 in this handbook.

**DOCTORAL ORAL EXAM (DISSERTATION DEFENCE)**

Aligning with the Krieger School of Arts and Sciences guidelines

(see: <https://homewoodgrad.jhu.edu/academics/graduate-board/degree-candidacy/>),

the doctoral oral exam committee will include 5 members: 3 internal and 2 external to the program. The committee will be formed when the student is expected to complete the degree requirements. The list of committee members is presented to the Graduate Board for approval at least four weeks prior to the date for the defense. The examination committee will be approved by the chair of the department and forwarded to the Graduate Board Office for approval and selection of the chair of the committee. Second readers, even those outside the subdivision or from other departments or universities, must serve as inside committee members. The advisor and second reader will provide the students with their thesis evaluation and comments at least 4 weeks before the exam. The main advisor of the student will provide the committee members an evaluation of the student’s thesis along with an electronic copy of the thesis at least 2 weeks before the thesis exam. Documentation will be produced per school policy following the oral final exam by the chair of the committee.

**5 YEAR SCHEDULE:**

**FIRST YEAR:** An entering graduate student may be required to be tested for linguistic proficiency in Hebrew or Yiddish and may be required to register for advanced Yiddish or Hebrew as determined by the respective Language Program Director. This course will not count toward the 12 seminars required for the PhD. Students will take a minimum of six courses for credit; the student’s advisor must approve all courses.

**SECOND YEAR:** At the beginning of their fourth semester, students will identify two areas for their Qualifying Examination Essays and write an abstract (around 1 page) of each. In the middle of the fourth semester, students will submit prompt questions for their Qualifying Examination Essays. By the end of the fourth semester of graduate study, the student should have completed 12 courses. In some cases (e.g., students who need to take an advanced language course), it will be possible to complete coursework in the 5th semester; exceptions must be approved by the student’s advisor.

**THIRD YEAR:** All of the student’s Qualifying Examination Essays should be submitted at the beginning of the sixth semester. By the end of the sixth semester of the degree, the student is expected to submit the prospectus.

**FOURTH YEAR:** The student will typically spend the fourth year abroad, free from teaching obligations and engaged in dissertation research.

**FIFTH YEAR:** The fifth year will be devoted to the writing of the dissertation.

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| **Program Component** | **Credit Hours and Schedule** |
| Twelve courses: At least: 4 JLL Graduate seminars and 4 Jewish Studies courses | 36  To be completed by the end of the **fourth** semester |
| Two semesters of graduate practicum | 6  To be completed by the end of the **fourth** semester |
| Qualifying Examination | 12  To be submitted by the beginning of the **sixth** semester |
| Prospectus | 6  To be submitted by the end of the **sixth** semester |
| Dissertation | 12  To be completed by the end of the **tenth** semester |
| Doctoral Oral Exam (Defense) | 6  To be taken at the end of the **tenth** semester |
| **Credit total** | 78 |

**DEGREE CHEACKLIST:**

**Semester 1:**

* **Take at least 3 seminars for credit**

**Semester 2:**

* **Take at least 3 seminars for credit**
* **Take “Mapping the Field” if offered**

**Semester 3:**

* **Take at least 3 seminars for credit**
* **Take “Training for Teaching” Course (count as TA).**

**Semester 4:**

* **Complete 12 seminars for credit**
* **Identify two areas for Qualifying Examination Essays**
* **Submit the two Qualifying Examination abstracts**
* **Submit prompts/questions for Qualifying Examination Essays**

**Semester 5:**

* **Work on your Qualifying Examination Essays**

**Semester 6:**

* **At the start of the semester, submit your Qualifying Examination Essays**
* **At the end of the semester, submit your Prospectus**

**Semesters 7+8:**

* **Year Abroad/Dissertation Research**

**Semester 9:**

* **Write your dissertation**

**Semester 10:**

* **Complete your dissertation**
* **Defend your dissertation.**

**ADVISING MEETINGS:** In the first 4 semesters, students will meet with their advisor once a month in addition to a planning meeting before the beginning of each semester and a meeting in March for the review process. Beginning in their fifth semester, students will meet with their advisor at least once a month during the academic year (if the student is doing Study Abroad during the Fourth year, meetings will be held via Zoom if needed). The advisors will keep track of the student’s progress and will fill in a progress form. Students are asked to fill in a feedback form after each meeting. Students are also encouraged to talk with the DGS if they feel their advising needs are not met.

**SUMMER FUNDING**

Competitive summer funding is available through the Stulman Program in Jewish Studies. See:

<https://krieger.jhu.edu/jewishstudies/research-opportunities/>