Department MA Guidelines

Master of Arts Degree

There are two programs of study for the Master’s Degree in Scandinavian Studies. Graduate students may choose either Scandinavian Languages and Literature or Scandinavian Area Studies. Both degrees emphasize mastery of the target Nordic language (Danish, Finnish, Norwegian, or Swedish) as well as a broad knowledge of the literature and culture of the Nordic region.

The Master’s Degree in Scandinavian Languages and Literature requires a working knowledge of the methods of literary study (historical, cultural and linguistic study of texts), including some literary criticism and theory. In addition, this track requires a knowledge of one secondary area (such as Baltic studies, cinema studies, history, folklore and mythology, politics, second language acquisition or translation studies).

The Master’s Degree in Scandinavian Area Studies requires broad knowledge of history, society, politics, cinema, and folklore, in addition to an emphasis in one of the following fields: Baltic studies, cinema studies, history, folklore and mythology, politics, second language acquisition or translation studies.

Graduate School MA Degree Requirements

Graduate School MA degree requirements can be found here. MA students must also fulfill the following departmental requirements:

Departmental Requirements

I. MASTER’S DEGREE IN LANGUAGES AND LITERATURE

A. Languages and Literature Thesis Program

1. Thirty credits of coursework to include the following mandatory courses (10 credits):
   - SCAND 500 Old Icelandic (5 credits)
   - SCAND 503 Methods of Scandinavian Studies (5 credits) or SCAND 513 Methods (5 credits)

   and 20 credits selected from SCAND 500-level seminars:
   - SCAND 505 Topics in Scandinavian Drama and Film (5 credits)
   - SCAND 508 Topics in Scandinavian Prose (5 credits)
   - SCAND 520 Topics in Scandinavian Poetry (5 credits)
   - SCAND 510
   - SCAND 511
   - SCAND 512
   - SCAND 514
   - SCAND 515
2. Ten credits of SCAND 700 for the masters thesis, which is to be written in consultation with the student’s supervisory committee. The thesis must be submitted for approval no later than 14 days before the written examinations begin.

3. Advanced graduate students interested in completing MA thesis work abroad, while under the direct supervision of their graduate committee chair, may register for Independent Learning credits without taking academic leave. Contact Katherine Kroeger (kroegk@uw.edu) at UW Study Abroad for further information.

4. Reading list: In preparation for the comprehensive examination, the student completes independent study of the MA reading list in Scandinavian literature. In addition, the student prepares a short reading list for their secondary field, such as Baltic studies, applied linguistics, film studies, folklore and mythology, history, society and politics, literary theory and methods.

5. Submission of three graded seminar papers from UW graduate coursework, one of the papers may be written in the target Nordic language.

6. Foreign language examination in German or French (or Finnish; other languages may be substituted with the permission of the student’s supervisory committee).

7. MA examination consisting of three separate written exams:
   1. Question based on material from the student’s secondary emphasis list (student will choose one of two questions). 2 hours
   2. Question on the history of the student’s major literature, based on the core MA reading list (student will choose one of two questions, to be answered in the major language, dictionary permitted). 2 hours.
   3. Literary analysis of a text chosen from any work on the core MA reading list (choose one of two questions). 2 hours.


Note: Students may chose to complete a Languages and Literature Non-Thesis Program which requires the 30 credits of mandatory courses listed above plus an additional 10 credits of SCAND 500-level courses or approved 500-level courses within the student’s secondary area in lieu of SCAND 700 (masters thesis).

II. MASTER’S DEGREE IN SCANDINAVIAN AREA STUDIES

A. Area Studies Thesis Program requires 40 credits of coursework consisting of the following:

1. Thirty credits minimum of course work to include:
   1. SCAND 503 Methods of Scandinavian Studies (5 credits) or SCAND 513 Methods (5 credits)
   2. One methodology or theory course (5 credits) in the student’s area of emphasis such as Baltic studies, cinema studies, history, folklore and mythology, politics, second language acquisition or translation studies.
   3. A literary genre course selected from one of the following:
      SCAND 505 Topics in Scandinavian Drama and Film (5 credits)
      SCAND 508 Topics in Scandinavian Prose (5 credits)
      SCAND 520 Topics in Scandinavian Poetry (5 credits)
      SCAND 510
      SCAND 511
      SCAND 512
      SCAND 514
      SCAND 515

2. Ten credits of SCAND 700 for the completion of a thesis, to be approved by the student’s supervisory committee. The thesis must be submitted for approval no later than 14 days before the written examinations begin.

3. Advanced graduate students interested in completing MA thesis work abroad, while under the direct supervision of their graduate committee chair, may register for Independent Learning credits without taking academic leave. Contact Katherine Kroeger (kroegk@uw.edu) at UW Study Abroad for further information.

4. Submission of three graded seminar papers from UW graduate coursework, one of the papers may be written in the target Nordic language.

5. Reading list: In preparation for the comprehensive examination, the student completes independent study of a reading list in
their area of emphasis. See these sample primary lists: folklore, politics, history. In addition, the student is responsible for independent study of the area studies literature short list.

6. Foreign language examination in German or French (other languages may be substituted with the permission of the student's supervisory committee).

7. Comprehensive written examinations:
   1. Two questions based on material from the student’s area studies reading list (the student chooses two of four questions). 4 hours.
   2. One question on Nordic and Baltic literature based on the area studies literature short list, with a focus on the student’s language area (the student chooses one of two questions). 2 hours.

8. One-hour oral examination which includes review of written exams, reading lists and thesis.

   Note: Students may chose to complete a Scandinavian Area Studies Non-Thesis Program which requires the 30 credits of mandatory courses listed above plus an additional 10 credits of 500-level courses within the student’s secondary area in lieu of SCAND 700 (masters thesis).

Selection of the Supervisory Committee

The supervisory committee oversees the progress of each individual graduate student. As early as possible, but no later than during the student's second quarter in the M.A. program, the student shall select the chairperson of his or her supervisory committee. It is the responsibility of the student to consult with the chairperson to arrange for a study program and supervisory committee members (a minimum of three faculty members). The committee is to be set up no later than one quarter before the examinations. The committee devises, administers, and evaluates all parts of the M.A. exam and advises on the thesis, when applicable. Area studies students must submit a reading list for approval by the supervisory committee no later than the second week of the quarter prior to the quarter in which the comprehensive exam is to be taken.

Reading Knowledge of a Non-Scandinavian Foreign Language

The Department of Scandinavian Studies requires that all candidates for the Master’s of Arts degree demonstrate a reading knowledge of ONE non-Scandinavian foreign language and that candidates for the Doctor of Philosophy degree demonstrate a reading knowledge of TWO non-Scandinavian foreign languages. The choice of language(s) is to support the student's plans to do research and requires approval by the student's supervisory committee. Please also note that students in the Department whose target language is Danish, Norwegian or Swedish may elect to use Finnish as a reading proficiency language.

The foreign language requirement for the M.A. and/or the Ph.D. degrees may be fulfilled by completing ONE of the following:

1. Successful completion with a grade of 3.0 or better of an upper division language or literature course offered in the original language by an approved language and literature department.
2. Successful completion of a two-quarter reading course, if available (i.e., GERMAN 121 and GERMAN 122).
3. Pass a foreign language reading exam from the Office of Assessment (if available).
4. If a test is not available at the Office of Assessment, the supervisory committee will recommend a competent person to administer an exam. The exam will consist of a translation of a standard, specific text of approximately 500 words into idiomatic and grammatically correct English. A dictionary may be used during the examination period, which shall be limited to two hours. The completed exam will be evaluated by two members of the faculty.

Upon the completion of the examination and the evaluation of it, the decision of the examiners shall be transmitted in writing to the student’s advisory committee through the chairperson of that committee and then placed in the student's permanent file. As a preparation for the exam, examples shall be made available whenever possible.
Related MA Forms and Reading Lists

- MA Committee Form (PDF)
- Independent Learning - Credit Verification
- MA Core Reading list
- Recommended Literary Histories and Reference Works
- Reading list: Area Studies
  - Sample primary lists: folklore, politics, history
  - Secondary Literature list

Department of Scandinavian Studies
University of Washington
318 Raitt hall
Box 353420
Seattle, WA 98195-3420

Phone: (206) 543-0645
Fax: (206) 685-9173
uwscand@uw.edu

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