

LLD Comprehensive Exam

Basic Exam Outline:

M.A. Linguistics

- Part I Phonetics/Phonology
- Part II Syntax/Semantics
- Part III One of the following:
 - Psycholinguistics
 - Sociolinguistics
 - Multilingualism and Language Contact
 - Historical Linguistics
 - Natural Language Processing
 - Speech Technology
 - Corpus Linguistics
 - Morphology
 - Second Language Acquisition

M.A. TESOL

- Part I Analysis of Language Structure and Language Development
- Part II Social and Psychological Contexts of Language Learning and Teaching
- Part II Pedagogical Issues

Exam Administration:

Friday of exam reception

- Attend the appropriate Zoom meeting (Ling – Professor Swan; TESOL – Professor Phillabaum) for online exam and discussion of exam procedures distribution (30 minutes-1 hour).
- Clarify any questions you have.
- Sign the *MA Comprehensive Exam Signature Sheet* via DocuSign

Monday of exam submission, no later than 5 PM

- Submit your completed exam questions to the appropriate assignment on the *MA Linguistics* or *MA TESOL comprehensive exam* Canvas site.
- Be sure to include the three-digit code you received at exam distribution on each of your answers.
- For those with test accommodations, the deadline will be different as determined by the Accessible Education Center (AEC).

Exam Policies:

University Policies:

- The Department would like to emphasize that we adhere strictly to the rules against plagiarism as set forth in SJSU's [Academic Integrity Policy](#). Should a student plagiarize on the Comprehensive exam, the Department will take disciplinary action, including granting the

student a failing score on the exam and referring the student to the University's Judicial Affairs Officer. In addition, students must write their answers without any informational help from any person at all, and without any help (either informational or editorial) from other students in or graduates of LLD.

- Students needing test accommodation should obtain documentation from the Accessible Education Center and notify the appropriate coordinator at least two weeks before the exam date. They should note that under no circumstances will the extended deadline be extended any further.

Department Policies:

- Exams are graded *anonymously* and by two readers per question.
- Students may take the comprehensive exam as many times as needed.
- The 5:00 PM deadline is VERY STRICT. The Canvas website will not allow exams to be submitted after that.
- In case of *failure*: Students occasionally fail one or more parts of the Comprehensive Examination, generally because they have: a) misunderstood some course content, b) misread the question, c) presented their answer in an unclear manner, d) failed to adopt a suitably academic tone and mode of presentation, applying theory and citing the literature where appropriate, e) devoted little time in exploring a question, f) plagiarism, g) failed to turn in answers to all three questions, or h) missed the 5:00 PM deadline.

In case of failure, a student will receive a written notice indicating the reasons for failure. They should see the appropriate coordinator to get additional verbal feedback and to make arrangements to petition for a retake. If a student fails one part of the exam, they should petition the faculty to retake that part only. If a student fails more than one part of the exam, they should petition the faculty to retake all three parts.

LLD Comprehensive Exam

Grading

Criteria

Students often ask what the grading criteria are. The following are the main points that are considered in evaluating a student's work:

- **Accuracy** – Is what you say *accurate*?
- **Completeness** – Have you addressed *all parts of the question*?
- **Authoritativeness** – Can you support your claims with reference to the literature? (*If you can, you should.*)
- **Elegance** – Is your response *well composed, organized, edited, and proofread*?

Grading Scale:

4 = High Pass, **3** = Pass, **2** = Low Pass,
Below 2 = Fail

Each question will be read by two readers. Original scores may be given in increments of 0.5. An average is taken for the final score.

Results:

Grades are generally available on the second Monday after the exam is submitted, unless special arrangements have been made for some students, in which case the announcement of results may be delayed. Written feedback is given **ONLY** if a part or parts of the exam is failed. If you would like verbal feedback on your exam, see the appropriate coordinator. The grades you receive on the exam do not appear on your transcript. The coordinators simply notify GAPE on your fulfillment of the Culminating Experience.

Preparing for the exam:

Before the exam date:

- Make arrangements for accommodation.
- Review class material.
- Make an index of topics with articles/chapters covering each topic.
- Be familiar with bibliographies distributed in each class.
- Form study groups to help each other with review.
- Review previous exam questions (but only for style).

The week before the exam:

- Take care of your living space.
- Make arrangements for family and roommates to give you space during your important weekend.
- Plan meals ahead of time.
- Make sure a back-up computer system and supplies are available.
- Relax the day before the exam and get a good night's sleep.
- Notify the LLD office if you decide not to take the Comps at the last minute.

After you receive the exam:

- Read each question very carefully. Make a decision on which you are going to answer.
- Budget your time wisely! Avoid spending too much time on one question and neglecting another.
- Apply and synthesize all the information from your MA work.
- Support all your claims with references from the literature. If you cite someone specifically, give the reference in the text and in a reference list at the end.
- If you have a counter position other than what is advocated by the present field, make sure you argue your position well.
- Make sure that you have answered all parts of each question. Failure to answer any part of a question can result in a failing score.

Exam Format:

- Do not identify yourself by name or anything unique to you on any portion of your essays.
- Use normal 1-inch margins.
- Double space.
- Use a 12-point font.
- On every page, include the three-digit code that you were given when you picked up the exam, page number (e.g. page 2 of 5), and the number of the exam part and subpart being addressed (e.g. PART II, Question 2). Be sure to follow the numbering of the exam itself.
- Unless otherwise specified, a reasonable length for answers should be between four (4) and (6) typed pages.

Important Contact Information

LLD Office: cookie.galvan@sjsu.edu

Dr. Scott Phillabaum (TESOL)

- scott.phillabaum@sjsu.edu

Dr. Julia Swan (Linguistics)

- julia.swan@sjsu.edu