TO: Graduate Council

FROM: Jeannine Blackwell  
       Senior Associate Dean

RE: Proposed new wording for FOREIGN LANGUAGE REQUIREMENT

We would like to propose changes in the options for fulfillment of the Foreign Language requirement for those programs which require it. This is the wording of the requirement as it currently stands in the Graduate Bulletin.

Current Wording:

**Foreign Language Requirement**

Many programs require a reading knowledge of a modern foreign language for the master's degree. French, German, or Russian are the normally accepted languages. However, another modern language pertinent to the student's program may be substituted on the recommendation of the adviser and with the approval of the Director of Graduate Studies and the Dean of the Graduate School. The language requirement may be satisfied by:

1. completing one of the accelerated graduate level language courses with a B or better grade.
2. completing the fourth semester of a foreign language with a grade of B or better as an undergraduate at an accredited college or university.
3. completing, with a grade of B or better, special examinations given for the graduate reading courses. Forms may be obtained from the Registrar's Office, Funkhouser Building. Other types of special examinations are scheduled in the Graduate School.
4. transferring a language taken to satisfy the requirements for a master's degree at another university.

Note: With the approval of their program, international students who are non-native speakers of English may satisfy the foreign language requirement by presenting a TOEFL score of 550 or above. (The equivalent score on the computer version of the TOEFL is 213.)

Candidates for degrees must be proficient in English.

PROPOSED WORDING:
Many programs require a reading knowledge of a foreign language for the master's degree. Accepted languages for fulfillment of this requirement are those currently taught at the University of Kentucky, subject to approval by the Director of Graduate Studies. Other languages may be recommended by the major advisor and approved by the Dean of the Graduate School on the recommendation of the Director of Graduate Studies. The Director sends this recommendation to the Dean. The language requirement may be satisfied by:

1. completing one of the accelerated graduate level language courses (011 courses) with a grade of B or better.
2. completing the fourth semester of a foreign language with a grade of B or better at an accredited college or university.
3. completing a more advanced foreign language course (beyond the fourth semester level, with all coursework and readings in the target language) with a grade of B or better at an accredited college or university.
4. completing an accelerated graduate level language course for reading knowledge with a grade of B or better, at another accredited university.
5. transferring a language taken to satisfy the requirements for a master’s degree at another accredited university.
6. completing, with a grade of B or better, special examinations given for the graduate reading courses. Forms may be obtained from the Registrar's Office, Funkhouser Building. Other types of special examinations are scheduled in the Graduate School.
7. for students with significant life experience in the foreign language culture: completing a placement test administered by the foreign language programs of the University, and testing to a level beyond the fourth semester of foreign language study, which is the equivalent of a grade of B or better. This method requires the approval and recommendation of the Director of Graduate Studies.

Note: With the approval of their program, international students who are non-native speakers of English may satisfy the foreign language requirement by presenting a TOEFL score of 550 or above. (The equivalent score on the computer version of the TOEFL is 213.) Candidates for degrees must be proficient in English.

Rationale for changes:

We recommend expanding “normally acceptable” languages to include all languages currently taught at the University (Arabic, Chinese, French, German, Ancient Greek, Hebrew, Italian, Japanese, Latin, Russian, and Spanish).

1, 2, 5 and 6 are currently forms for the fulfillment of the Foreign Language Requirement.

We recommend option 3 as an extension of number 2, for students who initially place beyond the fourth semester level in their undergraduate language training.
Currently the Associate Dean must personally approve this option or students must be tested.

We recommend option 4 for students who did not formally complete a masters degree elsewhere, but have taken a graduate reading course equivalent to our 011 courses at a different university. Currently we are not officially allowed to accept this coursework for fulfillment.

We recommend option 7 because of the demands of individualized testing on the foreign language faculty at the University. Currently, they must prepare individualized readings for graduate students to take the Special Examination for posted credit in 011, since those readings constitute the final examination. Also, the discussion of those readings is very focused and brief, and the grading overall language reading ability is by necessity subjective.

The current computerized placement tests in French, Spanish, and German used by the UK language departments have proven to be quite accurate in measuring achievement and yielding accurate placement for both graduate and undergraduate students. These tests assess active grammar, reading, vocabulary, and passive recognition of structures.

These tests would be used for a very small number of students who have significant life and work experience abroad, but have never taken advanced formal course work; international students who have taken foreign languages at home in their previous academic careers (Germans who have taken many years of French, for example); or for students whose undergraduate colleges have no assigned grades, but rather written assessments. This scoring would not be recorded as a Special Examination or as registered coursework, since it is a placement. It would be posted at the end of the transcript for the purpose of degree certification.