

Pedagogical Training Plan

Slavic Languages & Literatures

2025-2026

Overview

The Slavic Department's pedagogical training plan provides structure and rigor to optimize the preparation of graduate students for a job market that is growing more complex and multifaceted.

As teaching language and literature/culture is still the most common outcome for the Ph.D. in Slavic, most students will be advised to acquire training and experience in a) second language acquisition and b) the teaching of disciplinary content and approaches in literary and cultural studies. Depending on students' subfields and the kinds of academic or other jobs they may apply for, students may have a career path for which one of these choices might be emphasized at the expense of the other, or for which neither would be essential. In the latter case we are prepared to customize a Pedagogical Training Plan to prepare students for fields such as cultural work, curation, translation, government service, and social service—and we invite students to introduce new fields that would require alternative training strategies. Our goal is to have enough flexibility to ensure that student needs are met as directly as possible, but also to have enough structure in place to meet them efficiently and effectively.

Details

Mentoring:

Graduate students will work with the Director of Graduate Studies in the first year of the program. In the second year they will choose a mentor, who may be the faculty member working in their area or an anticipated member of a future dissertation committee. The mentor will work with the student and the DGS to identify pedagogical training opportunities and plan for accomplishing the student's goals over the course of the program. Students are encouraged to become exposed to many different styles of pedagogy over the course of their training by shadowing or TAing for a variety of different instructors. Students teaching language will also work closely with the Director of the Slavic Language Program to identify and work toward their language pedagogy training goals.

Students will create a projected pedagogical training plan based on the sample timeline below at the end of their first year in the program with help of the DGS, and will update this plan each year thereafter in consultation with their mentor, the DGS, and the Slavic language program director.

Expectations:

The Pedagogical Training Plan will be treated in a promissory manner, with each side responsible for fulfilling their commitments so that students achieve the desired outcome in a timely and effective manner.

Pedagogical Training Objectives:

1. Firm understanding of the principles of second language acquisition and/or learning outcomes for higher education.
2. Acquisition of sufficient language skills and comfort teaching and managing language courses (for students pursuing language teaching).
3. Ability to deliver a strategically targeted and well-received topical course that incorporates skillful design, rich content and meaningful learning objectives, and employs active learning methods, principles of inclusivity, and appropriate assessment practices.
4. Formation of teaching philosophy and initial development of a teaching portfolio appropriate to career goals
5. Training in inclusive pedagogy.

Expected Teaching Load:

Students are expected to complete 5 pedagogical training positions: 2 Graduate Student Teaching Assistantships for REES courses, 2 Graduate Student TAs or Lectureships in the language teaching program, and 1 standalone Graduate Student Lectureship for a self-designed course. However, depending on a student's training needs and department curricular constraints, a student could complete 2 Graduate Student Teaching Assistantships for REES courses and then complete 3 Graduate Student TAs or Lectureships for 3 quarters of a language sequence, or complete 3 Graduate Student Teaching Assistantships, 1 Graduate Student TA or Lecturer for 1 quarter of language, and 1 Graduate Student Lecturer for 1 standalone course.

Components

- A. The Slavic Department has the capacity to provide expert preparation in second language acquisition, which is of significant value to most graduating PhDs in our field. Unless specifically exempted according to career objectives, all graduate students will achieve:
 1. Advanced proficiency in a Slavic language
 2. Pedagogical training in Slavic languages, usually fulfilled by REES 31500 Teaching Slavic Languages

3. Chicago Language Center (CLC) training: CCTE 50100 Language Pedagogy for the Contemporary Classroom plus attendance at relevant lectures/events on second language acquisition
 4. CCTL workshop on diversity and inclusion
 5. One quarter of course shadowing
 6. Class observations of three instructional faculty in at least two different languages
 7. **Two or three quarters of language instruction as Graduate Student TA or Lecturer**, assigned in consultation with the department and supported by the Slavic language coordinator
- B. Those training for research positions involving the teaching of literature/culture courses must complete the following:
1. Chicago Center for Teaching and Learning (CCTL) Fundamentals of Teaching Series
 2. CCTL individual consultation
 3. CCTL workshop on diversity and inclusion
 4. Two or three Graduate Student - TA positions before a Graduate Student Lecturer role teaching the stand-alone course in the sixth year
 5. Mentored preparation for the stand-alone course
 6. One Graduate Student Lecturer position in a stand-alone course in literary/cultural studies taught through the Slavic Department or through other opportunities on campus including the support of course development grants from the Center for the Study of Gender and Sexuality (CSGS), the [Pozen Family Center for Human Rights](#), etc.

Most students will be required to fulfill the requirements in both lists, but these may be adjusted to meet individual goals.

Graduate Student – TA:

The department views Graduate Student - TA experience as an important element in its training, as it exposes students to varied teaching styles, course methodologies, grading and feedback strategies. It is a valuable apprenticeship, in which the graduate student assimilates course content from the vantage point of an instructor. Each student should be a Graduate Student - TA for two or three courses with a minimum of two different instructors, including one large lecture and one seminar style course as opportunities allow.

The Graduate Student - TA should meet with the instructor regularly to discuss the goals and outcomes of the course, teaching strategies, the developing atmosphere in the classroom, grading and feedback, and additional sources/perspectives that might be brought into discussion. The Graduate Student - TA may lead a discussion section, and in cases where they do not, they should lead one meeting/discussion of the full class and receive feedback from the instructor.

Capstone Pedagogical Experience

As noted above, for many students the capstone achievement will be designing and teaching a successful course in literature/culture as a Graduate Student Lecturer. This course will be selected in collaboration with the Department, and may be drawn from the student's dissertation research, but should aim for a broader audience by demonstrating a forward-thinking approach to material of strong interest to wide range of students. Students must submit a proposal for the course, including course description and tentative syllabus, to the department by the end of the first week of Winter quarter in the academic year before they plan to teach. Students must complete 2 TAs in a non-language course to qualify to teach a standalone REES course.

The Department may also allow students to fulfill an alternative capstone if this is appropriate to their career goals, such as:

- A curated exhibit or close collaboration with a specialist in a curated project
- An archival project, such as publishing or making other use of materials in local collections in the field
- An extensive social services or government service project, described in a report presented at a departmental colloquium
- A translation, presented and discussed in a departmental colloquium
- an additional quarter of a) the primary language at a different level, b) a second language, or c) specialized course for heritage speakers, business, etc.

Joint Degree Students

Those pursuing joint degrees will follow the requirements for both of their departments, with the understanding that credit for equivalent preparation should be given wherever possible. Every effort should be made to coordinate and synchronize training plans to the extent possible, and to adjust them to meet the students' ultimate goals across the two programs.

SAMPLE TIMELINE

YEAR	Pedagogical Training	Teaching Experience	Goals
1	Any language instruction necessary to achieve advanced proficiency in targeted language of instruction		Orienting to professional standards in second language and research
2	Completion of one CCTL Fundamentals of Teaching Series Teaching consultation with CCTL CCTL diversity and inclusion workshop	One Graduate Student – TA role in a non-language course, including discussion of comments provided on student papers	Building skills toward teaching topical courses Acquiring deeper understanding of content as a course assistant
3	Teaching consultation with CCTL CCTE 50100 Language Pedagogy for the Contemporary Classroom [CLC] (This course may be taken in year 2) REES 31500 Teaching Slavic Languages (for 2025-6, offered in Winter) (This course may be taken in year 2) Observation of two classes taught by other instructional faculty	One Graduate Student - TA role in a non-language course, including delivery of one lecture, with preparatory mentoring and feedback from instructor of record One Graduate Student TAship or Lectureship in language program*	Refinement of preparation for teaching topical courses Preparation for language teaching
4/5	One quarter of language course shadowing Attendance at planning meetings with language instructional faculty Attendance at CLC SLA programming (at least 3 events) 2 language class observations by language coordinator Planning for Capstone course including applying for teaching opportunities through CSGS and Pozen Family Center	One or Two Graduate Student TAships or Lectureships in language program (depending on availability)*	One year (4 th or 5 th) focused on research, with minimal or no teaching Acquisition of marketable skill in teaching a stand-alone language course
	Course design and College Teaching [CCTE 50000]	One Graduate Student Lecturer - Design and	Addition of marketable skill in delivering

6	At least one teaching observation by faculty Creation of web description and module for course (to be used for advertising the course, for reference on departmental web page, and for teaching portfolio)	delivery of stand-alone topical course, with faculty advising on Canvas site and syllabus**	stand-alone topical course (or equivalent) Preparation to enter job market
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*If a student wishes to complete 3 quarters as a Graduate Student TA or Lecturer for language courses (based on availability and departmental need) in addition to a standalone course, the 6th course may be treated as additional student teaching support (STS) and will be subjected to departmental request and divisional approval. Teaching additional courses above the PTP requirements is not guaranteed and students who apply for any approved STS positions must be in good academic standing and be making good academic progress per the department.

**It is departmental policy that students complete 2 Graduate Student Teaching Assistantships in a non-language REES course to qualify to teach a standalone REES course.