

York Centre for Asian Research

An Explanation of Graduate Diploma in Asian Studies (GDAS) Requirements

This document offers an explanation of the requirements of the GDAS in detail. It should be noted that this explanation does not replace the official description of the requirements set out in York Centre for Asian Research, Proposal for a Type II Diploma in Asian Studies available at www.yorku.ca/univsec/senate/committees/ccas/reports/2005-2006/051027%20docs/Action%20Item%201.pdf. In the event of a conflict, the official description is authoritative.

1. Competency in at least one Asian language

The purposes of the language requirement are: 1) to develop language skills sufficient for doing research, and 2) to demonstrate serious engagement with Asian culture.

The specific language should be that which is most relevant to the candidate's research. Competency can be demonstrated in several ways:

- a/ successful completion (minimum B+) of an intermediate level course in an Asian language (where available);
- b/ demonstration of oral competency equivalent to successful completion of an intermediate course, through successful completion of an oral examination; or
- c/ demonstration of written competency equivalent to successful completion of an intermediate course through translation of a written text into English.

The latter two options would use standardized testing materials where available, and be tested by a person competent in assessment of the language in question, not including members of the candidate's diploma committee. Where possible, testing will be conducted in consultation with the Department of Languages, Literatures and Linguistics with regard to testing materials and services. The candidate's diploma committee will make the final decision with regard to the satisfaction of this requirement.

The language requirement also applies to students conducting research on diaspora in Canada and elsewhere. However, in order to accommodate the nature of their research, efforts will be made to interpret the diploma requirements flexibly where necessary. The language to be tested will be determined on a case-by-case basis by the candidate's diploma committee, which will also determine how competency can be satisfied by the student.

In cases where students have an Asian language as a "parental" tongue, the decision on whether this language qualifies will be based on research relevance. Competency must still be demonstrated.

2. Completion of a one semester designated core course in Asian Studies

This normally would mean the core course created for the purpose of this diploma programme.

3. Two research papers with clear Asian content accepted by the Diploma Coordinator

These papers can be written as part of the degree requirements, and can include papers written for courses with grades that satisfy FGS requirements (with the exception of the core course). Normally, an MRP or one chapter of a thesis written in fulfillment of requirements for the Master's or Doctoral programme may count for one of these course papers, providing they contain clear Asian content.

4. Fieldwork or other experience in the geographic region of Asia, to be assessed by the diploma committee.

This would normally involve a period of residence in geographic Asia of at least 12 weeks duration during the graduate programme and include research and other activities directly relevant to the programme of study of the student. Travel of a tourist nature does not qualify. Archival work, studio work in the case of visual arts students as well as work experience may qualify if they are related to the candidate's research. Students whose research focuses on Asian diaspora may meet the requirements through activities directly relevant to their research programme including, for example, various sustained and substantive forms of community participation and volunteer work in Asian diaspora communities, equivalent to at least a 12-week period.

If the candidate has fieldwork or other experience in Asia prior to entering the graduate programme, the period should normally have been of a sufficient duration so as to be equivalent to a 12-week period of research during the graduate programme. It should also have involved engagement in an activity that the diploma committee deems relevant to the candidate's graduate programme. This period would normally be of at least a year, though shorter periods may be acceptable depending on the nature of the work or other activities undertaken while in Asia.