

**Middlebury College**  
**DOCTOR OF MODERN LANGUAGES**  
**GUIDELINES AND PROCEDURES FOR STUDENTS**

## **INTRODUCTION**

The Doctor of Modern Languages (DML) degree program, established in 1927, is unique to Middlebury College and reflects a commitment to the promotion of excellence in second language acquisition, literature, linguistics, and language pedagogy. The DML—offered in French, German, Italian, Russian, and Spanish—prepares teachers and scholars of two modern foreign languages, as well as the literature, linguistics, and culture associated with each.

The following guidelines are designed to clarify DML procedures for current and prospective DML candidates.

*Note: For the purpose of these guidelines, the abbreviations ‘L1’ (first DML Language) and ‘L2’ (second DML Language) will be used. L1 options include French, German, Italian, Russian, and Spanish; L2 options include all of the above, as well as Arabic, Chinese, and Hebrew.*

## **INQUIRIES**

Inquiries about the DML program may be directed to the L1 School Assistant Director or to the DML Assistant Director.

The DML Assistant Director and/or L1 and L2 Assistant Directors are responsible for administrative support only. Questions on academic matters and fulfillment of degree requirements should be addressed to the Director for the student’s primary DML language.

During the summer session, each Director, in consultation with the office of the Dean of Language Schools, has primary responsibility for his or her School’s DML program. During the academic year, the Dean of Language Schools coordinates the DML program for all Schools, consulting with the individual Directors as needed.

## **APPLICATION/ADMISSION PROCESS**

*A student applying to the DML program should normally have an MA degree in the L1 (French, German, Italian, Russian, or Spanish) or may, with the approval of the Dean of Language Schools and the L1 Director, substitute an MA in a related field such as comparative literature or linguistics, providing he/she has the necessary linguistic proficiency. It is expected that the MA language will become the principal DML language.*

**The deadline for applying to the DML program is March 1.** DML applicants will submit an application to the L1 School only.

In addition to supporting documents described in the Language Schools application instructions, DML applicants must complete placement exams and undergo oral interviews in both of their DML languages as a part of the application process. Only applicants who have demonstrated doctoral-level (minimum of Advanced-Mid) proficiency in both the first and second DML languages will be admitted to the program.

Upon preliminary acceptance to the program, the applicant submits, by email, a one-page summary of the topic of the Qualifying Paper (in the target language) and a preliminary bibliography of no more than one page to the DML Assistant Director by **May 1**, to be approved by the L1 Director before the beginning of the summer session. The enrollment and rooming form and tuition deposit must be submitted to the L1 School.

## **DEGREE REQUIREMENTS**

**Summer of Candidacy:** Before formal admission to the DML program, an accepted applicant completes a summer of candidacy at the L1 School on the Middlebury or Bennington, Vermont campus. During this summer, the applicant registers for the Qualifying Paper (listed as Research Paper or DML 6900) and two graduate courses (600-level or above) approved by the L1 Director.

Students must earn a minimum grade of B+ in all **course work** applied toward DML requirements. (*The minimum grade for the Qualifying Paper completed during the summer of candidacy is A-*). A student who receives a grade lower than B+ for any course will not be permitted to continue in the program. A Middlebury College Language School unit equals 3 semester hours or 4.5 quarter hours of credit.

All courses taken for credit towards the DML degree, at Middlebury or other institutions, must be 600-level or above. Courses in language practice (such as conversation and composition courses) cannot be applied toward the DML degree.

### **DML QUALIFYING PAPER – 1 course unit of credit**

*To qualify for DML candidacy, the student must earn at least an A- on the Qualifying Paper.*

Students may choose one of the following two options for completion of the Qualifying Paper:

1. Submit the Qualifying Paper before the end of the first summer session, in which case a DML candidacy decision will be made at the end of the summer.
2. Those who prefer more time to adequately complete the Qualifying Paper may submit it by the end of December of the same year. If the paper does not qualify for DML candidacy, the student will be alerted that they are not accepted into the DML program.

DML Directors will inform the Dean's office in writing before the end of the session which option the student has chosen.

If DML applicants study abroad immediately after the summer of candidacy and choose option 2 for the Qualifying Paper, they do so with the knowledge that they will go abroad without yet having been officially accepted as candidates for the DML degree. Therefore, if the eventual grade is lower than an A-, those study abroad credits will not count toward the DML and the student will not be accepted into the DML program.

If the Qualifying Paper topic and bibliography are approved, the DML Assistant Director informs the student. The L1 Director appoints a member of the School's faculty to advise the student in the preparation of the paper. The paper, written in the first language, is the equivalent of a third course and is valued at one unit of graduate credit. It must be approximately 25 pages in length, excluding introduction, bibliography and appendices, conform to the *MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers* or the *Manual of the American Psychological Association*, and be of **publishable quality**. The Qualifying Paper must be a new, original work by the student, not a revision of a paper the student has written earlier, either at Middlebury or at another institution.

The Director of the School and the adviser grade the paper jointly.

### **DML CANDIDACY**

A student who has successfully completed the Summer of Candidacy receives a letter from the Dean of Language Schools, formally admitting him/her to candidacy in the Doctor of Modern Languages program. The letter includes an explanation of the ten-year limit for completion of the degree. The DML reading list (in the first language) is sent with the candidacy letter by the Dean's office. A new DML candidate may enroll in the appropriate School Abroad for one semester and take L1 courses approved by the L1 Director in consultation with the School Abroad Director.

**Because of the 10-year limit for completion of the degree, candidates may not officially enter the program before attaining doctoral-level proficiency in the second language.**

## **COURSE WORK IN THE PRINCIPAL LANGUAGE**

In addition to the three units of credit that DML applicants earn during their summer of candidacy, they must complete six courses in the L1 during subsequent summers or a combination of summer sessions and a semester abroad. The L1 courses will include one pedagogy course and a teaching practicum (see descriptions below). Credit (up to three courses) may be transferred only for L1 work and must be requested in accordance with the regulations of the appropriate School (minimum grade of B+). A student who wishes to transfer courses should contact the L1 Assistant Director to request the Transfer of Credit form.

### **PEDAGOGY COURSE – 1 course unit**

All DML students must complete a compulsory pedagogy course (e.g., a course in second language acquisition or teaching methodologies). This course will normally be taken in the L1, but may be taken in the L2 if not available in the L1 School. This requirement may be waived if the student completed a comparable course as part of their MA. Requests to waive the pedagogy course requirement must be made in writing to the L1 Director and must include supporting documentation (such as the course syllabus). If the waiver is granted, the student would substitute an elective course in the L1.

### **TEACHING PRACTICUM – 1 course unit**

The Teaching Practicum will be completed in the L1 only. There are two parts to the practicum: classroom observations and supervised teaching. Students must complete the Teaching Practicum on either the Middlebury or Bennington, Vermont campus. Classroom observations will be done in the first half of the six-week session and supervised teaching in the second half of the session. Experienced language teachers may seek a waiver of this requirement by providing three letters documenting their teaching skills and experience (see section on Teaching Experience below). If a waiver is granted, then the DML candidate must complete an L1 elective course in place of the Practicum.

## **SECOND LANGUAGE REQUIREMENT**

Students may fulfill the second language requirement in one of three ways:

1. They may complete three advanced graduate courses in the L2 School at either the Middlebury or Bennington, Vermont campus. The L2 Director must approve the courses.
2. They may choose to complete the summer graduate program in Buenos Aires, Argentina, or Paris, France. See description below under Residency Abroad Requirement for detailed information.
3. They may choose to complete three advanced graduate courses during a semester in a C.V. Starr School Abroad where the L2 is spoken. The L2 Director and the Schools Abroad Director must approve the courses.
4. They may complete an MA at Middlebury in the second language.

DML students intending to take courses in the L2 submit an online application to their L2 School as returning graduate student.

No transfer credit may be applied toward L2 requirements.

## **RESIDENCY ABROAD**

Each DML student spends **at least one semester or two summers** residing in a country where the principal DML language is spoken, in order to gain greater familiarity with the target culture. (For the purposes of this requirement, a summer is understood to consist of at least 6 weeks of continuous residency.) Students who are native speakers of the L1 are strongly encouraged to complete the residency requirement in a country where their L2 is spoken. Residency abroad does not in itself carry academic credit; however, students may choose to spend a semester at one of the C. V. Starr-Middlebury Schools Abroad or a summer at the graduate program in Buenos Aires, Argentina, or Paris, France, during which they may earn credits applicable toward their degree. Spending one summer in Buenos Aires or Paris does not entirely fulfill the residency requirement; a second summer abroad would be required.

**Prior approval** of plans for residency abroad must be obtained by writing from the Dean of Language Schools. Upon completion of the residency abroad, students must document their stay in a letter to the DML Assistant Director, who will consult with the Dean of Language Schools to confirm that requirements have indeed been met.

**The Spanish Graduate Program in Buenos Aires:** Those candidates whose L1 or L2 is Spanish are eligible to participate in the summer program in Buenos Aires, Argentina. This program involves home stays with families and enrollment in three upper-level graduate courses during the six-week summer session (dates may vary slightly from those of programs on the Vermont campus). For students whose L1 is Spanish, participation in this program confers three graduate credits at the same time that it serves as one of the two summers of residency abroad. For students whose L2 is Spanish, it fulfills the requirement of one summer in the L2—in other words, it is equivalent to spending a summer in the Spanish School at the Vermont campus.

**The French Graduate Program in Paris (*launched in 2016*):** Those candidates whose L1 or L2 is French are eligible to participate in the summer program in Paris, France. For students whose L1 is French, participation in this program confers three graduate credits at the same time that it serves as one of the two summers of residency abroad. For students whose L2 is French, it fulfills the requirement of one summer in the L2—in other words, it is equivalent to spending a summer in the French School at the Vermont campus.

Upon completion of the residency abroad requirement, students must document their stay in a letter to the Dean of Language Schools, who will confirm that requirements have indeed been met. Documented residence abroad within 10 years prior to the summer of candidacy may be considered toward fulfillment of this requirement.

## TRANSFER OF CREDIT

DML candidates may apply up to three units (courses) of transfer credit in their L1 to their Middlebury degrees. No transfer credit is accepted in the L2. Candidates wishing to transfer credit should request Transfer of Credit Forms from their School Assistant Directors and must receive written approval in advance from the Language Schools Registrar for each course they intend to transfer.

### Transfer Course Requirements:

1. Only courses taken *after* successful completion of the summer of candidacy and formal admission to degree candidacy may be transferred; i.e., courses taken at other institutions before the first summer of study may not be transferred toward a Middlebury degree.
2. A student must obtain written permission from the Registrar **before** registering at another institution for a course that is intended for transfer to Middlebury. To request permission, a student must submit to the L1 Assistant Director a completed **Transfer Course Description Form**. (The L1 Assistant Director will consult with the School Director and/or the Registrar as to the suitability of a particular course.)
3. Courses in language practice (such as conversation and composition courses) are not transferable.
4. All courses intended for transfer must be taken at the graduate level (600-level or above) of an accredited institution offering graduate credit toward an advanced degree. Correspondence courses are not acceptable.
5. To be transferred as one unit, a course must carry at least 3 semester hours or 4.5 quarter hours of credit; courses that exceed this minimum will generally be accepted for no more than one unit of transfer credit.
6. A maximum of three transfer units can be applied toward the eight units of course work required for the L1. The transfer courses may not duplicate courses previously taken for degree credit, and may not have been counted toward any other degree.
7. **No grade below B+ may be applied toward to the DML degree.** All transfer courses counted toward the degree must have been taken on a graded basis, not “pass/fail.”

8. Special Middlebury two- and three-week seminar courses may not be counted toward the DML degree.
9. At the conclusion of an approved transfer course, an official transcript showing the course title and grade must be forwarded to the L1 Assistant Director to complete the formal transfer of credit toward the Middlebury degree.

## **COMPREHENSIVE EXAMINATIONS**

Each candidate must pass both written and oral examinations (Comprehensive Examinations) in the first DML language. The candidate may elect to take the exams after completion of L1 coursework or may wait until course work is completed in both languages. Candidates may enroll in courses in the summer in which they take the DML exams only by special permission of the Dean. The L1 Director appoints a committee which writes and grades the examinations.

### **Written Examinations**

Written exams are typically scheduled on the third or fourth Thursday and Friday in July from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. Students may take their examinations either:

- On a Mac or PC computer.
- By writing their answers in the examination booklets. Students must use a separate examination booklet (“blue book”) for each question and write the number of the question on the cover. Pens and pencils will be provided.

Students may not bring textbooks, reference books, or computers into the exam room. They are permitted to leave the exam room to call their Director or the DML Assistant Director if they have questions concerning the exam. Directors should be available for consultation on the designated exam days.

We recommend that students contact the DML Assistant Director to schedule a time to review previous exams. The DML Assistant Director will send a pdf version of the questions from a previous exam to the student.

### **Oral Examinations**

Oral exams are scheduled by the Directors on the Monday or Tuesday following the written examinations.

## **TEACHING EXPERIENCE**

All DML candidates must demonstrate competence in teaching the L1, and the Teaching Practicum serves as the usual means of demonstrating teaching competence. Experienced language teachers may seek a waiver of the practicum requirement by having three letters from colleagues or supervisors submitted on official letterhead to the DML Assistant Director. Teaching experience prior to the candidate’s summer of candidacy may be counted. DML candidates planning to seek a waiver of the practicum requirement should notify the L1 Director and DML Assistant Director prior to submitting letters. If a waiver is granted, then the DML candidate must complete an L1 elective course in place of the Practicum.

## **FIFTH-YEAR REVIEW**

At the beginning of the DML candidate’s fifth summer in the program, the L1 Director will review the student’s file to assess progress toward completion of course requirements and fulfillment of other degree requirements including teaching experience, residency abroad, and second language study. All course work must be completed no later than the end of the seventh summer.

## **ADVISING & TRAINING IN RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

The Director of a DML candidate’s L1 School is normally his/her general adviser during the full course of study and approves the candidate’s academic program in the Schools Abroad in consultation with the School Abroad Director.

Once the dissertation prospectus has been approved (see next section), the DML candidate will work primarily with the dissertation adviser, who is expected to provide substantive guidance in research methods appropriate to the discipline and topic of the dissertation.

## PROSPECTUS AND DISSERTATION

Upon successful completion of all course work and of both written and oral exams, and no later than the end of the candidate's seventh summer, the candidate submits a formal dissertation prospectus, written in the L1. The L1 Director recommends the proposed topic for approval by the Dean of Language Schools. The L1 Director, in consultation with the candidate, nominates a dissertation adviser from the School faculty, who will oversee the candidate's dissertation preparation. In the exceptional event that a candidate's dissertation topic is so specialized that no suitable advisor is available within the School's faculty, the Dean may allow the L1 Director to nominate an external advisor. This ensures that the candidate receives the necessary expertise and guidance for their research. The Dean of Language Schools confirms the appointment of the adviser. Once the prospectus has been approved, and the adviser appointed, the L1 Director, dissertation adviser, and candidate sign the DML Prospectus Form, which is sent to the DML Assistant Director to keep as part of the student's file.

The dissertation adviser meets regularly with the candidate during succeeding summers and is available for telephone, mail, or email consultation as needed during the academic year. The adviser, in consultation with the L1 Director, develops a reading list for the candidate's use in dissertation preparation. The L1 Director and dissertation adviser review the candidate's status annually. Failure to make adequate progress may result in the candidate's dismissal from the program.

The candidate is responsible for making timely progress on the dissertation and for keeping the adviser informed as to the status of the work. The adviser will respond in timely fashion to communications from the student. The L1 Director is responsible for monitoring the progress of the dissertation and, where necessary, facilitating communication between the candidate and the dissertation adviser. The office of the Dean of Language Schools will respond to any procedural questions or problems.

A Middlebury DML dissertation is a scholarly paper of at least one hundred pages in length (excluding front- and end-matter), written in the first language and conforming to the specifications of the latest edition of the *MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers* or the *Manual of the American Psychological Association*.

The dissertation author raises an important linguistic, cultural, or literary problem, reviews the work of other scholars in the area of this problem and identifies a question or questions for close examination. The author proposes a thesis (an answer or answers to the questions), considers evidence, and makes a well-structured argument in the context of a sound theoretical framework in order to draw appropriate conclusions that illuminate the linguistic, cultural, or literary problem.

The dissertation should be written on a computer, preferably one compatible with equipment available on either the Middlebury or Bennington, Vermont campus.

It is the responsibility of the dissertation adviser to recommend the dissertation for defense, when he or she considers that it is ready.

The candidate must submit **one electronic copy of the dissertation** to the DML Assistant Director on or before **June 1** of the summer during which the dissertation is to be defended. **No extensions will be granted.** Within one week after submitting the dissertation, the candidate will also need to submit a 3-5 page summary of the dissertation in the L2 to the DML Assistant Director. This is to facilitate discussion of the thesis with the member of the dissertation committee who is a specialist in the L2. The Director distributes the electronic dissertation to the members of the dissertation defense examination committee. The dissertation fee should also be submitted at this time. The dissertation defense is normally scheduled by the L1 Director to take place at least two weeks before Commencement.

One copy of the *final* version of your dissertation (with all corrections approved by the L1 Director) must be submitted in **electronic format** to the DML Assistant Director no later than **August 1**.

The defense is typically scheduled during the fourth or fifth week of the session. The L1 Director determines the date, time, and location of the defense and informs the Dean of Language Schools. The L1 Director normally appoints two readers in addition to the dissertation adviser and asks the L2 Director to appoint a third reader.

The defense normally consists of a brief introduction by the dissertation adviser, a presentation of about fifteen minutes in length by the candidate, and comments and questions by members of the committee from the L1 School, followed by comments and questions by the members of the committee from the L2 School. If the dissertation adviser is not present, the L1 Director conducts the defense or designates a director of the defense. Following the defense, the committee votes on acceptance of the dissertation. A majority vote is required for passage, broken in case of a tie by the L1 Director or his or her designate.

The L1 Director, dissertation adviser, or faculty member appointed to conduct the dissertation defense is responsible for the proper conduct of the examination. He or she must guarantee that the candidate is provided a reasonable opportunity to defend the dissertation, must ensure that it is the candidate alone and not any member of the examination committee who defends the dissertation, and must protect the candidate from harassment.

A Dissertation Report Form is completed by the L1 Director at the end of the defense. Results of the dissertation defense are transmitted to the Registrar's Office by Dean of Language Schools for recording on the student's transcript. In case of failure, the student may choose to rewrite the dissertation and submit it for a second defense no later than the following summer.

If the dissertation is accepted, a final, corrected copy of the dissertation (in pdf or Word format) is submitted to the DML Assistant Director **by August 1**. The DML Assistant Director sends the dissertation to the Library, where it is placed in the College Archive.

## **EXTENSIONS**

In exceptional cases, the Dean of Language Schools may grant an extension to the ten-year limit for completion of the degree. A candidate who, for reasons beyond his or her control, is unable to complete the degree within ten years may address a written request for an extension to the Dean of Language Schools, who will issue a written decision after consultation with the L1 and L2 Directors.