

**Annual Key Assessment Findings and Curricular Improvements
Department of Semitic and Egyptian Languages and Literatures
Academic Year 2011-2012**

**Master's Program in Ancient Northwest Semitic Languages
Master's Program in Near Eastern Christian Languages & Literatures
Doctoral Program in Ancient Northwest Semitic Languages
Doctoral Program in Near Eastern Christian Languages & Literatures**

Key Assessment Findings

Comprehensive exams are a requirement for both M.A. and Ph.D. students in the Semitics department. The M.A. comprehensive exams are designed to demonstrate that the student has reached an acceptable level of competence in his/her major and minor languages. Presuming competence in these languages, the Ph.D. comprehensive exams test the student's abilities to interpret selected passages from texts pertinent to the student's academic focus and to answer a set of linguistic, cultural, and historical questions based on these selected texts.

The number of students who took M.A. and Ph.D. comprehensive examinations in AY2011-2012 was a total of 11 (with one student making two attempts, for a total of 12 comprehensives taken). All students except two passed with a level within the rubrics of "2" (meeting expectations), with the new rubrics fully implemented as of the summer of 2010, which results are included within this report. The results table for the past two AY's is appended at the end of this report. The exception was one student who failed (achieved a level of "1" or below) 1 of 2 MA comprehensives, but passed on the second attempt. Another student failed 1 of 2 PhD comprehensives. The rest of the students achieved a "2" (meeting expectations) or "3" level (exceeded expectations). In general, the rubrics have proved useful; however, since the comprehensive exams are not standardized (that is, different questions are set for different students) it can be hard exactly to quantify performances within the broad wording of the rubrics. The table of rubrics results are appended below .

Curricular Improvements for Master's Program and Ph.D. Program

Several needs became apparent during AY2011-2012. One is that the students are not familiar with the comprehensive exam process until the exams are upon them. Another is that students have no easy way to track their own progress against departmental and university benchmarks, since this information is not available for Semitics on Cardinal Station. The solution, at least intra-departmentally, may be to generate a Student Handbook, which will contain information about requirements and comprehensive exams,

as well as a chart for tracking benchmarks. It is planned that advanced students themselves will help in compiling a Semitics student handbook.

Since the curricular revision of AY2010-2011, no further changes in curriculum have taken place.

THE CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY OF AMERICA
 Planning, Institutional Research, Student Learning Outcomes Assessment

GRADUATE COMPREHENSIVE EXAMINATION RESULTS

**Department of Semitics
 AY2009-2010 through AY2011-2012**

REVISED

	Fail		Pass		High Pass		Pass w/Distinction		Pass w/Honors		TOTAL
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	
MA comps											
AY2009-2010	0	0.00%	3	100.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	3
AY2010-2011	0	0.00%	1	100.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	1
AY2011-2012	1	12.50%	7	87.50%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	8
PhD comps											
AY2009-2010	0	0.00%	5	100.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	5
AY2010-2011	0	0.00%	5	100.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	5
AY2011-2012	1	25.00%	3	75.00%	0	0.00%		0.00%	0	0.00%	4

Note: 1) The count of comps outcomes is based on the number of attempts taken by the students.

2) Students were included in the categories High Pass, Pass with Distinction, and Pass with Honors if these designations were explicitly indicated in the student's milestone record. Please contact the Office of Planning, Institutional Research, Student Learning Outcomes Assessment if these designations can also be determined through the student's final grade in the comprehensive requirement.

****Note that Semitics does not report these categories to the Graduate Office and that therefore they should not appear in the Comps Results.**

3) To preserve confidentiality, if fewer than 5 students took comps during the period under study, the related data should be considered confidential and should not be cited or analyzed in the Annual Assessment Findings Report.

4) AY2009-2010 includes the summer 2009, fall 2009, and spring 2010 semesters.

AY2010-2011 includes the summer 2010, fall 2010, and spring 2011 semesters.

AY2011-2012 includes the summer 2011, fall 2011, and spring 2012 semesters.

Table of Results
Student Learning Assessment Rubric
Department of Semitics
Rubric for Master's Comprehensive Exam

Trait	Level						Mean	SD	Total N
	Exceeding Expectations (3pts)		Meeting Expectations (2pts)		Below Expectations (1pt)				
	N	%	N	%	N	%			
1) Knowledge of the grammar, syntax, and basic vocabulary of the major and minor languages	4	50%	3	38%	1	13%	2.38	0.74	8
2) Identification and discussion of selected grammatical and syntactical features in an assigned text in a major or minor language	4	50%	3	38%	1	13%	2.38	0.74	8
3) Ability accurately to translate selected texts in the major and minor languages into English	4	50%	3	38%	1	13%	2.38	0.74	8

Note: 1) The "N" represents the number of students at each level of performance for each trait.

2) The "%" represents the percentage of the number of students falling at the level performance

for each trait against the total number of students.

- 3) The mean is the average of all scores across the levels within the trait.
- 4) The standard deviation (SD) is the measure of the variability of the data set, indicating how "spread out" these data are from the mean value.

Department of Semitics
Rubric for PhD Comprehensive Exam

Trait	Level						Mean	SD	Total N
	Exceeding Expectations (3pts)		Meeting Expectations (2pts)		Below Expectations (1pt)				
	N	%	N	%	N	%			
1)Mastery of the major and minor languages	2	50%	1	25%	1	25%	2.25	0.96	4
2)Correct reading and apt consideration of the selected texts in the major and minor languages	2	50%	1	25%	1	25%	2.25	0.96	4
3)Ability to use the selected texts in the major and minor languages adequately to answer questions of cultural, historical, or literary relevance	2	50%	1	25%	1	25%	2.25	0.96	4
4)Demonstration of knowledge of current scholarly work sufficient to engage in a discussion of historical, cultural, and literary issues relative to the selected texts	2	50%	1	25%	1	25%	2.25	0.96	4

Note: 1) The "N" represents the number of students at each level of performance for each trait.

2) The "%" represents the percentage of the number of students falling at the level performance

for each trait against the total number of students.

3) The mean is the average of all scores across the levels within the trait.

4) The standard deviation (SD) is the measure of the variability of the data set, indicating how "spread out" these data are from the mean value.