

**Annual Key Assessment Findings and Curricular Improvements  
Department of Semitic & Egyptian Languages and Literatures**

**Master's Program in Semitic & Egyptian Languages and Literatures  
Doctoral Program in Semitic & Egyptian Languages and Literatures  
2014-2015**

**Key Assessment Findings**

The rubrics put in place previously (2010-11) are now being routinely used in assessment of the comprehensive exams. This has been a great aid to tracking the effectiveness of student preparation and our academic counseling.

Student performance on comprehensive exams continues to be overall good. However, 2 students failed one or both comprehensive exams in Fall 2014. One of the students was certified by Disability Services as having adult ADHD, and was offered extra time to complete the exam on the second attempt. Both students passed on the second attempts administered in Spring 2015. A third student withdrew from the University before taking comprehensive exams.

As of Fall 2015, 13 students were at the dissertation stage. Two students received the Ph.D. degree in May.

At the end of the 2013-2014 academic year, Prof. Sidney Griffith retired and in Fall 2014, Prof. Aaron Butts took his place. The transition has been successful and no adverse impact was noted in student performance.

Two incoming students in Fall 2014 requested and were administered assessment exams in Classical Arabic by Dr. Butts and Dr. Talia. It was determined that both students would benefit from taking the introductory Arabic sequence (SEM 541-542) taught by Dr. Talia.

**Curricular Improvements**

Students' lack of clarity about some program requirements, combined with inadequate information about the field as a whole, has been noted by faculty in the past among incoming students. To address this need, a new 1-credit course SEM 501, Research Methods, was instituted in Fall 2015 and required of all incoming students. It addresses both methodological and curricular issues.

It has been noted that incoming students in Biblical Hebrew are often at markedly different stages in their readiness for graduate study. An ideal solution would be to offer an intermediate Hebrew sequence, "Readings in Biblical Hebrew," for those less ready for graduate work in Hebrew. Currently no faculty are available to teach such a sequence, but inquiry will be made about the feasibility of having a graduate student teach the courses.

THE CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY OF AMERICA  
Financial Planning, Institutional Research and Assessment

**GRADUATE COMPREHENSIVE EXAMINATION RESULTS**  
**SCHOOL OF ARTS AND SCIENCES**  
**DEPARTMENT OF SEMITICS**  
**AY2009-2010 to AY2013-2014**

**Please note: The Department of Semitics does not use the rubric “Pass w/Honors.” Only the three rubrics Fail, Pass, and High Pass are used.**

Master's Comprehensive Exam

	Fail		Pass		High Pass		Pass w/Honors		TOTAL
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	
AY2009-2010		0.00%	5	100.00%		0.00%		0.00%	<b>5</b>
AY2010-2011		0.00%	6	100.00%		0.00%		0.00%	<b>6</b>
AY2011-2012		0.00%	7	100.00%		0.00%		0.00%	<b>7</b>
AY2012-2013	1	33.00%	2	67.00%		0.00%		0.00%	<b>3</b>
AY2013-2014		0.00%	1	100.00%		0.00%		0.00%	<b>1</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>4.55%</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>95.45%</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0.00%</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0.00%</b>	<b>22</b>

Doctoral Comprehensive Exam

	Fail		Pass		High Pass		Pass w/Honors		TOTAL
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	
AY2009-2010		0.00%	5	100.00%		0.00%		0.00%	<b>5</b>
AY2010-2011		0.00%	6	100.00%		0.00%		0.00%	<b>6</b>
AY2011-2012		0.00%	4	67.00%	2	33.00%		0.00%	<b>6</b>
AY2012-2013	1	11.00%	8	89.00%		0.00%		0.00%	<b>9</b>
AY2013-2014		0.00%	3	100.00%		0.00%		0.00%	<b>3</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>3.45%</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>89.66%</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>6.90%</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0.00%</b>	<b>29</b>

Note:

- 1) Milestone outcomes were included in the categories High Pass and Pass with Honors if these designations were explicitly indicated in the students' milestone record.
- 2) Category "High Pass" includes both "High Pass" and "Pass with distinction".
- 3) The count in this table is based on the exam outcomes of all attempts in an academic year.
- 4) Level of the comps, i.e. Master's and doctoral, is based on the milestone activities; if there is no specification of the level in the record, students' degree level is used to determine the level.

**Student Learning Assessment Rubric**  
**Department of Semitics 2014-2015**  
**Rubric for Master's Comprehensive Exam**

Trait	Level						Mean	SD	Total N
	Exceeding Expectations (3pts)		Meeting Expectations (2pts)		Below Expectations (1pt)				
	N	%	N	%	N	%			
<b>1) Knowledge of the grammar, syntax, and basic vocabulary of the major and minor languages</b>	2	50%	1	25%	1	25%	2.25	0.96	4
<b>2) Identification and discussion of selected grammatical and syntactical features in an assigned text in a major or minor language</b>	2	50%	1	25%	1	25%	2.25	0.96	4
<b>3) Ability accurately to translate selected texts in the major and minor languages into English</b>	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.

### Rubric for PhD Comprehensive Exam

Trait	Level						Mean	SD	Total N
	Exceeding Expectations (3pts)		Meeting Expectations (2pts)		Below Expectations (1pt)				
	N	%	N	%	N	%			
<b>1)Mastery of the major and minor languages</b>	3	60%	2	40%	0	0%	2.60	0.55	5
<b>2)Correct reading and apt consideration of the selected texts in the major and minor languages</b>	3	60%	1	20%	1	20%	2.40	0.89	5
<b>3)Ability to use the selected texts in the major and minor languages adequately to answer questions of cultural, historical, or literary relevance</b>	3	60%	1	20%	1	20%	2.40	0.89	5
<b>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</b>	3	60%	1	20%	1	20%	2.40	0.89	5

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.