

**SLAVIC LANGUAGES AND LITERATURES  
UC BERKELEY  
GRADUATE APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS**

**Graduate Application Deadlines for Fall 2010:  
*December 17, 2009***

**The on-line application system is scheduled to open on September 8.**

**Dear Applicant:**

Thank you for your interest in the Slavic Languages and Literatures program at U.C. Berkeley.

The Department offers a synthetic approach to the study of language, literature, and culture. The most common career choice of our graduates is teaching at the college level, although some also pursue careers in writing, publishing, public and government service, and other fields in the humanities. We accept into our graduate program mostly students whose interests and aspirations lie in the area of scholarship, and we accept only as many as we anticipate being able to support financially. In the application, we ask you to choose a field of concentration, either linguistics or literature and culture.

We select our graduate students on the basis of prior academic achievement and promise of success in scholarship and teaching. A bachelor's degree in Slavic or its equivalent is required for admission. Usually this includes at least three years of study of Russian (or another Slavic language) and appropriate training in its literature or linguistics. Knowledge of French or German is recommended but not required for admission.

Applicant files are sorted and summarized after the deadline. The Graduate Assistant will email each applicant as to the completion (or lack) of his/her file once the sorting and summarizing is complete. The files are read by the department faculty and evaluated throughout January and early February. Decisions regarding fellowships and admissions will be announced in late February through early March.

**All** applications and supporting documents, including GRE/TOEFL scores need to be postmarked by the application deadline in order to be considered for fellowship and admission. If your application is incomplete, it is difficult to obtain missing items from you in time for faculty review. It is therefore essential that you make arrangements for all materials to reach us on or soon after the deadline. It is also important to remember that incomplete applications may not only leave out information essential to our review but also adversely affect your chances for a university multi-year fellowship.

We require the following documents and materials in order for your application to be complete:

- **Graduate Division Application:** Beginning in early September, the online application and instructions are available from the Graduate Division's website <http://www.grad.berkeley.edu>. If, for some reason, you are unable to access the online application, please contact the Graduate Assistant toward the end of September. We will print a copy and mail it, however the online process is streamlined and strongly encouraged.
- **Proposed Degree Program:** If you have received or expect to receive your MA from another institution before beginning at Berkeley, apply for the Ph.D. If you have not completed a Master's program, apply for the MA/PhD. There is no terminal MA program

offered. Choose one of the following areas of emphasis: Slavic Linguistics, Literature/Russian, Literature/Polish, Literature/Czech, Literature/BCS, Literature/Bulgarian. In the emphasis section “Other” you may note interests such as film, folklore, etc.

- **Personal Information:** Accurate and complete information in this section is imperative. Including temporary, additional and/or alternate contacts may help the department clarify your status and reach you or a proxy quickly if necessary for further information.
- **Exam Scores:** The Graduate Record Examination (GRE) is required for native English speakers and for non-native English speakers who have studied in an institution of higher learning in which English is the primary language of instruction. The Educational Testing Service code for Russian is 2606; use this code regardless of emphasis. The Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) is required for non-native speakers of English who have not previously studied for one year or more in a U.S. institution of higher education (see the Graduate Division’s instructions for details). Minimum scores acceptable: 570 for the paper version, 230 for the computer test, and 68 for the Internet-based test. As an exception, International applicants may submit scores from IELTS. See the Graduate Division instructions for International applicants for details.
- **Personal Statements:** The *Statement of Purpose* should be a scholarly piece that demonstrates knowledge of the discipline chosen, academic seriousness, and sophistication. *The Personal History* should discuss how you have come to your decision. These are distinctly different statements and should not be combined. Further pointers and instructions are on the Graduate Division Application site.
- **Letters of Recommendation:** The department requires three letters of recommendation, preferably from instructors knowledgeable about your experience and ability in Slavic Languages & Literatures. Recommenders are prompted by email from the Graduate Division and sent instructions how to upload their letter when you submit your application. Make sure you have spoken to prospective recommenders in advance. The department prefers the on-line system, however those who do not want to use this service may send letters directly to the Department. Download a Letter of Recommendation Form from the application web site, fill out the waiver section, and provide it to the letter writer. Recommenders can type their recommendations directly on the form, or attach it to their own letterhead. Paper letters sent directly to the department must be in sealed envelopes signed by the recommender. List your recommender names on the application even if they prefer not to use the on-line service. We need to know from whom we are expecting to hear on your behalf.
- **Writing Sample:** Submit a recent scholarly paper on a topic in Slavic Languages & Literatures such as a term paper for a course, a senior thesis, or a paper written independently. The admission committee is unable to read entire dissertations; if you have written a lengthy undergraduate honor or MA thesis, one key chapter with thesis abstract should be sufficient. If you have several short papers which demonstrate different facets of your writing and research abilities, you may send up to three. Keep in mind that being unable to select 2 (or at the most 3) of one's best writing samples does not speak well for an applicant's intellectual maturity. There is no set rule as to length; a well written, intellectually mature and stimulating piece may hold the reader’s attention up to 40-50 pages, however you may assume that each member of the admission committee, on average, will not have time to read more than 25-30 pages for each application received. We are looking for examples of research ability and some idea of your knowledge in the field of Slavic Languages & Literatures. Please email your writing sample as a Microsoft Word attachment to the Graduate Assistant,

Sandy Jones, at [issag@berkeley.edu](mailto:issag@berkeley.edu). Use the subject heading, SLAVIC APPLICANT WRITING SAMPLE. The deadline is December 17, 2009.

- **Transcripts:** Be sure to include or arrange for direct mailing to the department of all transcripts from every institution you list in your Educational Background. This includes junior college courses, and summer study in areas unrelated to your eventual major both in the U.S. and abroad. It is acceptable for U.S. applicants to omit original transcripts from Education Abroad programs only if number of units/credit hours and grades for these courses are shown on the transcript of your home institution. Courses taken for one semester which do not relate to your major may not be important to our departmental review however the Graduate Division requires transcripts for ALL academic course work. Lack of transcripts may delay admission or possibly prevent full consideration for a university fellowship. If you have only an unofficial copy, send a photocopy along with your writing sample while you request original copies. Such copies are sufficient to begin the departmental review, as long as the official transcripts arrive in a timely fashion. Students who will be sending transcripts from international institutions should pay very close attention to the Graduate Division instructions for International Applicants. Official transcripts are mailed directly to the department at the address below.

**IMPORTANT NOTES:**

In addition to the above instructions, be sure to read and comply with the Graduate Division instructions.

The University of California/Berkeley offices are closed December 23-January 6. No one will be on site to answer email or phone inquiries. Campus mail will be centrally collected for disbursement to department offices immediately following the shut-down.

Send inquiries, paper applications, and all supporting documents (which include test scores, sealed transcripts, and paper letters of recommendation) to:

Graduate Assistant  
Slavic Languages and Literatures  
6303 Dwinelle Hall  
Berkeley, CA 94720-2979

Email: [ISSAG@berkeley.edu](mailto:ISSAG@berkeley.edu)  
Phone: (510) 642-9051  
Fax: (510) 642-6220