

Tips on Applying to the Second Language Studies Ph.D. Program at Michigan State University

Updated May 31, 2022 by Prof. Winke

1. Go to <https://admissions.msu.edu/apply/graduate-students> to apply. Note the application deadline for SLS is **Dec. 9, 2022**.
2. Follow the steps in the application process.
3. Note that it is important for you to select these under “Other Information:”
 - a. Major Preference: under the light-grey header “College of Arts and Letters” select “**Second Language Studies (Doctoral)**.”
 - b. Under “First Semester to Enroll,” select “Fall Semester 2023.” Add in names of faculty with whom you would like to work.

The screenshot shows the 'Other Information' section of an application portal. On the left is a navigation menu with links: Home, Personal Background, Personal Background - Continued, Other Information (highlighted), and Conduct. The main content area is titled 'Other Information' and has a sub-section 'Enrollment Information' highlighted in grey. Under 'Enrollment Information', there are two dropdown menus: 'Major Preference' set to 'Second Language Studies (Doctoral)' and 'First semester to enroll' set to 'Fall Semester 2023'. Below these is a text input field with the prompt: 'If there are any specific faculty members who you would be especially interested in working with, please provide their names.'

4. Select “Yes” under “Do you want to be considered for a graduate assistantship?” if you would like to be considered for full funding. Graduate assistants work part time for the Program or Program faculty teaching or doing research while obtaining the degree, and in exchange receive a monthly stipend during the academic year, health insurance all year, and a tuition waiver.
5. Upload these documents:
 - a. One “Academic Statement of Purpose (ASOP)” of around 600 to 800 words. SLS is accepting just one ASOP. This is a combined “Personal Statement” and “Academic Statement.” The Online Portal is supposed to adjust in summer 2022 to show this change in our application procedure, but if it has not changed by the time you go to upload your ASOP, please kindly use only the first of the two upload links (use the Personal Statement link) and leave the other blank. (Note that the “Department” for SLS is technically “Second Language Studies,” as SLS is not yet officially in the Dept. of Linguistics, Languages, & Cultures.)
 - b. You may optionally type in a COVID-19 impact statement, as described.
6. When you enter the information on your “Academic History,” and you add in an Institution you attended, please do mark if “*Yes, English is the primary language of instruction at this institution.*”

Note: When there are questions you cannot answer (like “Class Rank” in the image below), you may leave the info blank.

The screenshot shows the 'Edit Institution' form in the application portal. The form is titled 'Office of Admissions' and 'Edit Institution'. It contains several fields: Institution (University of Wisconsin-Madison), Country (United States), City (Madison), State (Wisconsin), Dates Attended (August 2014 to May 2018), Level of Study (Undergraduate), Degree (Bachelor of Arts), Date Conferred or Expected (May 2018), Major (French), GPA (3.92 on a scale of 4), and Language (Yes, English is the primary language of instruction at this institution). There is also a field for Class Rank (out of) which is currently blank.

7. Add your GRE test score information. If you need a waiver from the GRE, fill out the “[MSU SLS Program GRE Waiver Request Form](#)”.
8. **International students** whose first language is not English must submit English language test scores: Either IELTS or TOEFL. Home and indicator editions are fine. If you would like permission to **instead** submit Duolingo English Test scores (in lieu of IELTS or TOEFL), please fill out [this form for permission](#) to take the DET. If you have a master’s degree from an [AAU institution on a U.S. campus](#), then you can obtain an automatic waiver from needing to submit English language test scores. To see if you are eligible for this automatic English test score waiver, please fill out [this form \(to see if an English language test score is needed\)](#).
9. After submitting your application and paying the application fee, you will be required to upload your CV/Resume in the “Application Portal.” Thus, for the SLS Program, you do **not** need to add your “activity history” (i.e., employment and work/activity history) under “Activities.” You may skip the “Activities” section. (The SLS Admissions Committee will read about your activities on your CV/resume.)
10. Once you’ve submitted an application for admission, you will receive a confirmation email. You should then log into the student portal to see the status of your application and upload these documents (for the SLS Admissions Committee to review):
 - a. CV or resume (This is a required document for SLS.)
 - b. Writing sample (This is a required document for SLS. We recommend you upload your MA or MS thesis or a recent publication. Class papers or other academic papers are accepted as a writing sample, but a MA/MS thesis or publication is preferred.)
 - c. Other research, instructional materials, or evidence of teaching excellence you would like to upload. (Optional for SLS.)

Notes for international students:

- You will be asked to enter information under “Financial Support Requirements.” For SLS, you may leave this blank until **after** you are admitted to the Program. If you obtain funding (a graduate assistantship) from the SLS Program, you will go back and enter the SLS Program/College of Arts and Letters as your Sponsor, and we (SLS) will provide you the “Sponsor Amount Per Year \$” and the “Number of Years,” so no need to provide this information ahead of time, **unless you are not asking to be considered for a graduate assistantship**.
- You may be asked to submit a copy of your passport. You may hold on that and submit a copy of your passport **after** you are admitted.

QUESTIONS? Email the Director of the Second Language Studies Program, Dr. Paula Winke (winke@msu.edu), and/or other SLS Faculty or Students.

We look forward to hearing from you!