

FINAL EXAM

The final exam comprises **five parts** (out of the three parts II.1, II.2 and II.3, only two will be included in the exam, as shown below):

- I.1 Language Skills Assessment (written)
- I.2 Language Skills Assessment (oral)
- II.1 British culture and civilization (oral)
- II.2 American culture and civilization (oral)
- II.3 Linguistics and communication (oral)
- III. Defense of the Thesis

The performance of each of the examinees shall be assessed by an examination committee through a scale of five grades (1-5). The final grade of the state exam shall be calculated as the mathematical average of the individual grades received in the following five exam-parts: Language Skills Assessment (written), Language Skills Assessment (oral), Defense of the Thesis and, out of the three parts II.1, II.2 and II.3, the respective part corresponding to the stream specialization of the examinee, and one of the remaining two parts (decided by drawing lots on the premises on the day of the examination). If any of the individual grades is a failing grade (1), the overall grade of the state exam shall also be a failing grade (1).

The written exam shall precede the oral exam; passing the former is a precondition of taking the latter form of Language Skills Assessment. The result of the state exam shall be announced by the chair of the examination committee at the end of the oral exam.

Detailed description of the Final Exam

I. Language Skills Assessment

The purpose of this part of the examination is to measure the language proficiency of English majors in areas related to their stream specialization field. Based upon the criteria for Level C1 of the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages, the following skills in functional language use shall be assessed:

Written text comprehension (acquisition of information, search for and identification of arguments): The examinee can understand each detail of a wide range of texts that belong to his/her field of specialization.

Writing: The examinee can express him/herself in clear, well-structured text on topics related to his/her field of specialization, can highlight essential and important issues, can support his/her views with complementary ideas, arguments and appropriate examples, and wind up his/her train of thought with an adequate conclusion.

Spoken production: The examinee can present clear, detailed descriptions of specific complex subjects by integrating sub-themes, developing particular points and rounding off with an appropriate conclusion. S/he can use his/her broad range of language skills to select the linguistic forms and style required and appropriate for the message. S/he can consistently maintain a high level of grammatical correctness even in a continuous process of communication.

The comprehension of spoken English during the examination shall not be assessed separately. However, in the course of spoken interaction, the examinee is expected to follow the examiners and to respond to questions asked in an acceptable manner.

Exam parts

The exam comprises two parts: a written task (I.1) (summary writing) and an oral exam part (I.2).

I.1 For the written task of summary writing, the examinee shall receive a text related to his/her chosen stream and track within the BA program.

Stream: North American Studies

Stream: English Studies

Tracks: British Literature and Culture; Linguistics and Communication

The examinee is expected to produce a summary of 250-300 words of an original text of 600-800 words. Assessment shall be implemented through an analytical scale including the following aspects: ideas / communication quality, structure / text cohesion, linguistic accuracy / grammatical correctness, linguistic appropriateness / proper vocabulary. The maximum score is 20 points.

I.2 In the oral part of the exam, the language aspect of the oral performance of the candidate on a topic from the BA final exam list of topics shall be marked by a separate assessor. The assessment shall be completed on an analytical scale, in relation to: coherence and fluency of the oral performance, application of responsive/interactive skills, linguistic accuracy, and appropriacy of vocabulary and pronunciation.

The maximum score is 20 points. Out of the maximum scores of 20 points each, the pass mark at the written and the oral part of the examination is 60% (12 points). The grading scale shall be as follows:

0-11 failure

12-13 satisfactory

14-15 medium

16-17 good

18-20 excellent

II.1 American Culture and Civilization (list of topics)

1. The geography of the United States. Geographical regions and natural landscapes. Cultural regions in the U.S.A.

2. The American system of government (1). Federal and state institutions. Checks and balances. The American Constitution and civil liberties. Constitutional amendments. The judicial system: the courts and the law.

3. The American system of government (2). Political parties and the election system. The electoral college. Lobbyism.

4. The ethnic composition of the American population. Major ethnic groups and minorities. Immigration and federal immigration policies. Civil rights movements in the U.S.A. Melting pot → cultural pluralism → multiculturalism.

5. Factors contributing to cultural stability: belief systems and myth structures. Ideologies of American destiny and identity. Manifest Destiny and New Manifest Destiny. Mission. Redeemer Nation. Kinds of American ethnocentrism. Civil religion.

6. The survey of a historical period of your choice. Choose one of the following historical periods for your presentation: (1) the American Revolution; (2) the Civil War decade; (3) the "Gilded Age"; (4) the "Progressive Era"; (5) America between the two world wars; (6) the U.S.A. since 1945.

7. Entertainment and the mass media in the U.S.A. Television in U.S. culture. Major television networks. The printed media: major American newspapers (choose 5 for your survey) and magazines (choose 15). Popular culture. Advertising.

8. Holidays in the United States. International, religious, and patriotic holidays. Iconic

patriotic shrines in America.

9. Images of America. Emblems, culture- and region-specific configurations. Iconic manifestations. Images as ideological statements. Stereotypy. The contributions of literature and popular culture to the iconography of the U.S.A.

10. Regionalism and multiculturalism in Canada.

II.2 British Culture and Civilization (list of topics)

1. Major developments in the history of the four nations of the British Isles up to 1485 (The history of conquest and settlement. Wars in France. The first stages of the unification process.)

2. Britain in the Early Modern period (1485-1800)

(The Reformation. The Elizabethan religious settlement. The causes of the Civil War. The Glorious Revolution. The Hanoverians.)

3. Britain's changing role in the world

(Foreign policy. Britain's wars, 1485 to the present. Empire and Commonwealth. Britain and the EU.)

4. The British political system

(Constitutional development. The electoral system. The party system. Parliament. The government.)

5. Economy and society

(Economic history. Economic policies. Social classes. Race relations.)

6. The Educational system

(School history. The state school system. Public and other independent schools. The universities.)

7. Religion in Britain

(Religious history. The Church of England. Other religions, churches and religious movements.)

8. Welfare

(The origins of the welfare state. The NHS. The NHS reforms of the 1980s and 1990s. The benefits system.)

9. Post-1945 political history up to 1970

10. Post-1945 political history from 1970 to 1997

II.3 Linguistics and Communication (list of topics)

1. Descriptive vs. prescriptive linguistics, the aims and the scope of linguistic theory

2. The internal structure of words, types of morphemes, word level categories

3. Word formation processes, inflectional vs. derivational morphology

4. Basic sentence and phrase structure in English

5. Cross-linguistic variation and convergence

6. Types of meaning, meaning and reference, semantic relations involving words and sentences

7. Speech acts and conversational strategies, language and communication

8. Brain and language

9. Comparison of L1 and L2 acquisition

10. Language and Society

Literature:

O'Grady, William, John Archibald, Mark Aronoff, & Janie Rees-Miller. 2005. Contemporary Linguistics. An Introduction. 5. kiadás. Boston/New York: Bedford/St. Martin's.

III. Defense of the Thesis

The Final Examination Committee shall ask questions concerning the BA-thesis of the examinee in order to make sure that it has indeed been written by the examinee and that s/he is sufficiently knowledgeable in the appropriate field of scholarship.