

# GRADUATE DEGREE REQUIREMENTS

KU Department of Spanish and Portuguese

Revised October 2014

## MA in Spanish

### **M.A. Degree Goals of the Degree**

- Study the major movements and writers in Iberia and Latin America.
- Acquire the critical and theoretical tools necessary to engage literary analysis with sophistication.
- Develop communicative competence through pedagogical and scholarly formation.

### **Requirements for the Degree**

1. **A minimum of 30 hours of graduate credit.** The 30 hours of graduate credit will usually be in Spanish and Portuguese. Credit for one or two courses in other departments can sometimes be granted if the student's graduate advisor approves. For more information please consult the [University Academic Catalog](#).
2. **Course distribution:**
  - a. One seminar in Spanish or Latin American literature. Students should select a seminar for which they have taken the appropriate 700 level course or its equivalent.
  - b. Courses to be selected in consultation with the advisor and in keeping with the following distribution guidelines:
    - A minimum of 1 course in each genre
    - A minimum of 1 course in each period (Medieval, Early Modern; 19th, 20th, 21st Centuries Spain; Colonial, 19th Century Latin America; 20th, 21st Centuries Latin America)
  - c. *It is recommended that MA students considering continuing to the Ph.D. take a class in contemporary literary theory (such as Spanish 795). Students holding teaching assistantships in the Department should keep in mind the minimum enrollment requirement (15 hours per year in the Department).*
3. **Reading knowledge of another foreign language**, as approved by the Department. This may be established by:
  - a. passing the third semester college course in French, German, Italian, Latin, Portuguese, or any appropriate language for the degree in Spanish with a grade of A or B;
  - b. passing one of the following KU courses with a grade of A or B: French (FREN 100), German (GERM 101), Italian (ITAL 100), Latin (LAT 101), Portuguese (PORT 611), Russian (RUSS 101), Kaqchikel Maya (LING 575), Andean Quichua (LING 491), or Haitian Creole (HAIT 240).
  - c. passing an examination in one of the above languages administered by the corresponding department at KU
  - d. passing the GSFLT at the requisite level.
4. **A general examination over the literature of Spain and Latin America**, partly written and partly oral. (see below)

### **Procedure for internal M.A. applications to Ph.D. program**

1. The Department's M.A. to Ph.D. Admissions Committee oversees the application process. This Committee consists of the regular Graduate Admissions Committee and the Chair of the Graduate Studies Committee.
2. Applications for the Ph.D. program are due on the first Friday after the semester starts (MA exam to be taken later that semester). Students should submit their completed application to Jill Mignacca for review by the M.A. to Ph.D. Admissions Committee. A completed application includes:
  - a. a statement of Ph.D. goals, including likely committee members
  - b. a current progress degree report

- c. a writing sample from MA work;
  - d. 2 one-paragraph references from faculty members with whom the student would work; applicants request these letters from faculty
  - e. In addition the Committee contacts the Co-Directors of the Language Program for an assessment of the candidate's teaching qualifications.
3. In preparing the statement of PhD goals, applicants may consult the Department guidelines below.
  4. The Committee communicates its preliminary decision to the candidate by September 30 (fall applications) or February 15 (spring applications). All acceptances are contingent on successful completion of the MA.

### ***M.A. Examination***

A general examination over the literature of Spain and Latin America, partly written and partly oral. The written section is six hours long and is based on the M.A. reading list. Copies of this list are available above. The oral section is normally a one-hour examination of a more general nature, covering the reading list and course work. The oral examination will serve as a general assessment of how well the student can articulate ideas clearly and as a reading list check when necessary.

The M.A. examination is given once each semester at a date fixed by the department and is administered and graded by the M.A. Examination Committee.

The written examinations will be administered over a two-day period. The exams will be divided into four areas with one and a half hours allocated for each category:

- Medieval and Early Modern
- 19th, 20th, and 21st Centuries Spain.
- Colonial through Modernismo in Spanish America.
- 20th and 21st Centuries Spanish America.

Generally, the faculty who write the exam in the different areas will read the exam. These two readers per exam area should come to an agreement about the results of the written portion of the exam in their area; if these readers cannot come to an agreement the Chair of the Graduate Studies will assign a third reader. These results will be communicated to the Chair of the Graduate Studies and to the student's advisors. If the student passes the written section, the advisor will schedule and chair the oral.

Those who do not pass one section of the written exam may retake that section before the end of the current semester, but no later than the end of the following semester. Those who do not pass two or more sections of the exam will typically retake the entire exam the following semester. However, under extenuating circumstances, students may consult with their advisors and petition the Graduate Studies Committee for a different retake arrangement. The oral section is usually given by two members of the department and is chaired by the student's advisor.

Should the student fail the oral section, the committee will decide what kind of remedial work may be necessary before the student may repeat the oral exam. This remedial work may include repeating the oral exam, writing a research paper under the supervision of a faculty member in the weak area, and/or requiring the student to take a particular class.

The exam or any section of the exam may be taken only three times. M.A. examinations are not given during the summer session. Students will sign-up to take the M.A. exam by the deadline designated each semester. After that date, withdrawal from the exam will constitute a failed exam. Petitions for exceptions in extenuating circumstances may be presented to the Graduate Studies Committee with the endorsement of the student's advisor. Unless a student has received Graduate Studies Committee's approval for an exception, exams will normally be repeated in consecutive semesters following the first attempt.

## **PhD in Spanish**

### **Guidelines for Statement of PhD Goals in application to PhD program\*\***

In the Statement of PhD Goals for an application to the PhD program, the Department of Spanish and Portuguese recommends addressing the following in some way, though not necessarily in this order:

1. Highlights of your intellectual trajectory that have led you to pursue PhD study as your next step, including the fundamental questions or problems that drive your own curiosity and inquiries in the discipline or its subfields
2. The specific research areas that you wish to pursue, including, if known, the possible parameters of your dissertation topic;
3. The identification of at least 2 current Department faculty with whom you would like to work, along with a rationale connecting these choices to your own intellectual interests;
4. Beyond the presence of any specific faculty members, you should mention the factors that make the Department program a good fit for you;
5. The connections between your research interests at the PhD level and your long term professional goals;
6. The role of teaching in your formation, intellectual trajectory, and/or professional goals

*\*\*While students are always encouraged to discuss their intellectual and professional pursuits with any of their professors, the faculty of the Department of Spanish & Portuguese should have no direct role in developing or editing documents prepared by a department MA student for application to the PhD program.*

### **Ph.D. Degree**

The Department of Spanish and Portuguese has developed a Ph.D. to address the needs of a new generation of doctoral students in the humanities. The program provides a rigorous and comprehensive education in the traditional disciplines of Iberian and Latin American literary studies, while also allowing for engagement with larger issues relating to the role of the humanities in the contemporary world. Students admitted to the doctoral program will have the opportunity to develop research interests under the guidance of diverse faculty and to acquire the skills to teach successfully at the University level.

### **Goals of the Degree**

1. Broaden and deepen knowledge of literary and cultural movements, as well as engaging students in larger issues pertaining to the role of the humanities in the contemporary world;
2. Develop the research, analytical, and writing skills necessary for producing a solid dissertation and publishable articles;
3. Acquire working knowledge of major theoretical trends and critical issues (past and current) in the fields of specialization;
4. Increase knowledge of broader historical, cultural, and socio-political issues surrounding the fields of specialization;
5. Develop familiarity with current foreign language pedagogy and instructional methods.

### **Requirements for the Degree**

1. The general requirements of the KU Office of Graduate Affairs. Department requires two years of in-residence credits as a Ph.D. student.

2. The prerequisites and requirements as outlined for the department's Master's Degree. The progress of entering Ph.D. students already holding an M.A. degree from another institution will be evaluated by the faculty after the end of the first semester. If progress is satisfactory, an advisory committee will be appointed. In a case of unsatisfactory progress, the student will be given one additional semester for improving performance to a level evaluated as satisfactory by the faculty.
3. A reading knowledge of two foreign languages (other than Spanish) appropriate to the candidate's major field of specialization; the choice of languages and the mode of achieving this level will be decided in consultation with the student's advisory committee. This requirement may be met in the same ways as the foreign language requirement of the M.A. degree. A language used to satisfy the M.A. requirements may be counted here. This requirement must be fulfilled before the candidate proceeds to take the Comprehensive Exam. Students planning to write a dissertation on Latin American Literature will select Portuguese to fulfill one of their two language requirements. Students planning to write a dissertation on Latin American Literature should strongly consider taking a Brazilian literature course in the genre of their specialization.
4. All courses selected by the candidate's advisory committee. Course requirements will include: (a) a minimum of 5 seminars (at least 4 at KU); (b) a course in literary theory, such as SPAN 795; (c) a guideline of 24 hours at the University of Kansas, excluding courses for the minor and beyond the 30 hours required for the M.A. degree. PhD students are allowed to receive credit towards the seminar requirement by taking a 700-level class and writing a seminar quality paper. They would only be able to do this once (a second time would require a petition to the Graduate Studies Committee), and would need the permission of the instructor.
5. A minor in a field other than Iberian or Latin American literature. The minor should include a minimum of 9 hours of graduate credit. The minor shall normally be a single discipline or an interdisciplinary field as appropriate to the student's program (for specialization in Latin America, the Department strongly recommends Portuguese), and is usually arranged by the advisory committee. Courses taken to acquire proficiency in a language *cannot* count toward the minor.
6. Students who are non-native speakers of Spanish will submit at least one doctoral seminar paper in Spanish and non-native speakers of English will submit at least one doctoral seminar paper in English.
7. A comprehensive examination, partly written and partly oral (see A, B, & C below)
8. A dissertation (see page 7).
9. A final oral examination over the field of the dissertation (see page 8).

#### **Advisory Committee: Responsibilities and Functions**

Students admitted to the doctoral program will either choose or be assigned an advisor when they begin their coursework, and this advisor will counsel the student in course selections for the second semester. During the second semester, students will form and meet with a three-member advisory committee consisting of an advisor and two additional department faculty members. At this meeting the student and the committee will prepare a PhD Advisory Form with a working plan for the student's coursework, language-requirement fulfillment, minor, exams, and dissertation topic; this plan is submitted to the Department Graduate Studies Committee for approval before the end of the second semester. The plan may subsequently be changed if needed in consultation with the student's advisor and the Advisory Committee. In preparing the PhD Advisory Form, the advisor and committee will counsel the student in taking courses and seminars pertinent to the student's areas of specialization; the number of courses for students will vary according to the student's academic background and preparation. The Advisory Committee also oversees the preparation of PhD exam reading lists and the student's preparation of the A-exam paper and, when instructed by the chair of the Graduate Studies Committee to do so, prepares and grades the written examination questions for the B and C exams.

## **Comprehensive Examination**

Written Portions of the Examination Doctoral students normally take 4 semesters of coursework. During the first two semesters the student works closely with her or his doctoral advisor in all matters related to course selection and program planning. By the end of the second semester of course work at KU, the student will meet with her or his doctoral advisor to plan her or his exam areas and select two additional Advisory Committee members. Once formed, and as noted above, the Advisory Committee meets with the student to ensure the fulfillment of all required coursework, supporting languages, and the doctoral minor. In addition, the Advisory Committee and the student will decide on the topics for the written paper (A) and two examinations (B and C):

**Area A:** a genre (novel, poetry, essay, drama, etc.) or critical/theoretical area (e.g. poetics; performance studies; narrative and narratology; cultural studies; romanticism)

**Area B:** a field (e.g. contemporary Latin American; Caribbean Literature; Medieval and Early Modern; contemporary Peninsular Literature, etc.).

**Area C:** a secondary field, or additional theoretical problem. (e.g., for students seeking trans-Atlantic coverage, a Peninsular specialist for area B could select a Latin American field for area C or vice versa; Reading and Readership; Gender and Nationalism in 19th -Century Spanish American Narrative, etc.).

The committee will ensure that these three areas are complementary but not redundant and with the student will make a schedule for preparation for paper and written examinations. For example, a student would not be allowed to do Theories of Realism in area A, Nineteenth-Century Peninsular in area B, and Clarín in area C. The committee will also ensure that area B is not defined too narrowly: a field that is considered too narrow geographically (e.g. Mexico) might be extended chronologically, or vice-versa.

The student will write one substantive long paper (10,000-12,000 words) in area A. Areas B and C will be tested by three-hour written examinations (in Spanish). Written examinations for areas B and C will be prepared for individual students and may include questions about pertinent theoretical, critical and pedagogical issues. These examinations are based on reading lists agreed upon in advanced by the student and the Advisory Committee. The examination will be given twice a year, to be scheduled the second full week of classes in the Spring and Fall semesters, and the dates for these exams will be announced at least four weeks before they are to take place.

To be accepted, the paper for area A must demonstrate breadth and depth of understanding of the topic in question and a mastery of the relevant critical corpus, in addition to the ability to formulate an original and strong thesis about the topic. We expect that a paper will go through multiple revisions during the semester in which it is prepared. If the paper for area A is not presented in an acceptable state by the examination period, however, the student would fail this part of the exam. The student could undertake further revisions and present the paper for reconsideration in the following semester, but if s/he is unable to present an acceptable paper at the end of the next semester the exam will count as a failure for area A and the student will not be allowed to continue to the dissertation-writing stage. Students may be asked to repeat exams in areas B or C and will normally do so in the semester immediately following the first attempt. Students having passed one of two areas of an examination for areas B and C need not repeat those areas; a student may not take any part of the comprehensive written examination for areas B or C more than three times.

The paper will be written under the supervision of the doctoral advisor and additional members of the Advisory Committee. Examination questions will be written for the student by at least two Advisory Committee members; they will be proof-read and approved by all members of the students' Advisory Committee. Input for questions may be solicited from other departmental faculty members with expertise in the examination areas. All members of the Advisory Committee will read all areas of the written examination and these readers have sole responsibility for deciding on the acceptability of the exams and paper. The chair of the Advisory Committee has the responsibility of communicating in writing the results of each examination process to the director of Graduate Studies; these letters constitute a record of the written examination process and are placed in the student's academic file as evidence of progress toward the degree.

Although students are encouraged to prepare the paper earlier in their graduate work, the principal paper (A) and examinations are due at the exam period immediately following the last semester of coursework, i.e., students

completing coursework in May will be examined and turn in an acceptable paper in the second full week of the following Fall semester, those completing coursework in December will do so the second full week of the Spring semester. Students will turn in the final version of the Exam A paper on the date that the first Ph.D. written exam is administered. However, to receive feedback on the A paper from committee members prior to the exam, students must turn in a draft to the full Ph.D. Advisory Committee by November 1 prior to the Spring Semester exam or by April 1 prior to the Fall Semester exam. Students are encouraged to work with their principal advisor on preliminary drafts prior to turning in a draft to the full Advisory Committee. Students should not expect any faculty feedback on A papers after the end of the semester prior to the Exam.

If an appropriate seminar is not offered during the last semester of coursework when the student is writing the paper and preparing for the examinations, s/he will normally take an independent study course with the faculty member directing his or her paper.

### ***Policy on Postponement of the Written Ph.D. Examinations***

If a student signs up for the Ph.D. Examination for a subsequent semester and does not take the Examinations on the scheduled dates, and/or fails to present the Examination paper, the student will fail the relevant portions of the Examination. Students are encouraged to work with their committees to set realistic exam dates. The student may petition if unusual circumstances make it difficult or impossible to present the examination on schedule. If such a petition is granted, the student will be allowed to postpone the Examination with no penalty. Unusual circumstances include serious medical conditions, family emergencies, and sudden changes in the composition of the Department faculty.

Although students retain their legal right to petition for any reason, failure to make sufficient progress on a paper in the months prior to a scheduled exam does not in itself qualify as an “unusual circumstance.” A petition should explain the justification for postponement in detail and be accompanied by appropriate documentation, including a letter of endorsement from the Chair of the student’s examination committee. Since unusual circumstances can arise quite suddenly, the Graduate Committee cannot set a firm deadline for petitions. A student should act expeditiously, however, if considering such a request, in order to allow sufficient time for the Advisor and the Committee to consider it. If a student has petitioned to postpone the examination once and is unprepared to take it the following semester, it is recommended that he or she take a leave of absence from the Ph.D. program.

### ***Comprehensive Oral Examination***

When the student has passed all three written components of the examination, the Department will request the KU Office of Graduate Affairs to schedule the oral examination. The oral exam must take place during the same semester as the written portions of the Comprehensive Examination.

Failure to take the oral within that time period will require repetition and successful completion of all components of the written examinations. Ideally, the paper for area A will constitute the basis for a dissertation proposal and possibly even a chapter in the dissertation.

The request for the comprehensive oral examination must be made at least two weeks prior to the date of the examination. The examination committee will consist of at least five members and normally will include the members of the student's planned Dissertation Committee, another representative from the Department, and an additional member from outside the Department. The expected dissertation director normally shall chair this committee. All members of the senior staff are invited to participate in the examination. For the oral examination, students will present a written narrative (approximately 12-15 pages) of the dissertation proposal. Copies of this proposal will be submitted to members of the oral examination committee ten days prior to the scheduled examination date. In the narrative proposal, students will be expected to define a basic thesis, explain how the works to be studied relate to that thesis, and describe in general terms the overall formal divisions of the dissertation. The narrative should also comment on the theoretical/methodological model to be followed and situate the study in the context of prior scholarship. The narrative section of the proposal should be followed by a bibliography demonstrating that the candidate is conversant with the basic theoretical and critical works pertinent to the study. The entire proposal should be prepared according to MLA style. Students will be expected to consult with their projected dissertation committee concerning the preparation of the proposal.

The oral examination will focus on the proposal, but also will be designed to assure that the candidate has adequate control of the general field of the dissertation. The committee may wish to probe further aspects related to the dissertation not covered in the written examinations. The candidates will be expected to consult with their committees to ascertain if there are any specific areas needing special attention.

At the oral examination, questions may be asked by any member of the senior staff, but the decision to pass or fail the candidate is made by the committee (consisting on five graduate faculty; one has to be an external member to the department). According to the regulations of the KU Office of Graduate Affairs, if the student fails the comprehensive examination, it may be repeated on the recommendation of the department, but under no circumstances may it be taken more than three times. And it may not be repeated until at least ninety days have elapsed since the last unsuccessful attempt. Normally, a student would repeat the oral examination before the end of the semester following the semester in which the previous oral examination was given. After the student passes this examination, his/her status, as far as the KU Office of Graduate Affairs is concerned, is changed from that of Ph.D. aspirant to that of a candidate for the Ph.D.

If the student changes the dissertation topic after this examination has been successfully completed, a new dissertation proposal must be prepared and approved by the student's dissertation committee and by the department's Graduate Studies Committee.

### ***Dissertation and Dissertation Committee***

While the three-person Advisory Committee may become the core of the student's Dissertation Committee, this is not mandatory. If the student wants to change the composition of his or her committee after the PhD examination process is complete, s/he may do so in consultation with his or her doctoral advisor and the Chair of the Graduate Studies. Research and teaching specializations in the Department cover many areas of Spanish and Latin American literature. Membership on the dissertation committee is designated by the KU Office of Graduate Affairs on the basis of recommendations by the Department. The dissertation committee shall consist of at least three members who are specialists in an area related to the topic of dissertation. One of them can be from outside the Department, particularly if the dissertation topic is related to other disciplines. The chair of the candidate's committee is the director of the dissertation. Prior to beginning work on the dissertation, students are asked to consult carefully the Guidelines for Dissertations appended to this document.

All members of the committee must be satisfied that the work is adequately done, since, according to KU Office of Graduate Affairs regulations, the dissertation must be read and approved by them before the degree can be awarded. They should, therefore, have the opportunity to read the dissertation and to make suggestions concerning it before it is typed in its final version. Students are required to enroll in 6 hours each semester and 3 hours in each summer until they have reached a total of 18 hours of Spanish 999 (Dissertation) or have completed their degree requirements. Normally, students may not enroll in Spanish 999 until the semester in which they pass the oral examination. Students who are on staff as half-time Teaching Assistants will normally enroll in 6-9 hours of Spanish 999 each fall or spring semester, and 3-6 hours in the summer.

A student who has accumulated 18 hours of enrollment in Spanish 999 without completing the dissertation must continue to enroll for one credit per term until and including the term in which the dissertation is defended. Six (6) copies of the dissertation must be made available to the Department as least three weeks before the final oral examination for the use of committee members. After the final oral examination, the dissertation, prepared in accord with KU Office of Graduate Affairs and departmental guidelines, must be submitted electronically to the KU Office of Graduate Affairs. In addition, one bound and signed copy of the dissertation must be turned in to the Department for the Department's permanent files. A student who does not complete the dissertation within the eight-year time limit as currently stated in the KU Graduate Catalogue must petition for an extension of the deadline.

### ***Final Oral Examination***

The final oral examination covers the field of the dissertation, i.e. the dissertation itself and the general area with which the candidate should have become familiar in preparing the dissertation. The examination committee is normally

composed of five members appointed by the KU Office of Graduate Affairs on the recommendation of the Department: the three members of the candidate's dissertation committee plus two additional members from the major field. All members of the Department are invited to participate in this examination, but the decision to pass or fail the candidate and to accept or not accept the dissertation is made by the examination committee.

### ***Leaves of Absence and Extensions***

To request a leave of absence from the Ph.D. program a student must submit a written petition to the Graduate Committee. Leaves normally are for a maximum of one year. Such leaves are intended to accommodate students for personal reasons, i.e. illness, family crises, etc., and in special cases for full-time professional activities related to the student's doctoral program and long-range career goals. The Committee normally will not endorse any professional activities request submitted after May 15 for a leave beginning in the fall semester, or after November 1 for a leave beginning in the spring semester. Normally the graduate committee will recommend approval for single one-year extension to complete a dissertation, and to qualify for such an extension the candidate will be expected to have submitted to his or her committee a minimum of one half of the dissertation prior to the request. Dissertation directors are urged to remind students approaching the eight-year limit of this policy. Retroactive requests will not be considered.

## **Appendix I**

### Guidelines for Dissertations

1. The dissertation is expected to be an original contribution to knowledge, demonstrating in-depth mastery of the latest scholarship in the field of study.
2. Follow dissertation format (in punctuation, bibliography, etc...) beginning in the early drafts, so that valuable time is not wasted in the course of the dissertation process. Please consult the MLA Style Manual and the KU Office of Graduate Affairs guidelines ([http://www.graduate.ku.edu/04-02\\_etd.shtml](http://www.graduate.ku.edu/04-02_etd.shtml)). Rigorously edit your own work before submitting drafts so that your committee can focus on your ideas rather than your writing. Consult the MLA's *Line by Line* on how to edit your own writing.
3. Form your Committee, in consultation with your Dissertation Director, when you complete the written portion of the PhD exams (if not before). This committee does not have to be identical to the PhD Advisory Committee. Your director will be a specialist in your field of concentration, but the other members of the Committee may be chosen for their expertise in related areas of study (e.g.a theoretical problem, a genre). It can be helpful to have a reader who is not an expert in the particular field, who might be able to see problems in the communication of ideas.
4. With your committee, formulate a plan of action and a time-line. Normally, the director will read all chapters as they are finished, and the committee will decide which of the other two readers will read which portions on the dissertation along the way. Make sure that everyone involved is aware of how things will proceed, and keep your lines of communication open with each of your committee members. If you get "stuck" at any point in the process, the best approach is to consult with your advisor and other members of the committee in order to discuss strategies to get yourself going again. It is your responsibility to convene meetings of the dissertation committee, when needed.
5. Dissertation writing depends on revision. It is not unusual for some chapters to require more than one rewrite. In some cases, material will have to be shifted from one chapter to another, or changed to be made consistent with claims made in other parts of the dissertation. It is necessary to allow time in the plan of action to undertake such revisions.
6. After the Director approves a penultimate draft, the two other readers will have the opportunity to view this draft. Make sure you allow for enough time (at least three weeks) for them to read the dissertation and make comments, before you set a final defense date.

7. After you have incorporated the revisions suggested by your readers, you can set up a date for the defense. Consult Jill Mignacca for procedures. Six copies of a final version of the dissertation must be in the Department office at least three weeks before you defend.
8. The last stage of the process is to discuss with your director any minor revisions resulting from the defense (the correction of typographical errors, for example) required before the final version of the dissertation is submitted to the KU Office of Graduate Affairs (COGA).

**Appendix II** See Spanish and Portuguese Dissertation Rubric.