PhD Degree Requirements

Academic Requirements for the PhD in Hispanic Studies

The Department of Spanish and Portuguese Studies and the University of Washington Graduate School Requirements for the Ph.D. degree are as follows:

1. A total of 117 applicable credits of which 90 credits must be completed before the Ph.D. exams (see section #6 below) with the remaining 27 credits at the 800-level to be completed as part of the dissertation-writing process. To remain in good standing the student must maintain a cumulative grade point average of 3.2 on the University's 4.0 grade scale. The minimum acceptable grade for any given course is 2.7. Please note that SPAN 610 credits used for MA or Ph.D. exam preparation do not fulfill any degree requirement and do not count toward the 90-credit total needed to graduate.

2. As an optional part of their course of study, students enrolled in the Ph.D. program in Hispanic Studies may also fulfill the requirements for the Graduate Certificate in Public Scholarship, administered through a partnership with the School of Interdisciplinary Arts and Sciences, the UW Graduate School, and the Simpson Center. Six (6) elective credits of this coursework may also be counted toward the total 90 credits (60 credits pre-MA/30 credits post-MA) required for the Ph.D. degree. For students who choose to complete this Certificate, an additional nine (9) credits must be taken outside the department to fulfill the requirements. Note that admission to the Certificate in Public Scholarship is competitive, and interested students must submit their applications during their first year in the Ph.D. program. For details see: http://simpsoncenter.org/programs/curriculum/certificate-in-public-scholarship.

3. All students are required to take either SPAN 577, or an alternate graduate-level literary theory course, or a research methods graduate course. Selection of alternatives to SPAN 577 must be approved by the GPC. SPAN 510 (Methodology of Spanish Language Teaching) is required of all Teaching Assistants and is to be taken during or before a student's first quarter of teaching.

4. Distribution requirement: A minimum of five credits (normally one course) must be earned in five of the seven following areas: Medieval Spain; "Golden Age" Spain; Spain of the 18th and 19th Centuries; 20th-century Spain; Colonial and 19th-century Latin America; and 20th-century Latin America; and Spanish applied linguistics.

5. M.A. Exam and Thesis: Students enrolled in the Ph.D. program who do not already possess an M.A. in Hispanic Studies or an equivalent field (see Special Note in number 14 below) must fulfill the exam and thesis requirements for the M.A. as follows:

   a. During the first quarter of graduate study, students must select one area in which to be examined from the seven areas of study specified above. They will then have a year to prepare that field. Students may not write their M.A. Thesis in the field they have chosen for their examination. The M.A. examination is written at the beginning of the fourth quarter of study (ordinarily fall quarter). The exam will consist of one question, and the student will have five hours to answer his/her question, with only a
dictionary available for consultation. The examination in the chosen area is based on the M.A. Reading list, available on this website. For more details regarding an acceptable and unacceptable exam, see MA Exam Rubric (PDF).

b. Ph.D. students must complete the M.A. Thesis, written in Spanish: Students must take ten credits of M.A. Thesis (SPAN 700) in their second year of study (5 credits in the Fall quarter and 5 credits in the Winter quarter). The M.A. Thesis is written in Spanish (minimum 45 pages of text, plus bibliography) and directed by a graduate faculty member and submitted to the Graduate Studies Committee (GSC) for its approval by the end of the fifth quarter of study. Ph.D. students will not submit their thesis to the Graduate School.

6. Applicable credits are the following:

1. Credits earned in 500-level courses in the Department;
2. up to ten (10) credits of 600-level independent study coursework under direct faculty supervision in the Department;
3. up to twenty (20) credits of 500-level coursework offered in another department (to be pre-approved by GPC);
4. up to ten (10) credits of 400-level coursework in the Department (to be pre-approved by GPC);
5. up to ten (10) additional credits of 700-level coursework for the preparation of the M.A. thesis (for students entering with a B.A.);
6. a five (5) credit 600-level independent study with the student's future dissertation director in order to prepare the dissertation prospectus;

Students may also apply credit in one (1) of the following two areas:

1. Up to six (6) credits of the coursework with a Public Scholarship focus to be approved by students' faculty advisor

OR

B. Up to ten (10) credits of additional coursework in applied linguistics. (Distribution of these credits between 400-, 500- level, and 600-level independent studies must follow guidelines above [sec. 6a-d] for courses taken inside and outside the department.)

Please note: additional 600-level credit beyond what is outlined here will NOT be applicable to the Ph.D. degree course requirements.

7. Foreign Language Proficiency: Ph.D. students may also demonstrate proficiency in a language other than English and Spanish with 1) native status; 2) holding a university degree in the third language; 3) completing coursework in the target language at the 201 level; or 4) passing an auxiliary language reading ability test, the Graduate Foreign Language Exam (GFLE). Students may not take the Ph.D. exam without having first met this requirement. Students must maintain a GPA of 3.0 for the 201 level language course.

Information regarding the Graduate Foreign Language Exam can be found here at the Office of Educational Assessment Website (OEA). Be sure to ask the OEA specifically for the GFLE, when scheduling the test. The GFLE is not the same as a placement or proficiency test.

8. Ph.D. candidates must pass a Ph.D. examination. The exam portion of the Ph.D. program will comprise three elements:

1. The composition over several quarters of an annotated bibliography.
3. A ninety-minute oral exam to be administered in the third quarter of the third year (Y3Q3).

Unlike more traditional “comprehensive” exams, the Ph.D. exam is designed to encourage students to focus on areas of investigation more specifically related to their dissertation project. Starting in the second year of enrollment, students will choose a chair for their Ph.D. exam committee. Under the direction of the exam chair, students will prepare a Ph.D. reading list of 30-40
primary sources and 20-25 secondary sources. Throughout the second and third year of enrollment, students will produce an annotated bibliography with extensive entries for each of the works on the Ph.D. reading list. By the end of the second quarter of the third year (Y3Q2), the student will present the completed bibliography to the exam chair for approval. In the quarter following the completion of the annotated bibliography, students will compose a dissertation prospectus (10-15 pages) that will be due two weeks before their scheduled oral exams. It will be the students’ responsibility to furnish copies of the prospectus to each of the members of the exam committee by the two-week deadline. Failure to do so may lead to cancellation of the exam. Ninety minutes will be allocated for the oral exam, which will cover both the annotated bibliography and the dissertation prospectus. The exam committee will evaluate the performance on the exam, assigning a grade of “high pass,” “pass,” or “fail.”

9. Ph.D. candidates must complete a dissertation. In the fourth and fifth years (Y4-5) students will produce a dissertation under the direction of a committee of three members of the graduate faculty. The dissertation chair must be from the Department of Spanish and Portuguese. The Ph.D. exam chair may not serve as dissertation chair for the same student. Faculty from outside the department may serve on the dissertation committee with the approval of the dissertation chair and the faculty member in question. For faculty on the dissertation committee who did not serve on the exam committee, students must provide a copy of both the annotated bibliography and the dissertation prospectus by the beginning of the fourth year (Y4Q1). The dissertation project may take the traditional form of a scholarly monograph on a subject mutually agreed upon by the candidate and the director. Alternatively, the dissertation may take a more non-traditional form. This may include a portfolio of scholarly and creative work, digital publication, an exhibition with a strong scholarly apparatus, or other configurations, to be determined by the candidate in consultation with the dissertation committee. Upon completion of the dissertation, students will be required to participate in a dissertation defense before the student’s dissertation committee. The dissertation defense must be scheduled a full quarter before the anticipated completion of the dissertation. The full text of the dissertation must be made available to each member of the dissertation committee no later than four weeks before the date of the defense. Failure to observe either of these requirements may lead to a delay in graduation. Ninety minutes will be allocated for the dissertation defense. During the defense, students will be invited to make a presentation on their project. Faculty will then have an opportunity to question the degree candidate.

10. Ph.D. candidates make application for the Ph.D. degree at the Graduate School Office within the first two weeks of the quarter in which they expect the degree to be conferred. They must, at the time of application, notify the Graduate Program Adviser of the Department of Spanish and Portuguese Studies.

11. Graduate students must be registered as full-time or part-time students at the University of Washington for the quarter in which the degree requirements are completed.

12. Time Limit: All work for the Ph.D. degree, including credits transferred from other institutions, must be completed within ten years. However, Ph.D. candidates subsidized by teaching assistantships, research assistantships, graduate staff assistantships, or comparable financial support, are expected to complete their program within five years.

13. Removal of Incomplete Grades: Incomplete grades will be given only exceptionally. Incomplete work must be completed and a regular grade must be assigned by the end of the following quarter (including Summer quarter). In instances of exceptional hardship, students may petition the Graduate Studies Committee, but only before the deadline just stated, for an extension of time. Failure to complete Incomplete work on this schedule may jeopardize a student's good standing and eligibility for financial support and teaching and research assistantships.

14. Special note for transfer students and students already in possession of an M.A. degree:
I. Graduate students enrolled in the Ph.D. program who have completed an M.A. degree in Spanish or Hispanic Studies:

1. may transfer up to 30 credits of relevant graduate coursework taken while a graduate student at another institution;
2. will be exempt from (1) the distribution requirement, (2) the M.A. Exams and, (3) the M.A. Thesis requirement.

II. Graduate students enrolled in the Ph.D. program who have completed an M.A. degree in a related discipline:

1. may submit a petition to transfer up to 30 credits of relevant graduate coursework taken while a graduate student at another institution;
2. may submit a petition to waive the M.A. Thesis requirement

15. Unsatisfactory Performance and Progress:

- A student will be placed on probation if s/he fails the Ph.D. examination, and will have only one opportunity to retake the exam. Should the student pass the exam retake, s/he will be taken off probation. Should the student fail the exam a second time, s/he will be placed on final probation and be dismissed from the program.

- A student will be placed on probation if s/he receives no credit for SPAN 700/800 (thesis/dissertation work) in any given quarter, for failing to comply with the schedule and guidelines set up by his/her dissertation advisor. To remove probation status, the student must receive credit for SPAN 700 or 800 the following quarter. If s/he does not receive credit the following quarter, s/he will be placed on final probation.

16. Advising: Graduate students should consult with the Graduate Program Adviser quarterly before registration opens for the following quarter, to ensure that they are making satisfactory progress. Any potential area(s) of concern will be brought to the attention of the Graduate Program Coordinator for discussion with the student, and possible recommendation of probation to the Graduate School. Each student, consulting with appropriate faculty and administrators of the Department, bears the responsibility for making the best use of the available or obtainable resources for achieving educational objectives.

Degree Program Timeline

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