

Spanish, PhD

The PhD program in Spanish offers courses in the literature of the Spanish-speaking world and Spanish linguistics. In the literature program, students may take courses in Spanish American or peninsular literature, culture, and cinema. The Department of Spanish and Portuguese also offers a creative track in literature for students who have graduated with an MFA in creative writing. In the Spanish linguistics program, students take courses in Spanish syntax, phonology, language acquisition, and sociolinguistics.

Learning Outcomes

Students will be able to:

- demonstrate understanding and application of research methods and methodological knowledge;
- demonstrate understanding of and ability to analyze theoretical concepts and research in their field of study;
- express ideas effectively in professional academic settings in written and spoken communication in English and Spanish;
- continue to demonstrate knowledge and skills necessary to be effective teaching assistants for courses numbered 1000-1999 and beyond;
- plan, conduct, report on, and disseminate original research; and
- develop the critical research and writing skills necessary to publish peer-reviewed articles.

Requirements

The Doctor of Philosophy program in Spanish requires a total of at least 72 s.h. of graduate credit. Students must maintain a cumulative grade-point average of at least 3.00.

In this research-oriented degree, PhD students choose from two different tracks: literatures/cultures and Spanish linguistics. The literatures/cultures track trains students in textual analysis and literary history, criticism, and theory. The linguistics track provides training in linguistic analysis and theory. All courses taken to fulfill the semester hour requirement for the degree must be taken on an A-F graded basis; no graduate credit is awarded for a grade lower than C-minus.

Both tracks require a specified number of semester hours of coursework, of which up to, but not more than, 30 s.h. (10 courses) may be counted from the MA in Spanish or the MFA in Spanish creative writing at the University of Iowa or elsewhere, as approved by the director of graduate studies. The PhD also requires 3-15 s.h. for the thesis, SPAN:6999 Thesis, and the successful completion and defense of a dissertation representing original research or creative work.

No credit is awarded for coursework completed after the MA is granted and prior to entrance into the PhD program. If, in the course of doctoral study, the advisory committee recommends a student take coursework at another institution, the student may petition the director of graduate studies well in advance of undertaking the coursework, for approval of up to 9 s.h. of transfer credit. At least 39 s.h. of the 72 s.h. required for the degree must be in coursework taken at the University of Iowa.

Students who hold a teaching assistantship in the department are required to take WLLC:5000 Teaching and Learning Languages, a course in world language teaching methods.

A student who has not earned the MA in Spanish or the MFA in Spanish creative writing at the University of Iowa may request that this requirement be waived because of previous coursework in world language teaching methods. The decision to waive the requirement is made by the Spanish CLAS Core director; no transfer credit is awarded toward the 72 s.h. required for the degree.

The Doctor of Philosophy in Spanish requires the following coursework.

Literatures/Cultures Track

Literatures/Cultures Track Courses

Students must complete at least 36 s.h. (12 courses) beyond the master's degree (or 22 courses beyond the bachelor's degree). The following courses are required; courses taken for the MA may be used to meet part of this requirement.

Course #	Title	Hours
All of these:		
SPAN:5002	Pedagogical Practicum	2
SPAN:6999	Thesis	3
Three courses in Spanish American literature or culture; at least one course must be in pre-1700 literature		9
Three courses in Spanish literature or culture; at least one course must be in pre-1700 literature		9
Six courses chosen in conjunction with advisor (students approved for a creative writing dissertation must take at least three graduate courses in Spanish creative writing, and students approved for a literary or cultural studies dissertation must take at least three graduate courses in Spanish or Spanish American literature or culture)		18

The specific plan of study for students, tailored to their area of emphasis, must be approved by their advisory committee by the end of the first semester in the PhD program. Coursework must be numbered between 5000 and 7000.

Students are encouraged to complete a graduate certificate. University of Iowa graduate certificates that complement the literatures/cultures track include the certificates in Book Arts and Book Studies; College Teaching; Gender, Women's, and Sexuality Studies; Literary Translation; Online Teaching; and Public Digital Humanities.

Literatures/Cultures Track Language Tool Requirement

Students in this track must complete the equivalent of three years of college-level study in one language.

Students who plan to write dissertations on topics in Spanish or Spanish American literature before 1700 are strongly encouraged to select Latin, Arabic, or an Amerindian language to satisfy this requirement; they should consult specialists in their field to determine which language is most appropriate. Students may take more than two languages if their coursework permits.

Language tool coursework below the third-year college level does not count toward the 72 s.h. required for the degree. Courses taken to fulfill the language tool requirements may be taken graded S/U, P/N, or by audit. If the language tool requirements are satisfied by examination, the exam results must be documented in a student's file.

Spanish Linguistics Track

Spanish Linguistics Track Courses

Students must earn at least 27 s.h. (9 courses) beyond the master's degree (or 19 courses beyond the bachelor's degree). The following courses are required; courses taken for the MA may be used to meet part of this requirement.

Course #	Title	Hours
All of these:		
SPAN:6110	Spanish Phonology	3
SPAN:6120	Spanish Syntax	3
SPAN:6150	Topics in Spanish Language Acquisition	3
SPAN:6999	Thesis	6
LING:3005	Articulatory and Acoustic Phonetics	3
LING:5010	Introduction to Syntax	3
LING:5020	Introduction to Phonology	3
LING:6010	Syntactic Theory	3
One additional course in the dissertation research area		3
One course in historical linguistics, sociolinguistics/language variation, or language acquisition/psycholinguistics		3
One Spanish linguistics seminar numbered 7000 or above		3
One of these:		
SPAN:6190	Topics in Comparative Romance Linguistics	3
LING:6050	Language Universals Linguistic Typology	3

The additional course in the dissertation research area (phonology, syntax, language acquisition, language variation) must be taken in the Department of Spanish and Portuguese or the Department of Linguistics.

The specific plan of study for students, tailored to their chosen area of emphasis, must be approved by their advisory committee by the end of the first semester in the PhD program. Coursework in Spanish (taken after the MA) must be numbered 6000 or above, except for some courses offered by the Department of Linguistics and the required third-year-level course in Portuguese (see "Spanish Linguistics Track Language Tool and Additional Requirements").

Spanish Linguistics Track Language Tool and Additional Requirements

Students in this track must complete the equivalent of three years of college-level study of Portuguese and the equivalent of one year of college-level study in each of two other languages. For students specializing in historical linguistics, one of those two languages must be Latin.

Students may satisfy the language tool requirement by examination or by coursework at the University of Iowa or at another accredited university. Courses taken to fulfill the language tool requirements may be taken on graded S/U, P/N, or by audit. If the language tool requirements are satisfied by examination, the exam results must be documented in the student's file. The language tool coursework does not count toward the 57 s.h. of pre-thesis coursework required for the degree, except for the third-year-level coursework in Portuguese, which may be counted with the faculty advisor's

approval if a student completed the course on an A-F graded basis.

Students must also write two extended research papers and give two colloquium presentations based on these papers. The first paper must be in an area distinct from the intended dissertation research; it must be approved by a student's advisory committee by the end of fall semester of the second year of PhD coursework in order for the student to continue in the track. The second paper must be in the dissertation research area, of publishable quality, and approved by the student's advisory committee no later than the beginning of the semester in which the student takes the comprehensive exam.

Timeline: Post-MA/MFA

By the end of the fourth semester of enrollment, students should have completed all required coursework. They typically present their PhD comprehensive examination at the beginning of their fifth semester of enrollment. Students should develop the various parts of the comprehensive portfolio in conjunction with their PhD coursework. The two broad area reading lists can be developed while taking graduate-level courses in the department, and their article should be based on a research paper written in a graduate course in the department. Students are encouraged to complete their comprehensive examinations before Oct. 15 (in the fall semester) or March 15 (in the spring semester) and present and defend their dissertation prospectus before the end of the same semester. Some grants require students to have completed their doctoral examination and prospectus defense before they apply, so it is recommended that students finish the examinations early in the semester.

Comprehensive Examinations

The purpose of the comprehensive examination is to determine whether students have gained sufficient breadth and depth of research knowledge in Spanish literatures or linguistics to enter the profession as a teacher-scholar. The examining committee is composed of no fewer than four members of the graduate faculty. See the Manual of Rules and Regulations of the Graduate College for comprehensive exam policies.

Graduate students who plan to take the examination must file the departmental "Notification of Intent to Take MA or PhD Exams" form with the graduate student academic coordinator by the third week of the relevant semester; see the Graduate Program Manual on the Department of Spanish and Portuguese website. Students presenting the comprehensive exams cannot have more than one coursework requirement left to be completed, including courses for the fulfillment of the language tool requirements, after the semester in which the exams are presented. Generally, students either have finished their coursework requirements prior to presenting the comprehensive exams or they are completing them in the semester of their exams.

As with advisory committees, the student's advisor contacts the relevant faculty members to request their participation in the examining committee and then submits the proposed committee for approval by the director of graduate studies and the chair of the Department of Spanish and Portuguese. These individuals consult with the advisor as part of the approval process. This should be done as early as possible during the semester preceding the examinations, but not later than fifteen weeks prior to the start of examinations.

The research essay and position paper should be given to the Comprehensive Examination Committee at least one month before the oral exam, after approval by the faculty supervisors. The two written examinations are typically scheduled over a two-week period and must be finished at least one week before the oral exam. Between the time of the written exams and the oral exam, examining faculty individually evaluate and discuss the exams with the student. The information provided in the evaluation guides the student in final preparation for the oral component of the examination. However, it does not include specific questions to be asked in the oral exam nor does it limit the questions that may be asked.

The oral examination provides the opportunity for further development of the written examinations as well as a review of the position paper and research essay. At the end of the oral exam, the student is asked to leave the exam room in order for the committee to determine its evaluation. The student is then invited to return to the room to learn of the committee's evaluation, including an appraisal of specific areas of strength and/or weakness and recommendations for future academic work. The official evaluation of the exam is reported to the Graduate College as satisfactory, reservation, or unsatisfactory. If reservations are imposed, the examination committee must send a letter to the student specifying the reservations to be met and the deadline for their removal; copies are sent to the student's file, the director of graduate studies, and the Graduate College.

Students must be registered during the semester in which they take their comprehensive examinations. If all coursework has been completed prior to that semester, then students should register for 2 s.h. in SPAN:6998 Special Work with their advisor, on a satisfactory/unsatisfactory basis. Students may not register for SPAN:6999 Thesis during the semester of their comprehensive examination.

Literatures/Cultures Track Comprehensive Exams

The comprehensive examination has written and oral components. The written component includes four elements: two broad areas, one specialized area, and one article, each under the supervision of a committee member.

The elements of the written component are as follows.

- Two 2-hour written examinations, one for each of two broad areas of literary history, one Spanish and one Spanish American. The broad area lists should consist of approximately 35 readings. Selection of the two broad areas should be tied to a student's PhD coursework, particularly the courses taken after admission to the PhD program. The lists must be developed in consultation with the advisory committee and approved by the broad area supervisors before they are submitted to the rest of the committee for final approval. The written examination may include questions of textual analysis and aesthetics as well as historical periodization and literary criticism.
- One position paper in a specialized area related to the thesis. The specialized area list should include approximately 10-15 works that define the area. The narrow area is examined via a 10-15 page position paper that is a critical synthesis, particularly of the secondary readings. The list and position paper should be written in consultation with a faculty supervisor and must be approved by that supervisor at least one month before the date of the exam. The position paper is expected to form part of the introduction to the dissertation.

- One research essay. This part of the examination is a 20-25 page research essay. Typically, this essay is a substantially revised version of a paper written in one of the required graduate courses. The essay should be revised in consultation with the professor who taught the course for which the paper was originally written and with a second member of the exam committee. The research essay must be approved by both faculty members at least one month before the date of the exam.
- One oral examination. The oral examination lasts for approximately two hours. Approximately one-half of the oral exam is devoted to an examination of the two broad areas and the other half examines the research essay and position paper.

Spanish Linguistics Track Comprehensive Exams

The comprehensive exam includes written and oral components. The written component includes two weekend take-home exams consisting of linguistic analysis in two subdisciplines distinct from the subdiscipline of the intended dissertation research. The two-hour oral exam consists of one hour devoted to the discussion of the second research paper and the other hour devoted to follow-up questions on the written exams.

Dissertation

After the comprehensive examination is completed, a student submits a dissertation prospectus for the dissertation committee's approval. The dissertation committee is composed of no fewer than four graduate faculty members.

The dissertation, complete and in final form, must be submitted in the required electronic format to the Graduate College office by the deadline date of the session in which the degree is to be conferred. The approved dissertation in electronic format must be deposited at the office by the appropriate deadline in a student's graduation semester.

Students must adhere to the Graduate College regulations regarding the preparation of the dissertation copy; consult the Graduate College. For information on the dissertation and final examinations, see the Manual of Rules and Regulations on the Graduate College website.

Literatures/Cultures Track Dissertation

Dissertations can present a research project within literary/cultural history and/or theory in the form of a monographic study; present a research project within literary/cultural history and/or theory in the form of a set of journal article-style research essays, accompanied by an in-depth theoretical and critical reflection of 20-30 pages in length; offer a major creative project, accompanied by an in-depth theoretical and critical reflection; a critical edition of a literary work, accompanied by an in-depth theoretical and critical reflection; a translation of a literary work, accompanied by an in-depth theoretical and critical reflection. Theoretical and critical reflections for the major creative project, a critical edition of literary work, or the translation of a literary work options may be no less than 50 pages in length.

Dissertation Prospectus

The first step in the dissertation process is the submission and defense of the dissertation prospectus. The prospectus consists of these sections: a narrative that describes in detail the dissertation, the work done in the field previously, the research methodology and/or theoretical or creative approach, and a preliminary description of chapter divisions;

a preliminary bibliography; and a timetable for completion of the research and writing of the dissertation. Typically, the entire prospectus is 35–40 pages long.

Ideally, the prospectus should be approved by the dissertation committee by the end of the semester in which the comprehensive examination was successfully completed. In order to be considered to be making adequate progress toward the degree, a student should turn in the prospectus no later than the fourth week of the semester following the comprehensive exam.

Prospectus Defense

After the dissertation director has given preliminary approval of the prospectus, that faculty member schedules the prospectus defense. The defense is a meeting of the dissertation committee at which the student gives a brief oral presentation of the prospectus and answers questions that the committee members may have; the committee members should receive the written prospectus at least two weeks prior to the defense meeting. At this time, two members of the dissertation committee, in addition to the director, agree to read the dissertation on a chapter-by-chapter basis. Once approved, a copy of the prospectus and the departmental prospectus approval form are given to the graduate student academic coordinator by the dissertation director and placed in the student's file.

Additional Requirements

Independent Study

Only 3 s.h. earned for post-MA independent study may be applied toward the 72 s.h. required for the degree; the department discourages students from including independent study as a part of their coursework. Exceptions are made under extraordinary circumstances but must be preapproved by the director of graduate studies. For consideration of a request for independent study credit, students must complete the Department of Spanish and Portuguese Independent Study Contract for Graduate Students form obtained from the director of graduate studies, then secure the approval of the director of graduate studies and the chair of the department, and submit a copy of the form to the graduate student academic coordinator before the first day of the semester. Only students in good academic standing may enroll in an independent study course.

Graduate Study Loads

Maximum course registration for all graduate students is 15 s.h. of graduate-level coursework in fall or spring semesters and 12 s.h. of graduate-level work in summer sessions. Students with one-quarter-time and one-third-time teaching assistantships are permitted to register for the maximum study loads. Students who hold one-half-time assistantships are permitted to register for a maximum of 12 s.h. in fall and spring semesters and 6 s.h. in summer sessions. Students must have approval from the Graduate College to register for additional semester hours.

The minimum course registration is 1 s.h. for all graduate students. Doctoral students who have passed the comprehensive examinations typically register for 1 s.h. of thesis work to satisfy the minimum registration requirement. Students who fail to register for 36 months must apply for readmission to the Graduate College.

Career Advancement

The Pomerantz Career Center offers multiple resources to help students find internships and jobs.

Academic Plans

Sample Plan of Study

Sample plans represent one way to complete a program of study. Actual course selection and sequence will vary and should be discussed with an academic advisor. For additional sample plans, see MyUI.

Spanish, PhD

Literatures/Cultures Track

This sample plan is currently being reviewed and will be added at a later date.