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 SPAN: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 of these:		
SPAN:6190	Topics in Comparative Romance Linguistics	3
LING:6050	Language Universals Linguistic Typology	3
One additional course in the dissertation research area		3
Two courses numbered 6000 or above		6

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 second-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 two years of college-level study of Portuguese and the equivalent of one year of college-level study in one other language. 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 an S/U or P/N graded basis, 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 second-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.

In addition to the course requirements, students must write a qualifying exam paper and a comprehensive exam paper. The qualifying exam paper must be of publishable quality, presented in a public colloquium, and be approved by a student's advisory committee by the end of the spring semester of the second year of PhD coursework in order for the student to continue in the program. The comprehensive exam paper must be in the dissertation research area and be approved by the student's advisory committee by the end of the fall semester of the third year in the PhD in order for the student to continue in the program.

Timeline: Post-MA/MFA

Literatures/Cultures Track Timeline

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 the fifth semester. Students should develop the various parts of the comprehensive portfolio in conjunction with their PhD coursework.

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.

The research essay and position paper should be given to the comprehensive examination committee at least one month before the oral examination, after approval by the faculty supervisors.

Linguistics Track Timeline

Students must be registered during the semester in which they take their comprehensive examinations. If all coursework has been completed before 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.

Comprehensive Examinations

The purpose of the comprehensive examination/paper is to determine whether students have gained sufficient breadth and depth of research knowledge in Spanish literatures/cultures 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 inform the department administrator of their intent to take the PhD exam within the first three weeks of the relevant semester. Generally, students either have finished their coursework requirements before presenting the comprehensive exams or 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 before the start of examinations.

Literatures/Cultures Track Comprehensive Examinations

The two written examinations are typically scheduled over two weeks and must be finished at least one week before the oral examination. Between the time of the oral examination, the 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 examination, 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 examination, the student is asked to leave the exam room for the committee to determine its evaluation, including an appraisal of specific areas of strength and/or weakness and recommendations for future academic work.

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.

The PhD comprehensive examination includes two broad areas based on reading lists and two papers: a research paper and a position paper. The reading lists for the written examinations are developed in conjunction with the faculty while students complete coursework. The papers should also be developed while students take classes.

The official evaluation of the combined oral and written comprehensive exam is reported to the Graduate College as satisfactory, reservation, or unsatisfactory.

Students must be registered during the semester in which they take their comprehensive examinations. If all coursework has been completed before 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.

Linguistics Track Comprehensive Examinations

In addition to the course requirements, students must write a qualifying exam paper and a comprehensive exam paper. The qualifying exam paper must be of publishable quality, presented in a public colloquium, and be approved by the student's advisory committee by the end of the spring semester of the second year of PhD coursework for the student to continue in the program. The comprehensive exam paper must be in the dissertation research area and be approved by the student's advisory committee by the end of the fall semester of the third year in the PhD program for the student to continue in the program.

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.

Linguistics Track Dissertation

Dissertations can present a series of research papers focused on one theme or a longer monograph built around chapters. The precise format will be discussed with the advisor and committee during the prospectus.

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.

Graduate Education

Graduate education prepares students with advanced knowledge and skills in specialized fields. At the University of Iowa, the Graduate College advocates for student-centered graduate education and supports equitable application of rules and policies across graduate programs.

Academics

University of Iowa graduate credentials are regulated by policies and requirements found in the Graduate College Manual of Rules and Regulations. This includes minimum grade-point average (GPA) requirements for academic standing and degree conferral. The Graduate College sets the minimum requirement. Individual graduate programs may establish higher GPA requirements.

Admissions

Graduate student applicants must meet admission requirements for both the Graduate College and the program to which they have applied. University of Iowa graduate admission requirements are published by the Graduate College and on the Graduate Admissions website.

Financial Support

Graduate students might be eligible for financial support. Several contingencies apply, including degree program and award type, satisfactory progress toward degree, satisfactory completion of all duties related to an appointment, and availability of funding. Graduate students should inquire directly with their program for more information about funding availability. The Graduate Student Employment Standards govern the employment relationship between the University of Iowa and all graduate teaching and research assistants in all matters except wages, which are covered by an existing collective bargaining agreement or the conditions of an applicable federal grant.

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

Course	Title	Hours
Academic Career		
Any Semester		
72 s.h. must be graduate level coursework; maximum of 30 s.h. of graduate transfer credits taken for the master's from an accredited institution allowed upon approval. More information is included in the General Catalog and on department website. [a, b]		
Students in this track must complete the equivalent of three years of college-level study in one language.		
Completion of a graduate certificate that complements the Literatures/Cultures track is strongly encouraged. [c]		
	Hours	**0**
First Year		
Fall		
Spanish American literature course (pre-1700) [d]		3
Spanish literature course (pre-1700) [d]		3
Elective course [e]		3
	Hours	**9**
Spring		
SPAN:5000	Teaching and Learning Languages [e]	3
Spanish American literature or culture course [d]		3
Spanish literature or culture course [d]		3
	Hours	**9**
Second Year		
Fall		
Spanish American literature or culture course [d]		3
Elective course [e]		3
Elective course [e]		3
	Hours	**9**
Spring		
Spanish literature or culture course [d]		3
Elective course [e]		3
Elective course [e]		3
	Hours	**9**
Third Year		
Fall		
SPAN:5002	Pedagogical Practicum	2
Exam: Doctoral Comprehensive Exam [f]		
	Hours	**2**
Spring		
Dissertation Prospectus		
SPAN:6999	Thesis [g]	2
	Hours	**2**
Fourth Year		
Fall		
SPAN:6999	Thesis [g]	1
	Hours	**1**
Spring		
SPAN:6999	Thesis [g]	1

Exam: Doctoral Final Exam [h]	
Hours	**1**
Total Hours	**42**

a Students entering with fewer than 30 s.h. of coursework from the master's degree must work with their faculty advisor to complete the needed appropriate graduate coursework.
b Students must complete specific requirements in the University of Iowa Graduate College after program admission. Refer to the Graduate College website and the Manual of Rules and Regulations for more information.
c Possible options 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. More information is included in the General Catalog and on department website.
d Work with faculty advisor to select appropriate graduate coursework.
e Complete six courses (at least 18 s.h.) 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.
f Includes both written and oral components.
g Complete at least 3 s.h. of thesis credit.
h Dissertation defense.