

Degree Requirements, Iberian and Latin American Languages and Cultures

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Master of Arts

The Master of Arts (MA) degree is available only to students enrolled in the PhD degree program in Iberian and Latin American languages and cultures who are allowed by the Graduate Studies Committee to receive a master's degree after having successfully submitted and defended a doctoral qualifying paper in the fourth semester. If the doctoral qualifying paper is deemed unacceptable, the student may still petition to receive the MA after successfully completing 30 semester credit hours.

Doctor of Philosophy

General Requirements

The doctoral program in Iberian and Latin American languages and cultures includes three tracks that share the same five-year structure, described below. These tracks are (1) Iberian and Latin American literatures and cultures, (2) Luso-Brazilian cultural and media studies, and (3) Iberian and Latin American linguistics. All students must demonstrate proficiency in a second language beyond Spanish or Portuguese. In the first and third tracks, the second language may be any language other than English that is relevant to the student's proposed field of study and is approved by the graduate advisor. Students in the second track must choose Spanish or Portuguese as the second language.

Students seeking the PhD in Iberian and Latin American languages and cultures must complete a minimum of 54 semester hours of coursework. Coursework includes the following required courses: Iberian and Latin American Languages and Cultures 380 (Tracks 1 and 2), 385T, 394, 395, 396, 398T, and 399W, 699W, or 999W. The remaining semester hours may be fulfilled through elective courses at the graduate level, as approved by the graduate advisor. At least 15 of the 30 semester hours of elective coursework must come from courses offered by the Department of Spanish and Portuguese. For Tracks 1 and 2, at least one of these electives must be a graduate seminar on a Peninsular topic, and at least one must be a graduate seminar on a Luso-Brazilian topic (total of two courses).

For doctoral students, the fourth long semester is dedicated to the elaboration of the doctoral qualifying paper. In the first half of the semester, each student must write and submit a paper demonstrating a mastery of a specialized topic, theoretical rigor, sophisticated research techniques, and a command of structure, academic style, and organization. If the committee, consisting of the student's advisor and two other readers deem the paper acceptable, the student will defend the paper before the committee during the second half of the semester.

Upon the successful completion of the doctoral qualifying paper, in the fifth long semester, students will enroll in nine hours of additional elective coursework.

The sixth and seventh long semesters are dedicated to the preparation of the doctoral dissertation fields and proposal. In the sixth long semester, in consultation with a Dissertation Fields Committee (consisting of the three Graduate Studies Committee faculty members from the department, including the student's advisor, and one faculty member from outside the department), each student will prepare and write critical summaries of a number of field lists. If the Dissertation Fields Committee considers the list and accompanying summaries acceptable, the student will develop a doctoral dissertation proposal, under the supervision of their supervisor(s), which the student will defend in a meeting with the Dissertation Proposal Committee (consisting of the four committee members with the option of adding one more) before the twelfth week of the seventh long semester. The student will also enroll in Iberian and Latin American Languages and Cultures 385T during the seventh long semester.

Language Requirements

Graduate students in the Department of Spanish and Portuguese are required to demonstrate proficiency in three languages:

- English: The Graduate School *minimum scores for admission* are a 79 on the TOEFL (internet-based test) or an overall band of 6.5 on the IELTS Academic Examination for international students. To be eligible for a TA or AI position, international students must score a minimum of 25 on the speaking portion of the TOEFL.
- Primary Working Language (PWL): Spanish or Portuguese (non-native speakers usually demonstrate near-native fluency via previous coursework, academic degrees, and/or writing samples). Note that faculty may interview non-native speakers prior to admission to the department to confirm near-native fluency.
- Secondary Language (SL): Language appropriate to the student's line of study as determined by their faculty advisor/supervisor and Graduate Advisor. The student must demonstrate Advanced-Low Reading Proficiency.¹

¹ ACTFL description of Advanced-Low sublevel of reading proficiency: readers are able to understand conventional narrative and descriptive texts with a clear underlying structure though their comprehension may be uneven. These texts predominantly contain high-frequency vocabulary and structures.

Declaration of Languages

By the *end of the first year*, students should meet with their Faculty Advisors/Supervisors to discuss the SL appropriate to their line of study and to decide how proficiency will be demonstrated (see below). The student will complete the Declaration of Languages form available from the Graduate Coordinator, which will then be routed to the faculty advisor/supervisor and the Graduate Advisor for their approval.

Prior to advancing to candidacy, the student will submit proof of Advanced Low Reading Proficiency in the SL. This should take place before the Dissertation Proposal Defense.

Depending on the language, there are a variety of ways to demonstrate proficiency for the SL, for example:

- For Spanish or Portuguese, a reading and translation exam administered by the Director of the Language Program and/or Portuguese Program Director in the Department of Spanish & Portuguese (available once per year – see the Graduate Coordinator for details)
- A grade of B or higher in Intensive Reading courses at UT Austin or other accredited institution such as GER 380C German for Graduate Students in Other Departments.

- Confirmation of Advanced Low Reading Proficiency from a recognized language institute.
- Translation exam administered by a reader proficient in the SL (such as UT Austin or other university faculty, language institute directors, etc.). The exam usually consists of a passage taken from a secondary text. Students are given an hour to an hour and a half to translate, with a dictionary.
- Other arrangements may be implemented if approved by the student's faculty advisor/supervisor and by the Graduate Advisor.

Tracks

All graduate students in Tracks 1 and 2 must complete Iberian and Latin American Languages and Cultures 380 as well as 12 semester hours of elective coursework in their first three long semesters. By the end of the third long semester, students must have selected or been assigned a mentor from among the department's graduate faculty.

Track 1: Iberian and Latin American Literatures and Cultures

The Iberian and Latin American literatures and cultures track addresses the broad range of linguistic and cultural contacts that currently comprise our field. This track allows students to complete their primary coursework in Spanish, with a focus that may include the multiple languages and cultures of Latin America (including the U.S.), Spain, the Caribbean, Africa, or Asia, or related diasporas. Students will then choose a specialization in the literature and culture of a second language relevant to their research. This could be Portuguese, Nahuatl, a Mayan language, French, Arabic, Hebrew, Yiddish, Yoruba, a Creole language, etc.

Track 2: Luso-Brazilian Cultural and Media Studies

The Luso-Brazilian cultural and media studies track is designed for students who wish to acquire the cultural capital and critical thinking skills crucial to a global understanding of Brazil, Portugal, and the Portuguese-speaking populations of Africa and Asia. While also addressing a range of media and cultural contacts, this option allows students to complete their primary coursework in Luso-Brazilian literature, film, and culture, choosing either Spanish or another relevant language as the basis of a secondary research focus. This track is designed to bridge the traditional divide between Brazil, the Americas, and the Lusophone world.

Track 3: Iberian and Latin American Linguistics

In the Iberian and Latin American linguistics track, students pursue coursework in areas that bridge theoretical and applied approaches in the study of the structural and meaning-bearing properties of standardized and local languages, the sociolinguistics of the Ibero-American world, the development of second languages in natural and academic settings, and the qualitative and quantitative analysis of speech samples collected in the field and in the laboratory. This training is supported and augmented by coursework in the core linguistic areas of phonology and syntax as well as in the research methods of phonetics, discourse analysis, corpus linguistics, psycholinguistics, and anthropological linguistics through the offerings of graduate programs in the Department of Spanish and Portuguese and allied departments, including linguistics, French and Italian, curriculum and instruction, psychology, communication, anthropology, and Latin American studies.