

Spanish Master of Arts

MASTER COMPREHENSIVE EXAM

POLICIES AND PROCEDURES (rev. Fall 2015)

See Degree Requirements (Graduate Bulletin)

Regarding Exit Proficiency

It should be duly noted that, in addition to the requirements explained above, the candidate must demonstrate a level of Advanced High proficiency in all four skills (based on the ACTFL guidelines) through his or her performance on the Written and Oral Comprehensive Exams. However, it is generally understood that the candidate will not be able to satisfactorily complete coursework or the exams themselves without already having achieved this level. To this end, all graduate students are informally evaluated after 18 hours of coursework by the graduate faculty to determine if they have made sufficient progress towards this proficiency goal. If a particular student has not achieved a level of at least Advanced Mid at this point, the Graduate Coordinator will bring this to the students' attention in writing, with recommendations for remediation in future courses and/or (in the case of Oral Proficiency) the need to undertake graduate Study Abroad (see above) as a requirement for graduation.

The Master's Reading List

Upon entering the M.A. program in Spanish, each student should procure a copy of the Master's Reading List, upon which the Master's Comprehensive Exam is based. While the student's course work, if properly managed, should provide a solid grounding in the advanced study of Hispanic-American and Peninsular literatures and cultures, it must be supplemented with independent reading from the list to ensure sufficient command. The student is also advised to review introductory sections and relevant author headnotes in the Enrique Anderson Imbert anthology and in critical editions of texts. However, although anthologies and critical commentaries may be helpful, they are not a substitute for mastery of the primary text.

Registering for the Exam

As the student nears completion of course work, he or she should inform **in writing** the Graduate Coordinator of his or her intent to take the Master's Comprehensive Exam **by the second week of the semester following the semester in which coursework was completed**. The Spanish graduate division will then provide the candidate with the date of the written exam, which will take place during two days in the second month of classes (February or October). After the written exam is completed and passed, a date will be set for the oral exam. As stipulated in the graduate bulletin, graduate study at the master's level (including all examinations) must be completed within six consecutive years from the semester of initial enrollment (2.06.12).

The Exam Committee

There is flexibility regarding the selection and make-up of the committee. For example, it may consist of all the tenured and tenure-track graduate faculty members from the department, in which case all such faculty will be responsible for making, administering, proctoring, and grading the exam, and the Graduate Coordinator will be the main contact person. However, other

scenarios are permissible. For instance, students preparing for the exam may be allowed to choose a committee chair, who will then be the main contact person and work with the Graduate Coordinator in selecting the remaining members of the committee, which in all cases will have a minimum of three members.

Taking the Written Exam

The written exam itself consists of three parts, each of which corresponds to a core course and a section of the reading list. The format and questions of each part will be determined by the faculty: they may include a short-answer (identification) section dealing with characters, titles of works, literary terms, dates, brief quotations, terminology, and similar items that reflect the historical, literary, and cultural proportions of the Reading List; and/or essays. When writing the exam, all graduate faculty members will contribute an equal number of items for the section corresponding to his or her specialty. Each section will contain double the number of items needed for one sitting of the test so that, once half of the items have been removed for the test, the remaining items (not chosen for the initial exam) will be reserved for retakes, if these should prove to be necessary.

(1) All of the written exam will relate directly and exclusively to material covered in a) the three core courses and b) the reading list. The three sections are History of the Language and Linguistics, Spanish American Cultures and Literatures, Peninsular Spanish Cultures and Literatures.

(2) No books, notes, or dictionaries are permitted. Candidates may not communicate with other students while taking the exam. The exam must be taken on campus on the dates and times arranged in advance with the graduate coordinator, and under the supervision of the coordinator. Any exceptions to this policy must be proposed in advance, with adequate arrangements for proctoring the exam at another university, for example. **All regulations regarding Academic Misconduct will be strictly enforced. Any candidate having been found guilty of Academic Misconduct (plagiarism, cheating, copying, misrepresenting another's work as his/her own, copying one's own previous work, etc.) will receive a failing grade on the exam and may not be entitled to retake it.**

(3) Candidates will have **three hours to complete each section of the exam**, which will be taken during two days. During the first day, students will complete two sections of the exam, as determined by the graduate faculty. The remaining section will be taken the following day. All students will take the same sections on the same day, with no exceptions to be made for any reason. Candidates will have a 90-minute break between the first two sections.

(4) The **format** of each section will vary; however, the candidate can expect to encounter formats such as identifications, critical commentary, and/or essays. In some cases, it will be required to complete questions of both formats; in every case, students will have a selection of items (identification or essay) from which to choose.

With regard to **identifications**: in order to earn full credit for a response, the student will have to demonstrate not only precise knowledge of the item's significance, but also awareness of its generic/historical context. The graders may give partial credit at their discretion.

With regard to **essays**: although essay topics will vary, the following statement expresses the graduate faculty's expectations for candidate performance on any analytical essay written for the

exams: the exam is intended to test not only the candidates' concrete knowledge of literature, culture, and history of the language (familiarity with important authors, works, terminology), but also their ability, using critical thinking, to place individual writers and works in their literary, cultural, and historical contexts, making connections among all of these elements. The graduate faculty expects to see in these essays evidence of a synthetic and critical understanding of literature, culture, and the history of language, as well as the historical periods that correspond to these areas.

(5) When **evaluating** a candidate's written exam, faculty will consider only the assigned number of responses from each section (that is, any extra responses of identifications or essays will not be considered). A passing score for any format of responses will be 80%; a simple majority of the graders will have to assign a passing grade for the student to be passed on this section of the exam.

Receiving Exam Results

Normally, students will be notified in writing of exam results within two weeks of the written exam date. At that time, arrangements will be made with the Graduate Coordinator for the Oral Examination or for retakes, as described below.

Retaking the Exam

A student needs to retake only those parts of the exam (any of the three areas as described above) that have received a failing grade. Any student who fails some portion of the exam must arrange to meet within 30 working days (defined as days when classes are in session) with the Graduate Faculty to review his or her performance, to set a date for the retake, and to seek advice about preparation for the retake. The student must have this consultation session in order to be eligible for a retake. The retake exam will be composed of items written for the original exam: for each section retaken, only one unanswered item may be repeated from the previous exam; all other items will be selected from the originally submitted items for the exam that were not used in the first take. As in the original exam, the student will have 3 hours to complete the retake of each section. If the student needs to retake only one section of the three, then s/he can be expected to complete the retake and, pending favorable outcome, the oral exam during that same semester. However, if the student has failed two sections, arrangements should be made for retakes during the subsequent semester. In the case of two or more sections that need to be retaken, all sections must be retaken on the same day as arranged in the consultation session, and this exam date must fall within two semesters of the original exam date. Any retakes must be completed within a year of notification of the need to retake or the opportunity to retake will be forfeited.

In the case that a student should fail one or more sections of the written exam on the second attempt, the Graduate Faculty will consider petitions from that student if s/he wishes a third (and final) chance. The student cannot automatically assume a right to take the exam a third time. He or she will need to offer mitigating circumstances and a plan to address deficiencies. In this case, an exam date will be set for this final retake, which will consist of similar material and format to the original exam (drawing exclusively from the core courses and the reading list).

Oral Comprehensive Exam

After the student has passed the written Comprehensive Exam, s/he will schedule a date for the oral exam with the Graduate Coordinator. The Oral Exam should take place during the semester in which the written exams have been passed, generally the Friday after the last day of classes. Each one of the members of the Exam Committee will have a maximum of twenty (20) minutes to ask questions of and receive answers from the candidate. In any case, the oral exam will not exceed 90 minutes in duration for any reason. The questions will deal exclusively with four possible topics, but do not have to include items from each topic area: 1) any unanswered questions from the written exam (original and/or retake); 2) further development of essay or identification answers from the written exam (original and/or retake); 3) material dealing with courses taken by the candidate (core courses or electives); and 4) material from the reading list. As in the written exam, a passing score will be 80%; a simple majority of the graders will have to assign a passing grade for the student to pass the oral portion of the exam. The candidate will be informed in writing within 48 hours of the exam results; in the event of a failing grade, a retake will be scheduled with the Graduate Coordinator. Only one retake of the oral examinations is permitted, and will take place either in the same semester as the original oral exam, if time allows, or before the end of the following semester.

Portfolio of Written Materials and Survey of Alumni

Each graduate student will present a portfolio of written materials (reaction papers, research papers, etc.) which are representative copies of his/her work throughout the course of study in the program. This portfolio will be retained by the department as part of ongoing assessment processes. In particular, the portfolio will allow the department to determine if the program is meeting three of its stated goals; namely, that its graduates will a) gain advanced knowledge of the literatures, cultures, and civilizations of Spain and Spanish America, b) develop higher-level intellectual functions such as evaluation, synthesis, and analysis of literary and cultural discourse, and c) demonstrate knowledge of research methods and resources, as well as some methodologies and use of technology relevant to their area of interest. Additionally, for the purposes of program assessment, students who earn the M.A. in Spanish will also be asked to complete an alumni survey within a year of degree completion.

Information Sessions

The Graduate Coordinator will meet with graduate students early in the fall and spring semesters for the purposes of general orientation and review of Comprehensive Exam procedures. During this meeting, an information sheet which explains the procedures outlined in this document, along with the Master's Exam Reading List, will be distributed to the students. These documents will also be available online through the departmental website.

MASTER EXAM READING LIST (rev. Fall 2015)

I. Latinoamérica

1. Las raíces, el descubrimiento, la conquista y la colonia (¿?-1824)

a) LITERATURA PRECOLOMBINA

El Popol Vuh

Poesía nahuatl (selecciones de *Voces*)

Poesía quechua (selecciones de *Voces*)

b) EL RENACIMIENTO

Cristóbal Colón: *Diario de viaje* o *Carta a Luis de Santángel*

Fray Bartolomé de las Casas: *Historia de las indias* (Selecciones)

Bernal Díaz del Castillo: *Historia verdadera de la conquista de la Nueva España* (Selecciones)

c) EL BARROCO y las letras coloniales

Carlos Sigüenza y Góngora: *Los infortunios de Alonso Ramírez* (Selecciones)

Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz: *Romance, Redondillas, Sonetos, Respuesta a Sor Filotea*.

d) LA ILUSTRACION

José Joaquín Fernández de Lizardi: *El periquillo Sarniento* (Selecciones)

Andrés Bello: *Agricultura de la zona tórrida*

2. Búsqueda de la emancipación cultural (1825-1882)

EL ROMANTICISMO

Esteban Echeverría: *El matadero*

Gertrudis Gómez de Avellaneda: *Sab, al partir, a él*

Ricardo Palma, *Amor de madre* o *El alacrán de Fray Gómez*

José Hernández, *Martín Fierro* (Selecciones)

3. La realidad americana y la renovación literaria (1882-1910)

EL MODERNISMO

José Asunción Silva: *Nocturno, Vejeces*

Manuel Gutiérrez Nájera: *Para entonces, La duquesa Job, La mañana de San Juan*

Rubén Darío: *Sonatina, Yo soy aquel, A Roosevelt, Canción de otoño en primavera*, seleccionar: *El rubí* o *El velo de la reina Mab*

José Enrique Rodó: *Ariel* (Selecciones)

4. Continuidad y ruptura: hacia una nueva expresión (1910-1960)

a) EL POSMODERNISMO & EL VANGUARDISMO

Delmira Agustini, *El intruso, Explosión, Las alas*

Gabriela Mistral: *Los sonetos de la muerte, Sueño grande, La desvelada*

Alfonsina Storni, *Peso ancestral, Hombre pequeñito, Tu me quieres blanca* ...

César Vallejo, *Los heraldos negros, Poemas en prosa*

Vicente Huidobro, *Arte poética, Altazor (selecciones)*

Jorge Luis Borges, *Borges y yo, El sur*

Nicolás Guillén, *Búcate plata, Sensemayá, Balada de los dos abuelos*

Pablo Neruda, *Poema 20, Walking Around, Oda a los calcetines*

Juan Rulfo, *Nos han dado la tierra* o *Diles que no me maten*

Luis Palés Matos, *Tuntún de pasa y grifería (poema), Magestad negra*

Alejo Carpentier *El reino de este mundo*

b) EL NATURALISMO

Horacio Quiroga: *La gallina degollada*

Baldomero Lillo: *La compuerta número doce*

5. Consolidación y expansión (1960-1975)

LA NUEVA NARRATIVA

Julio Cortázar: *La isla a mediodía*

Octavio Paz: *El laberinto de la soledad: todos santos, día de muertos* (Selecciones)

Emilio Carballido, *El solitario en octubre*

Carlos Fuentes, *Chac Mool*

Gabriel García Márquez, *La prodigiosa tarde de Baltazar* o *Un señor muy viejo con unas alas enormes*

Elena Poniatowska: *Las lavanderas*

Mario Vargas Llosa: *El catoblepas*

Guillermo Cabrera Infante: *Tres tristes tigres*

6. Asimilación y diferencia (1976-Presente)

LA POSTMODERNIDAD

Luis Rafael Sánchez: *¿Por qué escribe Ud.?*

Luisa Valenzuela: *Los censores*

Rosario Ferré: *La muñeca menor*

Isabel Allende: *Clarisa*

Sergio Ramírez: *Catalina y Catalina*

Carmen Boullosa: *Duerme* o *Son vacas somos puercos*

7. U.S. Latino/Chicano literature

Sandra Cisneros, *The House on Mango Street* o Tomás Rivera, *Y no se lo tragó la tierra*

Julia Álvarez, *How the Garcia Girls Lost Their Accents* o Junot Díaz, *The Brief and Wondrous Life of Oscar Wao*

Esmeralda Santiago, *When I Was Puerto Rican*

Cristina García, *Dreaming in Cuban*

Nota bene: La mayoría de las selecciones y lecturas en la lista se encuentran en *Voces de Hispanoamericana: Antología Literaria* de Raquel Chang-Rodriguez y Malva E. Filer.

II. History of the Language and Linguistics

Penny, Ralph. *A History of the Spanish Language*.

Pharies, David A. *Breve historia de la lengua española*.

Hualde, et al. *Introducción a la lingüística hispánica* (or Azevedo, Milton M. *Introducción a la lingüística española*.)

Lloyd, Paul M. *From Latin to Spanish*.

Lathrop, Thomas A. *The Evolution of Spanish: An Introductory Historical Grammar*.

III. Peninsular Cultures and Literatures

Anónimo. *El Poema del Mío Cid*

Anónimo (Fernando de Rojas). *La Celestina*

Miguel de Cervantes

Novelas ejemplares (at least two novelas)

Don Quijote (significant selections from both parts)

Anónimo. *Lazarillo de Tormes*

At least one of the following works:

a play by Pedro Calderón de la Barca

a play by Lope de Vega (*Fuenteovejuna*)

Tirso de Molina, *El burlador de Sevilla*

Significant selections of Renaissance and Baroque poetry (including Garcilaso de la Vega, Fray Luis de León, Luis de Góngora, and Francisco de Quevedo)

María de Zayas, *Desengaños amorosos* (at least two desengaños)

At least one Neoclassical or Enlightenment work (such as Moratín's *El sí de las niñas* or Cadalso's *Cartas marruecas*)

José Zorrilla, *Don Juan Tenorio*

or another Romantic play (as long as *El burlador de Sevilla* has been read)

At least one Realist or Naturalist novel (such as *Doña Perfecta*, *La Tribuna*, *La desheredada*, *Fortunata y Jacinta*, *La Regenta*, *La madre naturaleza*, etc.)

Miguel de Unamuno, *Niebla*

At least one dramatic work from the Generation of '27 (such as *Bodas de sangre* or *Yerma*) and selected poems from members of Generation of '27 (such as Lorca, Alberti, Machado, Guillén, Aleixandre, Cernuda, and Diego)

At least one of the following:

Ramón J. Sender, *Réquiem por un campesino español*

Ana María Matute, *Primera memoria*

Carmen Martín Gaité, *El cuarto de atrás*

At least one other post-Franco text (such as *El sur*; *Los mares del sur*; *El misterio de la cripta embrujada*; *Amor, curiosidad, Prozac y dudas*; etc.)

A selection of Spanish visual art (Velázquez, Murillo, El Greco, Picasso, Dalí, etc.)

A selection of Spanish film (Buñuel, Almodóvar, Saura, Amenábar, etc.)