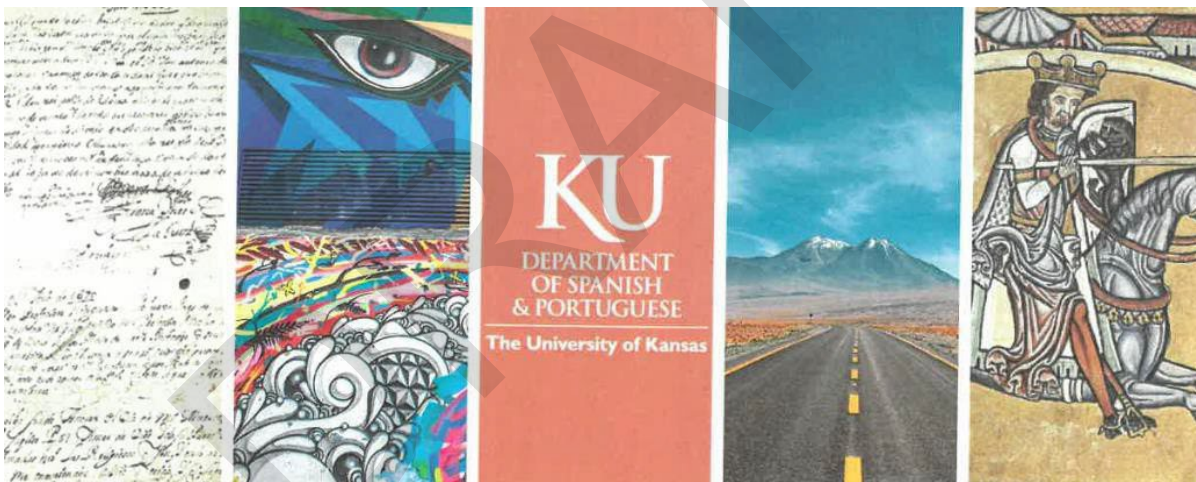


GRADUATE STUDENT HANDBOOK
2026-2027



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[Department Homepage](#)

This handbook provides essential information about the graduate program in the Department of Spanish and Portuguese at the University of Kansas.

Change History:

Updated by Graduate Studies Committee, September 5, 2023

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General Department Information

The Department of Spanish and Portuguese offers the MA and PhD degrees. MA students will study the major cultural expressions and literary movements from Spain and the Latin American region and acquire the theoretical tools necessary to engage critically in literary and cultural analysis and research. Students admitted to the PhD program will receive a rigorous and comprehensive education in the traditional disciplines of Iberian and Latin American literary and cultural studies, while also allowing for engagement with larger transdisciplinary and transnational approaches. A student may expect to finish the MA in approximately two years and the PhD in five to seven years beyond the MA.

In the Department of Spanish and Portuguese, the Graduate Studies Committee, headed by the Director of Graduate Studies, reviews departmental requirements, proposes new policies, administers milestone examinations, assigns advisors to MA students, evaluates admission applications, recommends students for fellowships and graduate teaching assistantships (GTAs), and acts on student petitions. The Graduate Studies Director provides first-semester advising, aid in forming exam and thesis committees, and final graduation checks. The College Office of Graduate Affairs (COGA) of the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences (CLAS) oversees the students' completion of all requirements.

Among the important functions of the Graduate Studies Committee is the consideration of student petitions for the waiver or modification of departmental requirements in individual cases. Such petitions are always discussed carefully, normally by the faculty members of the Committee, and sometimes lead to changes in Department policy. One graduate student member selected by the Chair of the Department sits on Graduate Studies Committee meetings during discussions of general policy.

Since 1986, the Graduate Association for the Department of Spanish and Portuguese (GRASP) is one of several student organizations that participates in the Graduate and Professional Association (GPA) and its representative senate. As such, the organization adheres to the general statement of purpose of this larger organization. All graduate students in the Department of Spanish and Portuguese become members of GRASP when they begin their graduate studies, and the association encourages active participation. GRASP sponsors colloquia, lectures, orientation-week activities, and other events. To keep in touch with GRASP, e-mail graspkuspan@ku.edu and/or check the [GRASP website](#) regularly for further information and details on short and long-term projects.

Key Offices at KU

The College Office of Graduate Affairs (COGA) of the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences (CLAS) oversees the students' completion of all requirements. The [COGA website](#) contains comprehensive information on requirements and policies pertaining to graduate education at KU. COGA should be your first stop for any questions your department cannot answer. For a summary of these policies and degree requirements, see Appendix A.

The [Office of Graduate Studies](#) sets policies and regulations governing graduate study and offers funding opportunities in several different categories. Students interested in applying to fellowships funds and awards should direct inquiries to the Director of Graduate Studies, Department of Spanish, and Portuguese. These funding opportunities include:

1. **Dissertation Fellowships:** intended for doctoral students who have passed their comprehensive examinations; for one academic year, non-renewable.
2. **Summer Fellowships:** intended primarily for post-comp doctoral students.
3. **[Graduate Student Travel Fund:](#)** intended for graduate students presenting a paper at a national or regional meeting of a learned or professional society. A student may receive an award (max. \$750) only once per academic year, with priority given to students who have not received the fund previously.
4. **[Doctoral Student Research Fund:](#)** Designed to support KU doctoral students who need assistance in conducting research that advances progress toward the degree. Students are eligible to receive one award from this fund during their doctoral career.

The Office of the University Registrar maintains official academic student records. This includes grades, transcripts, enrollment certifications, degrees and diplomas, and a student's personal information. Please see the [Graduate School calendar](#) for deadlines regarding closing dates for graduation, including dates to meet all school and college requirements, application for degree, etc.

International Support Services (ISS)

Contact [ISS](#) for questions related to enrollment requirements, international student insurance, social security cards, I-20 questions, and any issue related to student visas.

Center for Teaching Excellence (CTE)

The [CTE](#) is a university center dedicated to assisting instructors, including GTAs, to develop effective instructional techniques. The expert staff of the CTE can introduce instructors to the instructional technologies available at the University and help instructors to develop innovative approaches to teaching. CTE specialists collaborate with instructors individually and offer a diverse array of workshops and discussions. See the [CTE webpage](#).

Applied English Center (AEC)

The AEC helps prepare students who need to perfect their English before beginning their university studies. The Applied English Center (AEC) maintains a testing process for non-native speakers of English. This process serves to confirm each student's level of English proficiency and determines whether English courses will be included as a requirement of the student's graduate studies. More information can be found on the [AEC's website](#).

Admissions

In the Department of Spanish and Portuguese, the Graduate Studies Committee is responsible for reviewing applications for admission and recommending students for available fellowships and graduate teaching assistantships (GTAs). Requirements for application are on the [Department of Spanish and Portuguese website](#). International applicants should pay special attention to the additional materials required for non-domestic students.

Minimum Admission Criteria

In addition to the [general admission requirements](#) from the KU Office of Graduate Studies, all candidates to the graduate programs in the Department of Spanish and Portuguese must meet the criteria below:

For the MA Program

- The applicant must hold B.A. or B.S. degree in Spanish from an accredited U.S. college or university or the equivalent degree from a foreign university.
- Fifteen semester hours of literature courses at the survey level or above in Spanish.
- Be proficient in oral and written Spanish.
- Minimum GPA of 3.0 (on a 4.0 scale) in overall undergraduate coursework.

For the PhD Program

- The applicant must hold (or anticipate completing by the time of admission) an MA or MS degree in Spanish from an accredited U.S. college or university or the equivalent degree from a foreign university.
- Be proficient in oral and written Spanish.
- Minimum GPA of 3.0 (on a 4.0 scale) in overall graduate coursework.

The following supplemental documents should be included in the application:

Required Supplemental Documents

- A statement of academic objectives in English describing your intellectual development, previous academic training, and areas of academic interest. The quality of this statement is an especially important factor in the decisions of the admissions committee. It would also be helpful if you identified the faculty member(s) with whom you intend to work. The statement should not exceed two single-spaced pages.
- A curriculum vitae
- Copies of official transcripts for all undergraduate and graduate programs
- An academic writing sample in Spanish (not to exceed thirty double-spaced pages)
- Three letters of recommendation with the appropriate waiver form

- A video file (mp4) or a sound file (mp3) in spoken Spanish and English. Your recording should describe your background with Spanish, your reasons for seeking a graduate degree in Hispanic Studies, and the goals you intend to achieve as a student and instructor at the University of Kansas. Please speak spontaneously and be yourself; record 5 minutes for each language. The committee is trying to get a sense of your oral communicative abilities.

Admission to the graduate program is competitive and based on an evaluation of the entire dossier of materials submitted by the student. Particular attention is paid to the student's self-presentation, so care should be taken in writing the personal statement and in choosing the essay sent as a writing sample. The Admissions Committee considers each applicant's statement, academic accomplishments, letters of recommendation, audio recording, and writing samples to assess the applicant's potential for graduate studies. The committee uses the video-sound file to evaluate candidates for Graduate Teaching Assistantships (GTAs).

The deadline for all applications and supplemental materials is no later than April 1st for domestic applicants; for international applicants it is no later than February 1st. The Department of Spanish and Portuguese only admits new incoming students in the fall semester. Applications that are incomplete or missing materials after the April 1st deadline will not be considered for admission for the following fall semester.

Applications received by the above dates will be considered for departmental funding in the form of a Graduate Teaching Assistantship or a University Graduate Fellowship (UGF). Applicants wishing to be considered for additional university funding should submit their applications as soon as possible, but no later than February 1st. Incomplete applications can be held for consideration for the following academic year.

If you have questions about the admission requirements and procedures, please contact Aley Pennington, Graduate Program Coordinator at aleypennington@ku.edu, or Dr. Isidro J. Rivera, Director of Graduate Studies at ijrivera@ku.edu. For related policies and information about admission, see Appendix A.

English Proficiency Requirements

The University requires all applicants, international or domestic, [to demonstrate English proficiency](#) for admission to any graduate program at KU.

Additional English Competency Requirements for Graduate Teaching Assistantships (GTAs)

English proficiency requirements for GTAs are governed by the Kansas Board of Regents and must be met separately from the English proficiency requirement for admission to a KU graduate program. Detailed information on English proficiency requirements for GTAs may be found on Graduate Studies' [Spoken English Competency page](#). For related policies and information about English Proficiency Requirements, see Appendix A (50-51).

Internal MA Applications for admission to the PhD Program

Master's graduates of the KU Spanish and Portuguese program who wish to apply to the KU Spanish PhD program must submit the materials outlined below.

Applications for the PhD program are due on the first Friday of the semester when the student will be taking the MA written exams or submitting the portfolio. Students should submit their completed application to the Graduate Program Coordinator, who will forward the materials to the Graduate Studies Committee for review. A completed application will include:

- Statement in English of PhD goals, including a description of your intellectual development, previous academic training, and areas of academic interest. The statement should identify the faculty member(s) with whom applicant intends to work. The statement should not exceed two single-spaced pages.
- Current degree progress report;
- An academic writing sample in Spanish from MA work, 15-20 pages;
- One-paragraph letters from two faculty members from the Department of Spanish and Portuguese, University of Kansas, with whom the student would work. The applicant should request that the authors of these letters should send them to the Director of Graduate Studies.

The Department's Graduate Studies Committee reviews the application materials. In addition, the Graduate Studies Committee will contact the Director of the Language Program for an assessment of the applicant's teaching qualifications.

If you have questions about the admissions requirements and procedures, please contact Aley Pennington, Graduate Program Coordinator at aleypennington@ku.edu or Dr. Isidro J. Rivera, Director of Graduate Studies at ijrivera@ku.edu.

GENERAL POLICIES

Advising and Mentorship

The Department considers advising and mentoring a critical component of a graduate student's education. The Graduate Studies Committee oversees a robust mentoring program that pairs incoming students with experienced faculty mentors who provide insights, recommendations, and an understanding of the diverse paths that students can take. In addition, Aley Pennington (aleypennington@ku.edu), the Graduate Program Coordinator, serves as liaison with COGA and provides support for questions on enrollment, petitions, employment, and University policies.

The Director of Graduate Studies (DGS) will assign a faculty advisor to first-year MA students with attention to areas of interest. The DGS will advise entering PhD students until they have selected a primary academic advisor in their selected field.

Graduate students should meet with their faculty advisor a minimum of twice a year to discuss their course performance and timely progress toward the degree. The department encourages all graduate students to complete a mentoring agreement (Appendix B) with their advisor, which will be revisited at least once a year to ensure an appropriate degree timeline. The Mentoring Agreement can serve as a template for creating an appropriate timeline.

Regular and Timely Feedback from Academic Advisors and Department

To ensure academic success and professional growth, all graduate students will receive regular and timely feedback on their teaching, research, service, and coursework. The Director of Graduate Studies (DGS) will assign a faculty advisor to first-year MA students with attention to areas of interest. The DGS will advise entering PhD students until they have selected a primary academic advisor in their selected field. Within the first two (2) semesters in the graduate program, students must establish an individualized plan of study with the assigned Graduate Advisor and in consultation with the Graduate Program Coordinator.

Graduate students should meet with their faculty advisor a minimum of twice a year to discuss their course performance and timely progress toward the degree. The department encourages all graduate students to complete a mentoring agreement (Appendix B) with their advisor, which will be revisited at least once a year to ensure an appropriate degree timeline. The Mentoring Agreement can serve as a template for creating an appropriate timeline for program requirements and receiving feedback concerning progress toward degree completion.

Progress is monitored through an annual report of coursework, progress toward degree, and teaching submitted to the Director of Graduate Studies. The Graduate Studies Committee also evaluates these reports to evaluate progress and identify areas for improvement. To further support these positive mentoring relationships and the objective evaluation of progress, the student, primary academic advisor, or Director of Graduate Studies may request the completion or updating of the mentoring agreement at any stage of the degree program as specified by the department's mentoring agreement policy (see Handbook, page 14). Additionally, the Graduate Studies Committee meets each semester to review student progress in detail. This review, combined with the evaluation process, fosters an environment of constructive strategies that strive for excellence, celebrates progress, and facilitates timely advisement if a student needs assistance. After the review, each student and their advisor receive a status letter outlining their progress and identifying any areas for improvement. This letter provides a comprehensive look at the student's progress to date, including remaining coursework, program requirements, academic milestones, and availability of funding options.

Doctoral candidates are encouraged to meet with their dissertation committee once per semester and with their primary academic advisor providing formal evaluations of their annual progress to ensure consistent mentorship through the various stages of their doctoral work. Doctoral candidates should discuss plans for a Doctoral Committee with their primary academic advisor. The department suggests that all graduate students complete a mentoring agreement (Appendix B), which will be revisited at least once a year to assure an

appropriate degree timeline. During the final dissertation phase, advisors and committee members should follow a suggested four-week turnaround for reviewing the completed chapter drafts and communicating committee approval of the submitted work. This ensures students receive the timely feedback necessary to finalize their dissertation and plan for their oral defense as per University and Department policies.

Mentorship Agreements

The Department of Spanish and Portuguese recognizes that effective mentoring is especially critical during the preparation of the Master's portfolio and the doctoral dissertation stage. The Mentoring Agreement form is available in Appendix B and online at the [Graduate Student Resources](#) page. This agreement is a tool intended to support positive mentoring relationships, the objective evaluation of progress, and completion of the degree in a timely manner. The Department recommends that graduate students should complete a mentoring agreement upon completion of the first year of the MA program and/or of first year of PhD program. The department encourages all graduate students to review the mentoring agreement with their advisor at least once a year to assure an appropriate degree timeline.

The Mentoring Agreement is required in the following circumstances:

- Change of advisor
- Move away from campus
- Advisor retires or is on sabbatical
- Take job outside KU
- Upon return from LOA
- Health or personal challenges
- Placed on Probation
- Incomplete grade in a regular course
- LP/NP grade on thesis/dissertation hours
- Miss internal dept deadline (e.g., comps completion deadline)
- Unsatisfactory progress/warning at annual review
(Policy approved by Faculty on 6 Feb. 2025)

Note that the College's Mentoring Agreement is required for doctoral students who are within two (2) years of exhausting their maximum time to degree. For more information, see the [College's Maximum Time to Complete Degree information page](#).

Annual Review

The Graduate Studies Committee will review the academic progress of all graduate students in the spring semester. Grades, completion of requirements, progress on the thesis or dissertation, overall academic performance, and teaching evaluations will be reviewed. The Director of Graduate Studies will communicate the outcome of the evaluation in writing to the graduate student, along with whatever recommendations the

review committee chooses to make. A copy of the evaluation and recommendations will be retained in the student's file.

Graduate Courses

Consult the degree requirements for a listing of required courses below or online for [MA Program](#) or [PhD Program](#).

Courses numbered below 600-level are considered undergraduate courses and may only be taken when authorized by the Graduate Studies Committee. Here are the graduate courses in Spanish currently listed in the KU Catalog.

- 600-level courses: Broad coverage of subject-matter areas; focus on language instruction; previous knowledge of the field under study expected. These courses include both undergraduate and graduate students.
- 700-Level courses: Graduate topics course; attentive to strengthening the fields and foundations of graduate students; an awareness of students' needs at both the MA and PhD levels; mindful of students' variety of academic backgrounds. Courses at this level will include representative works from the MA exam list and require a variety of written and oral assignments, which vary widely by course and subject area.
- 800-level courses: Intended to introduce graduate students to the methods, resources, dedicated research conventions, and issues specific to Hispanic Studies to prepare students to enter the professorate. Students are encouraged to consider Independent Study courses (SPAN 898) once all required coursework within the department has been completed. For M.A degree, the maximum total credit hours for SPAN 898 are three hours.
- 900-Level courses: Intensive investigation of a particular topic, theoretical framework, or literary genre. Designed with attention to a career in research in Hispanic and Lusophone Studies or a related field in the Humanities. These courses offer an in-depth exploration of a research question in support of dissertation research and scholarship. SPAN 999 is designed to support the research and writing of a doctoral dissertation.

Grading

Graduate courses are graded on the ABCDF scale. The Doctoral Dissertation course (SPAN 999) is graded as NP (no progress), LP (limited progress), or SP (satisfactory progress). Only grades of S, SP, and B or better represent satisfactory progress in graduate courses. To be considered in "good standing" in the graduate program, the University requires graduate students to maintain a minimum GPA of 3.0 (or "B" average) and be making timely progress toward meeting their degree requirements. If a student's cumulative grade point average (GPA) falls below a B average (3.0), the student is not considered to be in "good standing" and will be placed on probation. The student will be expected to raise their average to at least a B during the next semester. Failure to do so may result in a recommendation to terminate graduate studies. Students on probation are not considered

to be in good standing for the purpose of continuing a GTA appointment. If the Department judges that a student who falls below the required 3.0 GPA after their first semester is still making satisfactory progress towards the degree, the Department may recommend to the College that the student be allowed to keep their assistantship for one additional semester.

Students who receive an unsatisfactory grade (U, NP, LP, or lower than a B) in a graduate course or dissertation/thesis course are not considered to be in good standing. Receipt of an unsatisfactory grade for research or their thesis/dissertation in two semesters places the student in bad standing in the Department and may result in a recommendation to terminate graduate studies.

The grade “I” (Incomplete) is used to indicate work of passing quality in a course, some part of which is, for good reason, unfinished. It is given only by advanced arrangement between instructor and student. Some instructors may reserve the right not to give I’s. See the [University policy on Incompletes grades](#). The department discourages Incompletes except in truly unusual emergency situations; students are advised to make the removal of any I’s on their record a matter of priority. The accumulation of three Incompletes or the failure to have an Incomplete removed within one year will result in a graduate student falling out of good academic standing and non- reappointment to a graduate teaching assistantship. A grade of I is not appropriate for enrollment in thesis work, examinations, or dissertation and will not be accepted.

Grading of Dissertation Hours

Graduate departments are responsible for evaluating the students in their programs to ensure satisfactory academic progress and for reporting to the graduate division when a student must be placed on academic probation. Graduate students may be placed on academic probation for failure to maintain the expected level of performance and rate of progress in a degree program.

The SP/LP/NP grading scale is restricted to dissertation hours as well as equivalent research courses approved by Graduate Studies. The College requires all departments to have a policy in place that governs the consequences of a student receiving LP or NP for one or more semesters. This policy was approved by Faculty on 03 Apr. 2025, is in effect beginning Fall 2025, and applies to LPs or NPs earned during or after Fall 2025.

- SP - Satisfactory Progress. Progress is consistent with the goals for the semester as agreed upon with the advisor(s) and/or supports timely completion of the degree.
- LP - Limited Progress. Progress is less than what was agreed upon with the advisor(s) and/or may cause delays in timely degree completion. Each department determines the consequences of receiving an LP. In cases where a student receives more than one LP (consecutive or otherwise), academic probation is strongly encouraged.
- NP - No Progress. The student has provided no evidence of progress on the dissertation work, or the work completed was insufficient to move the dissertation project forward. Probation is strongly encouraged, and dismissal may be warranted.

The policies governing the consequences of a student receiving LP or NP for one or more semesters are the following:

LP GRADE

1 LP	The graduate studies committee will review the grade and student's record and may recommend department probation and/or a revision of the mentoring agreement.
2 LPS	The graduate studies committee will review the grade and student's record and may recommend academic probation and/or a revision of the mentoring agreement on file.
3 LPS	The graduate studies committee will review the grade and student's record and may recommend academic probation and/or dismissal from the program.
MORE THAN 3 LPS	If more than 3 LPs are reported after the completion of the mentoring agreement and/or probation, the student is no longer making satisfactory progress toward their degree and is out of good academic standing. As a result, the graduate studies committee may recommend dismissal of the student from the program.

NP GRADE

1 NP	The student has provided no evidence of progress on the dissertation work, or the work completed was insufficient to move the thesis or dissertation project forward. Probation is strongly encouraged, and dismissal may be warranted. The graduate studies committee will review the grade and student's record and may recommend academic probation or dismissal from program
MORE THAN 1 NP	If more than 1 NP is reported after an update of the mentoring agreement and/or academic probation, the student is no longer making satisfactory progress toward their degree and is out of good academic standing. As a result, the graduate studies committee may recommend dismissal of the student from the program.

Academic Integrity

The Department of Spanish and Portuguese considers academic integrity essential to our work, and graduate students are expected to adhere to its principles in conducting research. Students should acknowledge the sources they use in their academic work and cite them fully and correctly; not acknowledging a source constitutes plagiarism, which is a violation of the rules and regulations of the University of Kansas and constitutes academic misconduct. The standards of academic integrity also apply to examinations and proposals requiring the proper documentation and referencing system used in scholarly writing. Penalties for academic misconduct range from failure of the assignment to expulsion from the University. Students are subject to sanctions by the University of Academic Misconduct if they violate these principles. See information on [Academic Misconduct](#).

Students should consult with faculty if they are not sure how to reference a source or document their research. The KU Writing Center offers [resources for graduate students](#).

Change of Advisor Policy

A graduate student might decide to change advisors for a wide variety of reasons. The student does not need the permission of the current advisor or of the Department to make such a change but will need to identify a new advisor willing to undertake this role. Students are cautioned that even when they are eligible to switch advisors, constraints on faculty time and resources may make it difficult or in some cases even impossible for them to switch to a new academic advisor. A student who thinks such a change would be beneficial is encouraged to meet first with the Director of Graduate Studies or with another member of the Graduate Studies Committee.

The following steps should be taken.

1. The student will inform the Director of Graduate Studies (DGS) or another member of the Graduate Studies Committee, outlining the reason for the change.
2. Within six (6) weeks, the student will identify a new advisor and ask if he or she is willing to serve in this capacity.
3. A change in advisor will be contingent upon the identification of an appropriate new advisor and the willingness of the prospective new advisor to assume the responsibilities.
4. Once the new advisor has agreed, the DGS will notify the former advisor in writing of this change, informing the student and the Graduate Program Coordinator (GPC) as well. If the current advisor is the DGS, then another member of the Graduate Studies Committee will oversee the process, including these notifications.

The Department considers that a graduate student without a primary academic advisor cannot make progress towards the degree. The Graduate Studies Committee will work with the student to identify an advisor. If a student is unable to identify a Spanish and Portuguese faculty member willing to serve as their advisor within six (6) weeks, the student will be placed on academic probation, which is a process with an ultimate consequence of dismissal unless an advisor is named.

In cases of a change of advisor where the student is enrolled in Spanish 898 and/or Spanish 999 and changes advisors during the semester, the DGS or another member of the Graduate Studies Committee will oversee the grading and evaluation of that coursework during the transition semester.

The student shall suffer no reprisals as a consequence of a change in advisors.

(APPROVED BY DEPARTMENT OF SPANISH AND PORTUGUESE ON 6 NOV. 2025)

Petitions

If a graduate student has compelling reasons to seek exemption from program requirements or University policy, they may submit a petition to the Director of Graduate Studies who will forward the petition to the Graduate Studies Committee for review. The petition should explain the reasons why the student seeks an exemption from a specific policy or program requirement. The petitioner should attach a letter of support from the student's primary academic advisor and the appropriate supporting materials.

The Graduate Studies Committee will review the petition. In cases where the policy or requirement is a departmental requirement, the Graduate Studies Committee will issue a final decision. If the policy or requirement being petitioned is a University policy, the Graduate Studies Committee will decide whether to support the student's petition. If the Committee supports the petition, the department will submit the petition to the College Office of Graduate Affairs accompanied by supporting materials as required. If the Graduate Studies Committee does not approve the petition, it will not move forward for further consideration. See the College's website for more information concerning the [University's policies on petitions](#).

If you feel that you need support from outside of the Department of Spanish and Portuguese, consider consulting with the [Ombuds Office](#) in this process.

Departmental Grievance Procedures

Any student in the department who has a grievance should follow the procedures outlined in the Department of Spanish and Portuguese's grievance procedure, which has been approved by the University and may be found at the following link: [Spanish and Portuguese KU Grievance Procedure](#). Also see the [Graduate and Postdoctoral Affairs grievance policy](#).

Prior to filing a grievance, the department urges the student to make an attempt to resolve the matter in a satisfactory manner with the parties involved.

This procedure does not apply to graduate students in matters related to their employment as teaching assistants. A separate grievance procedure outlined in the Memorandum of Agreement between the University of Kansas, the Board of Regents, and the Kansas Association of Public Employees is available for that purpose.

Department Funding Opportunities for Graduate Students

The Department offers several awards, fellowships, and grants that support graduate studies and research. The following is a brief list of these funding opportunities. Consult with your primary academic advisor or the Director of Graduate Studies to discuss the various options available.

- **Alva V. Ebersole Award:** The award recognizes excellence in research. Graduate students in the Department of Spanish and Portuguese who have complete one year of graduate coursework are eligible. The Graduate Studies Committee solicits nominations each year from faculty.
- **Robert Granberg Award:** Intended to recognize excellence in teaching by a GTA in the Department of Spanish and Portuguese, the award honors the memory of a former faculty member. MA students who have completed three semesters of teaching or PhD students who have taught for at least two years are eligible. The Graduate Studies Committee oversees the award and announces the criteria and deadline.
- **Kate Stephens Fellowship:** Awarded every two years, the Stephens Fellowship is given in memory of Kate Stephens's parents and in gratitude for their commitment to education. The fellowship is restricted to a candidate who has completed an undergraduate or an MA degree from any of the schools of the University of Kansas. The candidate's research interest should center on literature, comparative literature, history, or ethics and must show a humanitarian commitment. Research must center on the geographical areas east of the Allegheny Mountains (West Virginia) or west of the Rocky Mountains. The Director of Graduate Studies will invite students who are eligible for the fellowship to apply. Students in the ABD phases of their PhD will be given priority.
- **Esther Blaska Award:** This award honors the loving memory of Esther Blaska, a gifted piano teacher who left an indelible impression on her students. When available, the funds shall be used to provide financial assistance for graduate students in the Department of Spanish and Portuguese. In the 2022-23 academic year, this award supported *Hablemos*. The Chair of the Department administers this award and communicates deadlines and criteria.
- **Department Travel Funds:** Each academic year, the department sets aside \$3,000 for graduate student travel to deliver a paper at a conference or professional meeting. Any graduate student in the Department of Spanish and Portuguese who meets the following criteria is eligible to apply:
 - a. Must be a PhD student in good standing.
 - b. Preferred status is ABD; more advanced students have priority.
 - c. Presents a paper at an accredited conference or professional meeting.
 - d. Receives approval from their primary academic advisor.

The department provides a maximum stipend of \$500. If the student has received external funding, the department can provide additional funding to a maximum of \$750. **Example:** if a student receives \$400 external funding, then the department can provide an additional \$350. Preference will be given

to students who have not been funded in the current or previous academic year. Eligible applications will be funded on a first-come first-served basis.

Application Process for Departmental Travel Funds:

Applicants submit the following materials to the Chair of the Department and Director of Graduate Studies prior to attending the conference or professional meeting:

- a. Information about the conference
- b. Presentation abstract and professional development justification
- c. Evidence of acceptance to present at the conference or professional meeting
- d. Statement of approval by advisor and information about status
- e. Travel dates and travel budget, including total estimated costs for the proposed travel

The chair reviews the materials to determine if the applicant meets the eligibility criteria defined above for this fund. All applicants, successful or otherwise, will be notified via email.

Professional Development and Research

The Department of Spanish and Portuguese expects graduate students to attend and participate in the activities and events sponsored by the Department and other academic units in support of the University of Kansas's mission of research, teaching, and service. Graduate students may want to familiarize themselves with the following centers on campus:

- The [Hall Center](#) sponsors seminars and lectures that should interest graduate students in Spanish and Portuguese. Faculty in Spanish and Portuguese often co-host the Hall Center's Seminars which provide a forum for faculty, graduate students, and visiting scholars to present work in progress as well as to discuss issues of mutual interest.
- The [Center for Latin American Studies and Caribbean Studies](#) hosts research colloquia and promotes interdisciplinary study of the histories, cultures, and societies of Latin America and the Caribbean. Graduate students in the PhD program can develop a secondary area in Latin American Studies.

Office Logistics and Procedures

The following are the procedures and policies concerning offices, keys, copier usage, computers, break room, campus phones, mail, supplies, and mailboxes.

Office Space

The department will assign to each GTA office space as required with access to an Internet-enabled computer with printing capability and adequate software necessary for the performance of job responsibilities. The department will provide an adequate work environment, including a computer, basic office supplies, and materials.

Office Supplies

Office supplies are available in the main office, Wescoe 2650. The Office Manager can supply pens, markers, paper clips, rubber bands, staples, tape, paper, and other essential supplies.

Office Keys

The Office Manager will distribute digital keys to all GTAs to the outside door of Wescoe Hall and keys to each individually assigned office. The Department asks all graduate students to be very security conscious and to make sure that all offices are locked in their absence. Deadbolts should be used when you exit your office. There will be a \$10.00 fee to replace each lost key.

Copying, Printing and Scans

The multi-function device (MFD) located room 2655 Wescoe is available for use by graduate students for printing, scanning, and making copies for course-related documents associated with their employment. The MFD requires that you enter your online KU ID and password (i.e., password used for your registered KU email) to copy, scan, or print. No personal copying is allowed on this machine.

Computer Use

All GTA offices in Wescoe have at least one computer with adequate software necessary for the performance of job responsibilities. That computer may be shared with one other GTA. Since September 1, 2019, you are required to have a DUO login setup. The Office Manager will provide a DUO device to all GTAS. The department's IT Support Technician is Don Allmon (dallmon@ku.edu or 785-312-1057).

GTAs may also elect to use computers in the [Open Language Resource Center](#) (Wescoe 4070) or at various [locations](#) throughout the KU campus. In addition, [KU Anywhere](#) allows secure access to resources on the KU network from a computer that is not connected to the KU's network but is connected to the internet. For general IT Support on campus, call 785-864-8080 or send an email to itcsc@ku.edu.

E-mail

Graduate Students must have an active email account registered within the KU network. You should read your mail daily. Graduate students should keep the department office and Registrar informed of any changes in their email address.

Orange Room

The Orange Room (2655 Wescoe) is the department's break room. All faculty and graduate students are welcome to use the refrigerator, microwave, table, and Keurig coffee maker, but please help us keep the space tidy and clean.

Graduate students have their mailboxes in the Orange Room and should check them daily for information relating to [GRASP](#), upcoming events, and department updates. The multi-function device (copier, scanner, and printer) is also located in the Orange Room.

GTA's should not meet with undergraduate students in the Orange Room, nor require students to drop anything in their mailboxes. Instead, undergraduate students must turn in their work to the instructor in class, electronically, or directly to the GTA. If an undergraduate student needs to take a make-up exam, the GTA can ask the office staff to book a date/time for the Conference Room (2648 Wescoe) or the Seminar Room (2600 Wescoe).

Mailboxes

All graduate students have mailboxes in 2655 Wescoe (Orange Room). These mailboxes should be checked frequently, and they should not normally be used for the transmission of valuables or confidential communications, since they cannot be locked. Important University and Department information will be placed in your department mailbox on a frequent basis. Undergraduate students are not allowed to drop off a class assignment for their instructors at the main office or 2655 Wescoe. The student alone, not the office staff, is responsible for properly delivering their assignment to a graduate student assistant or to the graduate student assistant's office.

U.S. Mail

Graduate students may send domestic mail out via the U.S. Postal Service in Wescoe 2650. The Department encourages graduate students to use their home address for federal mail. Graduate students should keep the department and Registrar informed of any changes in their names or mailing addresses.

Campus Telephones

Most KU faculty and staff use Microsoft Teams on their computer to make and receive traditional phone calls via their KU work number. Because Microsoft Teams is compatible with laptops, tablets and smartphones, calls can happen anywhere there is internet access. In addition to making and receiving calls, Teams phone service offers unified messaging via your Outlook mailbox and delivers voice messages by email within Outlook. All university numbers have the prefix 864-. To dial a campus number from an on-campus, dial 4 and then the last four digits of the number.

Emergency Contacts

- Police or Fire/Medical: 911
- [Public Safety Office](#): 785-864-5900
- Watkins Health Services: 785-864-9500 / 785-864-9583
- [Campus Alerts](#)

Additional Resources

[Benefits policy and list of benefits for Graduate Assistants](#)

[Health Insurance](#)

[HR Pay system login page](#)

MASTER'S DEGREE PROGRAM

Degree Goals Master of Arts in Spanish Degree

The master's degree program provides students with the opportunity to study the major movements and writers in Iberia and Latin America, acquire the critical and theoretical tools necessary to engage in literary and cultural analysis with sophistication, and develop communicative competence through pedagogical and scholarly formation.

Students admitted to the MA program in Spanish must complete a total of **30 hours of graduate coursework** (approx. 10 courses). Students must also complete the requirements for reading knowledge of a language other than English and Spanish. Students with a graduate teaching assistantship are required to take Teaching Spanish in Institutions of Higher Learning (SPAN 801). All graduate students must complete the Master's Final Culminating Exam (either a portfolio or a qualifying exam).

Master of Arts in Spanish Degree Requirements (from Catalogue 2026-2027)

MA requirements continued...

M.A. Degree Requirements

Students must complete a minimum of 30 hours of graduate credit in literature, including one seminar in Peninsular literature or in Spanish-American literature. **At least 50% of coursework for the master's degree must be taken at the 700 level or above.**

Course List

Code	Title	Hours
SPAN 801	Teaching Spanish in Institutions of Higher Learning (required of all GTAs during their first semester of teaching)	3
	Medieval/Early Modern Peninsular (choose one)	3
SPAN 730	Topics in the Literature of 13th- and 14th-Century Iberia: _____	
SPAN 733	Print Culture in Early Modern Spain	
SPAN 739	Topics in Early Modern Spanish Drama: _____	
SPAN 940	Seminar in Trans-Atlantic Literatures and Cultures: _____	
SPAN 745	Don Quixote	
SPAN 961	Seminar: Medieval Literature: _____	
	Colonial Latin America: prior to 19th Century (choose one)	3
SPAN 940	Seminar in Trans-Atlantic Literatures and Cultures: _____	
SPAN 781	Colonial Identities	
	Modern/Contemporary Peninsular: 19th-21st Century (choose one)	3
SPAN 940	Seminar in Trans-Atlantic Literatures and Cultures: _____	
SPAN 762	The Spanish Novel Since the Civil War	
SPAN 764	Modern Spanish Poetry	
SPAN 922	Seminar in Spanish Literature and Culture: _____	
	Modern/Contemporary Latin/o America (choose one)	3
SPAN 785	Special Topics in Spanish-American Literature: _____	
SPAN 922	Seminar in Spanish Literature and Culture: _____	

[SPAN 940](#) Seminar in Trans-Atlantic Literatures and Cultures: _____

[SPAN 985](#) Seminar in Spanish American Literature and Culture: _____

One Seminar (900 level)

3

[SPAN 922](#) Seminar in Spanish Literature and Culture: _____

[SPAN 940](#) Seminar in Trans-Atlantic Literatures and Cultures: _____

[SPAN 961](#) Seminar: Medieval Literature: _____

[SPAN 985](#) Seminar in Spanish American Literature and Culture: _____

Two elective courses in the department (700 or above) from categories above or additional courses listed below 6

[PORT 742](#) The Brazilian Novel

[PORT 760](#) Contemporary Brazilian Literature

[PORT 780](#) Special Readings in Portuguese and Brazilian Literature

[SPAN 722](#) Special Topics in Spanish Literature: _____

[SPAN 780](#) Introduction to Hispanic Studies

[SPAN 795](#) Literary Theory and Criticism

Two courses may be taken outside of the department with the approval of the graduate advisor 6

Total Hours

30

Additional department requirement:

Language Requirement

Students are required to possess reading knowledge of one other languages as approved by the Department; students can satisfy this requirement in the following ways:

- Enroll in [PORT 611](#) and earn a grade of B or higher in the course. Recommended by the Department.
- Enroll in one semester of an indigenous Latin American language and earn a grade of B or higher.
- Enroll in a reading knowledge language course approved by the DGS in a chosen language at KU.
- Enroll in a graduate course in a language approved by the DGS. Graduate students must earn a grade of B or higher in the courses toward fulfillment of this requirement.
- Present third semester college course work approved by the DGS from another institution with an average grade of B or better.
- Pass an examination in the chosen approved language administered by the corresponding department at KU.

Additional department recommendations:

- Students in the MA considering pursuing a Ph.D., should enroll in [SPAN 795](#), or an alternative course with a focus in literary theory.
- Students should take at least one course with a focus on film studies or/and cultural studies.

Degree Completion Options: Portfolio or MA Qualifying Exam

Portfolio

- Introduction and Personal Statement
 - This section is to be completed in the student's language of choice and consists of an Introduction and Personal Statement. As part of your general academic growth, you might be interested in writing the personal statement in the language with which you are least comfortable. The introduction should provide essential context, identify your topics, and indicate the particular focus of the portfolio. The personal statement of a maximum of six pages in length should serve as a reflection on the student's learning experience, intellectual engagement, and professional growth during the graduate program.
- Curriculum vitae (CV)
 - You must turn in a copy in English, and optionally, a copy in Spanish.
 - Your CV should include education, work experience, awards, community outreach, grants and fellowships, language abilities, and experience abroad among other possible categories. Students are encouraged to seek assistance from the [KU University Career Center](#). Students should make an appointment with the center, visit the center, and follow their guidelines for CV preparation. However, it is often easier to use one of the CVs of our faculty as a model, available on the [website of the Department of Spanish and Portuguese](#).
- Teaching Statement
 - The portfolio should include a 700–800-word teaching statement in English which reflects on teaching and pedagogical practice. This statement should include specific examples from classroom experiences. Students should also demonstrate familiarity with current pedagogical methods and should be able to articulate how they have employed these methods effectively in the classroom. Students are encouraged to draw from what they learned through SPAN 801.
 - In addition to the teaching statement, students have the option to include supplementary materials such as lesson plans, instructional materials developed for courses, experiences as GTAs in Study abroad, or assessment work.
- Three course essays in Spanish
 - Students must include three examples of a paper/project that they have written during the MA program. You can use one of them to write your culminating project (see below). The papers should be at least 8-10 pages in length without works cited lists. Each should center its analysis on one of the four areas of concentration in the MA program (Peninsular I or II, Latin America I or II). One of the three essays should be a research paper developed in a 700-level course or a seminar research project.
- Culminating Project

- For the culminating project, students are encouraged to select what they consider to be their strongest paper, which they should revise and expand the paper based on feedback from the faculty members for whose course it was originally written. The Culminating Project should explore questions of ongoing academic interest and demonstrate the student's intellectual growth throughout the program. The culminating project should follow MLA style, be written in Spanish, and show evidence of critical thinking and an ability on the part of the student to synthesize material.
- Oral Defense of Portfolio
 - The primary faculty advisor in consultation with the student is responsible for establishing a committee. After the student has formed the committee, the Director of Graduate Studies and Graduate Program Coordinator will work with the faculty and students to schedule a time and date for the Oral Defense. The advisor should make sure that all arrangements for the oral defense are set by two weeks before Stop Day.
 - At least three weeks before the scheduled oral examination, the student should submit the final draft of the portfolio to each member of the examining committee. Upon completion of the oral defense, the primary academic advisor will send an email to the Graduate Program Coordinator and the Director of Graduate Studies with the results of the oral examination. The Oral Defense of the Portfolio will be evaluated on a Pass/Fail basis. The committee may have recommendations that the advisor should communicate to the advisee who should incorporate the recommendations to successfully complete the defense.

MA Qualifying Exam

The M.A. written and oral examinations are based on the M.A. reading list. It evaluates the student's knowledge and understanding of the [M.A. reading list](#). Portions of the written exam may be devoted to materials which candidates have not covered in graduate courses taken while in the program. Each portion of the written examination must be deemed passing before the student can proceed to the Oral Examination. The written exams consist of four areas with ninety minutes allocated to each area. There are two questions for each area:

- Medieval and Early Modern Iberia
- 19th-, 20th -, and 21st -Centuries Spain
- Colonial through 19th-Century Latin America
- 20th- and 21st-Centuries Latin America

From [2026—2027 Academic Catalog: Master of Arts in Spanish](#)

See the Advising Checklist, Appendix C

Reading knowledge of another foreign language requirement for MA degree

The Department requires that candidates for the MA degree demonstrate reading knowledge of one (1) relevant foreign language. Approval by the Director of Graduate Studies is required. Consult the previous table for ways to satisfy this requirement.

Master's Final Culminating Milestone Examinations: Portfolio or Written Qualifying Exam

To complete the requirements for the master's degree, students can elect to craft a Master's Portfolio or to sit for a Written Qualifying Examination. Both options require an Oral Examination. In the third semester of the master's program, students should inform the Director of Graduate Studies of their preference before November 15th.

Graduate students in the MA program should meet with their primary faculty advisor a minimum of twice a year to discuss their course performance and timely progress toward degree completion. The advisor and advisee should review the coursework and the credits needed to graduate (30 total hours). The faculty advisor and advisee should discuss plans for fulfilling the milestone examination for the MA degree in Spanish. The department encourages all graduate students to complete a mentoring agreement with their advisor (Appendix B), which will be revisited at least once a year to assure an appropriate degree timeline.

Information about the MA Portfolio

Portfolio Components

The Portfolio consists of five components.

I. Personal Statement

This section serves as an introduction and personal reflection on what the student has learned during their two-year course of study in the MA program. The personal statement should not exceed six double-spaced pages, 12-point Times Roman, written in Spanish.

Some of the questions that can guide your personal statement include:

- How has the MA program contributed to your understanding of the field of Hispanic studies? What skills have you acquired or improved throughout the MA experience?
- How would you describe the connections between your courses, and between content material that includes many national contexts, time periods, and theoretical perspectives?
- What approaches or frameworks have had the greatest impact on your learning?
- How do you intend to use the knowledge and skills you have gained in your future endeavors?

II. *Curriculum vitae* (CV)

You must turn in a copy in English, and optionally, a copy in Spanish.

Your CV should include education, work experience, awards, community outreach, grants and fellowships, language abilities, and experience abroad among other possible categories. Students are encouraged to seek assistance from the [KU University Career Center](#). Students should make an appointment with the center, visit the center, and follow their guidelines for CV preparation. However, it is often easier to use one of the CVs of our faculty as a model, available on the [website of the Department of Spanish and Portuguese](#).

III. Teaching Statement

The portfolio should include a 700–800-word teaching statement in English which reflects on teaching and pedagogical practice. This statement should include specific examples from classroom experiences. Students should also demonstrate familiarity with current pedagogical methods and should be able to articulate how they have employed these methods effectively in the classroom. Students are encouraged to draw from what they learned through SPAN 801.

In addition to the teaching statement, students have the option to include supplementary materials such as lesson plans, instructional materials developed for courses, experiences as GTAs in Study Abroad, or assessment work.

For this component, students are encouraged to explore [KU's Center for Teaching Excellence](#), which has various resources available for instructors, including Graduate Teaching Assistants.

IV. Three course essays in Spanish

Students must include three examples of a paper/project that they have written during the MA program. You can use one of them to write your culminating project (see section below). The papers should be at least 8-10 pages in length without works cited lists. Each should center its analysis on one of the four areas of concentration in the MA program (Peninsular I or II, Latin America I or II). One of the three essays should be a research paper developed in a 700-level course or a seminar research project.

The papers should be at least 8-10 pages in length, works cited excluded lists, double-spaced, 12-point Times Roman, and written in Spanish. Each paper should center its analysis on a distinctive area of concentration in the MA program (Peninsular I or II, Latin America I or II). Your faculty advisor can help you to select an appropriate essay topic.

V. Culminating Project

For the culminating project, students are encouraged to select what they consider to be their strongest paper, which they should revise and expand the paper based on feedback from the faculty members for whose course it was originally written. The Culminating Project should explore questions of ongoing academic interest and demonstrate the student's intellectual growth throughout the program. The culminating project should follow MLA style, be written in Spanish, and show evidence of critical thinking and an ability on the part of the student to synthesize material.

Oral Defense of Portfolio

The primary faculty advisor in consultation with the student is responsible for establishing a committee. After the student has formed the committee, the Director of Graduate Studies and Graduate Program Coordinator will work with the faculty and students to schedule a time and date for the Oral Defense. The advisor should make sure that all arrangements for the oral defense are set by two weeks before Stop Day.

At least three weeks before the scheduled oral examination, the student should submit the final draft of the portfolio to each member of the examining committee. Upon completion of the oral defense, the primary academic advisor will send an email to the Graduate Program Coordinator and the Director of Graduate Studies with the results of the oral examination. The Oral Defense of the Portfolio will be evaluated on a Pass/Fail basis. The committee may have recommendations that the advisor should communicate to the advisee who should incorporate the recommendations to successfully complete the defense.

The MA Oral Examination Committee consists of three professors with graduate appointments in the Department of Spanish and Portuguese. At least two of the members (including the primary academic advisor) must have tenured/tenure-track graduate appointments within the Department of Spanish and Portuguese. Students wishing to include a member from another department at the University of Kansas, or a person who is not in a tenured/tenure-track appointment at KU, should contact the Director of Graduate Studies as soon as possible. Applications for special graduate faculty status must be reviewed by the College and Graduate Studies.

After the committee is constituted, the Director of Graduate Studies and Graduate Program Coordinator will work with the faculty and students to schedule a time and date for the Oral Defense. The advisor should make sure that the oral defense takes place two weeks before Stop Day.

It is the student's responsibility to complete all University graduation requirements prior to the published Graduation Deadline in a given semester. Students should consult the current [Academic Calendar](#) for the published Graduation Deadline, which varies by semester. For more information, see Appendix A (52-53).

Please consult the on-line [MA Portfolio Checklist](#) (available in [Graduate Student Resources page](#)) for a checklist and rubric intended to be a practical assessment tool for the Portfolio.

Timeline to Prepare the MA Portfolio

In the second semester of the MA program, students should consult with their advisors to assess progress toward degree, review the degree timeline, and outline the preparations for the Portfolio. The faculty advisor and the advisee should also discuss the formation of an Oral Examination committee. The academic advisor and advisee should also notify the Director of Graduate Studies of intentions to submit a Portfolio (as opposed to taking the written qualifying exam).

All prospective MA candidates should meet with their advisors to complete a mentoring agreement (Appendix B). At that meeting, the advisor and advisee should outline a practical timeline for the writing and drafting of components for the Portfolio. In the third semester of the program, preferably before November 15th, MA graduate students should notify the Director of Graduate Studies of their intentions to submit a Portfolio and form an evaluation committee.

In the fourth semester, students should finalize their Portfolio and plan for the Oral Defense. The Director of Graduate Studies and the Graduate Program Coordinator will help to schedule the time and date for the Oral Defense, which should be completed no later than two weeks before Stop Day.

Information for MA Written Qualifying Exam

To complete the requirements for the MA degree, students can elect to sit for a Written Qualifying Examination. This option also requires an Oral Examination. Both written examination and Oral Examination are evaluated on a Pass/Fail basis.

The Department offers the examination once each semester: in the second week of November for the Fall semester, and in the week before Spring Break (typically in March) for the Spring semester. With the participation of the faculty advisor, The Graduate Studies Committee oversees the writing, administration, and grading of the examination. Examinations, written and oral, will be evaluated on a Pass/Fail basis. The Graduate Program Coordinator and Director of Graduate Studies will ensure that the exam respects any individual accommodation needed.

Students are strongly advised to begin working with their faculty advisor as soon as possible to prepare for the written qualifying exam, and at a minimum before the summer after their first year. The advisor and advisee should periodically review the courses taken and the progress toward degree completion. The department encourages all graduate students to complete a mentoring agreement (Appendix B) with their advisor, which will be revisited at least once a year to ensure an appropriate degree timeline. Students must inform the Director of Graduate Studies of their decision to either sit for the written examination or submit a portfolio before November 15th of the third semester of the MA program.

Written Qualifying Examination and Oral Examination

The MA written and oral examinations are based on the MA [reading list](#). It evaluates the student's knowledge and understanding of the MA reading list. Portions of the written exam may be devoted to materials which candidates have

not covered in graduate courses taken while in the program. The written portions of the exam will be taken over the course of a two-day period. Each portion of the written examination must be deemed passing before the student can proceed to the Oral Examination.

The written exams consist of four areas with ninety minutes allocated to each area. The exact format for each section may vary, but students are generally asked to answer two essay questions per section.

- Medieval and Early Modern Iberia;
- 19th-, 20th-, and 21st-Centuries Spain;
- Colonial through 19th-Century Latin America;
- 20th- and 21st-Centuries Latin America.

Students can opt out of **ONE** of the four areas by passing two courses in that area with a grade of B or higher. To opt out, the student must inform the Director of Graduate Studies in writing during the semester prior to taking the exams.

If a student needs to postpone an examination because of extenuating circumstances, such as a death in the family or a medical emergency, the student should inform the Director of Graduate Studies as soon as possible and request a rescheduling of the examination.

If a student starts an examination and is unable to finish it because of extenuating circumstances, the Director of Graduate Studies will consult with the student and reschedule the examination within ninety days of the original date.

Grading Procedures for Written Qualifying Examination and Oral Examination

The Director of Graduate Studies will notify all students of the results within two weeks following the written examination. If the student receives a grade of Pass, the Graduate Program Director will inform the student of the time, date, and location for the oral examination. Within a week following their oral exam, students will receive a notification of their grade. All students will be notified of examination results, including comments from qualifying examination committee members, via letter sent through the University of Kansas e-mail system no later than two weeks after the conclusion of the examination period. The Director of Graduate Studies will send out confirmation of the exam to the committee members and will transmit the results to the Graduate Program Coordinator who forwards the required paperwork to the Graduate School to finalize the examination results.

Once grades for the written examination are submitted, the student, in consultation with the primary academic advisor, will form an Oral Examination committee consisting of three professors with graduate appointments in the Department of Spanish and Portuguese. At least two of the members (including the faculty advisor) must have full-time graduate appointments within the Department of Spanish and Portuguese. The Director of Graduate Studies and Graduate Program Coordinator will work with the faculty and students to schedule a time and date for the Oral Defense. The advisor should make sure that all arrangements for the oral defense are set by two

weeks before Stop Day. The committee will review the written examination and discuss the strengths and weaknesses of the exam. During this Oral Examination, the student can comment on the answers to the written examination.

Upon completion of the Oral Examination, the primary academic advisor will send an email to the Graduate Program Coordinator and the Director of Graduate Studies with the results of the oral examination. The Oral Examination will be evaluated on a Pass/Fail basis.

In the event of an unsatisfactory performance, the following applies:

- Failure in one area of the written exam requires a retake of that section. The student must repeat that portion in a separate exam, to be taken as expeditiously as possible before the end of the current semester.
- Failure in two or more areas of the written exam constitutes failure of the exam and requires a retake of the whole exam. Students who fail the exam may take it a second time. If the student fails a second time, the Graduate Studies Committee will determine if the student will be offered a third retake or alternative exam. At least 90 days must elapse between exams, and a second attempt must be completed within six months.
- Students who fail the Oral Examination may take it a second time. If the student fails the Oral Examination a second time, the Graduate Studies Committee will determine if the student will be offered an additional retake or an alternative exam.

After a failed exam, students should meet with their primary faculty advisor and, when appropriate, with the faculty members responsible for the areas that must be retaken. A second failed attempt may prevent degree completion and may prompt a meeting with the Director of Graduate Studies to discuss future actions, which may include withdrawal or dismissal from the program.

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY IN SPANISH

The Department of Spanish and Portuguese has developed a PhD to address the needs of a new generation of doctoral students in the humanities. The program provides a rigorous and comprehensive education in the traditional disciplines of Iberian and Latin American literary and cultural studies, while also allowing for engagement with larger transdisciplinary and transnational approaches relating to the role of the humanities in the contemporary world. Students admitted to the Doctoral program will have the opportunity to develop research interests under the guidance of diverse faculty and to acquire the skills to teach successfully at the University level.

Degree Goals

- Broaden and deepen knowledge of literary and cultural movements of the Hispanic world, as well as engage students in larger issues pertaining to the role of the humanities in the contemporary world.
- Develop the research, analytical, and writing skills necessary for producing a solid dissertation and publishable articles in Hispanic Studies and adjacent fields.
- Acquire working knowledge of major theoretical trends and critical issues (past and current) in the fields of Hispanic Studies and in any other fields of specialization.
- Increase knowledge of broader historical, cultural, and socio-political issues surrounding the fields of Hispanic Studies and in any other fields of specialization.
- Develop an understanding of and professional competence in current foreign language pedagogy and instruction.

Doctor of Philosophy in Spanish Requirements (from Catalogue 2026-2027)

PhD requirements continued...

Ph.D. Degree Requirements

The degree of Doctor of Philosophy provides a rigorous and comprehensive education in the traditional disciplines of Iberian and Latin American literary and cultural studies, while also allowing for engagement with larger transdisciplinary and transnational approaches relating to the role of the humanities in the contemporary world.

Course List

Code	Title	Hours
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Complete course work prescribed by the advisory committee (this course work is to include a minimum of 5 seminars, at least 4 at KU, one literary theory course, and a guideline of a minimum of 24 hours in Hispanic literatures at KU beyond the 30 hours required for the M.A. degree)

Literary theory course

SPAN 795	Literary Theory and Criticism (or equivalent)	
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A minimum of five seminars in the Department of Spanish & Portuguese (repeatable for credit when content varies)

SPAN 922	Seminar in Spanish Literature and Culture: _____	
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SPAN 940	Seminar in Trans-Atlantic Literatures and Cultures: _____	
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SPAN 961	Seminar: Medieval Literature: _____	
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SPAN 985	Seminar in Spanish American Literature and Culture: _____	
--------------------------	---	--

PORT 970	Seminar in Brazilian Literature: _____	
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Elective courses in Iberian and Latin American Literacy and cultural studies within the department.
Chosen in consultation with faculty advisor. 9

Minimum of 9 credits in a secondary area, determined in consultation with faculty advisor

Research Skills and Responsible Scholarship Requirement

[SPAN 780](#) Introduction to Hispanic Studies 3

[SPAN 801](#) Teaching Spanish in Institutions of Higher Learning 3

Total Hours 39

Additional department requirements:

Language Requirement

Students are required to have reading knowledge of two other languages as approved by the Department; students can satisfy this requirement in the following ways:

- Enroll in [PORT 611](#) and earn a grade of B or higher in the course. Recommended by the Department.
- Enroll in one semester of an indigenous Latin American language.
- Enroll in a reading knowledge language course approved by the Graduate Studies Committee in a chosen language at KU.
- Enroll in a graduate course in a language approved by the Graduate Studies Committee. Graduate students must earn a grade of B or higher in the courses toward fulfillment of this requirement.
- Present third semester college course work approved by the Graduate Studies Committee from another institution with an average grade of B or better.
- Pass an examination in the chosen approved language administered by the corresponding department at KU.

Teaching Requirement

Students must complete a minimum of 2 semesters of quarter-time teaching or 1 semester of half-time teaching in the Department of Spanish and Portuguese.

Ph.D. Qualifying/Comprehensive Examinations

- The Ph.D. Qualifying/Comprehensive Examinations consist of three components: a qualifying essay, written exams, and an oral defense of the dissertation proposal.
- **Qualifying Essay:** A polished paper demonstrating theoretical and cultural or literary analysis, typically developed from prior seminar work and aligned with the student's research interests.
- **Field Examination:** Focuses on a defined region and time period (e.g., Caribbean literature or Colonial Latin America) through a balanced reading list of primary and secondary sources that reflect scholarly standards in Hispanic Studies.

- **Theoretical Examination:** Explores a theoretical framework related to a chosen corpus, engaging approaches such as feminist, queer, or performance studies.
- Students must complete all three areas successfully; the oral defense evaluates their dissertation proposal and readiness for advanced research.

Dissertation Defense

The dissertation must be an original contribution to knowledge that demonstrates mastery of current scholarship in the field. Each committee member must read and approve the final dissertation before the degree is awarded. The defense is evaluated by the five-member committee, which assigns a grade of honors, satisfactory, or unsatisfactory.

More details about the Ph.D. program can be found in our [Graduate Student Handbook](#).

See also the general requirements for the Doctor of Philosophy degree in [Graduate Studies](#) section of the online catalog and in the KU Policy Library.

From [2026—2027 Academic Catalog: Doctor of Philosophy in Spanish](#)

See the PhD Advising Checklist, Appendix D

Doctoral Mentoring and Advising:

The Director of Graduate Studies will advise incoming PhD students until they have selected a faculty advisor in the department. Students must form an Advisory Committee by the end of their second semester in the doctoral program, consisting of a chair of the advisory committee who must hold a Graduate appointment in the Department and two other faculty members with graduate appointments. Students will not be allowed to register for dissertation hours until they have formed a committee. Any change in the composition of the Advisory Committee must be approved by the Director of Graduate Studies who will immediately inform in writing all faculty members affected by the change.

A graduate student should meet with the faculty advisor a minimum of twice a year to discuss course performance and timely progress toward the degree. The department requires all graduate students to complete a mentoring agreement with their advisor (Appendix B), which will be revisited at least once a year to assure an appropriate degree timeline.

Note: Note that the College's Mentoring Agreement is required for doctoral students who are within two (2) years of exhausting their maximum time to degree. For more information, see the [College's Maximum Time to Complete Degree information page](#).

Secondary Area Requirement for PhD in Spanish

The Department of Spanish and Portuguese requires PhD students to develop a secondary area of studies other than Spanish or Spanish-American literature, consisting of nine (9) credits hours through coursework outside of the department or through courses in Lusophone Studies that includes courses in our department. Courses taken to acquire proficiency in a language *cannot* count toward the secondary area requirement. While a certificate is not required, courses in a graduate certificate can count toward a secondary area upon prior consultation with the student's primary academic advisor and the Director of Graduate Studies. Many students pursuing a PhD in the Department of Spanish and Portuguese, for instance, complete a certificate in [Indigenous Studies](#), [Museum Studies](#), [Medieval and Early Modern Studies](#), or [Women, Gender, and Sexuality Studies](#). The Department's flexibility in allowing graduate students to integrate a wide variety of certificates and secondary areas is key to our commitment to the transdisciplinary and transnational perspective that is at the root of the humanities.

Reading knowledge of two foreign languages other than Spanish appropriate to the specialization

The Department requires that candidates for the PhD degree demonstrate reading knowledge of two foreign languages appropriate to their specialization. Approval by the Director of Graduate Studies is required.

Doctoral students must fulfill the foreign languages requirement before they take their doctoral examination or be enrolled in a reading course the same semester as the exam. Students are permitted three attempts at passing each foreign language. Consult the table on page 35 for a list of ways to satisfy this requirement.

Overview of PhD Qualifying/Comprehensive Examinations (UPDATED ON MAY 3, 2024, REVISED OCTOBER 2024; REVISED JUNE 2026)

The Ph.D. Qualifying/Comprehensive Examinations consist of three components: a qualifying essay, written exams, and an oral defense of the dissertation proposal.

Doctoral students must take their Qualifying/Comprehensive Examinations no later than the end of their third year of post-MA enrollment. Graduate students may petition the Graduate Studies Committee for an extension. The students should work closely with their primary doctoral advisor in all matters related to course selection and program planning. By the end of the second semester of the doctoral program at KU, the students will meet with their advisor to plan their areas of research/interest for their comprehensive exams and select two additional Advisory Committee members. Once formed, the student will meet with the Advisory Committee to ensure the fulfillment of all required coursework as well as other requirements for the degree. In addition, the Advisory Committee and the advisee should discuss choices for the written paper (area A) and the scope of the reading lists for the two area examinations (areas B and C). After the exam, the student must meet with their advisor to select Dissertation Committee members and develop a dissertation prospectus. This prospectus is then presented to the committee during the oral examination.

Before scheduling the PhD Qualifying Exams, the graduate student should meet with the primary faculty advisor to discuss the completion of coursework, degree requirements, and the credit hours needed (24 hours total beyond the MA degree). The advisory committee and advisee should fill out the PhD Advisory Form (Appendix E) and submit it to the Graduate Studies Committee.

Note: The Mentoring Agreement (Appendix B) is required for doctoral students who are within 2 years of exhausting their maximum time to degree, which is currently five (5) years of study.

General Timeline for PhD Qualifying/Comprehensive Examinations

The PhD Qualifying/Comprehensive exams require completion of three components: a qualifying essay (Area A), written exams (Areas B and C), and an oral defense of the dissertation proposal. All areas must be completed after having passed or registered for the 24 hours of required coursework in the department (typically the third year of the program). The Director of Graduate Studies and the Graduate Program Coordinator will make sure that the qualifying exams respect any accommodation needed.

PRACTICES AND PROCEDURES FOR PHD QUALIFYING/COMPREHENSIVE EXAMINATIONS

Area A: Essay

The student will write a substantial research essay, equivalent in scope and depth to a peer-reviewed journal article in the field, typically ranging from 7,000 to 12,000 words, under the guidance of the Doctoral Advisory Committee. Collaboration with the members of the Advisory Committee in the essay's development is encouraged. The essay for Area A may take various forms, such as an analytical essay akin to a peer-reviewed journal article that highlights the student's proficiency in critical cultural/literary analysis.

To be accepted toward fulfillment of the PhD requirement, the essay must demonstrate breadth and depth of understanding of the topic in question and a mastery of the relevant critical corpus (i.e., major and current scholarship and research published on the topic), in addition to the ability to formulate an original line of inquiry and offer a strong thesis. The expectation is that students will undergo multiple revisions of their work prior to the final submission. Because the Advisory Committee will have sole responsibility for determining whether the paper is a Pass or a Fail, the involvement of all three members is encouraged, although the student should expect to work primarily with the chair of the advisory committee, especially as the date of comprehensive exams approaches. Other members of the advisory committee are not expected to provide feedback on the essay after the end of the semester prior to the exam.

The student must submit the final version of the essay at least one week BEFORE the exam.

Areas B and C: Written Examinations

Written examinations for areas B and C are based on a reading list agreed upon in advance by the Advisory Committee and the student and approved by the Graduate Studies Committee. The lists should include an introduction (1-2 paragraphs) where the student outlines the area of interest. Students are encouraged to collaborate with their advisory committee to guide the development of the list. It is imperative that the student articulate how each area complements the others to further inquiry in the fields of literary and cultural studies.

The reading list: The list should adhere to professional standards and follow MLA guidelines for organization, citation style, and formatting. The list for area B should contain a minimum of 20-25 works with a focus on primary texts and some of the most relevant critical studies about those texts in the student's research area. The list for area C should contain a minimum of 20-25 works with a focus on the theoretical framework proposed for the dissertation.

Once the reading lists are approved, the Advisory Committee will use the lists as a basis for the questions. The student should develop sample questions that will be shared with the Advisory Committee as preparation for the written examinations. With these sample questions in mind, the Advisory Committee will draft the final examination questions, which the Graduate Studies Committee will review. The Advisory Committee should forward the examinations to the Graduate Studies Committee by the last week of classes of the Spring semester (if exams are to take place in the Fall) and by the last week of classes of the Fall semester (if exams are to take place in the Spring).

Written Examination Dates

The examinations will be given twice a year, to be scheduled no later than the third full week of classes in the Spring and Fall semesters. The dates for these exams will be announced at least four weeks before they are to take place. The Director of Graduate Studies will set the time so that the examination concludes no later than 4 pm, ensuring access to necessary technical and staff support. Additionally, office staff can securely store laptops, and proctors are not required to work beyond regular hours. The Director of Graduate Studies and the Graduate Program Coordinator will make sure that the qualifying exams respect any accommodation needed.

Grading of Written Examinations

Once the written exam is completed, the Advisory Committee will have sole responsibility for its grading. Written examinations will be evaluated on a Pass/Fail basis. The chair of the Advisory Committee must communicate in writing the results of each examination to the Director of Graduate Studies no later than two weeks following completion of the exams. The Director of Graduate Studies will communicate the results in writing to the student; these letters constitute a record of the written examination results and are placed in the student's academic file as evidence of progress toward the degree.

Students who do not pass the A, B, and/or C area exams will be able to retake either one or more during the semester immediately following the first attempt. A student may not take any part of the comprehensive written examinations for areas B or C more than three times.

Oral Exam and Defense of Dissertation Proposal

Upon successful completion of the qualifying essay (Area A) and the written exams (Areas B and C), the student will meet with the doctoral primary academic advisor to designate the members of the dissertation committee. While the student can opt to retain the same doctoral advisory committee or make changes, it is essential that the doctoral academic advisor emphasizes the student's autonomy in selecting the faculty members to oversee the dissertation, including the chair of the committee. This ensures that students work with advisors who best align to their academic interests and needs, even as they may change.

All voting committee members must be appointed members of the Graduate Faculty at KU. Additionally, a majority of committee members serving on a graduate student oral examination committee must be tenured/tenure-track faculty holding regular graduate faculty appointments in the candidate's department or program of study.

After the student has passed all three written components of the comprehensive examination (Areas A, B, and C), the Director of Graduate Studies will request the College Office of Graduate Affairs to schedule the oral defense of the dissertation prospectus. This requirement must take place during the same semester as the written portions of the Comprehensive Examination, and at least two weeks following notification to the Office of Graduate Affairs. Failure to complete the oral defense within that time period could require repetition and successful completion of all components of the written examination.

The Director of Graduate Studies and the Graduate Program Coordinator will help to schedule the time and date for the Oral Defense of the Proposal, which should be completed by week twelve of the semester in which the written qualifying examinations are successfully completed. This timeframe provides students with the opportunity to consult with the advisor, finalize their dissertation committee, and draft a prospectus for the forthcoming dissertation. Furthermore, to aid students in navigating this unfamiliar terrain, the prospectus should include a concise overview of the dissertation topic, highlighting its purpose, scope, methodological framework, anticipated length, format, and bibliography.

Oral examinations and Defense of Dissertation Proposal will be evaluated on a Pass/Fail basis. The chair of the Doctoral Committee must communicate in writing the results to the Director of Graduate Studies no later than two weeks following completion of exam and proposal defense.

Continuous Enrollment for Post-Comprehensive Examinations

During the semester in which the doctoral oral comprehensive exam is completed and each fall and spring semester following, doctoral students must adhere to very specific enrollment requirements. PhD candidates must be continuously enrolled in Dissertation hours (Span 999) each fall and spring semester from the time

they pass the doctoral comprehensive examinations until successful completion of the final oral examination (defense of dissertation).

- Students enroll for a minimum of **6** hours each Fall and Spring semester until the total of post-doctoral exam Dissertation hours is 18. One hour each semester must be SPAN 999. In order to reach the **18**-hour minimum in an efficient manner, it is highly recommended that students enroll in **9** hours of Dissertation (SPAN 999) in the spring and fall semesters.
- Once a student has accumulated **18** post-doctoral exam hours, each subsequent enrollment will be for a number of hours agreed upon as appropriate between the student and the doctoral advisor, the minimal enrollment each semester being 1 hour of SPAN 999.
- A student must be enrolled in at least one (**1**) hour of credit at KU during the semester in which they graduate. Although doctoral students must be enrolled in SPAN 999 while working on their dissertations, according to current CLAS regulations, there is no absolute minimum number of SPAN 999 hours required for graduation.
- Students who live and work outside the Lawrence area may, under current University regulations, have their fees assessed at somewhat lower than the on-campus rate. Students must petition the College Office of Graduate Affairs before campus fees will be waived.

Refer to Appendix A (60) or [COGA's post-comp enrollment policy](#).

To avoid delays or additional costs, students are strongly advised to meet with the graduate program coordinator the semester before the oral comprehensive exam. The graduate coordinator will help you to develop an enrollment plan that meets all KU policy requirements, while also preventing unnecessary or avoidable fees.

Dissertation

Prior to beginning work on the dissertation, students are asked to consult carefully the “Guidelines for Dissertations” appended to this handbook (see Appendix F).

Doctoral Dissertation Committee

With your primary academic advisor, the doctoral student should discuss plans for a Doctoral Committee. The department suggests that all graduate students complete a mentoring agreement with their advisor (Appendix B), which will be revisited at least once a year to assure an appropriate degree timeline.

Doctoral committees are composed of a minimum of four (**4**) voting members. In the Department of Spanish and Portuguese, the dissertation committee typically consists of five members of the graduate faculty: the initial three members are the core readers who have graded the comprehensive examinations; the fourth is another faculty member from the department; and a fifth member from outside the department will serve as Graduate Studies representative. Normally, the dissertation director will read all chapters as they are finished, and the committee will decide which of the other readers will read which portions of the dissertation along the way.

The dissertation director normally chairs the doctoral committee. The College must approve the composition of the committee and authorize the naming of a chair.

In consultation with the primary academic advisor and the Director of Graduate Studies, the student can modify the composition of their committee after the PhD qualifying examination process is complete. Substitutions of the committee chair are prohibited after the Graduate Division of the College has approved the doctoral committee. If a committee chair needs to be replaced, the Graduate Division must approve the revised committee in advance of the exam.

Final Oral Defense

During the last semester of writing the dissertation, the student must contact the Director of Graduate Studies and the Graduate Program Coordinator to schedule the defense. The Graduate Program Coordinator will assist with the scheduling of the defense, the reservation of a room, and the pre-approvals required prior to the defense. The dissertation defense scheduling process should begin no later than two months prior to the earliest possible defense date. The examination request must be submitted at least three (3) weeks in advance of the intended examination date, as per [KU Graduate Studies policy](#).

The student should send the final draft of the dissertation to the full committee via e-mail (or in hard copy if preferred) at least four weeks prior to the intended date of the dissertation defense to enable committee members to examine it fully. It is important to allow enough time for the full committee to read the dissertation and make comments before it occurs.

The University considers the defense a public event. The Director of Graduate Studies will publicize the defense and make a copy of the dissertation available for members of the University community to read. One digital copy of the defense version of the dissertation must be delivered to the Department office at least three weeks before the defense.

At the oral defense, questions and discussion will normally center on the dissertation but may also range beyond the thesis into related literary and theoretical areas. The grade (honors, satisfactory, or unsatisfactory) for the defense is determined by the majority vote of the five-member dissertation committee. If an Unsatisfactory grade is reported, the candidate may be allowed to repeat the examination on the recommendation of the department.

After the defense, the candidate should meet with the dissertation advisor to make any revisions resulting from the defense. The University of Kansas requires that all students whose degree programs require the defense of a dissertation must publish their research to fulfill degree requirements. The dissertation should meet all the [formatting requirements](#) laid out in KU's ETD Formatting Guidelines.

Prior to submitting the dissertation, make sure all KU requirements are completed, information available on [Graduate and Postdoctoral Affairs' page about submitting your publication](#). If there are questions

about submission or other online technical details, contact the COGA Graduate Program Coordinator or the College of Liberal Arts Electronic Thesis Dissertation coordinator, Lauren Chaney, coga@ku.edu.

Information for Graduate Teaching Assistants

Graduate Teaching Assistantships

All applicants to the MA and PhD programs will be considered for departmental funding in the form of Graduate Teaching Assistantships (GTAs). The appointments are contingent on approval by the College and the University and on the availability of funds from the State.

Graduate Teaching Assistants are usually appointed on an annual basis. The Department Chair makes the appointments based on recommendations from the Graduate Studies Committee and the Language Program Committee. Additional information on the appointment and reappointment of Graduate Teaching Assistants is included in the [Memorandum of Agreement](#) between the University of Kansas, Lawrence, the Kansas Board of Regents and the Kansas Association of Public Employees (KAPE).

Pre-Semester Orientation and Meetings with Course Coordinators

In the week prior to the start of the semester, new incoming GTAs in the Department of Spanish and Portuguese are required to attend and complete orientation sessions organized by the University and by the Director of the Spanish Language Program. Attendance is mandatory. Please contact the Department Chair if you have any questions.

In addition, at the beginning of the semester all returning GTAs are required to attend orientation sessions convened by the course coordinators for the purpose of discussing course procedures, duties, and teaching assignments for the semester. **Each GTA is contractually obligated to attend these meetings.**

GTA Duties

The Department expectations for all GTAs and Out-of-Field Graduate Teaching Assistants are to:

1. attend orientation sessions convened by the course coordinators for the purpose of discussing course procedures, duties, and teaching assignments for the semester.
2. dedicate up to twenty (20) hours per week on teaching assigned courses (and optionally keep a log of how these hours are divided if you are concerned that you are exceeding twenty [20] hours);
3. adhere to all department syllabi and policies;
4. teach classes as scheduled and notify the course coordinator and main office if another instructor will be substituting your class (the substitute should be teaching the same course whenever possible);

5. hold three [3] regular office hours in person and on campus as posted at the beginning of the semester, with any changes updated on Canvas and with the main office;
6. follow the course calendar and evaluate assignments according to instructions/rubrics and within the proscribed time frame, (discuss any difficulties with adhering to deadlines with your coordinator *before* rather after deadlines);
7. participate in course staff meetings and respond to email regarding your course(s) as soon as possible and within 24 hours;
8. respond to students withing 24 hours (except on weekends) and avoid discussing grades with students over email;
9. maintain up-to-date grade records throughout the semester in Canvas (grades posted within one week of the assignment's due date (including zeros for unsubmitted work) unless otherwise specified by course coordinator);
10. whenever violations of Academic Integrity are suspected, follow the procedures as discussed in your course meeting and consult your course coordinator when in doubt;
11. submit course grades in accordance with Department and University policies and instructions.

Teaching Assignments

All GTAs with one-year contracts teach five or six contact hours per semester during the regular academic year. In addition, the Department shares a commitment to assuring that all GTAs in the department's PhD program have the opportunity to teach a variety of levels and courses as part of their professional training. GTAs enrolled in the department's PhD program should expect to teach, at a minimum, three different courses during their time in the program, of which one should be above the 200 level. With these principles in mind, the following course assignments fulfill the terms of a GTA appointment:

- Any one section of: SPAN 104, SPAN 108, PORT 104, PORT 105.
- Two sections of SPAN 212 or of SPAN 216.
- One section of SPAN 324 + one section of SPAN 328.
- One section of SPAN 340 + one other 2- or 3-credit course that the GTA has taught before.
- One section of: PORT 106, PORT 110, or PORT 212, PORT 216 + one section of PORT 388.

Teaching Resources

- [CTE Teaching Resources](#)
- [Academic Achievement and Access Center](#)
- [Center for Service Learning](#)
- [Canvas Help Resources](#)
- [Center for Learning and Writing Support](#)
- [Spencer Art Museum: CURRICULAR RESOURCES](#)

Office Hours

The Department requires that each GTA holds three (3) office hours per week. Office hours must be held at different times and on different days for the convenience of the students. GTAs should post their office hours on the door to their office and include them in the class syllabus along with their name, office location, and e-mail address. Should you be unable to hold your office hours due to an emergency or other extenuating situation, please notify your students, course coordinator, and the office staff.

Observations and Evaluations of Teaching

As an integral part of professional development, GTAs will receive regular feedback on their teaching. New GTAs / Lecturers will be observed in their first semester, continuing GTAs once per year. The Director of the Spanish Language Program and/or the Course Coordinator will communicate to the GTA the schedule for these observations. After the observation, the GTA will receive a copy of the observation report (Appendix G) with feedback from the faculty member(s) who observed the class. The observer will provide one copy to the office manager to be filed in the instructor's personal file. It is recommended that each GTA schedule a meeting with the Director of the Spanish Language Program and/or Course Coordinator to review and discuss the observation.

Student Grade Records

GTAs are responsible for keeping accurate and updated records of the students' attendance and grades on all assignments and graded work. GTAs should use the grade recording system designated by the course coordinator and follow [University guidelines concerning privacy and student records](#).

Privacy and Student Records

The University of Kansas ensures the confidentiality of student records in accordance with various federal, state, and university regulations, including the [Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act \(FERPA\)](#). Disclosure of information is governed by the [Student Records Policy](#) as administered by the Office of the University Registrar and General Counsel. All GTAs should follow the policies and procedures outlined on the [University guidelines concerning privacy and student records page](#). Any violation such as unauthorized access to confidential information, grades, or records should be reported immediately. If you have questions, please contact your course coordinator or the Director of the Spanish Language Program.

Student Academic Misconduct

The Department of Spanish and Portuguese considers academic integrity essential to our work, and all students are expected to adhere to its principles. According to the University's policy, "Academic misconduct by a student shall include, but not be limited to, disruption of classes; threatening an instructor or fellow student in an academic setting; giving or receiving unauthorized aid on examinations or in the preparation of notebooks, themes, reports or other assignments; knowingly misrepresenting the source of any academic work;

unauthorized changing of grades; unauthorized use of University approvals or forging of signatures; falsification of research results; plagiarizing of another's work" ([Academic Misconduct Policies and Procedures](#)). The GTA should notify the course coordinator in writing of situations of student misconduct immediately. Reference to the University's [Policy for Academic Misconduct](#) should be included in the syllabus and discussed during the first day of class.

Tutoring

A GTA is forbidden from tutoring students enrolled in their class for pay. KU's Academic Learning Center offers individual tutoring for SPAN 104, 108, 212, 216, 324, 328, 424, and 428 (see [Wingspan's supported courses list](#)).

The KU Writing Center (located in the Anschutz Library) in collaboration with the Department of Spanish and Portuguese now offers writing support in Spanish and Portuguese. Undergraduate students starting at the 300 level and graduate students can visit the Writing Center to receive assistance as they brainstorm, draft, and revise their projects. For more information visit [Wingspan: Center for Learning and Writing Support](#). For information on becoming a Spanish writing consultant, contact Jennifer Rupp, Associate Director, KU Writing Center (jennifer.rupp@ku.edu), or Professor Araceli Masterson-Algar.

Cancellation of classes

Instructors can **never** cancel class for any reason except for campus-wide emergencies or inclement weather events when declared by the Chancellor or Provost. In the case of a personal emergency due to an illness, accident, or abrupt medical crisis, the instructor should notify the immediate course coordinator who will make sure that the class is covered. The coordinator will also inform the main office of the staffing change as per KU policy.

Change in Class Schedule or substitution of instructor for a day

100- and 200-level classes must meet at the regularly scheduled location and time. In the case of non-emergency situations or professional obligations where the GTA is unable to teach the scheduled class, it is the instructor's responsibility to seek approval for this substitution from the immediate course coordinator and to find a substitute for that day's instruction. This request for approval should be made two weeks in advance.

Consenting Relationships Policy

The University of Kansas has a [Consenting Relationships Policy](#) which addresses situations in which two persons have an apparently voluntary romantic or sexual relationship, but where a power differential exists because of their roles within the university, e.g., faculty/student or supervisor/employee. The University discourages such relationships due to potential biases, negative consequences, and the impact on the academic or work environment. The policy applies to all faculty, staff, and students on the Lawrence campus and stresses

the need to avoid conflicts of interest, especially in evaluative roles. Your course coordinator can help you to determine what to do in various situations that you may encounter as an instructor.

Lecturer Positions for GTAs

The department supports graduate teaching assistants in good standing who are making progress toward the completion and defense of their dissertation. Contingent on enrollments and instructional funding, 50% lecturer appointments may be available to PhD students who are ABD in Spanish and have exhausted their eligibility for a GTA position for a maximum of one year while they complete and defend their dissertation.

PLEASE NOTE THAT ALL EXTENSIONS ARE CONTINGENT UPON FUNDING.

To be considered for a lecturer appointment, applicants must have established solid teaching credentials, and their graduate advisor must confirm satisfactory progress toward completion of the dissertation. Additional conditions apply. See Appendix H for the GTA support guidelines.

In addition, and in response to enrollment demands and/or shortages in staffing and when instructional funding allows, the department will consider applications from recent PhD graduates for possible one-year lecturer appointments at a rate of 50% or higher. An appointment above 50% as a lecturer and appointments to teach undergraduate 300-level courses or higher are only considered if the dissertation is defended and the final, corrected dissertation is submitted before the start of classes for the term in which the appointment begins. Additional conditions apply. See Appendix H for GTA support guidelines.

GTAs for Study Abroad programs

The Department of Spanish and Portuguese sponsors Summer Language Institutes in Barcelona and Buenos Aires. In addition, the Department has a lectureship exchange with the Universidade de Santiago de Compostela. These positions are contingent on funding, enrollment, and academic factors. The Graduate Studies Committee will send the call for applications for the Summer Language Institutes and for the Universidade de Santiago lectureship in the Fall semester with criteria and submission deadlines. The Graduate Studies Committee will review these applications and make the appointments based on the selection criteria.

APPENDICES

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APPENDIX A: University Policies and Degree Requirements, AY 2026-27

UNIVERSITY POLICIES AND DEGREE REQUIREMENTS

This section contains information on requirements and policies of the Office of Graduate & Postdoctoral Affairs, hereafter referred to as “the University”. It is not a complete list of all policies pertaining to graduate students. Only those policies that *most commonly* affect graduate students are included.

Policies are described in general terms and are intended to help students understand what is expected. They do not reflect the exact language of the official policy and should not be confused with official policy. Specific information and restrictions as well as links to relevant forms may be accessed by clicking on the policy headings. Links to the official policies in the KU policy library are found at the bottom of each policy description. Students are accountable to and should familiarize themselves with the University's official policies.

GENERAL POLICIES

The following University policies apply to ALL graduate students regardless of degree, program, or department. These are minimum general requirements. Your department or program may have more restrictive policies in any of these areas.

[Admission](#)

Degree or non-degree seeking applicants must have a bachelor’s degree (as evidenced by an official transcript from the institution the degree was obtained).

Related Policies and Forms:

- [Admission to Graduate Study](#)

[English Proficiency Requirements](#)

The University requires all applicants, international or domestic, to demonstrate English proficiency for admission to any graduate program at KU. There are multiple ways to prove English proficiency:

- Declaration of native or native-like speaker status on the online application for graduate study.
- Official scores from an English proficiency standardized test (e.g. TOEFL, IELTS-Academic, or PTE), sent by the testing agency to the University of Kansas. Official scores must be less than two years old. Scores must be reported to KU directly by the testing service. Self-reported scores or unofficial scores are not accepted. TOEFL scores should be sent by ETS to KU

institution code 6871. IELTS should be sent to KU Graduate Admissions via the e-delivery service. PTE score sheets containing the Score Report Code and Registration ID should be emailed to graduateadm@ku.edu for verification.

Graduation with a baccalaureate degree (or higher) earned in residence from an accredited English-medium college or university or an accredited college or university in the United States. Degrees earned online may not be used to verify English proficiency. Note: this option is not sufficient for employment as a Graduate Teaching Assistant.

- AEC Curriculum: Students who haven't taken one of the listed tests may complete coursework through the [KU Applied English Center](#) (AEC) to demonstrate English proficiency.
- US Military Employment: If you are employed as an officer in the U.S. military with documentation of selection or promotion to the rank of Major or higher (or the equivalent U.S. Navy or Coast Guard rank), then you will be considered fully proficient and will not be required to complete AEC testing.

Additional English Competency Requirements for GTAs:

English proficiency requirements for GTAs are governed by the Kansas Board of Regents and must be met separately from the English proficiency requirement for admission to a KU graduate program. Detailed information on English proficiency requirements for GTAs may be found on Graduate & Postdoctoral Affairs' Spoken English Competency page.

Related Policies and Forms:

- [English Proficiency Requirements for Admission to Graduate Study](#)
- [Spoken English Language Competency of Faculty and Graduate Teaching Assistants, Kansas Board of Regents Policy](#)

Enrollment

For graduate students, advising on enrollment and course selection take place at the department level. While individual units may have additional enrollment requirements, for students who are required to enroll full-time (e.g. students holding a GTA/GRA/GA appointment, international students on an F-1 or J1 visa, students receiving federal financial aid, etc.) the University defines full-time enrollment it as follows:

Fall and Spring semesters:

- Enrollment in 9 credit hours;
- Enrollment in 6 credit hours plus a GTA, GRA, or GA appointment, regardless of percentage of appointment;

- Enrollment in 6 credit hours for graduate students using the Montgomery GI Bill – Active Duty (MGIB-AD) and Post-9/11 GI Bill – Active Duty;
- Doctoral candidates enrolled in dissertation hour(s). *See Doctoral post-comprehensive enrollment.
- Enrollment in 6 competencies for students in a Competency-Based Education (CBE) program
Summer sessions:
 - Enrollment in 6 credit hours;
 - Enrollment in 3 credit hours plus a GTA, GRA, or GA appointment, regardless of percentage of appointment;
 - Enrollment in 3 credit hours for graduate students using the Montgomery GI Bill – Active Duty (MGIB-AD) and Post-9/11 GI Bill – Active Duty;
 - Doctoral candidates enrolled in dissertation hour(s).
 - Enrollment in 6 competencies for students in a CBE program

Graduate students are not normally permitted to enroll for more than 16 hours a semester or more than 8 hours in summer session.

While these are KU's definitions of full-time enrollment, other institutions may have different definitions. Be sure to consult with your financial aid and/or health insurance providers before making enrollment decisions.

Students not enrolled by 11:59pm the day before the first day of classes will be assessed a late enrollment fee. The University Registrar then deactivates the KU ID of any not enrolled by the last Friday in October (for Fall) or last Friday in March (for Spring). Students who wish to enroll after that must submit a [Permit to Re-Enroll](#) to be reactivated.

Students who wish to leave their graduate program should inform the department of such plans in writing so that a Voluntary Withdrawal form may be submitted on their behalf. Please note that voluntarily withdrawing from your program does **not** automatically withdraw you from coursework. You must also withdraw from all classes in Enroll & Pay via the "Withdraw from the University" option.

Deadlines for adding, changing, dropping, or withdrawing from all courses, as well any fines associated with the change, are set by the University. **Deadlines vary from year to year. Students should carefully review the current Academic Calendar.**

You may also wish to consult the Registrar's page on Effects of Dropping or Withdrawing on your Transcript.

Your graduate program coordinator (or similar title) is available to guide you through any enrollment scenarios or questions that come up. In order to avoid problems on your record, please consult with them prior to dropping or changing enrollment.

Related Policies:

- [Discontinued Enrollment](#)
- [Enrollment](#)
- [Full-time Enrollment for Graduate Students](#)
- [Graduate Coursework Expiration Dates](#)
- [Master's Degree Requirements](#)

Graduate Credit (Including Transfer Credit)

The University's Graduate Credit policy defines KU's conditions for the following:

- Definition of graduate credit for the purposes of a course "counting" towards a graduate degree or graduate certificate at KU;
- Transfer of graduate credit to KU from an outside institution;
- Reduction in the required number of graduate hours for Master's students;
- Counting credit hours taken as non-degree seeking student towards a later graduate degree at KU;
- Counting credit hours taken as a certificate seeking student toward another graduate degree.

Transfer Credit

The transfer credit option allows master's students to add graduate-level coursework completed at another institution to their KU transcript to count toward their KU degree. Upper-level coursework taken as an undergraduate, even courses numbered at the graduate level, is not eligible for transfer in any case. Additional restrictions apply to what non-KU graduate courses and the number of credit hours that can be counted toward a KU master's degree, so students should carefully review the information provided in the link above and the related policies below, as well as consulting with their DGS. In all cases, transfer credit must first be approved at the department or program level. To begin the transfer process, students should consult with their DGS to submit the required transfer materials. These include a transcript reflecting the courses to be transferred and descriptions and/or syllabi for the courses in question.

No transfer of credits is allowed for the Ph.D. In circumstances where students enter the Ph.D. program with an M.A. from another institution or other relevant graduate coursework, it may be possible for students to request a reduction in the number of hours required for the Ph.D. Students should consult with their DGS about their enrollment plan.

Reduced Credit Hour Degree

KU policy defines 30 hours as the minimum for master's degrees. Departments may petition for a reduced hour degree master's degree for individual students in cases where they may provide evidence that the student entered the program especially well-prepared to complete a graduate-level degree and the student is able to maintain a superior grade point average. Reduced credit hour degrees must be based on coursework or experiences that can be objectively measured, such as coursework or qualifying internship or study abroad programs. Professional or life experience does not qualify. A reduction in hours is distinct from a transfer of credit and is reserved for students whose prior coursework doesn't qualify for transfer credit (e.g. was already used to fulfill requirements towards a completed degree) and there are no modifications on the transcript.

Restrictions apply to the number of credit hours that can be reduced for a master's degree, so students should carefully review the information provided in the link above and the related policies below.

In all cases, a reduction in hours must first be approved at the department or program level, so to begin the process for approval, students should consult with their DGS. Students must also provide documentation of the coursework or experience being used to justify the reduced hours (e.g. transcripts, program descriptions).

Because there is no minimum number of required hours for the Ph.D., reduction of required hours based on prior degrees or experience is determined solely at the program level. Doctoral students should consult with their DGS about their enrollment plan.

Related Policies:

- [Graduate Credit](#)
- [Co-enrollment](#)
- [Master's Degree Requirements](#) (on Reduced Hour Master's Degree)

Credit/No Credit

The University supports and encourages interdisciplinary study, which may include graduate students enrolling in coursework at the graduate level that is outside of their primary discipline. The Credit/No Credit (CR/NC) is an option for graduate students who are taking a course that is not required for their degree or certificate and who do not wish to have the course grade reflected in their cumulative

graduate GPA. Rather than a grade appearing on the transcript, the student receives a designation of CR or NC, which does not factor in the GPA.

No course graded CR/NC will count toward the satisfaction of any graduate degree or certificate requirement. This includes, but is not limited to, courses taken to fulfill the Research Skills and Responsible Scholarship requirement for doctoral students.

Students make the CR/NC election via the Registrar's [CR/NC online request form](#). Elections and changes to elections can only be made during the specific CR/NC period. For regular semester courses, this period begins after the last day to add a class and extends for approximately two weeks. Exact dates may be found on the current KU [Academic Calendar](#). Please keep in mind, short courses may have [alternate dates](#).

The student should consult with their own program advisor about the appropriateness of the course prior to enrolling; however, in cases where CR/NC is elected, the course instructor is not informed of the election unless the student chooses to share this information.

Additional restrictions apply. Students should carefully review the information in the link above.

Related Policies and Forms:

[University Senate Rules and Regulations \(USRR\), Section 2.3.8](#)

Probation & Dismissal

Probation is an academic status that can be assigned to a graduate student that is not making [satisfactory progress](#) toward completing their degree. The department initiates the probation process and will inform the student of why they are not making satisfactory progress, what they must do to return to good standing, and the deadline for doing so.

Students are most commonly placed on probation due to their graduate cumulative [GPA](#) dropping below a B average (3.0 on a 4.0 scale). In these cases, on the student's record for the semester following the semester in which the student's GPA drops below 3.0. If the student's cumulative GPA is raised to 3.0 by the end of the probationary semester, the student will be automatically returned to good academic standing.

Individual Schools/the College may set more stringent GPA requirements.

Students may also be placed on probation by their departments for other reasons that constituting a failure to make satisfactory progress towards degree. These may include, but are not limited to;

- Lack of progress on the thesis, dissertation, or capstone project
- Unacceptable academic performance on program milestones outside of coursework (e.g. exams)

- Unsatisfactory grades or GPA within foundational required courses (despite the overall cumulative GPA)
 - An unsatisfactory result in their department’s annual progress evaluation
- Nearing or going beyond their maximum time to degree. See the Time Limits section below for more information.

Students should carefully review the [Good Academic Standing policy](#) for graduate students at KU for more information on what constitutes making satisfactory academic progress.

Individual programs may also have additional measures of progress. Students should also consult the Annual Review section of their department graduate handbook or the degree requirements section and with their program advisor for more information.

If a student is unable to raise their cumulative GPA or otherwise meet the communicated terms of the academic probation, the department will reconsider their continuation in the program, and in most cases will recommend the student for dismissal. Once dismissed, a student is no longer able to be enrolled in coursework and cannot complete their degree. Students dismissed from any graduate program may not be admitted to any other graduate program at the University of Kansas.

A student on probation or facing dismissal should discuss their status with their advisor.

Related Policies:

- [Academic Probation](#)
- [Dismissed Enrollment](#)
- [Good Academic Standing policy](#)

Grading

The Office of Graduate & Postdoctoral Affairs’ (GPA) [Grading policy](#) governs requirements for the grading of graduate students above those described in [Article II of the University Senate Rules and Regulations](#). Additionally, individual schools, departments, or programs may have grading policies that are more stringent than those of GPA.

Students should also consult their advisor and the departmental grading section of this handbook for additional information that may affect them.

At minimum, for all graduate students at KU, at least a B average is required on course work counted toward any of the master's degrees at KU, and only courses graded A, B, or C (excluding C-) may be counted. Course work counted toward a doctorate, including that for a master's degree if obtained at KU, should average better than a B.

Related Policies:

- [University Senate Rules & Regulations](#)
- [Grading](#)
- [Academic Probation](#)
- [Dismissed Enrollment](#)

Time Limits

The University expects that master's degree should typically be completed in two (2) years of full-time study, the doctorate degree in five (5) years of study, and both the master's and doctorate together in six-seven (6-7) years of study.

Students who anticipate exceeding these targets should review the information in the policies below, as well as consult with their program advisor to create a timeline for degree completion. In order to support this process, students are encouraged to use a Mentoring Agreement Template and/or adapt to their own needs to support effective mentoring and a positive mentoring relationship.

Note that individual schools/the College/degree programs may require Mentoring Agreements for students who are nearing their maximum time to degree.

Related Policies and Forms:

- [Master's Degree Program Time Constraints](#)
- [Engagement and Enrollment in Doctoral Programs](#)
- [Doctoral Degree Comprehensive Oral Exams](#) (on exam expiration and recertification)
- [Doctoral Program Profiles with Time to Degree Information](#)
- [KU CLAS Mentorship Agreement Template](#)
- [Univ. Michigan Rackham Graduate School Mentoring Plan Templates](#)
- [KU Graduate & Postdoctoral Affairs IDP template](#)

Leave of Absence

In exceptional circumstances (e.g. cases of illness, emergency, financial hardship, military leave, to pursue family responsibilities, or to pursue full-time activities related to long-range professional goals) it may be necessary for graduate students to take a break from their program temporarily, without having to withdraw entirely from the program. An approved leave of absence allows a student to take a temporary break from enrolling in graduate coursework while remaining in good standing with the University and the department and while "stopping the clock" on their time to degree. When a student

is on Leave of Absence status it is understood that they have temporarily suspended their graduate work and therefore will not make use of University resources, including faculty time.

Requesting a Leave of Absence is done through a University petition. University petitions must first be approved and supported at the program level, so students wishing to initiate the petition process should first consult with their Director of Graduate Studies and review their department's internal petition procedures. Units or the Director of Graduate Study may request documentation to support the student's need for a leave of absence.

In order for a Leave of Absence to be approved, the student must be withdrawn from all active and/or future enrollment. Withdrawal for the purposes of Leave of Absence is still subject to all Registrar deadlines, required forms, and applicable tuition and fees.

Students on Leave of Absence are automatically reactivated after their leave is over and are eligible to enroll for their intended semester back during the normal enrollment periods. See the KU [Academic Calendar](#) for exact dates that enrollment begins.

If at any time plans change and a student wishes to return and enroll before leave was supposed to end, they may contact their department to be reactivated early.

Related Policies and Forms:

- [Leaves of Absence](#) (policy)
- [Leave of Absence](#) (GPA website, form linked at bottom of page)

[Required University Milestones](#)

All graduate students must complete one or more exams as part of their degree requirements. In addition to department or program guidelines, the following milestones are required for all students and specific regulations apply:

- Master's Final Culminating Exam (written or oral)/Thesis Defense for Master's degree
- Doctoral Comprehensive Oral Exam
- Doctoral Final Exam/Dissertation Defense

*A final culminating effort is not required for departments with an approved coursework-only master's degree option in the Academic Catalog (note that programs with a capstone are considered coursework only).

Before a student is allowed to complete any of these three exams, pre-approval from the school/College is required in advance of the exam date. This pre-approval request will be submitted on the student's behalf by their department after the exam date has been scheduled. The school/College

reviews the student record and verifies all University requirements have been fulfilled. The full list of these requirements may be found via the link in the heading above. Students should work with their departments well in advance of their planned exam date, to schedule their exams in a timely fashion and to ensure that all University policies relating to oral exams are being followed.

There are additional policies requirements for oral exams. The following are University policies pertaining to oral exams:

Oral Exam Committee Composition

All voting committee members must be appointed members of the Graduate Faculty of KU. Additionally, a majority of committee members serving on a graduate student oral examination committee must be tenured/tenure-track faculty in the candidate's department or program of study.

Many additional restrictions apply, especially for doctoral exam committees. Master's and doctoral students should carefully review the University policies pertaining to exams, as well as consult with their Director of Graduate Studies when forming an exam committee. Your graduate program coordinator can assist with confirming the qualifying status of any faculty member at KU, or outside of KU.

Oral Exam Attendance

Oral Exams may be conducted in-person, remotely, or a hybrid of both. There are no University level requirements for physical presence; however, there are strict regulations on participation.

In all cases, all committee members must be present, either physically or via phone/video conference, for an exam to commence. **If a committee member does not arrive or appear, the exam may not begin and if a committee member leaves or loses connection such that they cannot fully participate, the exam may not proceed. Oral examinations that do not meet these attendance requirements are not valid.**

Master's and doctoral students should carefully review the policies below, as well as consult with their Director of Graduate Studies in the formation of an oral exam committee.

Related Policies and Forms:

- [Master's Student Oral Exam Committee Composition](#)
- [Doctoral Student Oral Exam Committee Composition](#)
- [Oral Exam Attendance](#)
- [Graduate Faculty Appointments](#)

DOCTORAL DEGREE REQUIREMENTS

In addition to the student's individual Ph.D. program's degree requirements, the following are University requirements for graduation with a Ph.D. at KU.

[Enrollment Requirement](#)

Prior to the semester in which the comprehensive exam is held, all doctoral students must complete a minimum program engagement equivalent to two full-time semesters. This may be accomplished through either of the following:

- Two semesters (fall and/or spring) of full-time enrollment in KU coursework, as defined by University policy
- At least 18 hours of enrollment in KU coursework spread out over several part-time semesters

Related Policies and Forms:

- [Engagement and Enrollment in Doctoral Programs](#)

[Continuous Enrollment for Post-Comprehensive Students](#)

During the semester in which the doctoral oral comprehensive exam is completed and each fall and spring semester follows, doctoral students must adhere to very specific enrollment requirements. These requirements may be different than enrollment requirements prior to the oral comp exam.

Failure to properly comply with the enrollment requirements may cause delays to graduation or additional enrollment requirements to make up what was missed, increasing tuition expenses near the end of your degree program.

To avoid delays or additional costs, you are also strongly advised to meet with your graduate program coordinator the semester before your oral comprehensive exam. Your graduate coordinator will work with you to develop an enrollment plan that meets all policy requirements, while also preventing unnecessary or avoidable fees.

Post-comprehensive enrollment requirements also apply to students with GTA/GRA/GA appointments, but these students must be certified to drop their enrollment levels. Departments are responsible for tracking student enrollment and will submit the certification form on the student's behalf **at least two weeks prior** to the beginning of the semester in which the enrollment will drop below 6 hours. Students who are certified to reduce hours continue to meet the University's definition of full-time enrollment, as well as the enrollment requirements of their employment contract.

Related Policies and Forms:

- [Full-time Enrollment for Graduate Students](#)
- [Doctoral Candidacy](#)

GRADUATE CERTIFICATE REQUIREMENTS

The University offers a variety of [Approved Graduate Certificate Programs](#) to encourage current graduate students to pursue interdisciplinary study, gain a credential for expertise in an outside area of study, or provide an option for a coherent course of advanced study for those not ready to commit to a full degree program. Note that students must be fully admitted to a graduate certificate by the end of the last course that will count to fulfill the certificate. Students wishing to complete the certificate should apply as early as possible. Students whose interests or career goals may be served by a Graduate Certificate should familiarize themselves with the University's policies relating to Certificate programs (found below) early in their graduate career, in addition to individual certificate program requirements.

Related Policies and Forms:

- [Graduate Certificate Programs: Eligibility and Admission Criteria](#)
- [Policies & Procedures for Graduate Certificate Programs](#)

GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS (Master's & Ph.D.)

In addition to all program requirements, students [planning to graduate](#) must complete all University graduation requirements **prior to the published Graduation Deadline** in a given semester. Students should consult the current [Academic Calendar](#) for the published Graduation Deadline, which varies by semester.

Graduate & Postdoctoral Affairs Graduation Checklists ([Master's](#) | [Doctoral](#))

These graduation checklists provide a comprehensive list of all University requirements for graduation and should be consulted by every graduating master's or doctoral student as soon as graduation is expected. Submission of the final draft of the thesis or dissertation is done electronically. Students must comply with all University requirements for [formatting](#) and [electronic submission](#) of the thesis or dissertation. There is no University requirement that students provide a bound or printed copy of the draft.

We strongly encourage students to submit an Application for Graduation as early as possible; ideally prior to the 20th day of classes of the semester they intend to graduate.

GRADUATE & POSTDOCTORAL AFFAIRS FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

The Office of Graduate & Postdoctoral Affairs (GPA) offers funding opportunities in several different categories. Students interested in applying should direct inquiries to the department's Director of Graduate Studies or to GPA. Some of the available funding includes:

[Summer Research Scholarships](#): intended primarily for post-comp doctoral students.

[Graduate Student Travel Fund](#): intended for graduate students presenting a paper at a national or regional meeting of a learned or professional society. A student may receive an award (max \$750) only once per academic year, with priority given to students who have not received the fund previously. Funds are available on a first-come, first-served basis.

[Doctoral Student Research Fund](#): Designed to support KU doctoral students who need assistance to carry out research that advances progress toward the degree. Applications for this fund are accepted only for a limited time as funding is available. Students are eligible to receive one award from this fund during their doctoral career. Students should check the link above for additional information and restrictions.

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APPENDIX B: Mentoring Agreement ([available online](#))



College of Liberal Arts and Sciences

Mentoring Agreement

This Agreement is a tool to support mentoring relationships with graduate students who have reached the portfolio/dissertation stage of their program.

The Agreement should:

- Be part of an extended and ongoing conversation between the student and his or her advisor(s). It should be discussed and agreed upon by all parties to that conversation.
- Clearly outline expectations for the student's performance. At a minimum, it should address the following questions:
 - What will be considered good academic progress toward the portfolio/dissertation for this student? What are the key milestones and timeline for completion?
 - What is expected of the student in terms of professional practice (e.g., what should the student do to prepare for meetings with the advisor(s) and/or committee; what is the appropriate way to submit draft materials)?
 - What happens if the student doesn't meet these expectations as discussed and agreed upon with the advisor? That is, what are the consequences?
- Clearly outline expectations for the advisor(s). It should make clear to the student what the advisor(s) agree(s) to do (e.g., turnaround time on feedback, frequency of meetings, nature, and extent of comments/suggestions for revision).
- Establish a realistic timeline for completion that takes into account past performance, the work that remains, the amount of time the student can reasonably dedicate to portfolio/dissertation work, and any extenuating circumstances that might impact progress.
- Be flexible. The student and advisor entirely determine the terms and conditions.
- Be revisited on a regular basis (each semester or annually) and adjusted as appropriate.

NOTE: This Mentoring Agreement should not be confused with the Graduate Degree Completion Agreement. While similar in content, the latter is a more extensive document required of all those seeking an extension on the time permitted to complete a graduate degree at KU.

1. **Student Name:** _____

2. **Advisor(s) Name(s):** _____

3. **Progress to Date:** Please outline in detail any research, writing, or other work toward the portfolio or dissertation that has been completed to date.

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4. **Milestones and Timeline:** Please provide detailed information on the expected steps toward completion, including the various stages of research, drafts, revisions, and final submissions.

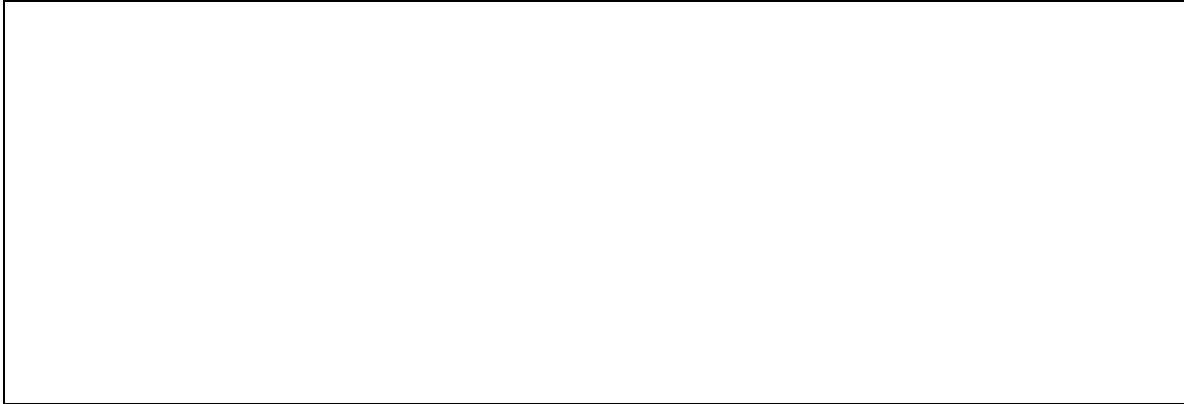
Milestones and Timelines

Tasks to be completed by the student	Due Date

5. Feedback and Revisions: Please explain who will provide feedback to the student and with what frequency. If a committee will provide feedback and review of student progress, please explain what the student should expect of this process.

6. Professional Practice: What is expected of the student in terms of professional practice? How should he or she communicate with the advisor and with what frequency? How should he or she prepare for meetings with the advisor and/or committee? What else should the student know about expectations (sometimes implicit) of a student at the portfolio or dissertation stage?

7. Consequences: If the student does not complete the portfolio or dissertation by the expected completion date, the followings steps will be taken:



By signing below, all parties acknowledge that they understand and agree to adhere to the expectations outlined in this Agreement.

Student Name: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Advisor(s) Name(s): _____

Signature(s): _____

Date: _____

A COPY OF THE SIGNED AGREEMENT TO BE FILED
WITH THE GRADUATE STUDIES COMMITTEE.

APPENDIX C: Advising Checklist for Master of Arts in Spanish

Advising Checklist for Master of Arts in Spanish

Courses	Credits	Notes	Courses taken
SPAN 801: Teaching Spanish in Institutions of Higher Learning	3	Required for all GTAs	<input type="checkbox"/>
Medieval/Early Modern Peninsular	3	one course required in this area.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Colonial Latin America (prior to 19 th Century)	3	one course required in this area.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Modern/Contemporary Peninsular (19 th -21 st Century)	3	one course required in this area.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Modern/Contemporary Latin/o America	3	one course required in this area.	<input type="checkbox"/>
One Seminar (900-level)	3	Required. Preferably after completing a 700-level course on a related topic.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Reading knowledge of another foreign language as approved by Department.	3	Required. See the Graduate Handbook below for more information.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Elective course in the department	3	<p>Students in the MA considering pursuing a PhD should enroll in SPAN 795 or an alternative course with a focus on literary theory.</p> <p>It is highly recommended that students take at least one course with a focus on film studies or/and cultural studies.</p> <p>MA students who wish to strengthen their engagement with literary and cultural analysis may be permitted to enroll in ONE 500-level Spanish course for credit towards their degree. This must be done in consultation with their primary faculty advisor and the Director of Graduate Studies.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Two 3-credit-hour courses, of the required 30 hours of coursework, may be taken outside of the department with the approval of the graduate advisor.	6	With the academic advisor's approval, the student may enroll in courses tied to Latin/o America/Iberian context or to the students' overall academic trajectory.	<input type="checkbox"/>

APPENDIX D: Checklist For Doctor of Philosophy in Spanish

Checklist for Doctoral of Philosophy in Spanish

Courses	Credit Hours	Notes	Course taken
Reading knowledge of two other languages as approved by the Department.	6	Required. See the Graduate Handbook for more information.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Complete course work prescribed by the advisory committee.	24	This course work is to include a minimum of five seminars, at least 4 at KU, one literary theory course (SPAN 795 or an equivalent), and a guideline of a minimum of 24 hours in Hispanic literatures at KU beyond the 30 hours required for the MA degree. If an appropriate seminar is not offered during the last semester of course work and preparation period for the qualifying exams, students can take an independent study course with a faculty of their choice to strengthen the preparation of their Area A paper.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Present a secondary area in a field other than Spanish or Spanish-American literature. Minimum of nine (9) credit hours as determined in consultation with faculty advisor, either through coursework outside the department or in Lusophone Studies that includes courses in our department. Please see the Graduate Student Handbook for more information.	9	Students may consider completing a graduate certificate. See Graduate Certificates page .	<input type="checkbox"/>
Complete a minimum of two semesters of quarter-time teaching or one semester of half-time teaching in the Department of Spanish and Portuguese			<input type="checkbox"/>
Research Skills and Responsible Scholarship Requirement.	6	Required courses are SPAN 780 and SPAN 801. This requirement must be met before taking the comprehensive oral exam.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Pass the PhD Qualifying/Comprehensive Examinations.		These exams require completion of three areas: a research essay (Area A), written qualifying examinations (Areas B and C), and an oral defense of the dissertation proposal. All areas must be completed after having passed or registered for the 24 hours of required coursework in the department (typically the third year of the program).	<input type="checkbox"/>
Write and defend a dissertation.		The dissertation is expected to be an original contribution to knowledge, demonstrating in-depth mastery of the latest scholarship in the field of study.	<input type="checkbox"/>

Updated JULY 2025

APPENDIX F: Guidelines for Dissertation

Guidelines for Dissertation

The dissertation is expected to be an original contribution to knowledge, demonstrating in-depth mastery of the latest scholarship in the field of study.

- In the semester that the qualifying exam is passed, the student is expected to form a dissertation committee. The committee members may easily be added or removed during the time from the qualifying exam to the final exam (thesis defense). The dissertation committee shares the responsibility of guiding the student's research to successful completion. Students should view the committee as mentors and advocates for their thesis research. This committee does not have to be identical to the PhD Advisory Committee. Your director will be a specialist in your field of concentration, but the other members of the Committee may be chosen for their expertise in related areas of study (e.g., a theoretical problem, a genre). It can be helpful to have a reader who is not an expert in the field and who might be able to see problems in the communication of ideas.
- With your committee, formulate a plan of action. The Department recommends that the Committee and student use the Mentoring Agreement to establish specific timelines. Normally, the director will read all chapters as they are finished, and the committee will decide which of the other readers will read which portions of the dissertation along the way. Make sure that everyone involved is aware of how things will proceed. Keep the lines of communication open with each of your committee members. If you get “stuck” at any point in the process, the best approach is to consult with your advisor and other members of the committee to discuss how to regain focus and stay on task. It is the student's responsibility to convene meetings of the dissertation committee, when needed.
- Dissertation writing depends on revision. It is not unusual for some chapters to require more than one rewrite. In some cases, the material will have to be shifted from one chapter to another or changed to be made consistent with claims made in other parts of the dissertation. It is necessary to allocate time such revisions.
- Follow dissertation format (in punctuation, bibliography, etc.) beginning in the early drafts, so that valuable time is not wasted during the dissertation process. Please consult the *MLA Handbook* 9th ed. and the [KU Graduate Studies Policy on Doctoral dissertation](#). Rigorously edit your own work before submitting drafts so that your committee can focus on your ideas rather than your writing. Consult the MLA's *Line by Line* on how to edit your own writing.
- Once the dissertation reaches its final stages of writing and revision, the Director and student plan for the defense of the dissertation. The University considers the defense a public event. Consult with the Graduate Program Coordinator about procedures for setting up defense date and arrangements. The Director of Graduate Studies will publicize the defense and make a copy of the dissertation available for members of the University community to read. One digital copy of the defense version of the dissertation must be delivered to the Department office at least three weeks before you defend.
- The student should send the final draft of the dissertation to the full committee via e-mail (or in hard copy if preferred) at least four weeks prior to the scheduled date of the dissertation defense to enable committee members to examine it fully. Make sure to allow enough time for the full committee to read the dissertation and make comments before you set a final defense date.
- The University of Kansas requires that all students whose degree programs require the defense of a dissertation must publish their research to fulfill degree requirements. After the defense, the candidate should meet with the dissertation advisor to make any revisions resulting from the defense. The dissertation should meet all the [formatting requirements](#) specified in KU's ETD Formatting Guidelines. **Before you submit your dissertation, make sure you have complied with all KU requirements, information available at [Graduate and Postdoctoral Affairs webpage about your publication submission](#).** If you have questions about submission or other online technical details, contact the COGA Graduate Program Coordinator or the College of Liberal Arts Electronic Thesis Dissertation coordinator, Lauren Chaney, coga@ku.edu.

APPENDIX G: Class Observation Form

CLASS OBSERVATION REPORT Department of Spanish and Portuguese + University of Kansas

Instructor:

Course:

Date and time of observation:

Number of students present:

Actual starting time:

Actual ending time:

Class observation report

5=Outstanding / 4=Exceeds Expectations / 3=Satisfactory / 2=Needs Improvement / 1=Unsatisfactory					
PREPARATION and IMPLEMENTATION of PLAN					
Clear and appropriate lesson plan	5	4	3	2	1
Logical sequence of activities	5	4	3	2	1
Smooth transitions	5	4	3	2	1
Good pace	5	4	3	2	1
Effective use of time and materials	5	4	3	2	1
LANGUAGE USE					
Appropriate use of target language by instructor	5	4	3	2	1
Rare use of English by instructor	5	4	3	2	1
Ample opportunities for students to speak target language	5	4	3	2	1
CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT					
Encouragement of active participation by all students	5	4	3	2	1
Clear task setting	5	4	3	2	1
Effective monitoring of pair work	5	4	3	2	1
Professional demeanor	5	4	3	2	1
Positive working atmosphere of openness and respect	5	4	3	2	1

SUGGESTIONS for improvement:

OVERALL COMMENTS about strengths:

Observer's Signature/Date

Instructor's Signature/Date

Instructor's comments about this observation and report (optional):

Observer-- provide one copy to the GTA / Lecturer and one copy to the office manager, for the instructor's personal file. New GTAs / Lecturers should be observed in their first semester, continuing GTAs / Lecturers once per year.

APPENDIX H: GTA Support Guidelines

GTA Support Guidelines

(Drafted by Verónica Garibotto and Margot Versteeg; Approved March 3, 2022; Revised 14 Oct. 2024; Revised August 2025)

Goal

1. Support our graduate students.
 - 1) academically with the completion of their degree and
 - 2) on the job market.

The idea is to support students to find a job elsewhere. We can help them with the transition. We can help some graduate students by appointing them as lecturers (with a lighter load, and the obligation to apply for jobs). For international students who cannot be appointed as lecturers because of their visas, we can extend their Graduate Student Assistantships (GTAs). That is why the two options. Both are intended for a *limited time*.

General Background

The University allows MA students six (6) semesters (Spring & Fall; summers do not count) of GTA eligibility. PhD and MA-PhD students are both allowed sixteen (16) semesters of GTA eligibility.

The Department of Spanish & Portuguese only allows MA students four (4) semesters of eligibility, PhD students are allowed ten (10) semesters, and MA-PhD students are allowed twelve (12) semesters.

Any semester-limit extension that exceeds the department's limits but not the University's can be handled by the Department and does not need to involve the University.

As long as MA students do not exceed six (6) semesters and all others do not exceed sixteen (16), the Department itself can decide to make extensions to GTA eligibility.

Please note that the University can easily allot more semesters to GTAs, but those additional semesters do not necessarily come with funding. The Department, on the other hand, considers semesters with funding as GTA.

Proposal: Hiring recently graduated PhD students as lecturers

1. Provided our staffing needs allow, recently graduated students can be hired as lecturers. **PLEASE NOTE THAT ALL EXTENSIONS ARE CONTINGENT UPON FUNDING.**
2. Hiring will be based on “reversed seniority” meaning that the most recently graduated students have priority. Students who have not received an extension as a GTA have priority over those who have.

3. The “recent graduate lectureship” will be a 0.5 FTE appointment, consisting of 2x2 courses to allow these lecturers to actively continue their job search.
4. Requirements: PhD in hand by May (for an August appointment), proof of a successful teaching record, and proof that the student is actively looking for jobs outside of the Department.
5. For evidence of job search activity, students need to include in their application: a) an updated copy of their application materials (cover letter, CV, statement of teaching philosophy, statement of research interests), and b) a brief narrative explaining their application plans and/or recent job search efforts. For proof of a successful teaching record, applicants need to include student evaluations and coordinators’ observations.
6. Complete applications should be addressed to a committee consisting of the Chair, the Director of the Graduate Studies Committee, and the Director of the Language Program. Deadline: **May 1**.

Extensions of GTAs

- a) Given our budget constraints, students should focus on finishing their PhD in ten semesters.
- b) If needed, a student can apply for an extension of their GTAs. Extensions will be given in yearly increments. **PLEASE NOTE THAT ALL EXTENSIONS ARE CONTINGENT UPON FUNDING.**
- c) The application deadline is March 1 for an extension for the following academic year.
- d) The application materials consist of a narrative plus timeline explaining how the extension will be used, a short endorsement from the advisor, and tangible evidence that the dissertation is almost finished. Proof of a successful teaching record needs to be provided. For proof of successful teaching record, students need to include student evaluations and coordinators’ observations.
- e) During the Fall of the extension year, the applicant will need to show that they are actively looking for jobs outside of the Department. For evidence of job search activity, they need to provide:
 - an updated copy of their application materials (cover letter, CV, statement of teaching philosophy, and statement of research interests),
 - and a brief narrative explaining their current job search efforts.

These materials need to be sent to a committee consisting of the Chair, the Director of the Graduate Studies Committee, and the Director of the Language Program by December 1 of the extension year.