

SPANISH, MA

Effective Fall 2025, admission to the Spanish MA is suspended.

The Department of Spanish and Portuguese offers a program of graduate study leading to a Master of Arts degree that focuses on the study of the Spanish cultures, language, linguistics, and literatures of the Hispanic world. Spanish MA graduates who subsequently wish to pursue the PhD are very advanced in the process of mastering the area in which they wish to specialize in their doctoral studies. Those who choose not to continue studying toward a PhD or a career in teaching will be able to pursue employment in other fields that require full proficiency in the Spanish language as well as mastery of Hispanic literature, culture, and linguistics.

The Department of Spanish and Portuguese has identified five learning outcomes for our MA majors in Spanish. These educational goals relate closely to the National Standards for Foreign Language Learning, as recommended by the American Council of Teachers of Foreign Languages.

Students will be able:

1. To communicate with an advanced or high-level of Spanish proficiency in all four skill areas including listening, reading, writing, and speaking.
2. To develop an advanced understanding and appreciation of Hispanic cultures and communities throughout the world, and analyze and draw cross-cultural differences which will be essential to future careers in a growing global environment.
3. To build a foundation of knowledge in the areas of Spanish and Spanish-American literature, culture, and linguistics, which will give students the breadth necessary for subsequent specialization in doctoral studies.
4. To develop and expand research and analytical skills within the area of Hispanic Studies, including literary analysis, cultural studies, and linguistic analysis.
5. To develop basic reading competencies in an additional romance language to prepare students for further research and provide broader career options.

The Department also participates, and works closely, with the Center for Latin American and Caribbean Studies.

Admission Requirements

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Application Deadlines

Application deadlines vary by program, please review the application deadline chart (<http://uwm.edu/graduateschool/program-deadlines/>) for specific programs. Other important dates and deadlines can be found by using the One Stop calendars (<https://uwm.edu/onestop/dates-and-deadlines/>).

Admission

An applicant must meet general admission requirements for the Graduate School, as established by the graduate faculty of the university, plus the following requirements to be considered for admission:

1. A bachelor's degree with a major in Spanish, foreign languages with an emphasis in Spanish, comparative literature, Hispanic linguistics,

or translation; or with a combination of courses that will, in the opinion of the Department, allow the student to participate fully in the program.

2. A 3.0 grade point average in the last 60 credits of undergraduate coursework.
3. A narrative statement of intent, written in both Spanish and in English.
4. A Curriculum Vitae.
5. An academic writing sample in Spanish.
6. Three letters of recommendation from former professors or advisors.

Applicants who do not have the requisite 3.0 grade point average in the last 60 credits of the undergraduate degree may be considered for admission on probation. Students will be removed from probation at the end of their first semester of enrollment if they achieve at least a 3.0 grade point average.

Credits and Courses

A content-based examination is mandatory for all incoming students. The results of this examination are used to develop the program of study. Students with insufficient preparation for graduate study in one or more areas may be admitted with specific, program-defined course deficiencies provided that the deficiencies amount to no more than two courses.

The student is expected to satisfy deficiency requirements within three enrolled semesters. The deficiencies are monitored by the Graduate School and the individual graduate program unit. No course credits earned in making up deficiencies may be counted as program credits required for the degree.

A minimum of 30 graduate credits beyond the baccalaureate degree is required for the MA in Spanish. All students must demonstrate reading competency in a second Romance language. In order to do so, they may take the departmental graduate reading exam or complete two semesters in another language. Courses taken to complete this requirement do not count toward the minimum credits required for the MA.

Specific course requirements and credit distribution are as follows:

Code	Title	Credits
SPANISH 701	Historical Linguistics (or equivalent)	3
SPANISH 720	Approaches to Hispanic Literary Theory and Criticism (or equivalent)	3
Select 12 credits in Spanish or Spanish-American literature and culture courses at the 700 level or above		12
Select 6 credits in language and/or linguistics courses in Spanish		6
Select 6 credits of electives in Hispanic culture, language, linguistics, literature, thesis, or related courses		6
Total Credits		30

All teaching assistants are required to enroll in MALLT 700 or an equivalent course during their first year. This course counts toward the 6 credits of electives.

No 300-level courses will apply toward the degree, and a maximum of six (6) graduate credits in 400-level U/G courses may be used to fulfill degree requirements.

The MA degree in Spanish offers both non-thesis and thesis options.

Additional Requirements

Major Professor as Advisor

All students must have a major professor who serves as an advisor and supervises their course of study. The Director of the MA program acts as the initial advisor for all entering students. By the end of the second semester, students will be matched with an advisor based on their academic interest.

Non-Thesis Option

Students pursuing the non-thesis option must complete a minimum of thirty (30) credits of acceptable graduate-level coursework (including the courses specifically required) and receive a passing grade on the final comprehensive examination.

Thesis Option

Students pursuing the thesis option must complete a minimum of twenty four (24) credits of acceptable graduate-level coursework, successfully defend a thesis for which a maximum of six (6) credits is granted, and receive a passing grade on the final comprehensive examination.

Students in the thesis option should choose an area of specialization for the thesis as early as possible. After a thesis topic is chosen, students, with the approval of the major professor, select two additional members of the graduate faculty in the area of concentration to serve as the thesis committee. A member of the graduate faculty specializing in the student's area of concentration acts as the thesis director and chair of the committee. Students writing a linguistics-based thesis may use either the APA, LSA, or MLA style. All other theses must be written following the MLA style.

Upon the approval of the Departmental Graduate Studies Committee, a student may be allowed to write the Spanish MA thesis in Spanish; each request will be examined on an individual basis to ensure the highest quality of theses and the linguistic ability of each petitioner. Those approved to write the thesis in Spanish must also provide an abstract written in English.

Comprehensive Final Examination

Students enrolled in the thesis and non-thesis options take the same MA comprehensive examination. Students are urged to take the examination no later than the fourth semester of graduate study. The examination may be repeated once.

Time Limit

The student must complete all degree requirements within five years of initial enrollment.

Spanish MA Learning Outcomes

Learning Outcome 1 – Advanced Proficiency in Speaking in Spanish

Students graduating from the Spanish MA program will be able to

- Engage in conversations in Spanish related to Hispanic culture, literature and linguistics.
- Express and defend their point of view in Spanish when discussing topics related to Hispanic literature and linguistics.

Learning Outcome 2 – Advanced Proficiency in Writing in Spanish

Students graduating from the Spanish MA program will be able to:

- Summarize, narrate and describe in all time frames in Spanish.
- Compose an organized and coherent defense of an argument.

Learning Outcome 3 – Advanced Understanding of Hispanic Cultures

Students graduating from the Spanish MA program will be able to:

- Identify and describe significant literary texts, cultural movements, historical events and linguistic processes related to Hispanic cultures and the Spanish language.
- Analyze texts and interpret their cultural, literary or linguistic significance.