MASTEr of Arts in Hispanic Studies

The Master of Arts (MA) in Spanish curriculum is designed to provide broad preparation through research and creativity. The graduate program offers options for scholarship, creativity, and practice. Besides learning and discussing ideas from the close reading of texts, students have the opportunity to explore modes of original expression and knowledge creation. Students gain skills for advanced research and the analysis of literary and cultural texts from the Hispanic world and from in-depth comparative study of Spanish-speaking and bilingual cultural production. Students can choose to concentrate in literary studies, linguistics or creative and professional writing, or an interdisciplinary blend. The Master of Arts degree in Spanish offers the opportunity for an in-depth view of Hispanic studies in specialized areas that underscore the diversity of the Hispanic world. Interdisciplinary elective courses offer an opportunity to further understand the Hispanic world in its geographical, cultural, and social variations.

The MA in Spanish at Texas A&M University coexists with the PhD program in Hispanic Studies, an interdisciplinary graduate program. Using a wide range of methods and theoretical frameworks, and with a wide range of research interests, our graduate faculty has expertise in cultural studies, digital humanities, film and performance, gender and diaspora studies, Hispanic literatures, historical and comparative linguistics, history and presence of Spanish in the U.S., iconography, language acquisition and pedagogy, language variation and change, photography, post-hegemonic and infrapolitical thought, and sociolinguistics. Several faculty members are accomplished creative writers.

 Students can choose between the thesis and the non-thesis options. For the creative/professional writing concentration, students must pursue a thesis option Master of Arts degree. A thesis track requires the submission of a monograph or major area paper. It is recommended for students who want to focus on their writing skills. The non-thesis track can include different combinations of discipline-focused course work, research and practice. Students develop their degree plans, research and writing projects with the guidance of an advisor and an advisory committee.

The MA in Spanish prepares students to pursue a range of career paths, from going to study for a PhD, to careers as teachers at the high school or junior college levels, as well as other professions for which a knowledge of Spanish and Hispanic cultures is important: international business, cultural affairs, homeland security, public administration, nonprofit organizations, tourism and entertainment.

For more information, visit our website at https://hisp.tamu.edu.

Program Requirements

Program Requirements
- Student’s Advisory Committee (p. 1)
- Degree Plan (p. 2)
- Credit Requirement (p. 2)
- Transfer of Credit (p. 2)
- Limitations on the Use of Transfer, Extension and Certain Other Courses (p. 2)
- Thesis Option (p. 3)
may be replaced by petition for valid reasons, a committee cannot resign en masse.

Degree Plan
The student's advisory committee, in consultation with the student, will develop the proposed degree plan and it must include study in more than one area of specialization, but these areas may be contained within the course offerings of a single department. The degree plan must be completed and filed with the Graduate and Professional School prior to the deadline imposed by the student's college, and no later than 90 days prior to the date of the final oral examination or thesis defense.

This proposed degree plan should be submitted through the online Document Processing Submission System located on the website https://ogsdpss.tamu.edu.

A student submitting a proposed degree plan for a Master of Arts degree should designate on the official degree plan form the program option desired by checking "thesis option" or "non-thesis option."

Additional coursework may be added to the approved degree plan by petition if it is deemed necessary by the advisory committee to correct deficiencies in the student's academic preparation. No changes to the degree plan can be made once the student's Request for Final Examination or Request for Final Examination Exemption is approved by the Graduate and Professional School.

Credit Requirement
A minimum of 30 semester credit hours of approved courses and research is required for the thesis option Master of Arts degree. A minimum of 36 semester credit hours of approved courses is required for the non-thesis option Master of Arts degree.

Transfer of Credit
A student who has earned 12 hours of graduate credit in residence at Texas A&M University may be authorized to transfer courses in excess of the limits prescribed above upon the advice of the advisory committee and with the approval of the Graduate and Professional School. Courses taken in residence at an accredited U.S. institution or approved international institution with a final grade of B or greater might be considered for transfer credit if, at the time the courses were completed, the courses would be accepted for credit toward a similar degree for a student in degree-seeking status at Texas A&M University. Otherwise, the limitations stated in the preceding section apply. Coursework in which no formal grades are given or in which grades other than letter grades (A or B) are earned (for example, CR, P, S, U, H, etc.) is not accepted for transfer credit. Courses appearing on the degree plan with grades of D, F or U may not be absolved by transfer work. Credit for thesis research or the equivalent is not transferable. Credit for coursework submitted for transfer from any college or university must be shown in semester credit hours or equated to semester credit hours. An official transcript from the university at which the transfer coursework was taken must be sent directly to the Office of Admissions.

Courses used toward a degree at another institution may not be applied for graduate credit. If the course to be transferred was taken prior to the conferral of a degree at the transfer institution, a letter from the registrar at that institution stating that the course was not applied for credit toward the degree must be submitted to the Graduate and Professional School.

Grades for courses completed at other institutions are not included in computing the GPA.

Limitations on the Use of Transfer, Extension and Certain Other Courses
Some departments may have more restrictive requirements for transfer work. If otherwise acceptable, certain courses may be used toward meeting credit-hour requirements for the master's degree under the following limitations:

1. The maximum number of credit hours which may be considered for transfer credit is the greater of 12 hours or one-third (1/3) of the total hours of a degree plan. The following restrictions apply:
   • Graduate and/or upper-level undergraduate courses, taken in residence at an accredited U.S. institution or approved international institution, with a final grade of B or greater, will be considered for transfer credit if, at the time the courses were completed, the student was in degree-seeking status at Texas A&M University, or the student was in degree-seeking status at the institution at which the courses were taken; and if the courses would be accepted for credit toward a similar degree for a student in degree-seeking status at the host institution.
   • Courses previously used for another degree are not acceptable for degree plan credit.

2. The maximum number of credit hours taken in post-baccalaureate non-degree (G6) classification at Texas A&M University which may be considered for application to the degree plan is 12.

3. A zero credit 684 or 685 course is only allowed for non-thesis option master's students. A zero credit 681 course can be used for either thesis or non-thesis option master's students. Other courses, including 691 research hours, are not eligible for zero credit.

4. Not more than 12 hours may be used in any combination of the following categories:
   • Not more than 6 hours in combination of 691 (Research) or 684 (Professional Internship) may be used.
   • Not more than 8 hours of 685 (Directed Studies) may be used.
   • Not more than 3 hours of 690 (Theory of Research) may be used.
   • Not more than 3 hours of 695 (Frontiers in Research) may be used.

5. A maximum of 2 hours of Seminar (681).

6. A maximum of 9 hours of advanced undergraduate courses (300- or 400-level).

7. For graduate courses of three weeks' duration or less, taken at other institutions, up to 1 hour of credit may be obtained for each five-day week of coursework. Each week of coursework must include at least 15 contact hours.

8. No credit hours of 684 (Professional Internship) may be used for the degree of Master of Arts non-thesis option with the exception of a student pursuing the Master of Arts in Philosophy, non-thesis option, who may use up to 6 hours of 684 (Professional Internship).

9. Continuing education courses may not be used for graduate credit.

10. Extension courses are not acceptable for credit.

11. For non-distance degree programs, no more than 50 percent of the credit hours required for the program may be completed through distance education courses.

12. To receive a graduate degree from Texas A&M University, students must earn one-third or more of the credits through the institution's
own direct instruction. This limitation also applies to joint degree programs.

Exceptions will be permitted only in unusual cases and when petitioned by the student’s advisory committee and approved by the Graduate and Professional School.

**Thesis Option**

An acceptable thesis is required for the Master of Arts degree for a student who selects the thesis option program. The finished work is expected to be a competently executed development and exposition of the student’s original research topic. Guidelines for the preparation of the thesis are available in the *Thesis Manual*, which is available online at https://grad.tamu.edu/.

After successful defense (or exemption) and approval by the student’s advisory committee and the head of the student’s major department, a student must submit his/her thesis in electronic format as a single PDF file. The PDF file must be uploaded to the website https://grad.tamu.edu/. Additionally, a signed paper approval form with original signatures must be received by the Graduate and Professional School. Both the PDF file and the signed approval form are required by the deadline.

Deadline dates for submitting are announced each semester or summer term in the “Graduate and Professional School Calendar” (see Time Limit statement). These dates also can be accessed via the website https://grad.tamu.edu/.

Each student who submits a document for review is assessed a one-time thesis/dissertation processing fee through Student Business Services. This processing fee is for the thesis/dissertation services provided. After commencement, theses and dissertations are digitally stored and made available through the Texas A&M Libraries.

**Thesis Proposal**

For the thesis option Master of Arts degree, the student must prepare a thesis proposal for approval by the advisory committee and the head of the major department. This proposal must be submitted to the Graduate and Professional School at least 20 working days prior to the submission of the Request for the Final Examination.

Compliance issues must be addressed if a graduate student is performing research involving human subjects, animals, infectious biohazards and recombinant DNA. A student involved in these types of research should check with the Office of Research Compliance and Biosafety at (979) 458-1467 to address questions about all research compliance responsibilities. Additional information can also be obtained on the website http://rcb.tamu.edu.

**Final Examination/Thesis Defense**

A student must pass a final examination by dates announced each semester or summer term in the Graduate and Professional School Calendar. To be eligible to take the final examination, a student’s GPA must be at least 3.00 for courses on the degree plan and for all courses completed at Texas A&M which are eligible to be applied to a graduate degree, and there must be no unabsolved grades of D, F or U for any course listed on the degree plan. To absorb a deficient grade, the student must repeat the course at Texas A&M University and achieve a grade of C or better. All coursework on the degree plan must have been completed with the exception of those hours for which the student is registered. For thesis-option students, an approved thesis proposal must be on file in the Graduate and Professional School according to published deadlines prior to the final examination or submission of the request for exemption from the final examination.

A request to hold and announce the final examination must be submitted to the Graduate and Professional School a minimum of 10 working days in advance of the scheduled date for the examination. The Graduate and Professional School must be notified in writing of any cancellations. A student may be given only one opportunity to repeat the final examination for the master's degree and that must be within a time period that does not extend beyond the end of the next regular semester (summer terms are excluded).

For thesis option students, the final examination covers the thesis and all work taken on the degree plan and at the option of the committee may be written or oral or both. The final examination may not be administered before the thesis is available to all members of the student’s advisory committee in substantially final form, and all members have had adequate time to review the document. The examination is conducted by the student’s advisory committee as finally constituted. A thesis option student must be registered in the University in the semester or summer term in which the final examination is taken. Persons other than members of the graduate faculty may, with mutual consent of the candidate and the major professor, attend final examinations for advanced degrees. Upon completion of the questioning of the candidate, all visitors must excuse themselves from the proceedings. A positive vote by all members of the graduate committee with at most one dissension is required to pass a student on his or her exam. A department, or interdisciplinary degree program, may have a stricter requirement provided there is consistency within all degree programs within a department or interdisciplinary degree program.

The Report of the Final Examination Form must be submitted with original signatures of only the committee members approved by the Graduate and Professional School. If an approved committee member substitution (1 only) has been made, his/her signature must also be submitted to the Graduate and Professional School. If necessary, multiple copies of the form may be submitted with different committee member original signatures. If an approved committee member substitution (1 only) has been made, his/her signature must be included on the form submitted to the Graduate and Professional School.

A thesis option candidate may petition to be exempt from his/her final examination provided his/her degree plan GPA is 3.500 or greater and he/she has the approval of the advisory committee, the head of the student’s major department, or intercollegiate chair, if appropriate, and the Graduate and Professional School. It is required that the petition for exemption be submitted the same semester the student intends to submit the thesis.

**Non-Thesis Option**

For the non-thesis option, a thesis is not required. A final comprehensive examination is required for all non-thesis Master of Arts students. No examination may be held prior to the mid-point of the semester or summer term in which a student will complete all remaining courses on the degree plan.

A student pursuing the non-thesis option is not allowed to enroll in 691 (Research) for any reason and 691 may not be used for credit toward a non-thesis option Master of Arts degree.

A maximum of 8 credit hours of 685 (Directed Studies), and up to 3 credit hours of 690 (Theory of Research) and up to 3 credit hours of 695
(Frontiers in Research) may be used toward the non-thesis option Master of Arts degree. In addition, any combination of 684, 685, 690 and 695 may not exceed 25 percent of the total credit hour requirement shown on the individual degree plan.

All requirements for the non-thesis option Master of Arts degree other than those specified above are the same as for the thesis option degree.

The department head or the chair of an intercollegiate faculty (if appropriate) for the program may approve an exception for a PhD student who changes to a non-thesis option MA degree program after at least one year of PhD studies to use 691 credits toward a non-thesis option Master of Arts degree. The department head or chair of an intercollegiate faculty (if appropriate) for the program may approve an exception for a master's student who changes from a MA thesis option degree to a MA non-thesis option degree program to use 691 credits toward a non-thesis option Master of Arts degree. In both cases, the student is allowed to use a maximum of 8 credit hours of 685 and 691 combined. Departments, Colleges, and Interdisciplinary Degree Programs may opt to establish higher standards. Further any combination of 684, 685, 690, 691 and 695 may not exceed 25 percent of the total credit hour requirement shown on the individual degree plan. All requirements for the non-thesis option Master of Arts degree other than those specified above are the same as for the thesis option degree.

Additional Requirements

Residence
In partial fulfillment of the residence requirement for the degree of Master of Arts, the student must complete 9 resident credit hours during one regular semester or one 10-week summer semester in resident study at Texas A&M University. Upon recommendation of the student's advisory committee and with approval of the Graduate and Professional School, a student may be granted exemption from this requirement. Such a petition must be approved, however, prior to the student's registration for the final 9 credit hours of required coursework.

Students who are employed full-time while completing their degree may fulfill total residence requirements by completion of less-than-full time course loads each semester. In order to be considered for this, the student is required to submit a Petition for Waivers and Exceptions along with verification of his/her employment to the Graduate and Professional School.

See Residence Requirements (http://catalog.tamu.edu/graduate/academic-expectations-general-degree-requirements/#degreerequirementstext).

Continuous Registration
A student in the thesis option of the Master of Arts program who has completed all coursework on his/her degree plan other than 691 (Research) is required to be in continuous registration until all requirements for the degree have been completed.

See Continuous Registration Requirements (http://catalog.tamu.edu/graduate/academic-expectations-general-degree-requirements/#registrationandacademicstatustext).

Time Limit
All degree requirements must be completed within a period of seven consecutive years for the degree to be granted. A course will be considered valid until seven years after the end of the semester in which it is taken. Graduate credit for coursework which is more than seven calendar years old at the time of the final examination (oral or written) may not be used to satisfy degree requirements.

A student who has chosen the thesis option must have the final corrected copies of the thesis cleared by the Graduate and Professional School within one year of the semester in which the final exam is taken, or a final exam exemption petition was approved. Exams taken in between terms will expire at the end of the term that ended prior to the exam. For example, a final exam taken and passed during the fall 2022 semester will expire at the end of the fall 2023 semester. A final exam taken in the time between the summer and fall 2022 semesters will expire at the end of the summer 2023 semester.

Foreign Languages
For the degree of Master of Arts, a reading knowledge (usually represented by two years of college study) of at least one foreign language is normally required.

Application for Degree
For information on applying for your degree, please visit the Graduation section.