

The Spanish/Latin American Studies Master's Program
Student Handbook
Department of Language and Foreign Studies
American University

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SECTION I: THE SPANISH/LATIN AMERICAN STUDIES M.A.

A. Introduction.

This handbook was prepared by your faculty to give you basic information on the M.A. program in Spanish and Latin American Studies in the Department of Language and Foreign Studies (LFS) at American University.

B. The M.A. program at a glance.

Our program is unique because of its flexibility, and because of the way it combines graduate study in the Spanish language with Latin American courses taught in Spanish, and English in various teaching units of the University. The checklist at the end of this handbook provides the best overview of our MA program. It may be helpful to consult it as you read through the rest of this handbook.

This 33 credit-hour interdisciplinary Master's degree program focuses on cultural studies, interdisciplinary Latin American Studies, international relations, literature, culture, and language with coursework available for a Certificate in Spanish Translation. Courses are taught in Spanish or English. Students take a minimum of 21 credit hours in Spanish.

There are several things that make this program special:

- *Is conducted by a dynamic faculty of outstanding scholars and teachers

- *Takes advantage of American University's Washington location through internships and cooperative education, field trips, guest lecturers, visiting faculty, and the rich range of research facilities in the area

- *Combines a core of common courses dealing with Latin America and a specialization of the student's choice from four options:

Interdisciplinary Studies, Linguistics and Translation, and Literature and Culture.

- *Allows students to choose courses taught in Spanish and English. The Department of Language and Foreign Studies offers a full range of graduate courses, taught in Spanish, in the areas of Literature, and Latin American area studies. Students may take up to 9 credits of Latin American studies courses in English, in the School of International Service, the School of Public Affairs, and the Departments of Anthropology, Economics, History in the College of Arts and Sciences.

- *Provides for study abroad opportunities in Latin American countries and in Spain

- *Administers a service-learning internship (Proyecto Amistad)

- * The inclusion of courses taught in Spanish and English, as long as they are relevant to the program's central focus: Spanish and Latin American Studies. (A minimum of 21

credit hours must be taken in courses taught in the Spanish language). We offer a full range of graduate courses taught in Spanish in the areas of literature and culture, translation and linguistics, and interdisciplinary studies (history, international relations, and politics). You also have the opportunity to take a maximum of 4 Latin American studies courses in English.

C. Admission

The basic requirement is a relevant B.A. degree from an accredited college or university and a 3.2 GPA. Two letters of recommendation, a written sample in Spanish, and the University's standard application must be submitted. Entering M.A. students have majored or minored in Spanish and/or Latin American Studies as undergraduates, although exceptions are possible. These exceptions include situations where an applicant has lived in a Spanish-speaking country for an extended period, or if the applicant's first language is Spanish. In any case, you must possess sufficient language abilities to carry out scholarly and professional work in Spanish. All LFS classes in the program are taught in Spanish. The program reserves the right to interview candidates in Spanish.

For an application contact:
Office of Graduate Admissions
The American University
4400 Massachusetts Avenue, NW
Washington, D.C. 20016
Phone: (202) 885-6100
Fax: (202) 885- 1025
OR

Department of Language and Foreign Studies
American University
4400 Massachusetts Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20016-8045
Phone: (202) 885-2381 Fax: (202) 885-
1076
E-mail: lfs@american.edu

For more information contact any of the faculty members in the program, listed below.

D. Degree requirements

The M.A. in Spanish and Latin American Studies consists of a total of 33 credit hours of graduate work with a grade point average of 3.00 (on a 4.00 scale). A minimum of 21 of these 33 hours must be in courses taught in the Spanish language. In accordance with Academic Regulations, 50 percent of the course work that a graduate takes in LFS must be courses that do not meet jointly with undergraduate-level courses. Therefore we encourage you to take at least one graduate seminar per semester while enrolled in the program. The key elements of the degree requirements are (see "Representative Recent Course Offerings" for specific examples):

Core Courses (21 credits)

- Three seminars in Latin American literature or culture
- One course in Latin American history, politics, international relations, or economics
- Three electives in Spanish: Latin American Studies (Graduate seminars in this field are offered every semester)

Specialization (12 credits):

In consultation with an advisor, students select one of the following fields of specialization and take four courses in that field.

The Core and Specialization are assessed by means of a two part written comprehensive examination in Spanish.

E. Course load

Full-time students may take up to four courses per semester. However, this is considered a heavy load at the graduate level, and most full-time students generally take 3 courses per semester. At this rate, it is possible to complete the program in 2 years. It is also possible to enroll on a part time basis, taking only 1-2 courses per semester and thus continuing other activities or employment. The University requires M.A. candidates to complete their degree work within 3 years.

Students who have received assistantships or fellowships must maintain enrollment as a full-time student each semester, and normally take three courses in each of the first three semesters (this is the minimum course load to maintain full-time status). In the fourth semester, students with assistantships and fellowships may maintain full-time status by taking two courses and waiving 3 credits of coursework by preparing for comprehensive exams (this is the so-called "in lieu of" procedure, which must be requested on a special form).

F. Your faculty

Dr. Jack Child, 342 Asbury, 885-2385 (*on partial sabbatical*)

Dr. Consuelo Hernández, 340 Asbury, 885-2345

Dr. Amy Oliver, 330 Asbury, 885-2140 (*on sabbatical*)

Dr. Ana Serra, 340 Asbury, 885-2384

Dr Brenda Werth, 230 Asbury, 885-1449

Adjunct faculty and part-time professors

Dr. Margarita Marín-Dale, 885-2325

Jorge Ata, M.A. SCAN 178, 885-6338

Dr Emil Alvarado

G. Internships, "Proyecto Amistad", employment opportunities.

The nation's capital is the seat of numerous federal agencies, international organizations, and non-government organizations (NGOs) where you can find internships and relevant employment on a part-time or full time basis during or after completion of your studies. We have a list of these relevant organizations, phone numbers, and contacts. Our Spanish language internship program goes by the name of "Proyecto Amistad", course 691. It requires 40 work hours per credit unit at an approved organization, as well as an academic component and regular meetings during the semester. M.A. students are limited to 3 credit hours of internship or coop work. It is also possible to do a Cooperative Education course abroad (limited to 3 credits and usually taken during the summer) in a Spanish-speaking country.

Please consult Professor Kristi Velleman, coordinator of Proyecto Amistad, Asbury 332B. 885-2344

Other places to look for internship and employment leads are:

The Smithsonian Institution's Scholar's Guide to Washington: Latin American and Caribbean Studies. This publication has a listing of over 400 organizations, institutions, government offices and other entities, with addresses, phone numbers and points of contact.

- * The School of International Service (SIS) posts internship opportunities on its bulletin board across from the SIS Undergraduate Advising Office.
- * The Washington Post and The Washington Times Sunday employment sections under the headings "International" and "Bilingual."
- * The bi-monthly employment publication entitled International Employment Opportunities located at the Career Center library and in the LFS main office, 324 Asbury.
- * The Center for Latin American Studies (4E04 Forbes Quad, University of Pittsburgh, Pittsburgh, PA, 15260) publishes After Latin American Studies: A Guide to Employment for Latin Americanists, which provides useful information and points of contact.
- * The Spanish Yellow Pages (Vega and Associates, 8301 Greensboro Dr., Suite 450, McLean, VA, 22102. Tel: 800-499- 7828 or 516-773-2880).
- * The Hispanic Yearbook (TIYM Publishing Co., 8370 Greensboro Dr., #1009, McLean, VA, 22102. Tel: 703-734-1632).

H. Research resources in Washington

The publications mentioned above contain a list of many organizations and offices, which welcome qualified researchers. At The American University Bender Library, ask the reference librarian for the Research Guide Series: Area Studies-Latin America This

document is available free of charge and lists the many dictionaries, encyclopedias, handbooks, and other reference materials that AU library has available to students concerning this part of the world.

Washington Research Library Consortium (WRLC):
There are seven members of the WRLC in addition to AU:

The Catholic University 202-319-5070
Gallaudet University 202-651-5217
George Mason University 703-993-2250
The George Washington University 202-994-6558
Marymount University 703-284-1533
The University of The District of Columbia (UDC) 202-282-3091
Trinity College 202-884-9350

The WRLC's collection is catalogued on the Access to Library and Database Information Network (ALADIN), the member on-line system.

For more information on the system see the Guide to Libraries available at the AU Bender Library circulation desk.

SECTION II: GENERAL INFORMATION

A. Registration procedures

When you are ready to register, contact our administrative assistant, Isadora Vigier de Latour (885-2381), who will let you know who your faculty advisor is. Please make an appointment with this advisor after you have consulted the Registrar's "Schedule of Classes" on line. With your advisor, select courses for the upcoming semester, and after your advisor clears you, you will be able to register on-line. At this time, be sure to update your Program Checklist for your records.

The Consortium of Universities of the Washington Metropolitan Area has a cross-registration arrangement, which permits students enrolled in eligible degree programs at one Consortium member institution to register for a course offered at another member institution. Consult your advisor before registering at a consortium university to be sure that the course you wish to take will be approved, since not all courses meet AU requirements. One basic requirement is that the consortium course not duplicate an existing course available at AU. Consult with your advisor, see the website or contact the member universities below for a current list of their individual course offerings.

The Catholic University 202-319-5000
George Mason University 703-993-1000
The George Washington University 202-994-4949
Georgetown University 202-687-5055
Howard University 202-806-6100
University of Maryland at College Park 301-405-1000

B. Maintaining matriculation (099)

Students who have completed at least one course in a graduate degree program are required by university regulations to register each fall and spring semester during the regular registration period until completion of the degree requirements. Graduate students not taking courses must register each fall and spring semester for a minimum of one credit hour in either Master's Thesis Seminar (797) or Maintaining Matriculation (099). Students enrolling in the Thesis Seminar should do so only after consultation with their graduate advisor.

*Note that the Thesis Seminar may vary in value from 1-6 credits while Maintaining Matriculation carries no credit. Those simply Maintaining Matriculation will be charged the equivalent of one graduate credit hour.

C. Financial aid

Financial Assistance is available to graduate students through a variety of graduate honor awards. You should check with the Financial Aid office (x6100), especially if you fall into any of the following categories where special scholarships exist: American-born minority students, international students, Canadian citizens, members of the Methodist Church, etc.

In addition, a limited number of fellow/assistantships are awarded each year by the department. Fellowships provide up to 18 hours of tuition remission during the academic year (plus a stipend), and require a service commitment of up to 20 hours each week during each semester. Assistantships provide up to 18 hours of tuition remission during the academic year and require a service commitment of up to 10 hours each week during the semester. This service involves working in the Language Resource Center (LRC), or serving as a research, teaching or administrative assistant in the department. Awards are competitive, and are granted on the basis of undergraduate academic achievement.

Students interested in fellow/assistantships should apply to the office of Graduate Affairs and Admissions as soon after January 1 as possible, and no later than February 15 for the following fall semester.

The Spanish/ Latin American Studies Restricted Fund

Thanks to a generous anonymous alumnus of American University's interdisciplinary Spanish/ Latin American Studies program, we have at our disposal a special fund to

support our program. This fund pays for student part-time wages to support faculty research as well as a variety of student and faculty activities. In the past, this fund has also been used to pay for student membership in professional organizations such as the Latin American Studies Association (LASA) and its regional affiliate the Middle Atlantic Council of Latin American Studies (MACLAS) and the American Translators Association (ATA). The fund is also available to provide modest loans to students with short-term financial problems.

Consult your advisor for further information.

D. Graduation

It is absolutely imperative that candidates for a degree file an Application for Graduation form, which may be found in the Office of the Registrar or online at www.american.edu/american/registrar/grad.htm no later than the beginning of the last semester of your program. It is only after this application has been filed that the Office of the Registrar can begin processing the information for final certification for graduation.

The following are recommended dates to file one's Application for Graduation:

Spring: October -January

Summer: April-May

Fall: April-August

E. Important AU publications

AU Catalog (available at the Registrar)

AU Schedule of Classes (available at the Registrar)

AU Guide to Graduate Study (available at the Office of Graduate Affairs)

AU Academic Regulations (available at the Registrar)

F. Key telephone numbers (prefix 885-)

University Information and Emergency Closings x1000

Admissions and Financial Aid x6100

Graduate Affairs x3406 AFA@american.edu

Alumni Relations x5960

Anderson Computing Complex x2561

Campus Store x6300

Cashier x 3588

Career Center x1804 careercenter@american.edu

McCabe Computer Assisted Writing Center x2829

Disability Support Services x3312

Graduate Student Council x2472

Bender Library x3200

Language and Foreign Studies (LFS) x2381

Lost and Found x2525

Off-campus Housing Resource Center x3270

Parking and Traffic x3110

Payroll x3520
Registrar x2200
Student Accounts x3541
Student Health Center x3380
Student Health Insurance x3384
Ticketmaster x3072
World Capitals Program x4900
Security x2525

G. Committees: Departmental, College and University

Certain departmental committees seek graduate student members. Such committees include the Rank and Tenure Committee, the Grievance Committee, the Departmental Council, and occasional ad-hoc committees. LFS representatives are also needed for the Graduate Student Council and CAS Graduate Advisory Council. Please volunteer if interested.

SECTION III: THE COMPREHENSIVE EXAM

A. General: purpose, requesting the exam

The purpose of the M.A. written comprehensive examination is to allow you to demonstrate the scope of your knowledge of Translation theory and practice as well as literature, culture, history, politics, international relations (as appropriate) of Latin America attained through your coursework and supplementary readings. A student who fails all or part of the exams must repeat the procedure within a period of two years. A second failure will eliminate the student from candidacy for the M.A.

The Spanish/Latin American Studies comprehensive exams in LFS are normally administered twice a year, on the first week of April and the first week of November. You should inform your advisor at the beginning of the semester in which you intend to complete the M.A. comprehensive exams. At that time you fill out a form to register for the comprehensive exam and pay the corresponding fee (\$25.00). On the form indicate that you are taking the Spanish Studies MA (SPAN 03).

For administrative purposes this counts as a single exam, but it consists of two 4-hour parts. You would normally also submit the graduation clearance form at the same time (check the Schedule of Classes for the specific deadline). If you delay the comprehensive exam you must maintain Continuous Matriculation. (See “Maintaining Matriculation” above). We suggest that you form study groups with your peers to prepare for the comprehensive exam in the early part of your final semester.

B. Format

Before taking the comprehensive exams there will be an oral interview in Spanish to determine if you are ready to take the written exams.

The Spanish/Latin American Studies Comprehensive is a four-hour exam in which you are presented with six broad answer questions (two in each of the three core areas). You must answer at least one question from each of the three areas; you can select the fourth question from any of the remaining questions. Candidates will be expected to cite authors, examples, authorities and the literature appropriate in their answers.

The three core areas are:

1. Latin American literature or culture
2. Spanish linguistics, language or translation
3. Interdisciplinary Studies (Latin American History, International Relations, Economics and Politics)

C. Suggested readings

Because of the scope of the various disciplines and courses involved, we suggest you consult course syllabi for each area of your comprehensive exam to compile your own reading list.

SECTION IV: REPRESENTATIVE RECENT COURSE OFFERINGS

A. Literature and Culture

ANTH-639 Cultural Area Analysis: Latin America

SPAN-554 Classics of Latin American Literature. Recent offerings include: Andean Indigenism, Neruda and Paz, Film and Literature in Latin America, Latin American Short Story, XX Century Poetics and Poetry in Latin America, Dictatorships and Repression in Latin America.

SPAN-559 Colloquium on Latin America. Post-Dictatorship Literature in Argentina, Cuba Today, Afro-Caribbean Culture and Music, Myth and Cultures of the Andes, Millenarian Discourse in Latin America, Gender Outlaws in Latin America

SPAN-656 Spanish Topics. Recent offerings include: Colombia Past and Present, the Mexican-US Border, Culture and Politics in Latin America, Latin American History and Politics from the Margins, Southern Cone Icons and Identity, Spanish in the World.

SPAN-705 Seminar in Spanish and Latin American Studies.

Recent offerings include: Central American Literature and Culture, Literature and Cultural Movements in Latin America, Latin American Thought, Double Translation: US Latino Literature in Spanish

B. Linguistics, Translation, and Language Teaching

SPAN-656 Spanish Topics. Recent offerings include:

SPAN-658 Introduction to Spanish Translation

SPAN-659 Advanced Spanish Translation

SPAN- 656. Introduction to Interpretation
SPAN-661 Introduction to Spanish Linguistics
LFS-691 Proyecto Amistad (internship)

C. Interdisciplinary Studies (Latin American History, International Relations, Politics and Economics)

SIS-577 International Relations of Latin America

SIS-579 Selected Regional and Country Studies. Recent offerings include: Politics of NAFTA, Latin America in Comparative Perspective, Politics of Economic Regional Integration in Latin America

SIS-582 International Organizations and Latin American Development

SPAN-656 Spanish Topics. Recent offerings include: Antarctica and Malvinas/Falklands, Colombia Past and Present, The Mexican-US Border, Women in Latin America