

PhD EXAM GUIDELINES IN SPANISH

General

All graduate students are expected to demonstrate basic knowledge in six different areas of Hispanic literary culture, understood amply*: 1) Medieval Spanish; 2) Golden Age Spanish; 3) Modern Peninsular (18th-21st centuries); 4) Colonial Latin American; 5) 19th century Latin American; 6) Contemporary Latin American. To that end, students will complete written and oral examinations in at least three of the areas (divided into one major and at least two minor areas). Students may satisfy the three remaining areas by substituting pertinent graduate-level courses in Spanish for the exams.

Timetable

It is expected that graduate students will complete their three course substitutions by May of their second year. Written and oral examinations will be offered during two windows of time: the first week of October and the first week of May. Students are strongly encouraged to take both minor exams by May of their second year, and in no case later than October of their third year. Students are strongly encouraged to complete the examinations in their major field by October of their third year, and in no case later than May of their third year. This policy is consistent with GSAS expectations that students making satisfactory progress towards their degree will have passed their PhD general examinations by the end of their third year.

Course Substitutions

Any course in Spanish at the 200-level may be counted as a substitution, pending the approval of the instructor. The course needs to treat a subject in direct relation to the area in order to be deemed an appropriate substitute. In exceptional cases, and with the approval of the course head in consultation with the head of the Spanish section and the DGS, a course in Spanish at the 100-level may be counted as a substitution.

Written and Oral Exams (Minor and Major Fields)

A. Preparation: Creation of Reading Lists and Exam Questions

Preparation for minor and major field exams involves significant advance planning and communication between students and faculty. For each of the two minor fields, as well as for the major field, students begin their preparation by constructing a reading list in consultation with a committee comprised of two faculty specialists in the particular area (minor field exams) and their adviser and up to two faculty specialists (major field exams). In doing so, students may avail themselves of the existing reading lists, and may modify them in consultation with their committee. For minor field exams, the reading list should not exceed a total of twenty works: a minimum of ten literary texts and up to ten more items, which could include works of criticism, theory, films, paintings, photographs, architecture, etc. For major field exams, the reading list should not exceed a total of eighty works: a minimum of fifty literary works and up to thirty more items, which, again, could include works of criticism, theory, films, paintings, photographs, architecture, etc. While

* Students may also engage pertinent non Spanish-language texts and contexts, such as indigenous cultures in Latin America and the Caribbean; Galician, Basque, and Catalán in Spain; and experiences of exile, immigration, colonialism, and cultural diaspora in, for instance, the Philippines, Africa, and the United States.

creating their reading lists for both the minor and major field exams, students, with guidance from their committee, will draft two or three questions. For the major field exam, one of the questions should be related to the dissertation topic. Students submit the reading list and questions for approval from the exam committee no later than May 1 for an October exam and no later than February 1 for a May exam.

B. Written Exam Structure (Minor Field)

A take-home examination, in which the student is given a maximum of two days (48 hours) to write 1) a detailed analysis, commentary, or *explication de texte* of a selection from a work on the student's reading list; 2) an essay on one of three previously submitted questions or topics, which the student will draft in consultation with the appropriate faculty member(s). The total amount of writing should not be any less than 2000 words and not in excess of 3000 words (approximately 8-12 pages). These limits will be strictly enforced. All responses should be written in Spanish. Responses should be double-spaced, with 1" margins on all sides, and written using Times New Roman 12pt font. **Pages should be numbered, with the student's name, exam identification and date on each page.** Students should e-mail their responses as a pdf attachment to the examining committee, with copies to the section head and to the Graduate Coordinator.

C. Oral Exam Structure (Minor Field)

An exam lasting 30-60 minutes, in which students discuss and develop their written responses with their committee members. The discussion is in Spanish.

D. Written Exam Structure (Major Field)

A take-home examination, in which the student is given a maximum of two days (48 hours) to write 1) a detailed analysis, commentary, or *explication de texte* of 2 out of 3 selections from works on the student's reading list; 2) two essays on two of six previously submitted questions or topics, which the student will draft in consultation with the appropriate faculty member(s). The total amount of writing should not be any less than 3750 words and not in excess of 5000 words (approximately 15-20 pages). These limits will be strictly enforced. **The page formatting requirements are the same as those for the minor field exam.** In addition to the close textual commentary and the essay, students are also expected to produce some notes or talking points towards their dissertation. **Note: the dissertation material is in addition to the 15 to 20 page allotment for the exam questions. Accordingly, time spent on it is not counted as part of the 48 hour exam time limit.** Both the textual commentary and the essay should be written in Spanish; the preliminary dissertation notes should be written in the same language as the dissertation.

E. Oral Exam Structure (Major Field)

The oral examination for the major field lasts two hours and involves the entire literature section of the Spanish Faculty. The first 90 minutes are devoted to the discussion and development of the written responses to the commentary and essay; the last half hour is comprised of a 10-minute presentation of the student's notes towards the dissertation, followed by a 20-minute discussion. In preparation for this exercise, students will form a preliminary dissertation committee that may include one individual from outside the department (either at Harvard or at another university).

