

Spanish, PHD

Modality

On Campus

Program URL

<https://spanport.georgetown.edu/graduate/>

The Ph.D. program in Spanish stresses the development of analytical, scholarly, and creative abilities through small seminars and formal pedagogical training. Graduate students are encouraged to present their work at scholarly meetings and to publish in refereed media, often in collaboration with faculty members.

Academic Policies

The academic policies and procedures of the Spanish program are those specified in the department handbook and Georgetown University's Graduate Bulletin.

Requirements

Program Requirements

Doctoral students are required to complete 48 credits of coursework, pass a language proficiency exam in a language other than English or Spanish, complete the Qualifying Examination, research; write; and publicly defend a dissertation of original research in order to successfully complete the program. Students focus their coursework through a specific area of study.

Degree requirements for each area of study is outlined below.

Required Examinations

Qualifying Paper

The purpose of the Qualifying Paper (QP) is to give the student an opportunity to show that he or she is able to conduct the kind of independent research that is necessary to write a doctoral dissertation. Students may consult faculty regarding the viability and originality of their proposed topics or any questions that come up along the way; faculty will not read drafts nor will they provide written feedback. The QP may be an original study or one that originated in a previous course but has not received written feedback from any member of the faculty; provision of written feedback disqualifies a paper from being considered. Documentation of the relationship between the QP and any prior paper previously submitted to fulfill a course requirement is required. In addition, if the QP is a conceptual replication of a previous study or is based in whole or in part on one of the faculty's paradigms or databases, or even public databases (i.e., Childes), it needs to include minimally another independent variable with its pertinent review of the literature necessary to motivate its research question.

The paper must be submitted by the end of the candidate's fourth semester of coursework, or the last day of finals in the Spring semester. Students can apply for one extension, which must be approved by the Director of Graduate Studies and is only granted for medical reasons. The maximum time for an extension cannot exceed two weeks. The Qualifying Paper is evaluated by a committee made up of two Georgetown University faculty members with expertise

in the subject area of the paper who, after evaluating the paper (cf. Summary Ranking attached), will provide students with written comments. Members of the committee are appointed by the Chair of the Department in consultation with the DGS; ideally both, but at least one of the members must be a member of the faculty in the Spanish and Portuguese Department. The committee's decision is reported to the Director of Graduate Studies, who announces it to the student, the Chair, the Registrar, the faculty, and the Graduate School. Decisions are final. If the paper is satisfactory and the student has a general GPA higher than 3.5, and a GPA of 3.67 or higher in the chosen area of specialization, s/he is accepted into the Ph.D. Program. If the paper falls short of passing quality, and/or the minimum GPA has not been reached in both categories, the student is not allowed to continue to the Ph.D. program, but may be awarded a Master's degree, provided all other requirements, including a minimum GPA of 3.0, are met.

Students not wishing to continue to the Ph.D. program need not complete a Qualifying Paper. After successful completion of all requirements for the Master's degree, students accepted into the Ph.D. program may apply to the Graduate School to obtain the degree of Master of Science in passing and participate in Commencement if they so wish.

Ph.D. Examinations

By October 15th of the third semester in the Ph.D. program, the student will present the thesis director with a written proposal that comprises

1. a 350-word abstract that works as an executive summary of the thesis/topic, goals and motivation, and potential theoretical and practical implications;
2. a succinct review of the pertinent literature of selected independent variable(s) or social (external) and linguistic (internal) factors to be accounted for;
3. potential research questions;
4. a potential research design that includes the dependent variable(s) or main phenomenon to be investigated; and
5. a comprehensive reference list.

The length of the proposal should be 10 to 15 pages maximum plus references. The thesis director uses this proposal to shape the questions for the two written exams. The first exam should be the first attempt to write Chapter 1 (the Statement of the Problem) of the dissertation and will ask the student to contextualize their research by providing a comprehensive overview of previous and current research and to identify potential future areas of research in the specific strand(s) they wish to pursue. The second exam is the first draft of Chapters 2 and 3 of the dissertation. This exam asks for more elaboration on the selected independent variable(s) of such future research and comprises a review of the literature, research questions, and a research design to address the independent variable(s). Chapters 1-3 make up the Dissertation Proposal. The two four-day take-home exams must be a maximum of 20 pages (theoretical, historical, and sociolinguistics) or 30 pages (Applied Linguistics) in length, not including references, appendices etc., and double-spaced. The exams will be taken during the last month of the third semester in the Ph.D. program after the student has submitted the department's "Ph.D. examination form" to the DGS. The examinations are graded by the thesis director and one other professor appointed by the Chair. To pass the Ph.D. Examination, the student must obtain a minimum grade of B+. Students are allowed one rewrite.

Thesis Requirements

One semester after successful completion of the two Ph.D. exams, the student will draft a dissertation proposal to be defended publicly before the established dissertation committee. All committee members must be present, either in person, on Zoom or Skype, or on a conference call. At least one week prior to the defense of the proposal, students must submit to the DGS the "Proposal Defense Form" in addition to submitting the appropriate form, which includes a detailed abstract, to the graduate school. The proposal will be more than an overview of the topic; considerable research on the subject must be evident so that rigorous discussion may take place. For Theoretical Linguistics, the dissertation proposal comprises an Abstract, a Review of the literature, a Statement of the Problem with clearly formulated research questions, a discussion of the methodology used for data collection (if relevant), and a sketch of the proposed solution. For Applied Linguistics, the dissertation proposal comprises an Abstract, Introduction, and Statement of the Problem, Review of the Literature with research questions, and a defendable Research Design and Methodology section to address the research questions. All treatment and testing materials must be included in the appendices. Upon approval of the proposal by the dissertation committee, the student will enroll in two successive semesters of Thesis Research in the last year of study, during which period the dissertation will be written. Once a student has defended his or her dissertation proposal, the student is considered ABD.

Upon completion of the dissertation, and before a dissertation defense can be scheduled, the student's committee must certify unanimously one week before the defense date that the dissertation is ready for defense, that is, that there is a reasonable expectation both a) that the student will be able to address any questions about or shortcomings in the dissertation, and b) that only minor revisions will be required after the defense. After the committee's unanimous decision that the dissertation is ready for defense as certified by their signatures on the Graduate School Doctoral Dissertation Reviewers' Report Form, there will be a public presentation and defense of the dissertation in order to satisfy fully the requirements for conferral of the doctorate. The Graduate School requires that the defense be publicized through its web page and that the Doctoral Dissertation Reviewers' Report Form be filed at least one week prior to the defense. All committee members must be present, either in person, on Zoom or Skype, or on conference call at the defense for the entire session. The candidate will be considered to have passed the dissertation defense when the committee certifies by majority vote that the defense was "successful." That is, the committee must certify that the candidate has satisfactorily addressed any questions about and shortcomings in the dissertation and that no major revisions are required.

Spanish Linguistics

All students take the following Tier I courses:

- Spanish Teaching Methodology (3 credits)
- History of the Spanish Language (3 credits)
- Semantics & Pragmatics (3 credits)
- Phonology and Morphology, I (3 credits)
- Generative Syntax I (3 credits)

Students must also take any four courses from Tier I:

- Instructed Second Language Acquisition (3 credits)
- World Spanishes (3 credits)
- Semantics and Pragmatics II (3 credits)
- Phonology and Morphology II (3 credits)
- Generative Syntax II (3 credits)

In addition to courses from Tiers I and II, students take seven electives (21 credits) selected in consultation with their advisor.

Spanish Literature and Cultural Studies

All students req required to take:

- Introduction to Critical Theory (3 credits)
- Spanish Teaching Methodology (3 credits)
- Eight electives selected in consultation with advisor (24 credits)
- One department course in six of the following fields (18 credits):
 - Medieval to Peninsular to 1500
 - Early Modern Peninsular to 1700
 - Modern Peninsular
 - Colonial Latin American
 - Modern Latin American
 - Luso-Brazilian
 - Transatlantic
 - Film and Media Studies