Spanish - Doctor of Philosophy (PhD)

Unique among other departments in the country, the Spanish and Portuguese Department at CU Boulder offers two distinct tracks to our PhD students:

- medieval and early modern Hispanic literatures
- Peninsular and Latin American literatures

Both PhD programs offer students a rigorous yet flexible plan of studies designed to deepen their knowledge of Peninsular and Latin American literatures and cultures.

Our faculty is actively engaged in research and publication in a variety of topics covering the whole range of peninsular and Latin American literatures and cultures, from the role of female leadership in the Peninsular Middle Ages to cultural histories of banditry in Latin America, from Cervantes to the work of contemporary authors like Roberto Bolaño.

At CU Boulder, students work closely with faculty members and are encouraged to pursue their own research interests.

Students wishing to pursue graduate work in Spanish leading to candidacy for advanced degree should carefully read the Master’s Degree Requirements section of this catalog.

Requirements

Residence Requirement

PhD students must complete a minimum of one academic year in residence on the Boulder campus (excluding summer) within the four years immediately preceding the date on which they present themselves for the PhD comprehensive examination.

Areas of Concentration

The PhD in Spanish is offered in six literary periods of concentration:

- medieval
- golden age
- 18th and/or 19th century peninsular
- 20th and 21st century peninsular
- colonial and 19th century Spanish American
- 20th and 21st century Spanish American

For further information on these options, contact the department.

Course Requirements

Prior to taking the PhD comprehensive exams, students must complete a minimum of 36 credit hours in graduate seminars in Spanish and/or related fields numbered 5000 or above. Students can take as many as 9 graduate credit hours outside the department. The student’s advisor and the associate chair, in consultation with the chair of the department, must approve credit hours in excess of 9, provided that the student formally requests it and gives a compelling reason for the standard limit to be overridden. Approval of the MA degree must also be presented for the PhD. Each advisor, in consultation with the student, will determine which courses will be acceptable.

All PhD students must take at least 30 credit hours of graduate coursework at CU Boulder. PhD students may transfer to the department a maximum of 6 hours of acceptable graduate-level credit. Transfer of credits will be considered only at the moment of admission into the program, not later on. Students may take no more than 3 credit hours of independent study courses. Additional independent study has to be approved by the graduate committee, which makes a recommendation to the associate chair of graduate studies or the chair of the department. Under no circumstances can independent study coursework exceed 25 percent of the coursework required for the PhD degree.

Doctoral students can only take up to 12 credits in course load that are not regular graduate seminars in the Spanish and Portuguese Department. These 12 credits are a combination of credits taken outside of the Spanish and Portuguese Department and independent studies offered by a faculty member of the Spanish and Portuguese Department. If a student decides to take one independent study with their advisor, then the student is allowed to take 9 credits outside the department; this is the recommended situation. If a student takes two independent studies, then they can only take 6 credits outside the department, and so on. No more than 9 credit hours can be used in independent studies, and no more than 9 credit hours can be taken outside the department.

PhD students who did not take a teaching methodology seminar, a literary theory seminar, or a Hispanic linguistics seminar as part of their MA program must do so as part of their PhD program. Those students who did not take a minimum of 3 graduate credit hours in each of the seven subject areas as part of their MA program, must make up coursework in these areas as part of the PhD program. The associate chair for graduate studies makes the decision regarding this additional work during the student’s first semester in the program. If this additional work is not completed the semester prior to the PhD exam, students will not be able to take their comprehensive exams.

Language Requirement

The student must demonstrate as early as possible, but at least one full semester before taking the comprehensive examination, a communication knowledge (as defined by the Graduate School) of one foreign language and a reading knowledge of a second language in addition to Spanish. The languages are chosen by the student in consultation with the advisory committee.