

Graduate Student Handbook 2024-25

Department of Languages, Literatures, & Cultures

Overview

The Department of Languages, Literatures and Cultures offers a **Master of Arts (M.A.) in French**, a **Master of Arts (M.A.) in Spanish**, and a **Master of Arts (M.A.) in Spanish Education**.

Academic Policies and Procedures

Academic Good Standing

According to Graduate Education policy, if the student's cumulative grade point average falls below 3.0, that student is automatically placed on academic probation. To continue degree pursuit, the student must progress toward a 3.0 cumulative average and is expected to emerge from academic probation within nine credit hours or two successive academic terms, whichever is sooner. A student will not be advanced to M.A. candidate status while on academic probation. To be eligible for a Teaching Assistantship or a Research Assistantship, a student must maintain a GPA of 3.0 minimum. **If a student does not plan to enroll for a Fall/Spring semester during his/her graduate work, he/she must petition Graduate Education for a leave of absence. There is a penalty for failing to enroll when not taking classes. Also, a student must maintain continuous registration (achieved through online registration), even if coursework is completed, until final examinations are taken.**

Advising

Graduate Program Coordinator:

The Graduate Program Coordinator (GPC) is responsible for overseeing and coordinating the Graduate Program, from the initial point of contact – fielding questions from prospective students – to the point when the student completes the M.A. in French or Spanish. The Graduate Program Coordinator meets with the student at least once per semester to advise on course selection, review the program of study, and discuss progress towards completing the degree. Guided by the Graduate Program Coordinator, students select their examination committee and establish a timeline for completing the degree. Spanish M.A. students meet with the Graduate Program Coordinator at least once per semester to share updates and discuss progress. French M.A. students submit a Progress Review to the Graduate Program Coordinator annually. Finally, the Graduate Program Coordinator acts as the student's advocate within the Department of Languages, Literatures and Cultures and the University.

Evaluation

Graduate students will be evaluated on an annual basis by the Program Faculty and Graduate Program Coordinator. The GPD's evaluation includes a discussion of future coursework and any remedial work needed to avoid probation.

Graduation

In the final semester of your degree program, in addition to informing the Graduate Program Coordinator, you must apply online for graduation through the Banner portal no later than the second Friday of the semester. A link to instructions for completing your application can be found on Graduate Education's page for Current Students, under "Master Forms & Policies."

<https://www.slu.edu/academics/graduate/current-students/index.php>

If you apply after the second Friday, you are responsible for contacting the master's candidacy advisor to initiate preparation of your degree audit.

Incompletes

Students must complete coursework on time. Incompletes at the graduate level will be permitted only under extenuating circumstances (e.g. serious illness or accident). The incomplete must be cleared within twelve months; a shorter time period may be designated at the instructor's discretion. Should the incomplete fail to be cleared within the one-year period, the grade will be automatically converted to an "F." Students must submit the appropriate form requesting the incomplete to the Graduate Program Coordinator. Teaching and Research assistants may not carry more than one incomplete on their records if they wish to have their assistantships renewed.

Integrity and Academic Honesty

The Graduate Education Catalog reads as follows: "The University is a community of learning, and its effectiveness requires an environment of mutual trust and integrity. As members of this community, students share with faculty and administrators the responsibility to maintain this environment. Academic integrity is violated by any dishonesty in submitting an assignment, test, essay, or any other documentation required to validate the student's learning. In a case of clear indication of such dishonesty, the faculty member or administrator has the responsibility to apply sanctions to protect the environment of integrity." Although not all forms of academic dishonesty are given here, the instances listed below should be seen as actions that violate academic integrity:

- soliciting, receiving, or providing any unauthorized assistance in the completion of any work submitted;
- submitting materials authored by or editorially revised by another person but represented as the student's own work;
- copying a passage or text directly from a published source without appropriately citing/recognizing that source.

Any clear violation of academic integrity will be met with sanctions. In a case of dishonesty within a course, the instructor may assign an appropriate grade and/or recommend further sanctions to the Dean or Associate Dean, who is then responsible for the final decision and notification of all associated parties. The final decision of the Dean or Associate Dean may be appealed as described in "Procedures for Academic Appeals."

Leaves of Absence

An approved leave of absence will extend the time to degree and maintain access to university resources (e.g. mail, library privileges). If a student wishes to extend the leave, a new request must be submitted to the Graduate Program Coordinator using the "Petition for a Leave of Absence" (found on the Registrar's Forms page: https://www.slu.edu/registrar/pdfs/leave_of_absence.pdf)

Leaves of absence should be requested for compelling reasons only, and must be requested before the start of the leave.

For *Parental Leave Policy and Petition* information, please consult the Graduate Education website: https://www.slu.edu/academics/graduate/pdfs/ge_petition_for_parental_leave.pdf

Procedures for Academic Appeals

The Graduate Education Catalog states: "As a general policy, if a student desires to appeal any academic decision that appeal should first be made to the faculty member or faculty committee involved and, if necessary thereafter, to the department or program chairperson, the Associate Dean or Center Director of the particular school/college/center, and the Dean, in that order. Should the student wish to pursue an additional level of appeal, the case is taken to the Associate Vice President for Graduate Education who reviews the file to determine if the process was followed. The Associate Vice President does not overturn a decision, but may send the case back to the school/college/center if process was not followed:" <https://www.slu.edu/arts-and-sciences/pdfs/graduate-academic-cppeals-process.pdf>

Registration

Students must be registered before the first day of classes to avoid late registration fees. Late registration begins on the first day of classes and extends through the second Friday of the semester. Registration after the second week is possible only by petition and with dean's approval.

Time Limits

Typically, the M.A. in French or Spanish for a full-time student is completed in 2 years. If a (part-time) student does not complete program requirements within five years from the time he/she began coursework, the student must apply for an extension from the college. This requires a signed form of support from the Graduate Program Coordinator as well as a letter of explanation from the student. Financial assistance is not guaranteed.

Withdrawal

If a student wishes to withdraw from the program for the duration of the current semester, he or she must inform the Graduate Program Coordinator in writing and complete the Petition for Complete

Semester Withdrawal Form (available in the Office of the University Registrar) and return it to the Registrar's office. If a student decides to withdraw from the program prior to completion, he or she must inform the Graduate Program Coordinator in writing and complete the Petition for Complete Withdrawal Form (available in the Office of the University Registrar) and return it to the Registrar's office.

M.A. in French

Students preparing for the M.A.-in-French are required to take at least 30 graduate credit hours, which include:

A) FREN 5100

B) nine credit hours of coursework in the period prior to the year 1900

C) nine credit hours of coursework after the year 1900.

A maximum of six credits of coursework may be approved for transfer toward fulfillment of degree requirements. (See Office of Graduate Education for regulations regarding transfer of credit.)

In addition, **a final scholarly essay or written examination, and a final oral examination are required.**

Students may take a general written examination or write a Final Project.

Written Examinations for the M.A.-in-French:

- **General Written Examinations:**

These examinations cover the material listed on the *French M.A. Reading List*. Students will choose three areas from the list. When starting the written examinations, the student will receive a sealed envelope, labeled with the name of each area, and containing a choice of essay questions. The student must write one essay per area and has 90 minutes per area to do so. Testing on each area is followed by a 15 minute break. It is not allowed to go back or review the essay after turning it in. Students have one hour for lunch. This is not an open-book exam. Books, dictionaries, and online materials are not allowed.

Grading: Students are evaluated on the knowledge of the area they demonstrate; their ability to write a clear and organized essay with literary, cultural and/or theoretical examples to support an argument; the level of analysis, mastery of the language, accuracy, and style.

After the student has completed the written exam, the exam committee members will read the student's work and complete an evaluation form. In addition to commenting on his or her view of the examination, each committee member will assign one of three grades: Excellent, Pass, or Fail. The student must have two passing votes in order to be eligible to take the M.A. Orals and receive the M.A. degree.

- **Research Paper (or Final Project)**

Student may pursue the option of a research paper instead of a written examination.

A Final Project (FP) is a research paper that showcases the student's ability to think both critically and creatively, and to conduct research independently. The FP usually originates from a research paper written for a graduate class during the student's career in the M.A. Program. The FP could represent a

significant revision and extension of a paper that was written for a class, or it could be related to a course area, or to the area of concentration of a professor.

The FP should represent a crowning achievement of the student's career in the M.A.-in-French Program at SLU. Students might be able to present their FP for publication, or at a professional venue, such as at a research colloquium.

The completed research paper must

- be at least 30-40 pages in length.
- follow the latest MLA guidelines.
- be typed, double-spaced and in size 12 font
- be written in French

Procedure & Timeline:

The FP usually moves through three stages: defining a subject; writing the paper; presenting a final draft.

Stage 1:

In consultation with the Faculty Mentor who is to direct the project, the student will define the topic of the Final Project. For full-time students, this is usually done at the end of the first year of study or shortly after the beginning of the last year of study; for non-full-time students, this is best done before the final semester of study, but no later than four (4) weeks into the last semester.

- The student notifies the Coordinator of the M.A. Program of his/her intent to write a FP, and indicates the composition of the FP committee.
- The student will notify in writing the Faculty Mentor and French Faculty of his/her plan to write a Final Project. Along with the letter, the student will include a thesis statement with a short description of methodology (1-2 pages) and a working bibliography.
- It is the responsibility of the student to schedule a meeting, with all the members of the committee, during which he or she will present orally the initial steps of his/her work in progress. The topic must then be approved by **all members of the FP Committee**.

This stage is best finished before the start of the semester during which the FP is to be completed.

Stage 2:

- After the FP proposal is approved, research and writing will continue during the following semester.
- The student meets with his/her Faculty Mentor, to discuss a timeline of events. The student and the Mentor should work out together when written work is to be submitted, and how frequently they will meet to discuss the student's research.
- For students petitioning to graduate in Fall, a first draft should be submitted October 15 to the Faculty Mentor for review.
- For students petitioning to graduate in Spring, a first draft should be submitted March 15 to the Faculty Mentor for review.

Stage 3:

- After the student submits the first draft, the Faculty Mentor arranges a meeting with the student to discuss the student's progress and any further revisions to the FP.
- In consultation with the Mentor, the student completes the final version of the FP.

- Students wishing to graduate in December submit their final version to all members of his/her committee by November 20.
- Students wishing to graduate in May submit their final version to all members of his/her committee by April 20.
- The student needs to determine a date for the defense with the Mentor and the members of the FP committee.

- **Oral Examination**

M.A. candidates choose their jury. The Jury or exam committee is made up of 3-5 professors, who reflect the areas chosen for the written exam, and who must also reflect 7 out of the 10 courses taken during the student's career. All students must pass the oral examination in order to receive the Master's degree. The oral exam usually lasts 60-75 minutes.

During the first part, professors ask questions regarding the written exams; 10-15 minutes are allotted per area. If a final project has been written, the first part will last a maximum of 45 minutes and will start the following way: the Faculty Mentor starts the meeting by introducing the candidate. The student defends the project beginning with a brief overview (ten minutes), which will be followed by questions from the Faculty. The Faculty Mentor will moderate, and see that the discussion runs smoothly and according to schedule.

During the second part, professors examine the candidate on the classes they have had together. After the student has completed the oral exam, the committee members evaluate the student's performance immediately. The student must receive a majority of passing votes in the oral examination in order to receive the M.A. degree.

M.A. in Spanish

<https://catalog.slu.edu/colleges-schools/arts-sciences/languages-literatures-cultures/spanish-ma/>

Students preparing for the M.A. in Spanish are required to take at least 30 graduate credit hours.

Students are required to take at least:

- A. Three courses in Literatures & Cultures;
- B. Three courses in Linguistics & Pedagogy.

Students may also take courses at our campus in Madrid.

A maximum of six credits of coursework may be approved for transfer toward fulfillment of degree requirements. (See Office of Graduate Education for regulations regarding transfer of credit.)

Sample Two-Year Course of Study

MA in Spanish

Year One: Fall	Credits
Three Seminars	
Credits	9
Year One: Spring	Credits
Three Seminars	
Credits	9
Summer	Credits
[0-1 Seminars]	
Credits	[0-3]
Year Two: Fall	Credits
Two Seminars [or One Seminar + SPAN 5970 Research Paper Project]	
Credits	6
+ <i>Written Exam</i>	
Year Two: Spring	
Two Seminars	
Credits	6
+ <i>Oral Exam</i>	
Total Credits	30

Optional Research Paper/Project in Spanish

SPAN 5970

Students may pursue the option of a Written Research Paper/Project (*in lieu of* a one 3-credit seminar) normally to be written and finished in their penultimate semester. This requires the permission of the Graduate Program Coordinator and the support of a directing professor from Graduate Faculty (Research Paper/Project Advisor). The student will select their Research Paper Advisor in consultation with the Spanish Graduate Program Coordinator. The principal job of the Research Paper Advisor is to aid in the development and writing of the research paper, guiding the student and making suggestions; the RPA also assigns the final grade. The student performs all research and writing of the paper, which should be 20 pages in its final version.

Written Examination in Spanish

The Written Examination generally is taken in the penultimate semester of the student's two-year course of study. The student is encouraged to meet actively with their three committee members in the months leading up to the exam. The three committee members should be invited and confirmed by the end of the student's second semester (in the case of full-time students): at least one Graduate Faculty member will be from Literatures & Cultures; at least one Graduate Faculty member will be from Linguistics & Pedagogy; the third Graduate Faculty member will be designated according to availability.

This four-hour examination covers material from our Reading List. It consists of **three** questions. Upon reading the exam, the student will select **three out of four** categories from which to answer:

- Latin American Literatures & Cultures
- Peninsular Literatures & Cultures
- Linguistics
- Pedagogy

Each category will contain a choice from two questions, previously selected and agreed upon by the Graduate Faculty committee.

Students are not allowed to bring any books or other accessories (personal laptops, cellphones, flash drives, etc.) with them into the exam.

After the student has completed the written exam, each committee member will read the student's work and complete an evaluation rubric, assigning a grade (and commentary) to each section of the exam: With Distinction, Pass, or Fail. If there is any discrepancy / disagreement / question about a grade in any particular section, or the exam as a whole, the Graduate Program Coordinator will call a committee meeting in order to discuss the student's exam and the grade(s) together before each individual re-submits their final decision via rubric, to be tallied by the Coordinator. In order to pass the M.A. Written Examination, a student must achieve an overall passing vote (2 out of 3 members) on all three questions. If the student fails to pass each of the 3 questions, they will have ONE chance to retake the failed question category (or categories) of the exam within a 6-month period. *The student should have the same committee for the retake.* If at the retake the student does not receive at least 2 out of 3 passing votes in the previously failed question area(s), the student forfeits further chances and cannot proceed to the Oral Examination required for the M.A. degree.

Oral Examination in Spanish

The Oral Examination is taken in the final semester of the student's two-year course of study. The evaluation committee is composed of three Graduate Faculty members and named by the Graduate Program Coordinator in consultation with the student, with at least one Graduate Faculty member from Literatures & Cultures, and at least one from Linguistics & Pedagogy. (These members may or may not be the same as the written examination committee members.) The oral examination will be tentatively scheduled for the semester after the written examination, pending a passing score. The questions in the oral examination can refer to any combination of the 10 courses that the student has taken. It lasts a *minimum of one hour*, then as long as necessary for the committee members to fully evaluate the student to their satisfaction. After the student has completed the oral exam, the committee members

will evaluate the student’s performance immediately. The student must receive at least two passing votes on the oral examination in order to receive the M.A. degree. If a student fails to obtain two passing votes, they will have **one** opportunity to retake the test within a reasonable period of time, ordinarily within a 6-month period. (The re-take will typically not be scheduled during the same semester, as the recommended wait time is usually one school term.) *The student should have the same committee for the retake.* If the student does not pass the oral examination the second time, they forfeit their opportunity to earn the MA degree.

M.A. in Spanish Education

<https://www.slu.edu/arts-and-sciences/academics/degrees/graduate/spanish-education-ma.php>

Students preparing for the M.A. in Spanish Education are required to take at least 33 graduate credit hours, plus 10 experiential credit hours. Students are required to take:

- A. Five specific courses in the School of Education (see sample RoadMap below for required numbers);
- B. Two Spanish-language Pedagogy courses in LLC (SPAN 5041 & SPAN 5042);
- C. Four Spanish-language content electives in LLC;
- D. Two Teaching Experiences (1-credit hour each) and 1 culminating Practicum (8-credit hours).

Students may arrange to take up to four Spanish-language content electives (LLC) from the Madrid campus. A maximum of six credits of coursework may be approved for transfer toward fulfillment of degree requirements. (See Office of Graduate Education for regulations regarding transfer of credit.) The degree recipient is equipped to undertake a licensure exam through the state of Missouri that allows the recipient to begin teaching with licensure in public or private schools.

Sample Two-Year Course of Study **MA in Spanish Education**

Year One: Summer	Credits
EDSP 5310 – Advanced Studies in Psych / Educ the Exceptional Child	3
EDF 5700 – Advanced Growth & Development	3
One SPAN Course	3
Credits	9
Year One: Fall	Credits
SPAN 5041 – Methods I	3
EDI 5820 – Field Experience	1
One SPAN Course	3
Credits	7
Year One: Spring	Credits
EDF 5600 – Foundations of Urban Education	3
One SPAN Course	3
Credits	6
Year Two: Summer	Credits
EDI 5390 – Teaching Reading: Contemporary Issues & Practices	3
One SPAN Course	3
Credits	6
Year Two: Fall	Credits
EDSP 5240/4240 (primary) or 5250/4250 (secondary) – Classroom Organization	3

SPAN 5042 - Methods II	3
EDI 5825 – Field Experience	1
Credits	7
Year Two: Spring	
EDI 5940 – Supervised Practicum	
Credits	8
+ <i>Oral Exam</i> [portfolio presentation in English]	
Total Credits	43

Portfolio & Oral Examination

The Oral Examination is taken in the final semester of the candidate’s two-year course of study. It consists of the candidate’s oral presentation (in English) of their Portfolio (in English) to the three members of the committee. The student will prepare diverse components of the Portfolio during the required courses of SPAN 5041 and SPAN 5042, in which models of the final Portfolio will be shared, including, among other components: a summary of the curricular plan (topic, student population, Missouri State Standards, etc.); a summary of pedagogical methods implemented in relation to the student’s two-year course of study; concluding thoughts and reflection on the Practicum-in-progress. The student will have composed their committee by the beginning of the semester preceding their practicum. The committee will be composed of three members of the Graduate Faculty, invited by the Graduate Program Coordinator in consultation with the student: two Graduate Faculty members should be from LLC, and one from SOE. Heading into the final semester Practicum, the student will have met with their committee to work on a draft of their Portfolio, which they will continue to prepare and refine during the Practicum semester. The Oral Examination will be tentatively scheduled toward the end of the Practicum semester, yet prior to the Practicum’s successful completion. It lasts a *minimum of one hour*, then as long as necessary for the committee members to fully evaluate the student to their satisfaction. After the student has completed the exam, the committee members will evaluate the student’s performance immediately. The student must receive at least two passing votes on the oral examination in order to receive the M.A. degree. If a student fails to obtain two passing votes, they will have **one** opportunity to re-present the Portfolio –having made any and all changes requested by the committee members within a reasonable period of time, ordinarily within a 3-month period. *The student should have the same committee for the retake.* If the student does not pass the oral examination the second time, they forfeit their opportunity to earn the MA degree.

Funding & Professional Development Opportunities:

- Graduate Student Association:
<http://gsa.slu.edu>
- Reinert Center for Transformative Teaching and Learning:
<http://www.slu.edu/ctl>
- SLU-Madrid:
<https://www.slu.edu/madrid/academics/degrees-and-programs/spanish-ma.php>
- University Writing Services:
<https://www.slu.edu/life-at-slu/student-success-center/academic-support/university-writing-services/index.php>