

**Hispanic Linguistics Program
Department of Spanish and Portuguese
School of Languages and Cultures
Purdue University**

2/6/13

M.A. Advisory Committee Formation and M.A. Exams

The M.A. advisory committee must be constituted by the fifth week of the second semester of the first year. The chair or co-chair of the committee must be a faculty member specializing in Spanish linguistics. The student and the major professor will select the other members of the advisory committee. The committee should have a minimum of 3 faculty members. The duties of the committee are to assist the student in the preparation of the plan of study and to offer advice during the period of M.A. graduate work, thesis preparation (in the case of thesis option) and the completion of common and specific course requirements for Spanish linguistics (general or applied).

The M.A. Exam is comprised of a primary area and a secondary area. The primary area is related to the core areas in Spanish linguistics (Spanish Phonetics and Phonology, Spanish Syntax and Morphology, and History of the Spanish Language). The secondary area covers areas of interest to the student or topics related to the student's thesis topic (e.g., second language acquisition, bilingualism, psycholinguistics, semantics, pragmatics, sociolinguistics, etc.). For the exam, the student will receive a list of 6 essay questions (3 questions from the primary area and 3 from the secondary area). From the list, the student will select two questions from each area (4 in total). At least one of the questions on the written examination must be answered in Spanish and one of the questions must be answered in English. A portion of the oral examination will be conducted in Spanish and a portion in English.

Written examinations are usually held in the tenth week of each semester. Typically, students will have one week to write their M.A. Exam. The oral examination will be typically administered within two weeks of the written examination. No student will be advanced to the oral examination unless the committee has judged the written portion of the exam as satisfactory. During the oral examination, students are expected to answer questions from the committee members about their essays.

In the case of the thesis option, students may be required to present a prospectus of their M.A. thesis at the discretion of the Chair of the M.A. Advisory Committee during the first semester of the second year. The prospectus would serve to introduce all committee members to the thesis topic, background literature, and methodology and for the committee members to provide feedback on the project prior to collecting data. The thesis oral defense will be conducted following the successful completion of the oral defense of the M.A. exams. The M.A. exams oral defense and the M.A. thesis oral defense will be held the same day.

It is the student's responsibility to consult with the office of graduate studies in the SLC and Purdue University Graduate School to find out the requirements for M.A. thesis formatting, deadlines for MA thesis deposit, and graduation dates.

Ph.D. Advisory Committee Formation, Ph.D. Exams and Dissertation Proposal Defense

The Ph.D. advisory committee must be constituted by the fifth week of the second semester of the program. The chair or co-chair of the committee must be a faculty member specializing in Spanish linguistics. The student and the major professor will select the other members of the advisory committee. It is preferable for an additional member to be from the Spanish linguistics faculty. The committee should have a minimum of four faculty members. The duties of that committee are to assist the student in the preparation of the plan of study and to offer advice during the period of graduate work, ensure the completion of common and specific course requirements for the Ph.D. degree in Hispanic linguistics on schedule, Preliminary Exams preparation, dissertation proposal defense, and Ph.D. dissertation research. The composition of this committee should be representative of the general field of study in which the student expects to do work.

In order to progress towards Ph.D. candidacy, a student will complete the Ph.D. Preliminary Examination and the Dissertation Proposal Defense. A student should take the written Ph.D. Preliminary Examination in the semester in which course work is completed for the Ph.D. or in the following semester at the latest. The student will be tested in two major areas of concentration and in two minor areas of concentration. Given that students will be obtaining a Ph.D. degree in Hispanic Linguistics, Hispanic Linguistics must be one of the two major areas of concentration. The other major area of concentration and the two minor areas of concentration should be determined by the student with the advice of the major professor and considering the dissertation topic. For example, a student may be examined in Hispanic Linguistics and Phonetics/Phonological Theory as the major areas along with Second Language Acquisition and Bilingualism as the minor areas.

For the exam, the student will receive a list of 12 essay questions (3 questions from each area of concentration). From the list, the student will select two questions from each major area and 1 question from each minor area to answer (6 total). The questions in Hispanic Linguistics should be representative of the core areas not covered in the student's second concentration and two minor areas (e.g. if the student's second major area is Phonology, the two Hispanic linguistics questions should be drawn from Spanish Syntax/Morphosyntax and History of the Spanish language).

The student and adviser will set a specific date to begin the Ph.D. Preliminary Examination, during the appropriate semester. Typically, students will have 4 weeks to write their Preliminary Exams. This should give them ample time to consult whatever

scholarly resources necessary to complete the exam. Students cannot consult with anyone nor may they speak with anyone about the exam. No student will be advanced to the oral examination unless the committee has judged the written portion of the exam as satisfactory.

At least one of the questions on the written examination must be answered in Spanish and one of the questions must be answered in English. A portion of the oral examination will be conducted in Spanish and a portion in English. After the oral examination of the written exams, students usually proceed to the oral defense of his/her dissertation proposal. The dissertation proposal defense cannot take place without the successful completion of the written and oral exams. The student, in consultation with her/his adviser, may choose to have the dissertation proposal defense at a later date.

The dissertation proposal defense consists of a 20 to 30 minute presentation by the student with handout or Power Point followed by a question period. The presentation should include the goals of the study, a brief literature review on the topic of investigation, description of the populations under examination, description of the linguistic phenomenon, preliminary hypotheses and assumptions, data elicitation methods, and contributions of the study to current research. The student must send a written version of the dissertation proposal to all members of the committee at least two weeks before the dissertation proposal defense takes place. The dissertation proposal must follow LSA or APA style and provide a full list of works cited.

Purpose of the Ph.D. Preliminary Examination

The purpose of the Ph.D. Preliminary Examination in Hispanic Linguistics is to create a situation in which the student demonstrates the capacity of a research professional. Whereas the Master's Exams are tests of a student's understanding of specific and general, standard and well-known topics in Hispanic Linguistics, general linguistics and in related areas, the Ph.D. Preliminary Exam is intended to allow the student to demonstrate a variety of professional skills. Among these required professional skills are:

- 1) The ability to enter into current scholarly debates.
- 2) An ability to analyze problems and propose reasonable solutions to them.
- 3) An ability to organize and write essays at the level of a professional researcher.
- 4) Knowledge of how to successfully carry out linguistic research using relevant research design and tools.

The essays produced during the Ph.D. Preliminary Examination should be of sufficient quality to become part of a published article, a conference paper or part of the doctoral dissertation. Therefore, the content and format of your exam should reflect these goals as well as adhering to the Linguistic Society of America or APA style sheets.

Looking towards the Dissertation and Graduation

Once the Ph.D. exams and dissertation defense proposal are successfully completed, the student becomes a Ph.D. candidate (ABD -all but dissertation). The student will then draft a dissertation completion schedule and discuss it with his/her adviser.

The adviser in consultation with the student will set the dissertation defense date once all the committee members have judged the dissertation to be satisfactory and defensible.

It is the student's responsibility to consult with the office of graduate studies in SLC and Purdue University Graduate School to find out the requirements for Ph.D. dissertation formatting, deadlines for Ph.D. dissertation deposit and graduation dates.