



UNIVERSITY OF CENTRAL FLORIDA

# Spanish MA Graduate Program Handbook

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## Table of Contents

Introduction .....	1
Curriculum .....	1
Timeline for Completion.....	2
Steps to Completion .....	2
Degree Plan of Study.....	2
Advising and Mentoring .....	2
Examination Requirements .....	2
Thesis Requirements.....	3
University Dissertation Requirements .....	3
Thesis Committee.....	3
Thesis Enrollment.....	4
Thesis Defense.....	4
Graduate Research .....	4
Human Subjects .....	4
Ethics in Research.....	4
Financial Support.....	5
Assistantships and Tuition Waivers.....	5
GTA Performance Appraisal.....	5
International Students.....	5
Graduate Student Associations .....	6
Spanish Graduate Association (SaGA) .....	6
Graduate Student Association (GSA).....	6
Professional Development.....	6
Conference Presentation Support .....	6
Pathways to Success Workshops .....	7
Graduate Teaching Assistants: Instructor Training and Development.....	7
Graduate Research Forum.....	7
Graduate Excellence Awards .....	7
Other .....	8
Job Search.....	8
Career Services and Experiential Learning .....	8
Forms.....	8
Useful Links .....	9
Grad Faculty .....	9

Contact Info ..... 10

# Spanish MA

Together, the [Graduate Student Handbook](#) and your graduate program handbook should serve as your main guide throughout your graduate career. The Graduate Student Handbook includes university information, policies, requirements and guidance for all graduate students. Your program handbook describes the details about graduate study and requirements in your specific program. While both of these handbooks are wonderful resources, know that you are always welcome to talk with faculty and staff in your program and in the Graduate College.

The central activities and missions of a university rest upon the fundamental assumption that all members of the university community conduct themselves in accordance with a strict adherence to academic and scholarly integrity. As a graduate student and member of the university community, you are expected to display the highest standards of academic and personal integrity.

Here are some resources to help you better understand your responsibilities:

- [Academic Honesty](#)
- [Academic Integrity Training](#) - Open to all graduate students at no cost
- [Plagiarism](#)

## Introduction

Students will acquire an in-depth knowledge of the Spanish language, culture, literature, and linguistics, and develop critical thinking skills, a foundation in theory to analyze texts in Spanish, and the ability to apply the language in a given Hispanic community. Graduates of the program are prepared to enter doctoral programs in Spanish, teach all levels of high school Spanish and introductory courses at the university and/or community college level, or to work in international trade tourism and journalism. The core courses at the 5000 level are designed to establish a foundation in academic investigation in the areas of literature, culture, and linguistics. The culture and civilization courses examine Spain's main trends as well as those of pre-Columbian high cultures and Spanish American countries since colonial times up to present, and of Hispanics residing in the United States. The core courses at the 6000 level provide an in-depth study of a particular theme, genre, period or author in order to convey comprehensive knowledge of a specific topic and consolidate skills in conducting research. The program structure will enable students to learn research methods and their application to different kinds of texts as well as the linguistic patterns of Spanish-speaking populations, thus enhancing their language skills, and providing them with a knowledgeable view of the Spanish-speaking world.

### Total Credit Hours Required

36 Credit Hours Minimum beyond the Bachelor's Degree

## Curriculum

Please visit the [Graduate Catalog](#) to see the current curriculum for our program.

# Timeline for Completion

## Steps to Completion

During the **first year** of study (first 18 credits), students begin their coursework and also identify their primary and secondary fields of study. In the **second year** students fulfill the following degree requirements:

- Completion of remaining coursework (required courses and electives)
- Comprehensive Exams **and**
- If thesis option is chosen, completion of the thesis, including the thesis defense. Students who select the thesis option, should explore the topic during their second semester of full time study (before reaching 18 credits).

Full-time students (enrolled in nine hours per fall and spring semesters) normally complete the program in two years.

## Degree Plan of Study

Completion of the program is achieved when students successfully fulfill all program requirements established above. The Graduate Plan of Study and regular contact with the program director are resources for making students aware of degree requirements and progress toward degree. Graduate Study policy requires that the Plan of Study must be established by the 9th credit hour in the program. Please also see the Plan of Study section in the Graduate Catalog.

## Advising and Mentoring

Advising and mentoring are two important elements in graduate students' careers and begin upon their admission to the program. Graduate students receive guidance from the Graduate Coordinator on overall academic requirements, including program and university policies and procedures. Students are expected to schedule a meeting with the Graduate Coordinator as soon as they acknowledge the letter of acceptance into the program.

**Students should make an appointment with the Graduate Coordinator during their second semester of study to identify their primary and secondary fields of study.**

## Examination Requirements

Students must pass a comprehensive examination in order to qualify for the master's degree in Spanish. This examination is based on knowledge of the literature and culture of Spain and Hispanic America and/or on concepts of linguistic theory and analysis.

Since this examination will be given toward the end of the course work (only during fall and spring semesters), it is expected that the student will have developed an ability to analyze literature, culture, and linguistics at the graduate level. It is also expected that the responses, both written and oral, will show an excellent command of the Spanish language. The oral examination will follow the written examination and will allow students to expand more readily on particular points of culture, literature, and linguistics, and to show ability in the use of the spoken language.

If a student does not successfully pass both the written and oral comprehensive examinations, he or she may be able to retake the exams in the following semester (fall or spring). Thereafter, if the student does not pass the examinations the second time, he/she will be removed from the program.

The Graduate Committee has developed a reading list of major Peninsular, Latin American, and Linguistics works, and works by Hispanics in the US, with which the student must be familiar. The comprehensive examination is based on the reading list and the courses that the student has taken.

## Thesis Requirements

### University Dissertation Requirements

The College of Graduate Studies [Thesis and Dissertation page](#) contains information on the university's requirements for dissertation formatting, format review, defenses, final submission, and more. A step-by-step completion guide is also available on [Thesis and Dissertation Services](#) Site.

All university deadlines are listed in the [Academic Calendar](#). Your program or college may have other earlier deadlines; please check with your program and college staff for additional deadlines.

#### **The following requirements must be met by dissertation students in their final term:**

- Submit a properly formatted file for initial format review by the format review deadline
- Submit the Thesis and Dissertation Release Option form well before the defense
- Defend by the defense deadline
- Receive format approval (if not granted upon initial review)
- Submit signed approval form by final submission deadline
- Submit final dissertation document by final submission deadline

Students must format their dissertation according to the standards outlined in [Thesis and Dissertation Webcourse](#). Formatting questions or issues can be submitted to the Format Help page in the [Thesis and Dissertation Services](#) site. Format reviews and final submission must be completed in the [Thesis and Dissertation Services](#) site. The Dissertation Approval Form is also available in the Thesis and Dissertation Services site.

The College of Graduate Studies offers several thesis and dissertation [Workshops](#) each term. Students are highly encouraged to attend these workshops early in the dissertation process to fully understand the above policies and procedures.

The College of Graduate Studies thesis and dissertation office is best reached by email at [editor@ucf.edu](mailto:editor@ucf.edu).

### Thesis Committee

Students have the option of completing a thesis in fulfillment of their degree requirements. Students work with their thesis chair and committee members to guide their research, on a topic approved by the thesis chair and committee.

Students select a thesis chair from within the Spanish MA faculty, before completing 18 credit hours. The thesis committee must consist of at least three members and be approved by the College's Associate Dean of Graduate Studies as the first step. Of the three members, two of these must be qualified regular faculty members in the Spanish MA program, one of whom must serve as the chair of the committee.

Adjuncts, visiting faculty, courtesy appointments or qualified individuals from outside the university may serve as the third member or co-chair of the committee, but may not serve as the chair. If there are co-chairs, one must satisfy faculty qualifications for serving as a chair of a thesis advisory committee. The other co-chair must satisfy the minimum requirements for serving as a member of a thesis advisory committee. Qualifications of additional members must be equivalent to that expected of UCF faculty members. UCF faculty members must form the majority of any given committee.

For most students, conducting the research and writing the thesis normally take two semesters.

Only if absolutely necessary, students may change their thesis advisor up to one semester before their thesis defense.

For more details about the Thesis Committee, please refer to the [UCF Graduate Catalog](#).

## **Thesis Enrollment**

Prior to enrollment into SPW 6971 Thesis, your thesis committee must be reviewed and approved by the College of Arts and Humanities Assistant Dean of Graduate Studies. Thesis students who have completed all coursework and are engaged in thesis research must be continuously enrolled in at least three hours of SPW 6971 every semester, including summers, until they successfully defend and submit their thesis to the University Thesis Editor. This enrollment each semester reflects the expenditure of university resources, and is required even if more than the minimum number of hours is needed for completion of the thesis. While three hours is the minimum enrollment, this may not constitute full time enrollment for tuition, financial aid, or employment purposes.

## **Thesis Defense**

The thesis defense must be coordinated with the Spanish MA office two semesters prior to graduation.

## **Graduate Research**

There is zero tolerance for plagiarism, and should a student submit dishonest research, he/she will be removed from the course/program and penalized accordingly by removal from the Graduate Program. For additional information, please see the UCF Golden Rule-Rules of Conduct at [goldenrule.sdes.ucf.edu/](http://goldenrule.sdes.ucf.edu/).

For information available on book referrals on conducting research, please see the recommendations in the program's reading list as well as your professors/advisor. The University Writing Center has workshops on thesis and dissertation formatting, library research, and writing essentials at [uwc.cah.ucf.edu](http://uwc.cah.ucf.edu).

## **Human Subjects**

If the student chooses to conduct research that involves human subjects (i.e. surveys, interviews, etc.), he or she must gain Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval prior to beginning the study. For access to the IRB submission form and sample consent forms, please visit the Office of Research website: [research.ucf.edu/](http://research.ucf.edu/).

If you have questions regarding human subjects, please contact an IRB Coordinator at (407) 823-2901.

## **Ethics in Research**

Researchers in every discipline have a responsibility for ethical awareness as the status of the profession depends on each individual researcher. It is important to be honest and ethical in conducting research as well as in coursework. The ethical collection and use of information includes, but is by no means limited to the following: confidentiality, accuracy, relevance, self-responsibility, honesty, and awareness of conflict of interest.

# Financial Support

## Assistantships and Tuition Waivers

For complete information about university assistantship and tuition waivers, please see the [UCF Graduate Catalog](#) > Financial Information.

If you are interested in applying for loans or externally funded need-based awards, visit the Office of Student Financial Assistance website at [finaid.ucf.edu](http://finaid.ucf.edu) and complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA), which is available January 1 each year.

The Graduate Teaching Assistants perform all administrative functions that deal with student matters, and works with the Graduate Coordinator and program professors. Graduate employment positions are decided for GTA positions as soon as the College of Arts and Humanities provides the necessary funds. The department will assign e-mail accounts and Mailboxes for GTAs. They must follow the departmental policies for the copy machine and office supplies.

To be employed and to maintain employment in a graduate position, the student must be:

- In good academic standing
- Enrolled full time
- Masters students can be offered tuition support for a maximum of nine semesters.

To be awarded and continue receipt of a tuition waiver, the student must be:

- In good academic standing
- Enrolled full time
- Employed in a graduate position (GTA, GRA, GA) or receiving a University fellowship

Masters students can be offered tuition support for a maximum of nine semesters.

International students who will be hired in GTA positions must be proficient at speaking English and must successfully pass the SPEAK exam with a score of 55 or better. This exam (also known as the Oral Proficiency Exam) is administered by the Center for Multicultural and Multilingual Services (CMMS). For more information and to register for the training, visit [SPEAK Test](#) on the College of Graduate Studies Students website.

## GTA Performance Appraisal

At the completion of each semester the student is employed as a GTA, the student's performance will be evaluated by the faculty advisor. These assessments will be used to review strengths and weaknesses in the student's performance in preparation for future employment.

## International Students

Several types of employment are available to international students, including on-campus employment. For more information about the types of employment available to international students, and the requirements and restrictions based on visa-type, please see the International Affairs and Global Strategies website: [global.ucf.edu/](http://global.ucf.edu/).



# Graduate Student Associations

## Spanish Graduate Association (SaGA)

SaGA's mission is to provide graduate students with fun and educational gatherings that reflect on the literary works related to the Spanish MA Program through guest speakers, group discussions, art, the local community, an annual colloquium, and more.

The annual colloquium provides an opportunity for students from all academic levels to participate in forums related to the literature, linguistics and culture of the Spanish-speaking world. Students present their own work, engage in academic discussions, and develop cross-cultural relations with their peers. A prominent scholar is invited each year to share his or her works with attendees and to foster an interest in Spanish arts and culture. Students have the opportunity to interact with the speaker in order to reinforce their own creative abilities.

For more information about SaGA, contact [SaGA@ucf.edu](mailto:SaGA@ucf.edu) or contact the Program Coordinator.

## Graduate Student Association (GSA)

The Graduate Student Association (GSA) is UCF's graduate organization committed to enrich graduate students' personal, educational and professional experience. To learn more or get involved, please visit [facebook.com/groups/UCFgsa/](https://facebook.com/groups/UCFgsa/). For individual department or graduate program organizations, please see program advisor.

# Professional Development

While this is not required for graduation purposes, we strongly encourage MA students to present a poster or a topic of their research at conferences and publish their papers in professional journals.

One of the goals of this program, as part of the students' professional development, is that students disseminate their research conducted through coursework or their theses through presentations at regional, national or international conferences and/or in publications in academic venues. Presentations may also take the form of a poster presentation.

The Graduate Research Forum, organized annually by the UCF College of Graduate Studies and the Graduate Student Association, provides an excellent opportunity for students to showcase their research projects. Information regarding upcoming conferences and "Calls for Papers" will be emailed to students and posted outside the Spanish MA office. It is also recommended that students participate in SaGA's Annual Colloquium and actively pursue opportunities to disseminate their research at regional, national and international conferences.

## Conference Presentation Support

Students who present their research in professional venues may seek university funding from: UCF Student Government, UCF College of Graduate Studies, and the Spanish MA Program/Department. It is recommended that students seek funding from these sources in this same order (i.e., SG, COGS, and program/department).

### UCF Student Government

All students pay student activity fees, so graduate students are eligible for funding from Student Government money. These funds are limited to \$250 per year, and there are guidelines for registration, hotel rates, distance traveled, etc. You will need to fill out a Conference Registration and Travel (CRT) Individual Allocation Request, which is available at: [ucfsga.com/services/funding/](http://ucfsga.com/services/funding/).

### UCF College of Graduate Studies

The College of Graduate Studies offers a Graduate Presentation Fellowship that provides funding for master's, specialist, and doctoral students to deliver a research paper or comparable creative activity at a professional

meeting. Students must be the primary author and presenter. Please see the following website for more information: [funding.graduate.ucf.edu/presentation/](http://funding.graduate.ucf.edu/presentation/)

Note that awards are made on a first-come, first-served basis, so students are encouraged to apply early in the award period. The amount of money will vary each year depending on budget.

### **Your Program/Department**

Having graduate students present at conferences, especially conferences outside the Orlando area, is excellent publicity for the program and increases the program's and department's prestige. It is possible that a program may be able to get some funding from the department's budget, but this funding is subject to annual budgets, availability for graduate students, and college limitations.

## **Pathways to Success Workshops**

Coordinated by the College of Graduate Studies, the Pathways to Success program offers the following free development opportunities for graduate students including workshops in Academic Integrity, Graduate Grantsmanship, Graduate Teaching, Personal Development, Professional Development, and Research. For more information and how to register, please visit [graduate.ucf.edu/pathways-to-success/](http://graduate.ucf.edu/pathways-to-success/).

## **Graduate Teaching Assistants: Instructor Training and Development**

The Faculty Center for Teaching and Learning (FCTL) promotes excellence in all levels of teaching at the University of Central Florida. They offer several programs for the professional development of Graduate Teaching Assistants at UCF.

- **GTA Training** (mandatory for employment as a GTA): This training provides information and resources for students who will be instructors in a two-day workshop. The seminars cover a variety of topics, including course development, learning theories, lecturing, and academic freedom. Those interested in additional training can also attend an optional training session that normally follows the mandatory training.
- **Preparing Tomorrow's Faculty Program**: This certificate program (12-weeks) consists of group and individualized instruction by Faculty Center staff and experienced UCF professors. Textbooks and materials are provided.

For more information: [fctl.ucf.edu/](http://fctl.ucf.edu/) > Events > GTA Programs or call 407/823-3544.

## **Graduate Research Forum**

Sponsored by the College of Graduate Studies and Graduate Student Association, the Research Forum is an opportunity for students to showcase their research and creative projects and to receive valuable feedback from faculty judges. Awards for best poster and best oral presentation in each category will be given and all participants will receive recognition. For more information, please visit: [graduate.ucf.edu/graduate-research-forum/](http://graduate.ucf.edu/graduate-research-forum/).

## **Graduate Excellence Awards**

Each year, the College of Graduate Studies offers graduate students who strive for academic and professional excellence the opportunity to be recognized for their work. The award categories include the following:

**Award for Excellence by a Graduate Teaching Assistant** – This award is for students who provide teaching support and assistance under the direction of a lead teacher. This award focuses on the extent and quality of the

assistance provided by the student to the lead instructor and the students in the class. (Not intended for students who are instructor of record)

**Award for Excellence in Graduate Student Teaching** – This award is for students who serve as instructors of record and have independent classroom responsibilities. The focus of this award is on the quality of the student's teaching and the academic contributions of those activities.

**Award for the Outstanding Master's Thesis** – It recognizes graduate students for excellence in the master's thesis. The focus of this award is on the quality and contribution of the student's thesis research. Excellence of the master's thesis may be demonstrated by evidence such as, but not limited to: publications in refereed journals, awards and recognitions from professional organizations, and praise from faculty members and other colleagues in the field. The university award will be forwarded to a national-level competition sponsored by the Council of Southern Graduate Schools (CSGS) when the thesis discipline corresponds to the annual submission request.

For the nomination process and eligibility criteria, see the College of Graduate Studies website [graduate.ucf.edu/awards-and-recognition/](http://graduate.ucf.edu/awards-and-recognition/).

## Other

Students should take opportunities to present a poster or a topic of research at a conference. To obtain financial support to present at a conference (other than through your program) or to engage in comparable creative activity at a professional meeting, visit the Graduate Travel Fellowship section at [graduate.ucf.edu/](http://graduate.ucf.edu/).

For information about the Council of Southern Graduate Schools (CSGS) thesis and dissertation awards, see their website: [csgs.org/](http://csgs.org/)> Awards.

For grant-proposal writing resources: [uwc.cah.ucf.edu](http://uwc.cah.ucf.edu).

## Job Search

### Career Services and Experiential Learning

Graduate career development issues are unique and include evaluating academic and nonacademic career choices, discussing graduate school effect on career choices, as well as learning, evaluating, and refining networking and interviewing skills. Whatever your needs, the offices of Career Services and Experiential Learning offer services and resources to aid in the career exploration and job search of Master and Doctoral students in every academic discipline. To learn more, visit [career.ucf.edu/](http://career.ucf.edu/) and [explarning.ucf.edu/](http://explarning.ucf.edu/).

For specific services or resources provided by the academic program, please contact the graduate program director or academic advisor.

## Forms

- [College of Graduate Studies Forms and References](#)  
A complete listing of general forms and references for graduate students, with direct links, may be found here.
- [Graduate Petition Form](#)  
When unusual situations arise, petitions for exceptions to policy may be requested by the student. Depending on the type of appeal, the student should contact his/her program adviser to begin the petition process.
- [Traveling Scholar Form](#)  
If a student would like to take advantage of special resources available on another campus but not

available on the home campus; for example, special course offerings, research opportunities, unique laboratories and library collections, this form must be completed and approved.

## Useful Links

- [Spanish MA Website](#)
- [College of Arts and Humanities Website](#)
- [College of Graduate Studies](#)
- [Academic Calendar](#)
- [Ask UCF](#)
- [Bookstore](#)
- [Campus Life](#)
- [Campus Map](#)
- [Counseling Center](#)
- [Financial Assistance](#)
- [Golden Rule Student Handbook](#)
- [Graduate Catalog](#)
- [Graduate Student Association](#)
- [Graduate Student Center](#)
- [Housing and Residence Life](#)
- [Housing, off campus](#)
- [Knights Email](#)
- [Learning Online](#)
- [Library](#)
- [Modern Languages and Literatures Graduate Programs](#)
- [NID Help](#)
- [Pathways to Success](#)
- [Recreation and Wellness Center](#)
- [Shuttles Parking Services](#)
- [Student Health Services](#)
- [Student Technology Center \(Computer Labs\)](#)
- [Thesis and Dissertation \(ETD\)](#)
- [UCF Global](#)
- [University Writing Center](#)

## Grad Faculty

**Asterisk** = has previous committee experience, which qualifies the person to serve as chair, co-chair or vice chair.

### **Fernandez-Rubiera, Francisco**

College: College of Arts and Humanities

Disciplinary affiliations: Spanish

Contact Info: [rubiera@ucf.edu](mailto:rubiera@ucf.edu)

### **Garcia, Martha \***

College: College of Arts and Humanities

Disciplinary affiliations: Spanish

Research interests: Medieval and Golden Age literature, theatre and film, the portrayal of female characters, the theological aspects of the narrative and theatre, interdisciplinary approaches

Contact Info: [Martha.Garcia@ucf.edu](mailto:Martha.Garcia@ucf.edu)

Websites: <http://mll.cah.ucf.edu/staff.php?id=116>

**Izquierdo Jimenez, Lucas**

College: College of Arts and Humanities

Disciplinary affiliations: Spanish

Contact Info: [Lucas.Izquierdo@ucf.edu](mailto:Lucas.Izquierdo@ucf.edu)

**Lopez, Humberto \***

College: College of Arts and Humanities

Disciplinary affiliations: Spanish

Contact Info: [hlopez@ucf.edu](mailto:hlopez@ucf.edu)

**Nalbone, Lisa \***

College: College of Arts and Humanities

Disciplinary affiliations: Spanish

Research interests: Modern and contemporary Spanish literatures, Hispanic modernisms, gender studies, Spanish civil war, generation of 98

Contact Info: [Lisa.Nalbone@ucf.edu](mailto:Lisa.Nalbone@ucf.edu)

**Thompson, Gregory**

College: College of Arts and Humanities

Disciplinary affiliations: Spanish

Research interests: Acquisition of listening by second language learners, heritage learner placement exams, assessment in the second language classroom and the heritage classroom, service-learning in the second language classroom, bilingual identity and code switching, program and curriculum design to optimize study abroad for students and teachers, interlanguage variation-especially the acquisition of L2 phonology

Contact Info: [gregory.thompson@ucf.edu](mailto:gregory.thompson@ucf.edu)

**Villanueva, Celestino \***

College: College of Arts and Humanities

Disciplinary affiliations: Spanish

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**Villegas, Alvaro**

College: College of Arts and Humanities

Disciplinary affiliations: Spanish

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