

University of Missouri-Columbia
School of Languages, Literatures, and Cultures
Plan of Study and Requirements
**Master of Arts (MA) and Master of Arts in Language Teaching (MALT)
In Spanish**

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1. ADMISSION

Students who wish to pursue either the MA or the MALT degree should apply for admission online, through the Graduate School's website:

<http://gradstudies.missouri.edu/admissions/apply/>

The student will find more information on admission in the MA and MALT programs at

<https://slhc.missouri.edu/spanish/graduate-studies>

1.1. Required materials for application at the Graduate School's website:

- All required Graduate School documents
- Official Transcript
- 10- or 15-page writing sample in language of desired degree program
- 500-word Personal Statement, uploaded to the online application
- 3 letters of recommendation
- Résumé or CV

1.2. Additional materials for international students:

- Official copies of diplomas earned at post-secondary institutions (colleges, universities, or the equivalent) outside the US.
- TOEFL scores (send to Graduate School)

Minimum TOEFL scores:

Internet-based test (iBT)	Paper-based test (PBT)	IELTS
80	550	6.5

1.3. Requirements for Admission

Before their admission into the program, candidates for the MA or MALT must hold a Bachelor's degree (or the equivalent) with a GPA (or equivalent) of 3.0 or better in their major field of study. They must also demonstrate adequate preparation in advanced language and literature courses. This will require their having completed at least four courses equivalent to a 4000-level course at the University of Missouri. At a minimum, three of these courses must be in literature.

If members of the admissions committee determine a deficiency, they will require the student to complete remedial work in literature before or during the first year of enrollment, beyond the 30 credit hours necessary for the MA degree. The committee will inform students of such additional requirements at the time of their admission to the program or earlier.

1.4. Proficiency Requirements in the Target Language

All graduate students except native speakers of Spanish, upon admission to the program, must demonstrate proficiency in Spanish through an assessment, administered by an elementary language coordinator. Elementary language coordinators rely on this assessment to determine a student's eligibility for all levels of language teaching.

Students deemed to be deficient in either their written or spoken grasp of the language will need to undertake remedial work. These students will undergo reassessment the following year. Failure to demonstrate proficiency in the target language a second time will terminate a student's eligibility for the MA or MALT degree and result in dismissal from the graduate program.

1.5. Proficiency Requirements in English

All candidates must demonstrate proficiency in English, including non-native speakers of English who are US citizens.

1.6. The Academic Advisor

All graduate students in the department may choose, or the Director of Graduate Studies will assign them, an academic advisor at the start of their first semester of graduate study. Students must choose an academic advisor by the end of their first semester of graduate study.

1.7. Transfer of Credit

Students may transfer a maximum of 6 credit hours of graduate-level course work completed in other graduate programs. All transfers of credit require approval by the Director of Graduate Studies, in consultation with the Graduate Studies Committee. The Director and the Committee will award transfer credit only at the 7000 level.

2. PLAN OF STUDY

2.1. Credit Hour Requirements

Candidates for the MA or the MALT must complete a total of 30 credit hours at the graduate-level (7000 or above). At least 15 hours (5 courses) must be in courses at the 8000 level or above. In the MALT program, at least 15 hours (5 courses) must be in the target language (Spanish). In the MA program, at least 18 hours (6 courses) must be in the target language (Spanish).

For the MA and MALT, the total number of credit hours in special readings (7960), problems (8085), or any combination of both may not exceed 6. The number of credit hours in special readings (7960) within the student's major field may not exceed 3 per semester.

2.2. Teaching Methodology Requirement

Graduate Instructors with no pedagogical experience or those who have completed no graduate course in foreign language teaching methodology must complete Spanish 7120, (Foreign) Second Language Teaching Methodology.

2.3. Plan of Study ([M-1 Form](#))

MA and MALT candidates must submit a completed M-1 Plan of Study to the Graduate School at least one semester before completing their MA examinations, their MALT examinations, or their MA thesis.

2.4. Required Courses for the **MA in Spanish**

The Plan of Study for the MA in Spanish must include a minimum of 9 hours of course work in Spanish peninsular literature and a minimum of 9 hours of course work in Spanish-American literature.

Candidates for the MA in Spanish must take *Span 4721/7721: Structure of Modern Spanish, Span 8000: Introduction to Hispanic Literature and Culture and Its Pedagogy*, and at least one course on Afro-Hispanic literature and culture.

2.5. Comprehensive Examination for the MA degree ([M-3 Form](#))

A candidate for the Master of Arts degree must either write a thesis or pass a six-hour written examination based on the MA reading list (available on the School's website at this link: <https://slc.missouri.edu/spanish/graduate-studies>).

The Spanish MA examination consists of two 3-hour parts, one part per day. The first part, Day 1, covers Peninsular Spanish literature from the Middle Ages to the present. The second part, Day 2, covers Spanish American literature from the Colonial period to the present.

2.6. Dates for the MA Examination

The School offers the MA examination twice a year, in October and in April, as specified by the Director of Graduate Studies. The examination takes place on two separate days, three hours per day, with a period of no more than 72 hours between those two days. The student's advisor will request questions from the faculty at least three weeks before the first day of the examination.

2.7. MA Examining Committee

A student choosing to complete an MA Examination will name an Examining Committee as well as other members of the regular faculty who write examination questions relating to their respective periods of expertise. The Examining Committee will consist of no fewer than three members of the regular (tenured or tenure-track) graduate faculty in the School of Languages, Literatures, and Cultures.

A member of the regular faculty in the School of Languages, Literatures, and Cultures who is an expert in literature pertaining to each part of the MA examination will prepare

questions for that part. This may require questions prepared by faculty other than members of the Examining Committee. If there is only one available expert in a specific field (for example, only one regular faculty member who is an expert in colonial literature), that faculty member must prepare and grade examination questions relating to that field. If there is more than one expert available in a particular field (for example, more than one member of the regular faculty who is an expert in contemporary Spanish-American literature), the student may choose one of those faculty members to prepare and grade questions in that field.

2.8. Language of the MA Examination

The degree candidate must write at least half the MA examination in the language of specialization (Spanish). Faculty preparing questions may require native speakers of Spanish to write some answers (never more than half) in English.

2.9. Grades for the MA Examination

The MA examination is graded as follows: High Pass, Pass, and Fail. Faculty submit grades in writing to the Director of Spanish Graduate Studies for parts of the examination that they prepared and, if they wish, for the remaining parts. In order to receive a passing grade on any part of the examination, a student must receive passing grades from two thirds of all faculty who prepared questions. To pass the entire examination, students must receive passing grades on all parts.

With permission from the Examining Committee, students who fail part of the examination may retake only the failed part or parts. A minimum of 14 days must elapse before a student retakes a failed part or failed parts of the examination. Two failures of the examination, in whole or in part, will terminate candidacy for the degree and result in dismissal from the program.

2.10. MA Examining Committee Report ([M-3 Form](#))

After a degree candidate completes the MA examination, members of the Examining Committee will complete and sign the M-3 Form and submit it to the Director of Spanish Graduate Studies. After finding that the results comply with departmental and university regulations, the Director will sign the form and submit it to the Dean of the Graduate School for final approval.

2.11. MA Thesis in Spanish ([M-2 Form](#))

Students choosing to write a thesis must name a Thesis Committee and submit an M-2 form by the end of their second semester. This committee will consist of no fewer than three members, one of whom must be outside the department. The advisor must be a member of the regular faculty (tenured or tenure-track) in the School of Languages, Literatures, and Cultures.

The writing of an MA thesis is optional. The MA thesis takes the place of the MA Comprehensive Examination. A minimum of 4 hours and a maximum of 6 hours of

research credit (8080) will be allowed for the thesis. The thesis must conform to the University of Missouri's formatting and style specifications, available at this link: <https://gradschool.missouri.edu/current-students/thesis-dissertation/thesis-dissertation-guidelines/electronic-dissertation-thesis-basics/>

2.12. Language of MA Thesis

Students must write the MA thesis in the language of specialization (Spanish).

2.13. Thesis Defense and Grades

The MA thesis requires a defense, open to the public, before the Thesis Committee. The thesis is graded as follows: High Pass, Pass, or Fail. In order to receive a passing grade on the MA thesis, a student must receive passing grades from all members of the Thesis Committee.

With permission from the Thesis Committee, a student who receives a failing grade may revise and resubmit the thesis. A minimum of 30 days must elapse between the submission that resulted in the failing grade and the second submission. Two failing grades on the thesis will terminate candidacy for the degree and result in dismissal from the program. Alternatively, the Committee may deny permission to resubmit the thesis and require the candidate to complete the MA Comprehensive Examination. The candidate will then have two attempts to pass the MA examination.

2.14. MA Minor Field in Spanish

MA students in Spanish may elect a minor field of study, under the supervision of their academic advisors. The minor requires a minimum of 9 hours of course work completed in another department or other departments. Students interested in such minors should consult the Graduate School website at this link: <http://gradschool.missouri.edu/programs/minors/>

Minor fields appear on students' plan of study, but not on their transcripts. Students electing minors must either write an MA thesis or complete the standard MA examination in their major field (Spanish).

2.15. Required Courses for the **MALT in Spanish**

The Plan of Study for the MALT in Spanish must include the following distribution of credit hours, all at the 7000 level or above, and all within the School of Languages, Literatures and Cultures:

- 6 credit hours in Language/Linguistics
- 3 to 6 credit hours in Civilization
- 6 hours in Literature
- 9 hours in Methodology/Second Language Acquisition

The Plan of Study for the MALT requires that 5 of these courses (15-credit hours) are

taught in Spanish. MALT students may take a maximum of 9 credit hours, at the 7000 level or above, outside the School of Languages, Literatures and Cultures. Students might earn outside credits in the College of Education (in this case, the student would need to pay an extra fee) or the Department of English.

Candidates for the MALT in Spanish must take *Span 4721/7721: Structure of Modern Spanish* and *Span 8000: Introduction to Hispanic Literature and Culture and Its Pedagogy*.

2.16. Comprehensive Examination for the MALT degree ([M-3 Form](#))

A candidate for the for the MALT degree must either write a thesis or pass a 6-hour written examination. Questions on the MALT examination are based on the candidate's course work at the University of Missouri.

2.18. Dates for the MALT examination

The School offers the MALT examination twice a year, in October and in March, as specified by the Director of Spanish Graduate Studies.

The examination takes place on three separate days, two hours per day, with a period of no more than 48 hours between Day 1 and Day 2, or between Day 2 and Day 3. The examination consists of the following three parts, two hours per part, one part per day:

- Applied Linguistics
- Second Language Methodology/Second Language Acquisition
- Civilization OR Literature

2.17. MALT Examining Committee

Each candidate will name an Examining Committee and, as necessary, other faculty members who will prepare examination questions. The Examining Committee consists of at least three members, with a maximum of 5 members, all of them part of the graduate faculty at the University of Missouri. This committee will include the student's academic advisor and two other members of the regular faculty in the School of Languages, Literatures, and Cultures.

2.19. Language of the MALT Examination

The degree candidate must write at least half the MA examination in Spanish. Faculty preparing questions may require native speakers of Spanish to write some answers in English.

2.20. Grades for the MALT Examination

The MALT examination is graded as follows: High Pass, Pass, and Fail. In order to receive a passing grade on any part of the examination, a student must receive passing grades from two thirds of the Examining Committee. To pass the entire examination, students

must receive passing grades on all parts.

With permission from the Examining Committee, students who fail part of the examination may retake only the failed part or parts. Two failures of the examination, in whole or in part, will terminate candidacy for the degree and result in dismissal from the program. A minimum of 14 days must elapse before a student retakes a failed part or failed parts of the examination.

2.21. MALT Examining Committee Report ([M-3 Form](#))

After a degree candidate completes the MALT examination, members of the Examining Committee will complete and sign the M-3 Form and submit it to the Director of Graduate Studies. After finding that the results comply with departmental and university regulations, the Director will sign the form and submit it to the Dean of the Graduate School for final approval.

2.22. MALT Thesis in Spanish ([M-2 Form](#))

Students choosing to write a thesis must name a Thesis Committee and submit an M-2 form by the end of their second semester. This committee will consist of no fewer than three members, one of whom must be outside the department. The advisor must be a member of the regular faculty (tenured or tenure-track) in the School of Languages, Literatures, and Cultures.

The writing of an MALT thesis is optional. The MALT thesis takes the place of the MALT Comprehensive Examination. A minimum of 4 hours and a maximum of 6 hours of research credit (8080) will be allowed for the thesis. The thesis must conform to the University of Missouri's formatting and style specifications, available at this link: <http://gradschool.missouri.edu/policies/thesis-dissertation/guidelines/basics-ch1.php#masters>.

Scope: The scope and quality of the research project for the master's thesis for the MALT is expected to be of such a caliber that it could be submitted to a refereed journal in the student's discipline. The research project must be on a modern language education-related topic (i.e., issues related to methods of teaching languages, literatures and cultures, target language use in the classroom, student outcomes, biliteracy, or dual language programs, among others). This thesis can be written in English or in Spanish.

Foundational Course Requirements: In order to select the master's thesis option for the MALT, students must complete at least 9-credit hours dedicated to research design and methods. These courses should include a combination of SLLC courses (Bilingualism and Language Contact and /or Research in Language Learning) and other research-oriented courses offered at the School. An independent study may be added after the completion of the 9 hours once a research proposal is approved by the selected faculty committee.

Timeline: Some of the thesis topics might require approval from campus IRB (Institutional Research Board) which can also increase the timeline to completion. If a

student wishes to select the thesis option, this discussion **must** be initiated with their advisor immediately following the **first semester** of studies in the program at MU. A project proposal will then be submitted **prior to the end of the second semester** of studies to facilitate completion of the degree within two years.

2.23. Language of MALT Thesis

Students might write the MALT thesis either in English or Spanish after previous consultation with their Thesis Committee.

2.24. Thesis Defense and Grades

The MALT thesis requires a defense, open to the public, before the Thesis Committee. The thesis is graded as follows: High Pass, Pass, or Fail. In order to receive a passing grade on the MALT thesis, a student must receive passing grades from all members of the Thesis Committee.

With permission from the Thesis Committee, a student who receives a failing grade may revise and resubmit the thesis. A minimum of 30 days must elapse between the submission that resulted in the failing grade and the second submission. Two failing grades on the thesis will terminate candidacy for the degree and result in dismissal from the program. Alternatively, the Committee may deny permission to resubmit the thesis and require the candidate to complete the MALT Comprehensive Examination. The candidate will then have two attempts to pass the MALT examination.

2.25. Maximum of 8 Years to Complete MA or MALT Degree

Students must complete all requirements for either the MA or the MALT degree within a period of eight years. This period begins on a student's first day of classes as an officially enrolled degree candidate in either the MA or the MALT program.

3. GRADUATE INSTRUCTORSHIPS

3.1. Semesters of Financial Support

MA and MALT students normally receive 4 semesters of financial support from the university while completing their degree. In exceptional cases, students in good standing—with no grades of Incomplete and with unproblematic teaching—may receive a fifth semester of support, at the discretion of the faculty. Faculty will award a fifth semester of support according to the department's need for instructors. Students must submit all requests for a fifth semester of support in writing to the Director of Graduate Studies. No student will receive more than five semesters of support.

Students who fail to remove a grade of Incomplete within one year of its issuance will be limited to 5 hours of teaching per semester for as long as that grade of Incomplete remains on their academic records.

3.2. Teaching Load

The normal teaching assignment for MA candidates holding instructorships is 4 hours (1 course) per semester. International students may never teach more than 8 hours (2 courses) per semester owing to visa restrictions. All MA and MALT candidates must be registered in a minimum of 6 hours of course work for each semester in which they hold an instructorship. Students may enroll in up to 6 hours per semester of 8080 (MA Examination) if they have completed their required course work and are preparing for their comprehensive examinations.

3.3. Semester Evaluation of Graduate Students

The faculty meet during the fall or winter semesters, or both, to evaluate the teaching and academic performance of all graduate students. The Director of Spanish Graduate Studies informs all students in writing of their status at the end of each semester or each academic year.