

SPANISH LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE (SPAP)

Graduate Degree Program
College: Arts and Humanities

Abstract

The Faculty of the Department of Spanish and Portuguese is committed to excellence in teaching and mentoring, along with the production of new knowledge that is the hallmark of a strong department. Our principal focus is on the intersections between language, literature, culture, and politics; community engagement; and our MA track in Hispanic Applied Linguistics. We bridge several intellectual fields across Spain, Portugal, and Spanish America and between North, Central and South America, the Caribbean, and Brazil, as we rethink the specificity of our cultures. The Department has been the home of major Latin American and Spanish literary figures, to include Juan Ramon Jimenez, who taught at the University between 1943 and 1951 and who, after being nominated by the Department, received the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1956. His legacy, as well as that of cultural critic Angel Rama, award-winning poet Jose Emilio Pacheco, award winning writer and Professor Emeritus, Jorge Aguilar Mora, and Professor Emerita, Graciela Palau de Nemes, among others, continues to shape our thought, vision, and mission.

The Department is renowned for its multidisciplinary strengths in Latin American and Lusophone literatures and cultures as well as its faculty research in the areas of the history of ideas; Southern Cone literature; Judeo-Latin American literature; Mexican literature, theater, and performance; Latin American *modernismo*; colonial and transatlantic discourses; Central American transnational cultures; U.S. Latinidades; Quechua language and indigenous literatures; Caribbean-Archipelagic poetics/politics, *salsa* and *sabor*; Brazilian cinema; Lusophone Africa and African diaspora studies; deconstruction of the Cuban Revolution; and contemporary reinscriptions of the nineteenth century.

Faculty members in the area of Spanish literature and Iberian cultures are highly recognized for their teaching and research in the history of the Spanish language and philology from the Middle Ages to the present; Medieval historiography and women narratives; Golden Age poetics; Cervantes and Quevedo traditions; reinterpretations of the Enlightenment and Neoclassicism; Romanticism (journalism and *costumbrismo*); queer theoretical approaches to Realism and Naturalism; modern and postmodern narrative and poetics; and representations of the Spanish Civil War and exile, particularly in Latin America.

The Department is also at the forefront of Spanish Applied Linguistics, in such areas as language teaching pedagogy; language teacher education; language use and identity; social and political issues in foreign language teaching and learning; instructional technology; learner variables and learning disabilities; language for specific purposes; cross-cultural communication; and heritage language learning.

Mission

The Department of Spanish and Portuguese seeks to forge a strong dialogue between, and within, our areas of specialization pertaining to Latin America, Spain, and Portugal. To that end, we offer thorough instruction in the diverse, complex, and globalized literatures, cultures, and linguistics of the Spanish- and Portuguese-speaking worlds. Our students not only develop the critical language skills vital for communicating in the target language, but also gain an understanding

of the cultures, politics, histories, and literatures of the communities and national spaces of the Americas, Spain, and Portugal.

Our goal is to foster learning and thought, develop critical perspectives, and promote intellectual growth in our students. We teach across interdisciplinary fields such as literature, film, popular and visual culture, theater, history, philosophy, critical theory, gender and sexuality studies, queer theory, philology, and linguistics in different cultural and geographic contexts. We strive for the creation and discussion of new forms of knowledge and the effective engagement of our students and faculty with the world. We prepare students to become promising professionals in their chosen careers.

Our M.A. and Ph.D. graduates are mentored by our faculty, engage in substantive research projects, and benefit from rigorous training in the teaching skills required by the profession. They are prepared to meet the professional demands of highly competitive academic positions in the United States, Latin America, Canada, and Europe.

Financial Assistance

Financial assistance in the form of fellowships and assistantships is available for qualified applicants.

Contact

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Courses: SPAN (<https://academiccatalog.umd.edu/graduate/courses/span/>)

Relationships: American Studies (AMST) (<https://academiccatalog.umd.edu/graduate/programs/american-studies-amst/>)
Comparative Literature (CMLT) (<https://academiccatalog.umd.edu/graduate/programs/comparative-literature-cmlt/>)
English Language and Literature (ENGL) (<https://academiccatalog.umd.edu/graduate/programs/english-language-literature-engl/>)
Second Language Acquisition (SLPH) (<https://academiccatalog.umd.edu/graduate/programs/second-language-acquisition-slma/>)
Theatre and Performance Studies (THPF) (<https://academiccatalog.umd.edu/>)

graduate/programs/theatre-performance-studies-thpf/) Women's Studies (WMST) (<https://academiccatalog.umd.edu/graduate/programs/womens-studies-wmst/>)

ADMISSIONS

General Requirements

- Statement of Purpose
- Transcript(s): Minimum 12 credits upper level literature/culture courses.
- TOEFL/IELTS/PTE (international graduate students (<https://gradschool.umd.edu/admissions/english-language-proficiency-requirements/>))

Program-Specific Requirements

- Letters of Recommendation (3): The letters of recommendation must be in English or notarized translation.
- Writing Sample
- Additional Optional Writing Samples: (one optional for M.A., two optional for Ph.D.)
- CV/Resume
- Description of Research/Work Experience (optional)

In addition to Graduate School requirements, candidates must have a bachelor's degree with a major in Spanish Language and Literature, or the equivalent in a related field with near native fluency in the written and spoken language.

For more admissions information or to apply to the program, please visit our Graduate School website (<https://gradschool.umd.edu/admissions/application-process/step-step-guide-applying/>).

Application Deadlines

Type of Applicant	Fall Deadline
Domestic Applicants	
US Citizens and Permanent Residents	January 21, 2026
International Applicants	
F (student) or J (exchange visitor) visas; A,E,G,H,I and L visas and immigrants	January 21, 2026

Other Deadlines: Please visit the program website at <http://sllc.umd.edu/spanish> (<http://sllc.umd.edu/spanish/>)

REQUIREMENTS

- Spanish Language and Literature, Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.) (<https://academiccatalog.umd.edu/graduate/programs/spanish-language-literature-spap/spanish-language-literature-phd/>)
- Spanish Language and Literature, Master of Arts (M.A.) (<https://academiccatalog.umd.edu/graduate/programs/spanish-language-literature-spap/spanish-language-literature-ma/>)

FACILITIES AND SPECIAL RESOURCES

In addition to the resources of the University libraries, students have easy access to the Library of Congress, the Smithsonian Institution and other

Washington-based libraries and archives. National Archives-II, located on University grounds, is readily accessible to the Campus community. Dr. Sosnowski is the founder and editor of the literary journal *Hispan mica*. The graduate students publish the literary journal *Animal de fondo*.

In association with the Latin American and Caribbean Studies Center, the Department promotes original initiatives on Latin American and Caribbean topics. Postdoctoral Fellows and Visiting Professors are an integral part of our academic program. Also, the Department hosts the Juan Ram n Jim nez Distinguished Lectures series, the Jos  Emilio Pacheco Distinguished Lectures series, the interdisciplinary seminar "Hoy: Interdisciplinary Approaches to the Present", and a series of lectures by scholars working in Hispanic Applied Linguistics, Hispanophone literatures and cultures, and Lusophone literatures and cultures. In recent years, our faculty have been the recipients of major grants and fellowships from The Rockefeller Foundation, the National Endowment for the Humanities, and the John Simon Guggenheim Foundation.