

Spanish MA

Goal: Demonstration Of Breadth Of Knowledge

Goal Description:

Spanish MA students will demonstrate their graduate-level of knowledge in literature, language, and linguistics. Graduate-level knowledge gives students the ability to teach and/or clearly communicate what they have learned through their focused study in the discipline.

Providing Department: Spanish MA

RELATED ITEMS/ELEMENTS

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 1

Learning Objective: Breadth Of Knowledge

Learning Objective Description:

Spanish MA students will demonstrate their graduate-level knowledge through comprehensive written exams demonstrating their ability to clearly communicate what they have learned through their program of study. Students whose dominant language is not Spanish will demonstrate their Advanced High Oral Communication skills on the ACTFL OPI-C.

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 2

Indicator 1: Breadth of Knowledge

Indicator Description:

During their last semester of study, Spanish MA students will demonstrate their graduate-level knowledge through written comprehensive exams in three subject areas of their choosing. Students select these areas from their MA coursework and work with faculty to develop a reading list and exam questions.

Criterion Description:

All Spanish MA students will achieve a score of Pass or High Pass on their written comprehensive exams during their final semester of study.

Findings Description:

All MA graduates in the 2021-2022 cycle achieved a Pass or High Pass on written comprehensive exams.

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 3

Indicator 1: Breadth of Knowledge

Action Description:

WOLC will maintain the current written comprehensive exam as a method for measuring graduate-level knowledge.

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 2

Indicator 2: Breadth of Knowledge

Indicator Description:

Prior to graduation, Spanish MA students whose dominant language is not Spanish will take the ACTFL OPI-C and obtain a minimum score of Advanced High. WOLC selected this benchmark based on the ACTFL guidelines for Oral Proficiency Levels in the Workplace (2015) (see: <https://bit.ly/ACTFLOPITW>).

Attached Files

 [OralProficiencyWorkplacePoster.pdf](#)

Criterion Description:

All students taking the OPI-C will obtain a minimum score of Advanced High. ACTFL describes this level as follows:

“Speakers at the Advanced High sublevel perform all Advanced-level tasks with linguistic ease, confidence, and competence. They are consistently able to explain in detail and narrate fully and accurately in all time frames. In addition, Advanced High speakers handle the tasks pertaining to the Superior level but cannot sustain performance at that level across a variety of topics. They may provide a structured argument to support their opinions, and they

may construct hypotheses, but patterns of error appear. They can discuss some topics abstractly, especially those relating to their particular interests and special fields of expertise, but in general, they are more comfortable discussing a variety of topics concretely.

Advanced High speakers may demonstrate a well-developed ability to compensate for an imperfect grasp of some forms or for limitations in vocabulary by the confident use of communicative strategies, such as paraphrasing, circumlocution, and illustration. They use precise vocabulary and intonation to express meaning and often show great fluency and ease of speech. However, when called on to perform the complex tasks associated with the Superior level over a variety of topics, their language will at times break down or prove inadequate, or they may avoid the task altogether, for example, by resorting to simplification through the use of description or narration in place of argument or hypothesis.

Findings Description:

All graduating MA Spanish students in the 2021-2022 cycle had Spanish as their dominant language and were therefore exempt from this criterion.

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 3

Indicator 2: Breadth of Knowledge

Action Description:

WOLC will maintain this standard for students whose dominant language is not Spanish

Goal: Graduate Student Scholarship

Goal Description:

Graduate-level study will give students essential professional scholarly knowledge and skills.

Providing Department: Spanish MA

RELATED ITEMS/ELEMENTS -----

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 1

Learning Objective: Graduate Student Scholarship

Learning Objective Description:

Through a deliberate admissions process and faculty-student research collaboration, the MA Spanish program will give students essential professional and scholarly knowledge and skills.

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 2

Indicator 1: Graduate Student Scholarship

Indicator Description:

The Spanish Graduate Faculty revised admissions criteria to more accurately reflect program content and goals. Prior to admission, graduate faculty evaluate students’ prior coursework (minimum of 18 hours undergraduate Spanish), undergraduate GPA, writing in Spanish and English, and students’ letters of recommendation from academic and professional sources. The student application package reflects these criteria; students must submit writing samples in Spanish and English and must provide letters of recommendation from academic and professional mentors. Application packages are evaluated using the attached rubric.

Attached Files

 [Admission Rubric Spanish MA.pdf](#)

Criterion Description:

All students admitted to the Spanish MA program will meet minimum criteria for program admission or will have a clear remediation plan in place prior to admission.

Findings Description:

All admitted students met the criteria for direct admission. None required a remediation plan.

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 3

Indicator 1: Graduate Student Scholarship

Action Description:

WOLC will continue to use the admissions criteria for new applicants.

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 2

Indicator 2: Graduate Student Scholarship

Indicator Description:

WOLC will build a program of regular graduate student external scholarly activity.

Criterion Description:

Each academic year, at least 2 graduate students will collaborate with faculty to prepare a scholarly project for submission to a peer-reviewed conference, publication venue, or grant agency.

Findings Description:

One MA student completed work with a MA faculty member. The student-faculty team was awarded a Mellon-funded Grant-in-Aid through the University of Houston's US Latino Digital Humanities program.

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 3

Indicator 2: Graduate Student Scholarship

Action Description:

WOLC will maintain the KPI, striving for a minimum of two peer-reviewed scholarly projects from faculty-student teams.

Update to Previous Cycle's Plan for Continuous Improvement Item

Previous Cycle's Plan For Continuous Improvement (Do Not Modify):

Closing Summary

- 1) Continue direct recruitment in Houston-area schools and at campus events to increase enrollment
- 2) Continue to survey school districts, teachers, and current/future MA students to tailor curriculum and program development.
- 3) Revise current Spanish MA program to be a fully online WOLC MA program oriented to building professional language skills.

Update of Progress to the Previous Cycle's PCI:

- 1) Continue direct recruitment in Houston-area schools and at campus events to increase enrollment

WOLC continued direct recruitment to these schools, but was not especially successful. We will be evaluating the Spanish MA program and refining its content as we move forward with the WOLC BA (and MA to follow).

- 2) Continue to survey school districts, teachers, and current/future MA students to tailor curriculum and program development.

WOLC continued revising its MA curriculum and offered courses that were most relevant to our current student population.

- 3) Revise current Spanish MA program to be a fully online WOLC MA program oriented to building professional language skills.

WOLC offered all Spanish MA courses online and will continue to do so during the transition to a WOLC MA.

New Plan for Continuous Improvement Item

Closing Summary:

Closing Summary

- 1) Continue direct recruitment in Houston-area schools and at campus events to increase enrollment

2) Continue to survey school districts, teachers, and current/future MA students to tailor curriculum and program development.

3) Revise current Spanish MA program to be a fully online WOLC MA program oriented to building professional language skills.