

Hispanic Studies

Senior Project Guidelines

Topics

[Introduction](#)
[Getting Started](#)
[Choosing a Topic](#)
[Choosing an Advisor](#)
[Expectations of the Faculty Project Advisor and of the Student](#)
[Senior Project Timetable](#)
[Proposal](#)
[Abstract](#)
[The Project](#)
[Presentation](#)
[Presentation Schedule](#)
[Checklist](#)

Introduction

The Senior Project is intended as a capstone experience for students pursuing a Spanish major in the Department of Hispanic Studies. Preparation of such a project in your final year can focus your interests, provide perspective in your major, develop basic scholarly skills, foster creativity and independent effort, and synthesize your educational experiences. Besides independent work, the project also involves close associations with faculty members, particularly with the professor supervising your work. Such sustained interaction contributes greatly to the quality of the experience. Students completing a senior thesis in the Honors Program in Spanish do not need to do a separate Senior Project, but will present their Honors thesis at the Senior Project conference.

Getting Started

To begin work on your senior project, you must (1) choose your topic, and (2) choose your project advisor. These choices are closely related.

Choosing the Topic

The student will choose a topic for a written project for presentation at a departmental conference. The project, written and presented in the target language, may be a development of a course paper. In this case, students will choose a work from a previous course in their major and prepare it for presentation, expanding its substance by readings in secondary literature and/or by further analysis, and correcting problems of grammar and style. The project might also involve literary translation and commentary, a unit of lesson plans appropriate to a student's Education major or minor, preparation

of a reading list and subsequent exam discussion, creative writing or other interdisciplinary projects based on previous class work.

Choosing the Advisor

Choose an advisor who you feel will help you reach the goals of your project. If a faculty member cannot direct your project, please contact the department chair, José Antonio Fábres, who will help you find another advisor. The choice of advisor must be made by **December** of the senior year for May graduates, by **mid-September** for December graduates.

Expectations of the Faculty Project Advisor and of the Student

A faculty member who agrees to supervise your project expects four basic things of you: (1) to be genuinely committed to the research or creative project, which should fit into your course of study, your interests, and your post-B.A. plans, (2) to have an adequate general preparation in the subject, (3) to have well-defined and obtainable objectives for the project, (4) to be responsible for meeting deadlines, and (5) give your presentation and remain for the entire event.

The faculty member who agrees to be your project advisor will help you to accomplish the following tasks: (1) doing an adequate literature search and developing a bibliography, if relevant, (2) focusing the topic, (3) achieving a good outline, organization, and style, and correct use of the target language, and (4) preparing the final draft by reading the paper carefully, critically, and in time for you to make final revisions.

Senior Project Timetable

Fall Semester, Senior Year

Early in the semester: Choose possible project topic, choose advisor. Begin work on your project to be sure you have a good topic for you. Experience suggests that the most important advice is **START EARLY!** If the project is to be of maximum value, preparation must begin long before the final deadline.

November-December: For May graduates: Register for SPAN 399 (1 credit). December graduates should be registered by Fall Semester.

Proposal

Write a one-page proposal in English describing the project and submit it to your project advisor for their signature by the first class day in December (see checklist below). The proposal should be typed

in English, and double-spaced: give one copy (hard copy or email attachment) to your advisor and turn one copy in to José Antonio Fábres, Richarda P19, CSB. Be sure to keep a copy for your records. Include **your name** and the **name of your advisor** at the head of the document.

At this time you will also agree with your project advisor on a schedule for completion of the work in the spring semester. Normally you will meet with your advisor twice a month to discuss the progress of your work on the project. The student is responsible for scheduling meetings.

Abstract

You will be required to write a 150-word summary in English of your project to be submitted to the department coordinator via email by a date to be determined each year, usually in early to mid March for spring presentations. The abstract will be printed in the official program for the presentations. Please include your **advisor's name** and the **title** of your work.

Here is an example of an abstract done by a former student:

La poesía de mujeres nicaragüenses: Expresiones de revolución y liberación

The women's movement in Nicaragua was an imperative driving force behind the successful Sandinista Revolution in 1979. Women's participation earned them a promise of equality that was temporarily appeased, but never truly established or made a priority within the revolutionary government. Poetry, the most popular means of literary expression in Nicaragua, tells their story—a story that testifies, hurts, hopes, and creates. The poetic works of Michèle Najlis, Gioconda Belli, and Daisy Zamora, three prominent feminist authors and political activists in Nicaragua, are representative of the struggle of the Nicaraguan women's movement since the late 1970s. Their poetry gives a creative voice and an important cultural representation to their story, tracing the movement from the necessity, excitement and optimism of the revolution, through the post-revolution disappointment, and on to women's hopes and visions for the future.

The Project

The student and advisor will meet according to the schedule agreed on, and the advisor will monitor work on the project.

Form of the Senior Project is to be agreed upon by the student and the advisor. The student and advisor will agree on a deadline in late March for a complete draft (late November for Fall graduates).

The final draft must be a minimum of ten pages, excluding the bibliography and completed by the end of the first week in April (December for fall graduates). All copies of the project must be on white paper. Photocopies may be made only on high-quality machines. It is essential that the type of all copies of the thesis be clear, black, and neat. In regard to documentation (footnotes, bibliography, etc.), the general guide should be the MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers or another guide agreed upon by advisor and student.

Presentation

Students should prepare a 10-minute presentation (to be given in Spanish) for the conference. In addition to summarizing the content of their project, students might also explain how they came to the project, how the project evolved, what difficulties they encountered, and what they learned from the project. The department will host a mini-conference late in the semester for the presentations of student work. (This conference may coincide with Celebrating Creativity and Scholarship Day.) Presentations are given in concurrent sessions. The abstracts will be published and distributed to students and faculty in the form of a program.

The project will be graded H/S/U, on the basis of both written work and oral presentation.

Presentation Schedule (See below)

As part of the Senior Project and major requirement, students are expected to remain for the entire event in support of fellow Hispanic Studies majors.

Hispanic Studies Senior Project Checklist

FOR MAY GRADUATES

October of senior year	Plan to attend meeting on senior projects
November of senior year	Register for SPAN 399 for spring
February and March	Be in regular contact with your advisor to be sure you are on track.
By end of February	Submit a project proposal to your project advisor and Hispanic Studies chair, and agree upon a schedule for the work to be done.
By March 1	Submit an electronic version of your abstract to your advisor.
Late March	Give a complete draft of the project to your advisor for comment and suggested revisions.
By end of first week of April	Submit a final paper of the project to your advisor. Once approved by your advisor, an electronic copy will be made available for HS faculty and also kept in the HS department archives.
Late-April (TBA)	Senior presentations (10 min. per project)

Hispanic Studies Senior Project Checklist

FOR DECEMBER GRADUATES

Spring of Junior Year	Register for SPAN 399
October and November	Be in regular contact with your advisor to be sure you are on track.
By end of October	Submit a project proposal to your project advisor and HS chair, and agree upon a schedule for the work to be done.
Late November	Give a complete draft of the project to your advisor for comment and suggested revisions.
Early December	Submit a final draft of the project to your advisor, together with an abstract which will be circulated to HS faculty and major.
TBA	Senior presentations (10 min. per project)