



SCHOOL OF LIBERAL ARTS

INDIANA UNIVERSITY

Department of World Languages and Cultures
IUPUI

MEMORANDUM

TO: Carrie Foote, Chair, SLA Graduate Curriculum Committee

FROM: Herbert Brant, Director of Graduate Studies in Spanish, Dept. of World Languages & Cultures

SUBJECT: Proposal to Change the Curriculum of the MAT in Spanish

DATE: January 20, 2010

RECOMMENDATION

The Graduate Committee of the Program in Spanish unanimously recommends a change in the curriculum requirements for the Master of Arts for Teachers of Spanish. Instead of a single option with a required thesis, the committee strongly endorses the creation of a coursework option for the Spanish MAT Program at IUPUI and a minor reduction from a total of 37 credit hours to 36.

RATIONALE

The MAT in Spanish was created to meet the needs of both in-service Spanish teachers and those who wish to become teachers of Spanish, but who lack the highly specialized training necessary for success in the profession. Given the MAT's practical approach to teacher training, language skill development, and content area instruction, the thesis may not be necessary for most MAT graduates. For some, plans to continue into a Ph.D. program may be appropriate, and the thesis option may be a good experience in developing the research and writing skills necessary for successful doctoral work, while for most MAT students, increased coursework may be more valuable and professionally rewarding. It is hoped that offering both options might appeal to a wider range of applicants and better meet their individual professional needs.

PROPOSAL SPECIFICS

The grid below indicates the current single-option curriculum, and the two proposed options. To sum up the proposed changes, the total number of credit hours will decrease slightly from 37 to 36 —with or without the thesis—, the thesis course (S686) will be offered for variable credit —from 3 to 6 hours— to allow for greater flexibility of enrollment patterns, the summer courses abroad will be reduced to 3 credit hours each,¹ and new courses will be added to complement our current offerings.²

¹ The summer courses abroad were originally created for a 6-week program at *Cursos Internacionales* at the University of Salamanca. Since then, the program has been shortened to five weeks, and the original four credit hours per course now seem excessive given the shorter session. Additionally, we have examined the coursework in the classes, and in comparison to those offered on the IUPUI campus, the work load no longer warrants 4 credit hours each.

² New course proposals and changes to existing courses will be submitted separately.

Current MAT Curriculum	PROPOSED Curriculum: Option 1 (THESIS)	PROPOSED Curriculum: Option 2 (COURSEWORK)
<p>The IUPUI M.A.T. in Spanish consists of 37 credits and it may be completed in three academic semesters and two five-week courses in Spain completed in sequential years. The summer work in Spain must be done in consecutive years. The remainder of the course work must be completed in residence at IUPUI.</p>	<p>The IUPUI M.A.T. in Spanish consists of 36 credits and it may be completed in three or four academic semesters, and two five-week sessions abroad completed in sequential years. The summer work abroad must be done in consecutive years. The remainder of the course work must be completed in residence at IUPUI.</p>	<p>The IUPUI M.A.T. in Spanish consists of 36 credits and it may be completed in three or four academic semesters, and two five-week sessions abroad completed in sequential years. The summer work abroad must be done in consecutive years. The remainder of the course work must be completed in residence at IUPUI.</p>
<p>Course Work at IUPUI (to be completed during the academic year):</p> <p>Methodology and Applied Linguistics</p> <p>S513 Introduction to Hispanic Sociolinguistics (3 cr.)</p> <p>S515 Acquisition of Spanish as a Second Language (3 cr.)</p> <p>S517 Methods of Teaching College Spanish (3 cr.)</p> <p>S519 Practicum in the Teaching of Spanish (2 cr.)</p> <p>Latin American Culture and Literature</p> <p>S518 Studies in Latino and Spanish American Culture (3 cr.)</p> <p>S680 Topics in Contemporary Spanish American Literature (3 cr.)</p> <p>Thesis</p> <p>S686 M.A.T. Thesis (4 cr.)</p>	<p>OPTION 1: M.A.T. with THESIS</p> <p>Course Work at IUPUI (to be completed during the academic year): 9 credit hours of core coursework, 9 credit hours of additional coursework, and 6 credit hours of thesis work</p> <p>Core Required Courses (9 cr.)</p> <p>S515 Acquisition of Spanish as a Second Language (3 cr.)</p> <p>S517 Methods of Teaching College Spanish (3 cr.)</p> <p>S519 Practicum in the Teaching of Spanish (3 cr.)</p> <p>THESIS (6 cr.)</p> <p>S686 M.A.T. Thesis (3-6 cr.)</p> <p>Additional Coursework Options (9 cr.)</p> <p>S511 Spanish Syntactic Analysis (3 cr.)</p> <p>S513 Introduction to Hispanic Sociolinguistics (3 cr.)</p> <p>S518 Studies in Latino and Spanish American Culture (3 cr.)</p> <p>S528 Translation Practice and Evaluation (3 cr.)</p> <p>S5xx Topics in the Teaching of Spanish (3 cr.) (new course under development)</p> <p>S680 Topics in Contemporary Spanish American Literature (3 cr.)</p>	<p>OPTION 2: M.A.T. via Coursework</p> <p>Course Work at IUPUI (to be completed during the academic year): 9 credit hours of core coursework, and 15 credit hours of additional coursework</p> <p>Core Required Courses (9 cr.)</p> <p>S515 Acquisition of Spanish as a Second Language (3 cr.)</p> <p>S517 Methods of Teaching College Spanish (3 cr.)</p> <p>S519 Practicum in the Teaching of Spanish (3 cr.)</p> <p>Additional Coursework Options (15 cr.)</p> <p>S511 Spanish Syntactic Analysis (3 cr.)</p> <p>S513 Introduction to Hispanic Sociolinguistics (3 cr.)</p> <p>S518 Studies in Latino and Spanish American Culture (3 cr.)</p> <p>S528 Translation Practice and Evaluation (3 cr.)</p> <p>S5xx Topics in the Teaching of Spanish (3 cr.) (new course under development)</p> <p>S680 Topics in Contemporary Spanish American Literature (3 cr.)</p>

Current MAT Curriculum	PROPOSED Curriculum: Option 1 (THESIS)	PROPOSED Curriculum: Option 2 (COURSEWORK)
<p>Course Work Abroad (to be completed in two consecutive July sessions):</p> <p>S521 Spanish Grammar and Linguistics for Teachers I (4 cr.)</p> <p>S523 Spanish Literature, Art, and Culture for Teachers I (4 cr.)</p> <p>S524 Spanish Grammar and Linguistics for Teachers II (4 cr.)</p> <p>S525 Spanish Literature, Art, and Culture for Teachers II (4 cr.)</p>	<p>Course Work Abroad (to be completed in two consecutive July sessions):</p> <p>S521 Spanish Grammar and Linguistics for Teachers I (3 cr.)</p> <p>S523 Spanish Literature, Art, and Culture for Teachers I (3 cr.)</p> <p>S524 Spanish Grammar and Linguistics for Teachers II (3 cr.)</p> <p>S525 Spanish Literature, Art, and Culture for Teachers II (3 cr.)</p>	<p>Course Work Abroad (to be completed in two consecutive July sessions):</p> <p>S521 Spanish Grammar and Linguistics for Teachers I (3 cr.)</p> <p>S523 Spanish Literature, Art, and Culture for Teachers I (3 cr.)</p> <p>S524 Spanish Grammar and Linguistics for Teachers II (3 cr.)</p> <p>S525 Spanish Literature, Art, and Culture for Teachers II (3 cr.)</p>

FACTORS IN SUPPORT OF THE PROPOSAL

- To begin, it must be noted that on a national level it is not common for MAT programs in Spanish to require a thesis for completion of the degree. The addition of an option for more coursework will put our program more in line with **national norms** for MAT degree programs.
- For those students who may wish to continue on in a Ph.D. program, the thesis option may prove to be useful for successful admission to a quality doctoral program. However, for those master's candidates who plan to apply their training directly to their teaching situation, additional coursework may be of greater value to their **professional development**. With a wider range of content-area courses, the potential caliber of our graduates who teach in elementary or secondary schools should increase, and thus help to fulfill one of the original aims of the MAT in Spanish: to improve the quality of Spanish language and culture instruction for the state of Indiana and the Indianapolis metropolitan area.
- With a non-thesis option, the MAT in Spanish should be more attractive to a larger pool of **applicants** than is currently the case. For those who are interested in a degree that combines a rigorous master's program in Spanish with practical teacher training, a required thesis may encourage them to consider other programs in the area that do not require a major research project. With an option to expand their training through additional coursework, the MAT in Spanish at IUPUI may become a more appealing choice for current and future teachers to complete their graduate work.
- By providing a choice of options, the MAT in Spanish will acquire greater **flexibility**. Currently, students must follow a single path towards completion of the degree, and the lack of options has occasionally been an impediment for timely completion of the program requirements. With other course options, students may tailor the program more to their individual needs.
- With an option for additional coursework, those students who do not have a strong interest in conducting research and publishing their findings may find it easier to finish the program within the time limits, and complete the degree. An increased **graduation rate** will further enhance the reputation of the MAT in Spanish at IUPUI, attract higher quality applicants, and help meet the dire need for better qualified teachers of Spanish in the state of Indiana.

CONCLUSION

With the creation of an option either to complete a master's thesis or to conduct additional graduate coursework, the MAT in Spanish at IUPUI will attract a greater quantity and quality of applicant, provide a program more tailored to the individual professional needs of its students, offer students greater flexibility in the completion of the program, improve its retention and graduation rate, and align itself better with national trends and norms for MAT programs in the United States.