

DOCTORAL PROGRAM (Ph. D.)

A minimum of 66 units are required for completion of the Ph.D. in Mexican American Studies. All required units of credit must be at the graduate level at the University of Arizona or at an accredited institution in consultation with the Major Advisor, MAS Graduate Program Coordinator and the Director of Graduate Studies. Completion of Degree is required no later than 5 years from passing comps. Various forms are available online the MAS and Graduate College websites or through the Major Advisor, Graduate Program and the Director of Graduate Studies.

Degree Requirements

The department does not require full-time status for its PhD students but the department requires that they enroll for at least 3 units each semester. Those holding departmental teaching and research assistantships, however, must enroll in at least 6 units of graduate credit to meet Graduate College standards. If the student is working on a dissertation and is only enrolled in 900-level units, full-time status is 3 units. *If the student has completed all course work, the dissertation requirements, and is not receiving University funding, 1 unit of graduate credit will maintain full-time status. The full-time status enrollment minimums apply to students wishing to defer federal loan repayments and/or students receiving University funding. Please refer to Graduate College website for the most up-to-date information.*

The department encourages students to collaborate with other academic units within the University to explore relevant theories, knowledge and perspectives based on their specialized field of scholarly inquiry and research. These aforementioned departmental requirements allow students a wide breath choices and independence in completing their degree requirements and all courses must be regularly graded courses (A, B, C, D, and E). Only in unusual circumstances may the above-mentioned requirements be altered.

Learning Objectives

a) Demonstrate skills in critical analysis of research literature and demonstrate the ability to design and conduct original research in the interdisciplinary field of Mexican American Studies and across relevant disciplines.

b) Apply Mexican American studies theories to think critically about social justice in the context of Mexican American/Mexican origin communities.

c) Contextualize and analyze the experiences of Mexican Americans within a broader hemispheric perspective --from pre-Columbian to contemporary --by applying relevant theories and principles from Mexican American Studies and other relevant disciplines in order to analyze the complex realities and issues faced in a hemispheric context of the Americas.

d) Articulate and demonstrate an understanding and analysis of Mexican American/ Chicanx/Latinx/Indigenous and contemporary issues, social movements and related theories, such as critical race and border theories.

e) Develop and apply a theoretical lens of transdisciplinary Mexican American studies that draws on, and is grounded in, relevant frameworks, such as gendered dynamics, racialization, marginalization of communities and decoloniality.

MAS Core Courses Overview

The MAS PhD Degree requires that students take 18 units of core graduate coursework offered by the MAS Faculty, as well as MAS 695A (3 units): Mexican American Studies Colloquium taken during their first semester in the program.

MAS Core Courses Overview

Minimum Credits: 66

Course Work:

Foundation: MAS 695A	3 units
Methods: MAS 580A Advanced	3 units
Core (6 MAS courses)	18 units
Minor (if in MAS)	9 units
Specialization	15 units
Research Methods	
Dissertation	18 units

Questions about courses and which courses to take, contact your advisor

**Students who have taken any co-convened courses during their undergraduate studies cannot count credit toward the graduate degree. See your Advisor for substitution options.*

If you are ready to enroll in Research, Dissertation, Independent study units - email the Graduate Program Coordinator for enrollment. Approval from your advisor is needed.

Elective Course Work

See list of elective on page 41

Program Requirements:

The Ph.D. program is a standard two-year program. While faculty and staff will help you to successfully earn your M.S., you are ultimately responsible for making sure that you meet all requirements and deadlines for both the department and the Graduate College.

- **Ph.D Student Progress Report:** *Required by the Graduate College and required to stay in good standing by the department and the Graduate College. An annual PhD student progress form will be used so that faculty can evaluate your progress.*
- **Qualifying Review:** A qualifying review within be administered within two semesters that affirms formal acceptance into the program. See PhD Student Qualifying Exam Form.
- **Doctoral Plan of Study:** Students need to work closely with their Major Advisor and Faculty committee to create a doctoral plan of study that meets the department's criteria.
- **Comprehension Exam:** Completion and affirmative evaluation of the comprehensive examination. Written and Oral Comprehensive Examinations should cover the major and minor areas of study for advancement to *all but* dissertation (ABD) status.
- **Prospectus and prospectus review**
- **Dissertation Defense**
- **Completed and Approved Dissertation**

Specialization Area

In consultation with your Major Advisor students must also complete 15 units in a Mexican American Studies specialization area. No more than 6 units may be taken as Independent Study and only 3 units as preceptorship. An Independent Study Contract form is required for each independent study class, and a Preceptorship form is required for the preceptorship.

Minor Area

The Graduate College requires a minor. Students have the option of completing a Minor in MAS (9 units) or selecting to minor outside of MAS. If completing a minor outside of MAS, please see that department for their PhD Minor guidelines and unit requirements. The minor chair and advisor must be core faculty in MAS. Exceptions may be made to use an affiliated faculty on a case-by-case basis. When an affiliated faculty member is approved by the DGS, the affiliated faculty will work with the DGS to establish assessment for all benchmarks.

Research Methods

Since this is an interdisciplinary program, each student, in consultation with their Major Advisor should take 3 units in an approved research methods course that best serves their research agenda. Additional units may be required as per research needs.

Dissertation Units

A minimum of 18 dissertation units are required.

Transfer Units

The department will allow a maximum of 15 Master's units taken at the University of Arizona or transferred from another university to be listed on the Plan of Study. Coursework taken outside this department requires a copy of the syllabus be provided for the class under consideration. For Instructions contact the Program Coordinator. In consultation with the student, the Qualifying Review Committee will review the relevancy of these courses and determine how many of these units merit inclusion in the Plan of Study.

MAS Evaluation of Transfer Credits

Any units accepted by your advisor/committee not taking at the University of Arizona must then be submitted via GradPath and go to the Graduate College for evaluation.

Qualifying Review

Mexican American Studies requires students to take a diagnostic evaluation to demonstrate acceptability to pursue the doctorate as well as to determine areas of study where further course work is necessary. Graduate students will take their Qualifying Review/Exam after they have completed their **first year of study or have completed 12 credits**. This examination usually takes 1-1½ hours and should be scheduled early in the student's second semester in residence (**but the review will occur at the end of the completed credits/year of study**). Students should be prepared to discuss the following dossier items at the examination.

The MAS Qualifying Packet or Dossier should include:

1. A 3-5 page short academic bio statement. In addition to highlighting the student's academic background, the statement should include the direction of the research interests in MAS in relation to key theories and intersecting fields of study; students should also stipulate their future academic goals.

2. An updated academic curriculum vitae (CV).
3. A set of transcripts including all graduate courses taken. These can be unofficial copies. (can request a copy from the Graduate Program Coordinator - has on file copies of any transcripts that were submitted with student's graduate college application.) Include an outline of courses you would like to take in the upcoming year. The courses should express an intellectual coherence with your research interests.
4. For students who do not have a masters from the Department of Mexican American studies, the Qualifying Review consists of submitting a research paper developed from a MAS course *at least 10 pages*.

Qualifying Review Committee

The Qualifying Exam ad-hoc committee should be composed of the student's major professor (advisor) and at least two committee members, one of whom can hold an appointment outside the MAS Department for the Major, and one committee member for the Minor. Students should try to include at least one faculty member from their specialization area. **Select an ad-hoc Advisory Committee no later than you second semester of residency** to conduct a Ph.D. Qualifying Review to consider the suitability for continuation in the program.

The major professor should be an appointed MAS faculty member who also serves as the student's advisor and mentor. The department head may designate a temporary major professor (advisor) for incoming students, students are allowed to change major professors with departmental approval, but they are ALWAYS required to have an MAS major professor in order to maintain Satisfactory Academic Progress. The Department of Mexican American Studies has over twenty associated and affiliated faculty members whose appointments in their respective departments and colleges strengthen the MAS Ph.D. program through elective course offerings, mentoring, and serving on dissertation committees as needed.

Be prepared to discuss a projected timetable for your completion of course work, language requirements and comprehensive examinations with your committee. You should also have a rough dissertation topic.

Comprehensive Examination for Advancement to Candidacy

Before admission to candidacy for the doctoral degree, the student must pass a written and an oral Doctoral Comprehensive Examination (comp exam). This examination is intended to assess the student's comprehensive knowledge of the major and minor subjects of study, both in breadth across the general field of Mexican American Studies (MAS) and in depth within the area of specialization. The Comprehensive Examination is considered a single examination although it consists of written and oral parts.

While the Graduate College sets general policies and guidelines for exams, The Department of MAS uses its own criteria for assessing a student's comprehensive knowledge of the field through an examination intended to test the student's knowledge of their major and minor subjects of study. With few exceptions, the Comprehensive Examination must be passed before a student is allowed to register for dissertation (MAS 920) units. Students who have completed their coursework but have not passed their exams will need to enroll in research units (MAS 900). Exceptions to this rule are rarely granted and the student must get approval from their advisor, the Director of Graduate Studies and the Department Head.

Comprehensive Examination Committee

The examining committee must consist of a minimum of four members. The chair of the examination committee must be a tenured or tenure-track MAS faculty member and is considered as the student's Major Advisor. The two additional members must be current tenured, or tenure track MAS faculty members. Additional committee members may be tenured or tenure-track, or an approved special member who has published and acquired an expertise in MAS or the minor field. Special members must be pre-approved by the Dean of the Graduate College.

The committee members do not all have to be related to the research interest of the student. The comprehensive exam is an assessment of the student's understanding of the field of Mexican American Studies and its interdisciplinary study that is contingent, related or intersectional. The committee will present questions that may address methodology or theories related to the research interest. At least one question must address the student's understanding of the Mexican American Studies discipline and if applicable, one question will be presented from the minor. The questions will be in relation to the student's particular field of study, and even potential research, but the comprehensive exam is an evaluation of the research interest.

The student is responsible for submitting the "Comprehensive Exam Committee Appointment" form on Grad Path and, if needed, for requesting that the Graduate Program Coordinator seek approval of "special" committee members from the Graduate College.

Any optional members beyond the fourth can also be current tenured or tenure-track faculty members, or approved special members.

Minor in MAS Committee:

The Minor Advisor must be tenure or tenure-track. If the minor is in MAS, the department requires only one committee member. If a student's Master's degree is in MAS, a fourth question for written portion for the MAS minor exam is not required but their minor advisor must be present and participate at the oral examination.

Minor outside of MAS:

If the student selects to minor outside MAS, they must familiarize themselves with that department's requirements. Minors in other departments are governed by that department's examination procedures. The minor advisor must be a tenure or tenure-track faculty member from the designated department. Under certain circumstances, the minor department may waive their portion of the written examination at their discretion but must be present at the Oral Examination. This may be the case when a student earned a Master's degree from that department.

The Examination Committee must have both a major and minor chair.

Guidelines

The student will **meet with both their major and minor advisor the semester prior to taking the written examination, or early in the semester of the examination to discuss the process.**

The student should also consult with their committee members individually to develop a reading list within reason. A minimum of at least 20 bibliographic references relevant to MAS and/or the students' specialty is required of all students, but each committee member may request a lengthier list within reason. When each committee member has approved their list, the student needs to submit the reading list to the Major Advisor for approval.

After the student has mastered the readings, and has the approval of the Major Advisor, the student can submit the "Comp Exam Committee Appointment Form" in GradPath. This form is to

indicate who will serve on your committee for the Comprehensive Exam. The form will go through an approval chain: Graduate Program Coordinator, Committee Chair, MAS Director of Graduate Studies and lastly will need approval from the Graduate College.

**Submit at least three weeks before examination date.*

Reading List and Questions:

Once the examination has been scheduled, the student should meet with all their committee members to revisit the reading lists and discuss potential examination questions. Although students may contribute and suggest potential questions, committee members have complete discretion as to which question(s) they intend to ask.

Questions should be broad enough to allow students to integrate a range of literature and demonstrate an expertise in MAS but also consider that the department has established a maximum page length of 10 pages or a maximum of 2500 words (this does not include footnotes or drafted their questions, they will submit them to the Major Advisor. At this point the committee, under the direction of the Committee Chair may choose to discuss revising the questions to fit the students' research specialties and to avoid redundancy.

If the student needs any accommodations during the written and/or oral examination, the student will need to speak with their Major Advisor/Committee Chair prior to the examination date. More information on page 10.

Written Examination

The Committee Chair will forward the questions to the Graduate Program Coordinator, who will then forward the student the questions and exam directions via email at the agreed start time. The student has three weeks to complete the MAS written portion of the exam.

If the student has selected to minor in MAS, they will be given four questions to complete and will have 3 weeks to complete the comprehensive exam.

Upon completing their exam, the student will forward their results via email to the Graduate Program Coordinator, who will distribute them and a ballot to each Examination Committee member. **The student has 24 hours starting at the agreed start time to contact the committee chair with any questions, emergencies or need of clarification in regard to the exam questions.** The committee can take up to two weeks to evaluate the Written Exam and submit their ballot to the Committee Chair. Responses should be judged on the ability to demonstrate a depth of knowledge related to MAS and they should provide clear evidence that the student is able to synthesize, analyze, and write in a scholarly manner. In addition to demonstrating an understanding of theoretical underpinnings of MAS.

At this point, the Examination Committee members should exercise discretion and communicate any concerns, discrepancies or results only with the Committee Chair. Upon receiving all the ballots, the Committee Chair will consider the following options:

Move Forward: If all committee members agree, the student will be advised to proceed and submit the "Announcement of Doctoral Comprehensive Examination" on GradPath.

Re-take: This option is only considered when only one committee member has cast a "fail" ballot. The student must re-take that portion of the written exam within three weeks and "pass" before they move on to the Oral defense portion of the exam. They can only re-take the exam once.

Fail: If more than one committee member casts a “fail” vote, the student will need to re-take the entire exam. The composition of the committee cannot be changed. If unexpected and dire circumstances require replacing a committee member, both the Director of Graduate Studies and the Department Head must approve the replacement. If the student passes the examination on their second attempt, they can proceed with the Oral defense portion of the exam. Students will not be permitted to move forward in the PhD program if they fail the second exam.

Only the Major and/or Minor Advisor will inform the student to move forward or if they have failed the exam.

Oral Defense Examination

Within three weeks of being advised to move forward, the Oral Comprehensive Examination is conducted before all of the faculty members who directed the written exam.

After receiving a "Pass" score on the written portion of the Comprehensive exam the student can move forward with submitting the "Announcement of Doctoral Comprehensive Exam" in GradPath by completing items 1-6 on the form. This form is to indicate an agreement between the student and committee members of a date, time and place to hold the Oral Defense. The Committee Chair will need to work with the student to complete this form that will be used to record the results of the Oral Examination. The form will need to be submitted at least ten (10) days before the scheduled exam date. The form will go through an approval chain: Graduate Program Coordinator, Committee Chair, MAS Director of Graduate Studies and lastly will need approval from the Graduate College.

The oral portion of the examination must cover both the MAS major and the selected minor. All committee members must be present for the entire examination and they all should be familiar with the “Policies and Procedures for Oral Comprehensive Examination for Doctoral Candidacy” issued by the Graduate College available at <https://arizona.app.box.com/v/grad-gsas-comporexam>. Should special circumstances require a member to attend remotely, prior permission from the Director of Graduate Studies and the Graduate College is needed. This faculty member must participate during the entire exam and must be able to communicate effectively with the student and other committee members.

In the event of an emergency:

During the comprehensive exam, contact the Graduate Program Coordinator for questions concerning examinations or for emergencies which arise before or during examinations. If there is any change to the committee on the examination day, please contact the Graduate Program Coordinator before beginning the exam.

If something arises during the written exam, please also reach out to your advisor to alert us of the situation so that we can help you navigate a best way forward.

The *Oral Examination* is when faculty committee members have both the opportunity and obligation to require the student to display a broad knowledge of MAS and sufficient depth of understanding in areas of specialization. Discussion of proposed dissertation research may be included. The examining committee must attest that the student has demonstrated the professional level of knowledge expected of a junior academic colleague.

The minimum time for the Oral Comprehensive Examination is one (1) hour and the maximum time is three (3) hours. It is a closed session and is not open to the public, and ballots will need to be completed after the exam. A secret vote is

completed by the committee (possible votes: Pass, Fail, and Abstain) and the outcome of that vote determines whether or not the student passes the oral comprehensive exam.

More than one negative vote (Fail and Abstain are negative votes) will result in failure of the exam. Votes are tallied by the committee chair, who informs the committee, and ultimately the student, whether the vote resulted in a Pass or Fail decision. The identities of persons voting one way or the other should not be revealed to the student. If the majority of the committee is not convinced that the student demonstrated a broad knowledge of MAS and/or sufficient depth of understanding of their specialization areas, they may request that the student re-take the examination. The committee can also NOT recommend reexamination, at which point the student's doctoral program is disqualified. Students can re-take the Oral Examination only once with the same Examination Committee members. If they "Fail" a second time, they will not be allowed to continue in the program and are effectively disqualified.

Advancing to Candidacy

When the student has 1) an approved doctoral Plan of Study on file with the Graduate Student Academic Services Office, 2) has satisfied all course work, language, and residence requirements and 2) has passed the written and oral portions of the Comprehensive Examination, the student is expected to move forward to the dissertation phase. The Graduate College will notify students that they have advanced to candidacy and the student's bursar account will be billed for the fee for candidacy.

Selecting a Dissertation Committee

As of Fall 2017, students must select a chair that is a core MAS faculty. The committee will be comprised of at least two core faculty, including the chair. The dissertation committee must have a minimum of three, and a maximum of four, committee members.

Prospectus and Dissertation Credits

The prospectus must be completed within one semester of passing the comprehensive exams. Doctoral students cannot register for dissertation credits unless they have completed their prospectus and it has been approved by their committee, or, under special circumstances, with approval of the DGS.

To enroll in Research (900), Thesis (910), or Dissertation (920) units - e-mail the Graduate Program Coordinator requesting to enroll. Approval from Major Advisor is required

Approval of the Dissertation Prospectus

All students must write a dissertation prospectus that explains and justifies the dissertation. It should include a literature review, as well as relevant theoretical, methodological approaches and research methods that the student intends to utilize to design their research project. It should also include a tentative timetable for completing the dissertation. Students should select committee members with research specialty areas related to their proposed dissertation topic in order to receive constructive advice and guidance. At this point, it is expected that the members involved in the Prospectus Defense will also serve as Dissertation Committee members. The UA Graduate College requires a minimum of three members, all of whom must be current University of Arizona faculty members that are tenured, tenure-track, or approved as equivalent. The fourth member may be tenured or tenure-track, or an approved special member. Special members must be pre-approved by the Dean of the Graduate College. Any members beyond the fourth can also be tenured or tenure-track or approved special members.

Students may have approved dissertation committee before the approved prospectus. However, the prospectus “defense” or presentation (e.g., committee approval of the doctoral prospectus) is required and the student must adhere to the handbook. Throughout this process, the student should work closely with their dissertation chair. When the chair deems the prospectus draft is suitable to share with the other committee members, the student should schedule a time when all committee members agree to be present (participating virtually is acceptable).

The departmental prospectus defense does not necessitate a formal announcement and the student, with the approval of the committee chair, may invite additional individuals they feel might help define and guide the dissertation in fruitful directions. The department requires that the chair and other committee members must all be present to approve the prospectus. The student should send a draft of their prospectus to each committee member at least two weeks before the meeting. The committee chair determines the page length of the prospectus (should be approximately between 15-20 pages) but it should be significantly developed and ready to share with the other committee members.

The committee chair resides over the prospectus defense and should also download and print a departmental, “Approval of Dissertation Prospectus” form that all members must sign at the conclusion of the meeting, which should not exceed two hours. The student should be preparing 20-30 minute presentation that summarizes the proposed dissertation for this meeting after which those present will ask questions and offer advice on content, methods and research agenda. All committee members must agree to allow the student to proceed to the dissertation phase. This meeting also provides the committee an opportunity to discuss and agree to timeline issues such as distributing chapters for comments and the process involved if minor design changes are necessitated in the future. If the majority of the committee senses severe deficiencies or require more extensive clarifications the student may be asked revise their dissertation prospectus and reschedule another departmental defense meeting.

Students are expected to gain approval of their prospectus no later than one semester after passing their PhD Comprehensive Exams. They will be only allowed to register for dissertation units for one semester to complete the prospectus.

Developing Your Dissertation

Traditional Dissertation

The traditional dissertation is a monograph organized into distinctive chapters. Since most dissertations produced in MAS are interdisciplinary, the number of chapters may vary according to research agendas and/or methodological approaches. Traditional dissertations usually include an Introduction, a Literature Review, Methods, Findings or Results and a Conclusion. They also should include abstract, references and a bibliography. The student should use the citation style recommended by their advisor and appropriate for their research specialty.

Article-Based Dissertation

Structuring a dissertation around articles allows the presentation of research in the format of three journal manuscripts with the intent of submitting them for publication. In addition to the three articles, the department requires an Introduction, Literature Review, and Conclusion that connects, integrates and synthesizes the articles’ main themes and major arguments in a coherent manner and explain how they cumulatively contribute to MAS. References and appendices should also be included. All three articles must be completed before the Dissertation Defense.

Doctorate's Guide to GradPath Forms

All forms are electronic and can be found on GradPath

1. **Responsible Conduct of Research Form** - Must be completed at beginning of program. No other forms will be available until this has been completed.
2. **Evaluation of Transfer Credits** - only if using external transfer courses. Must be provided to advisor no later than the end of your second semester.
3. **Doctoral Plan of Study** - Due no later than the end of your second semester. Please note there are fees associated with submitting the form.
4. **Comprehensive Exam Committee Appointment Form** - Announcement should be submitted before your oral exam once you set the date, time and room with your committee. (Written and Oral results are reported together by the committee chair following the oral exam)
5. **Announcement of Doctoral Comprehensive Examination** - Submit at least 7 business days prior the date of the Final Oral Examination. Note: your committee members need at least 3 weeks prior to the exam date to review materials.
6. **Results of Comprehensive Exam** - submitted by committee chair. (*Candidacy fees charged to student upon advancement to doctoral candidacy.*)
7. **Prospectus/Proposal Confirmation** - submitted by the Graduate Program Coordinator
8. **Announcement of Final Oral Defense** - must be submitted and approved at least one week before the date of date. Note: your committee members need at least 3 weeks prior to the defense date to review materials.

	Graduation Term	Date
Recommended Last Date for Oral Examination/Thesis Defense	Fall 2022	Schedule defense before Nov. 21, 2022
	Winter 2022	Schedule defense before Dec. 20, 2022.
	Spring 2022	Schedule defense before April 17, 2023.

9. **Results of Final Oral Defense** - submitted by committee chair. Note: plan to submit dissertation a couple of days before the due date incase the Grad College request for edits/revisions to be made.
10. **Submission of Final Dissertation for Archiving** - <https://grad.arizona.edu/gsas/dissertations-theses/submitting-your-dissertation>

	Graduation Term	Date
Last Date to Submit Dissertation	Fall 2022	Submit by Dec. 5, 2022
	Winter 2022	Submit by Jan. 20, 2023.
	Spring 2022	Submit by May 1, 2023.

11. **Exit Survey** - At the time of a graduate student's completion of their program, all students must participate in an exit survey regarding their learning experience in the department.