

## LAIC PH.D. HANDBOOK

### ACADEMIC PROGRAM

#### **Coursework**

Students must satisfactorily complete a total of sixteen (16) course units at 6000-level or above, with a minimum grade of B, for a total of at least sixty (60) credits.

During their second year, all students must take the pedagogy seminar, Theory and Practice of Second Language Teaching (SPPO GR6001).

To ensure a combination of breadth and depth, during the first two years students are encouraged to take courses in most of the areas available in the Department of Latin American and Iberian Cultures and with as wide a range of LAIC ladder faculty as possible.

The first semester of the third year will be devoted to an independent research study (SPAN GR9811), in which the student will prepare for the M.Phil. qualifying examination. During the second semester of that third year, every student will enroll in the Workshop on Scholarly Writing (SPAN GR6200) to complete the dissertation prospectus.

All sixteen courses must be taken for a letter grade (not Pass/Fail). A student may opt to enroll in MA courses (4000-level or 5000-level) only under exceptional circumstances and upon approval of the DGS. Courses taken beyond the required sixteen may be taken for a grade or "R" (Registered for the course; no qualitative grade assigned).

1. The faculty recognizes that students may need to supplement their studies with courses in other departments and programs. A total of four 6000-level courses may be taken outside the department with the approval of the Director of Graduate Studies (DGS). During their first year in the Ph.D. in Latin American and Iberian Cultures program, students must take the six minimum required courses within LAIC, unless the department offers fewer than three graduate seminars per semester or there are other unusual circumstances that require students to take one or more of these courses outside of LAIC. Courses *beyond* the sixteen seminars required for the doctoral degree may be taken within or outside the department. Courses outside Columbia University ([Inter-University Doctoral Consortium](#)) require DGS approval, may not be taken in the first year, and are limited to one in a given semester and two in the Ph.D. program. Courses cross-listed by the department are considered as offered within the department.

Continuing students should request appointments to meet with the DGS each semester, during pre-registration, to discuss course selections for the following term. New students should meet with the DGS during orientation week in late August, but may register for LAIC Ph.D. seminars in advance.

Anticipated dates of registration are listed in the [Office of the Registrar's schedule](#).

Students may register for classes through [Student Services Online \(SSOL\)](#). For more detailed registration information, refer to the [GSAS Registration page](#). Courses through the [Inter-University Doctoral Consortium](#) require a registration form and consultation with the DGS.

The expectations of a doctoral career in the Department of Latin American and Iberian Cultures are:

### **FIRST YEAR:**

#### **Fall**

- 3 doctoral seminars at LAIC

#### **Spring**

- 3 doctoral seminars at LAIC
- Theory and Practice of Second Language Teaching (SPPO GR6001)
- First language examination, also known as a reading proficiency examination (or a summer language course *before* the third semester). [Here are the details](#) on the reading proficiency examinations in Spanish, Portuguese, and Catalan. For details on the reading proficiency examinations in other languages, please visit the website of the relevant department at Columbia.

### **SECOND YEAR:**

#### **Fall**

- 2 doctoral seminars
- A Practical Approach to Second Language Teaching: Strategies and Mentoring (SPPO GR6002)
- With the mentorship of the Director of the Spanish Language Program, students will be appointed as Teaching Assistants. As such, they will be expected to design and lead at least six class sessions, with opportunities to teach additional sessions if desired. Teaching Assistants will work closely with instructors of record of those sessions, who will also provide guidance and evaluation on prepared lesson plans and instructional materials. During this stage, teaching sessions will be observed by the Director of the Spanish Language Program and/or the instructors of record or other faculty colleagues.

## **Spring**

- 3 doctoral seminars
- Second language examination, also known as reading proficiency examination. It is suggested that you take it in your second year even though it is only required when applying for the M.Phil. degree in your third year. [Here are the details](#) on the reading proficiency examinations in Spanish, Portuguese, and Catalan. For details on the reading proficiency examinations in other languages, please visit the website of the relevant department at Columbia.
- Consolidation and Professional Development

In Spring 2027, students will consolidate their training through continued teaching practice rather than formal coursework. With the coordination and mentorship of the Director of the Spanish Language Program, each student will teach a minimum of six class sessions across elementary, intermediate, and advanced levels; develop lesson plans, activities, and assessment tools; participate in at least three pedagogical workshops (e.g., through the Center for Teaching and Learning, the Language Resource Center, or departmental initiatives); and conduct other didactic activities. This phase emphasizes increased autonomy, expanded teaching experience, and continued professional growth.

## **THIRD YEAR:**

### **Fall**

- Supervised Independent Research for the M.Phil. list (SPAN GR9811)
- The M.Phil. Qualifying Exam

### **Spring**

- Workshop on Scholarly Writing (SPAN GR6200)
- The Dissertation Prospectus Defense

## **FOURTH YEAR:**

- 1 Yearlong Teaching Assistantship in content classes. With the mentorship of a faculty member, Teaching Assistants will aid in the preparation of course materials, attending all lectures, hold discussion sessions or office hours, regularly meeting and coordinate with a faculty supervisor, grade assignments and exams, attend/complete mandatory trainings and/or orientations.

**Fall**

- Dissertation writing. Aim to complete one dissertation chapter draft of approximately 30-50 pages per semester.

**Spring**

- Dissertation writing

**FIFTH YEAR:**

- Dissertation Writing Fellowship (no teaching assistantship). Under special circumstances and after consultation with your dissertation sponsor and the DGS, the DWF can be also taken during your Fourth year. Continue with dissertation writing.
- Prepare applications for external fellowships in consultation with the DGS.

**SIXTH YEAR:**

- 1 Yearlong Teaching Assistantship in content classes. With the mentorship of a faculty member, Teaching Assistants will aid in the preparation of course materials, attending all lectures, hold discussion sessions or office hours, regularly meeting and coordinate with a faculty supervisor, grade assignments and exams, attend/complete mandatory trainings and/or orientations.

**Fall**

- Complete a full draft of the dissertation by mid fall.
- Job market or postdoctoral fellowship applications

**Spring**

- Revise and then formally distribute the complete dissertation
- Dissertation defense

### **Note on Teaching**

The teaching plan described above is a guideline for how the department imagines the teaching in the 2nd, 4th, and 6th years. Both the schedule and content of teaching may change depending on individual circumstances, such as, for instance, teaching opportunities outside of LAIC and external fellowships. Students should discuss these opportunities and fellowships with the DGS in advance of applying and accepting them.

Any changes to the previous calendar, due to exceptional circumstances, must be consulted with the student's dissertation sponsor and the Director of Graduate Studies.

### **Independent Study in Lieu of Coursework**

Independent studies are usually intended to prepare the reading list for the M.Phil. in Latin American and Iberian Cultures degree. Otherwise, they will be reserved for those special cases in which a student needs directed reading in an area not covered regularly in coursework. Students may take only one independent study per semester, usually in the second or third year. The total number of independent studies throughout a student's graduate career normally may not exceed two. Students should secure the approval of the DGS before making arrangements with an individual professor to undertake an independent study. It is expected that an independent study will involve a syllabus, written assignments, and a final letter grade. A student who has been approved to engage in independent study should register for Supervised Individual Research (SPAN G9811).

### **Credit for Graduate Work Completed Elsewhere**

An incoming student may receive credit for up to two courses completed previously. The DGS will secure the fulfillment of all the first-year requirements of the Ph.D. in Latin American and Iberian Cultures program before awarding credit to a student for approved courses taken earlier in another academic institution. That is, a student may receive credit for graduate coursework done at another institution in the terms specified by the GSAS, excluding the departmental requirements, which must be satisfied by coursework pursued at Columbia. For more detailed information regarding credit for prior graduate work students may consult the GSAS policy on Transfer Credit for Ph.D. students.

### **Final Papers for Graduate Courses**

Final papers for classes taken in LAIC will be due one month after the last day of classes. Students should be assigned a grade of IN (incomplete) by the university deadline announced by the Office of the Registrar. Students will submit their papers to the professor via email by the announced due date.

This evaluation procedure was approved by the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences and allows for the timely assessment of students every semester. In each doctoral seminar, student performance is graded in the context of critical reports, reviews, oral presentations, midterm examinations, and other scheduled assignments. Students are also evaluated based on their interventions in class, which allow their professors recurrent opportunities to detect weaknesses and to engage in a sustained appraisal of academic

performance throughout each seminar. Students are granted a month after a seminar concludes to submit a final project that entails research and analysis. Each student conducts the relevant research gradually throughout the semester, with the professor's supervision. The result of this exercise is a critical essay that may be transformed into a publishable, peer-reviewed article with pertinent revisions, and submitted as part of the collective work pursued in workshops.

Moreover, again in order to allow students adequate time to research and write papers on those topics that most interest them, LAIC students will have the option to take an examination as the final exercise for one of their LAIC courses per semester—usually a take-home exercise to be completed and returned to the professor within 24-48 hours.

### **Late Work and Incomplete Grades**

Any student who does not comply with the announced deadlines for exams and papers will have the grade for the written exercise in question lowered. An exception may only be made in the case of a medical emergency. For the sake of equity, students cannot make (and instructors will not agree to) individual arrangements with their professors regarding the timetable for submission of final exams or papers, except in medical emergencies. Incomplete grades may not be carried for more than one semester, except in emergency circumstances. Students who have completed all work for a course and have not received a final grade for the course one month after the due date of the final paper are urged to notify the DGS promptly. Incomplete grades that are not removed by the submission of a qualitative grade by the instructor within one year will be changed to a final grade of "F" by the Registrar, in accordance to the Graduate School of Arts & Sciences policy on incompletes.

### **Language Requirements**

Students must demonstrate reading ability in two foreign languages appropriate to their prospective fields of specialization. The choice of languages will be made upon consultation with the DGS, but students who are planning to specialize in Latin American cultural studies should choose Portuguese as one of their languages. The requirement may be satisfied by passing a reading proficiency examination. [Here are the details](#) on the reading proficiency examinations in Spanish, Portuguese, and Catalan. For details on the reading proficiency examinations in other languages, please visit the website of the relevant department at Columbia.

A student may also fulfill each language requirement by passing a one-semester (or summer term) undergraduate elementary course in the chosen language with a minimum grade of B+. At least one language exam must be completed before the second year in the program, and it is advised that both exams and/or courses be taken by the end of the second year. Students will not be allowed to sit for their M.Phil. prospectus defense (see below) until all language requirements have been met.

It is essential that all graduates of the department have a strong command of both Spanish and English. Native speakers of one language who need to improve their skills in the other are expected to do so speedily and professionally. The university sponsors free courses in English, and there are limited funds available to allow students to enhance their command of Spanish during the summer months. All incoming students should make certain that their Spanish and English skills are satisfactory before their second year in the program.

## Master's Evaluation

First-year students will meet with the DGS soon after the completion of the first semester to receive an evaluation of their performance. At the end of the first year, faculty members will evaluate all aspects of each student's performance, including written assignments completed for courses (exams and papers), progress with the language requirement, and engagement in the intellectual life of LAIC.

After all the evidence is considered by the graduate faculty, the student will be informed that she or he has:

- passed the evaluation and is invited to continue studies toward the doctorate. Once all GSAS and departmental requirements have been met, the student may request to be awarded Master of Arts (M.A.) degree for the October conferral date. Students must apply to the Office of the Registrar to be considered candidates for the Columbia University Master of Arts degree.
- passed the evaluation yet is not allowed to continue on to the Ph.D. in Latin American and Iberian Cultures degree. The student would then be eligible for the one-year terminal Master's degree. A student who is judged eligible for a terminal Master's degree will need to complete all first-year course work successfully and prove proficiency in one language, after which he or she will be recommended to the GSAS to receive a terminal Master's degree at the next possible date.
- failed the evaluation if the departmental requirements have not been met and will be asked to withdraw or face dismissal from the program at the end of the first year.

## Annual Evaluation of Students

At the end of each academic year, the faculty reviews the progress of each student (see above for the first-year evaluation). The faculty closely monitors each student's scholarly and professional development, particularly during the crucial first two years. Among the items covered during this review are: quality of written material, performance in class, grades, teaching performance as teaching assistants, and due progress toward the degree. Because the faculty does not wish to encourage students who may not be able to complete the degree, any student who has generally performed below expectations may be placed on departmental probation or be asked to withdraw from the program.

[Individual counseling and other support services](#) are available on campus should students encounter difficulties with any aspect of their graduate careers or have problems of a personal nature that may impact their academic performance.

## The Residence Unit (RU) and other Registration Categories

Residence Unit (RU): The Residence Unit is a full-time registration category for one semester (whether or not the student is taking courses), which provides the basis for tuition charges and stipend deposits. **Six Residence Units**—including the two for the M.A. in Latin American and Iberian Cultures degree—**are required** for the M.Phil. and Ph.D. in Latin American and Iberian Cultures degrees.

Extended Residence (ER): After completing six Residence Units, **all students must register for Extended Residence** in any term in which they are holding a university teaching appointment (Teaching Assistantships), taking a class, or completing a degree requirement, other than the dissertation defense.

Matriculation and Facilities (M&F): Advanced students who are neither holding a university teaching assistantship nor completing a degree requirement must satisfy the continuous registration requirement by registering for “Matriculation and Facilities (M&F),” which allows them to make use of various university facilities. M&F is the correct registration status for a student writing or defending the dissertation. Students must register M&F during the term in which their dissertation distribution takes place.

Students who are not on a teaching assistantship at Columbia and have completed their M.Phil. in Latin American and Iberian Cultures degree requirements (for instance, those holding a yearlong Dissertation Writing Fellowship) **must register for M&F status**. Students may not register on a part-time basis.

### **The M.Phil. in Latin American and Iberian Cultures Degree**

The M.Phil. Evaluation consists of two parts: a qualifying examination on the student’s field of specialization and a defense of the student’s dissertation prospectus. The M.Phil. qualifying exam is based on the works included in a reading list that is prepared by the student, in consultation with a faculty member, as part of the independent study (SPAN GR9811) for which all students register in the third year. The list should be prepared and the related M.Phil. qualifying examination should be undertaken during the fall of the third year of study. The defense of the prospectus should ideally take place in February of the third year (the student’s sixth semester).

### **The M.Phil. Qualifying Exam**

For the first part, the qualifying examination, the student will choose a broad period or area and will compose a comprehensive list of primary, critical, and pertinent theoretical works, in consultation with two faculty members, at least one of whom must be a ladder faculty at LAIC. This list will allow students to read widely in the chosen field or area to acquire a sense of its boundaries, main problems, and the relevant critical discourse in order to contextualize their future work. The list should consist of no fewer than 75 items.

The qualifying examination is based on the works included in the list, and will adhere to the following parameters:

- The guidelines for the exercise will be sent via email by the Director of Academic Administration or the Director of Graduate Studies on a Friday morning at 9:00 a.m. and submitted via email to the Director of Graduate Studies and the examination committee, with a copy to the Director of Academic Administration, by 5:00 p.m. the following Monday.
- The student may consult whatever sources she or he may deem necessary.
- The examination will consist of four questions or statements, among which students will choose and respond to three.
- The three responses should be comprehensive yet concise—each between 15 and 20 pages in length and may be written in Spanish, Portuguese, or English

The DGS will request questions or statements for possible inclusion in the exam guidelines from the two members with whom the student has worked to formulate the reading list. Copies of the completed exam will be distributed to the two faculty members involved, who will send comments to the DGS evaluating the student's performance within two weeks. The DGS will share a synopsis of these comments with the student. The examiners will provide individual comments and feedback to the student as well. Before being allowed to proceed to the dissertation prospectus defense, a student may be asked to retake any section of the qualifying examination if any aspect of the first effort is judged unsatisfactory. The two faculty examiners will go on to serve in the student's dissertation reading committee.

### **The Prospectus Defense**

Upon successful completion of the M.Phil. qualifying examination, the student will choose a dissertation sponsor, if she or he has not done so previously. Students are encouraged to consult with the DGS regarding this choice. Once a sponsor has been confirmed, the student will proceed to draft the dissertation prospectus in the context of the Workshop on Scholarly Writing (SPAN GR6200). The prospectus is a 15 to 20-page document with an appended bibliography. It begins with a narrative section that explains in detail the proposed thesis topic, the critical and theoretical instruments used to approach it, and the existing scholarship on the subject, followed by an overarching plan for its development in the form of a chapter-by-chapter synopsis. Students should consult with the DGS if in doubt about the formal aspects of the prospectus.

The prospectus is prepared in consultation with the sponsor, who is a ladder faculty or affiliated faculty of LAIC and has already served as one of the student's examiners during the qualifying exam process. The sponsor is generally joined on the prospectus defense committee by the second examiner and a third faculty member from inside or outside of LAIC, chosen in consultation with the DGS, the sponsor, and the student. Of the three committee members, two must be LAIC faculty members. In cases of dissertation co-sponsorship, one of the two sponsors must be LAIC faculty members, and the prospectus defense committee may be composed of four rather than three members, if so desired, though two of the four committee members must be LAIC faculty members. Students are encouraged to seek advice and guidance from all members of the reading committee while preparing the dissertation prospectus. This committee will constitute the core set of mentors throughout the dissertation writing process.

The prospectus defense is a two-hour oral exercise in which the student confers with the reading committee regarding the proposal. The date of the defense is determined in consultation with the DGS, who will make the necessary arrangements for the meeting to take place. The student will distribute copies of the prospectus to the members of the committee at least two weeks before the scheduled date. If the committee approves the prospectus, the student will receive written comments from every member of the reading committee at least 48 hours before the meeting. At the end of the defense, the student will step outside, and the three members of the committee will determine the overall outcome of the M.Phil. examination, which should reflect the student's performance in the qualifying exam and in the defense of the prospectus. The members of the reading committee will vote formally on whether to approve the project and to recommend the student for receipt of the M.Phil. in Latin American and Iberian Cultures degree. Successful completion of the M.Phil. examination means that the committee approves the project and recommends that the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences grant the student the M.Phil. in Latin American and Iberian Cultures degree. The student's status at that point will be ABD (All But Dissertation). The reading committee may also decide to grant the M.Phil. as a terminal degree.

## Dissertation

Upon a successful defense of the prospectus, the student will embark on the preparation of the dissertation. Students must schedule semesterly chapter meetings with the dissertation sponsor and at least one other member of the dissertation committee (beginning in the semester after the prospectus defense). Beyond these meetings, students are always encouraged to consult and to share their work regularly with the three members of the dissertation committee as they advance toward completion of the dissertation. The committee will meet with the student to discuss every chapter. Students who wish to write the dissertation in Spanish or Portuguese must request permission to do so from the Director of Graduate Studies. Such requests are routinely granted. Typically, the student receives a Dissertation Writing Fellowship (DWF) during her or his fourth or fifth year in the program. As noted above, students should aim to complete one dissertation chapter per semester beginning in the fourth year of the program.

### DISSERTATION DEFENSE APPLICATION AND REGISTRATION

#### Dissertation Defense Application

The student is responsible for distributing copies of the dissertation **at least four weeks before the defense is to take place**, and for notifying the Director of Graduate Studies and the Director of Academic Administration once all members have received their copies. Notification of distribution is critical to the scheduling of the defense date. Once the final draft of the dissertation is completed and the sponsor has given the go-ahead, the department will submit the Application for the Dissertation Defense [form](#) to the GSAS Dissertation Office **four weeks in advance of the anticipated date of the defense**. The dissertation sponsor will contact all members of the defense committee in consultation with the DGS. (See the [GSAS dissertation dates and deadlines](#) for application and distribution deadlines associated with a particular conferral date.) The sponsor, in collaboration with the DGS, is responsible for scheduling dissertation defenses; **students never schedule their own defenses**. The doctoral candidate will be given all materials necessary to complete the deposit of the dissertation with the GSAS Dissertation Office at the defense. The [GSAS Dissertation Office website](#) has more information about this final step.

Present at the defense will be: the student, the sponsor, the two other internal members of the dissertation committee, and the two external readers. The chair of the defense committee will serve as moderator for the proceedings. The defense will begin with a short (5-10 minute) presentation by the student. Afterward, the members of the committee may direct questions or comments to the candidate in turn. At the end of the exercise, the student will step outside and the five members of the defense committee will vote formally on whether to recommend the dissertation to GSAS for approval and for any other notations of distinction in the manner described by GSAS. If the vote is positive, the student will proceed to prepare the final version for deposit with the GSAS Dissertation Office, making sure to incorporate any amendments suggested by the members of the defense committee during the proceedings. If the vote is negative, the student will not be recommended to the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences for receipt of the doctoral degree.

## Dissertation Registration

All students must be registered during the semester or summer term in which they distribute the defense copies of the dissertation. Filing early in the term is recommended to ensure approval of the defense committee before the deadlines. Provided that all 6 required Residence Units are fulfilled, [students who are distributing and/or defending must register for either M&F or ER](#). Students who are defending while on teaching assistant appointments, or who are also completing pre-dissertation degree requirements register for ER; all others should register for M&F.

- If students distribute any time between the first day of the fall semester and the day before the start of the spring semester, their final registration is in the fall semester.
- If students distribute any time between the start of the spring semester and before September of next fall semester, their final registration is in the spring.
- Students who miss the spring semester distribution deadline are not required to register for the summer; they can distribute any time before September to be considered a summer distribution. Beyond the September distribution deadline, students must register for the fall.
- International students in F-1 or J-1 status must consult with the International Students and Scholars Office regarding their registration requirements.

For more information, refer to the [GSAS Dissertation Office website](#).

## GRADUATION

The **dissertation deposit**, and not the oral defense, is the final requirement for the Ph.D. in Latin American and Iberian Cultures degree. After the successful defense and GSAS-approved deposit of the dissertation, the degree is awarded on the next subsequent conferral date, in October, February, or May of each year. Students must clear all outstanding accounts in order to receive their degree. See the [GSAS website](#) for more information on the award of the degree.

## Academic Standing

Good academic standing for Ph.D. students includes but is not limited to:

- Maintaining consistent contact with the departmental Director of Graduate Studies and dissertation sponsor
- Completing degree requirements and maintaining superior quality of work as determined by the department
- Maintaining a cumulative grade point average (GPA) of at least 3.0
- Holding no more than one mark of Incomplete at any given time
- Fulfilling teaching assistantship requirements and responsibilities as designated by the department and GSAS
- Maintaining consistent contact with a dissertation sponsor

- Fulfilling the dissertation prospectus requirement
- Holding semesterly chapter meetings with the dissertation sponsor and at least one other member of the dissertation committee (beginning in the semester after the prospectus defense)
- Meeting other criteria specified by the department

The department will communicate any additional criteria for good academic standing and candidates should be familiar with them. Any questions should be directed to the Director of Graduate Studies.

## GENERAL EXPECTATIONS

### **Awareness of Requirements**

All students must be familiar with the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences guidelines as explained on the [GSAS website](#) and in the [GSAS Policy Handbook](#). Students should pay special attention to information regarding registration and the timely submission of documentation and forms for degree conferral. It is not the responsibility of the DGS, the Chair of the department, the student's dissertation sponsor, or the department's administrative personnel to ensure a student's compliance with official GSAS regulations. Exceptions and/or exemptions from any of the department or GSAS requirements or schedules are granted, if at all, with reluctance and after consultation with and/or written request to the appropriate officer. Students should consult with the DGS as early as possible with any question concerning requirements, overall progress toward the degree, deadlines, etc.

### **Teaching Opportunities and Responsibilities**

Graduate students have the opportunity to teach undergraduate courses in Spanish language, Portuguese language, and Latin American or Iberian cultures, in preparation for which they must attend a pedagogical training seminar and workshops sponsored by the department. Students typically hold teaching assistantships during three of their years in the PhD program: years two, four, and six, though winning an external fellowship can affect this schedule and decrease the amount of teaching. The department determines teaching assistantships with a view to giving students wide pedagogical experience. Opportunities also occasionally arise to teach in another department or unit at Columbia; students should consult with the DGS about the feasibility and advisability of such opportunities.

Students are expected to perform their teaching assistant responsibilities professionally and judiciously, including attendance to meetings, following directions from the language or section coordinator, timely grading, holding office hours, and other related tasks. A student's pedagogical training performance is assessed as part of the yearly evaluation of the graduate cohort. Any student who experiences difficulties related to a teaching assistantship should seek help immediately from the appropriate source. For more information on teaching assistant responsibilities see the [GSAS Graduate Student Teaching Guidelines](#).

The Columbia University Center for Teaching and Learning offers an extensive list of resources. All students are encouraged to create a teaching assistant portfolio from the beginning of their academic careers.

### **Time to Degree**

Students are guaranteed [GSAS funding for six years](#), though GSAS policy provides for some limited circumstances that allow for a seventh year, such as winning specific types of [external fellowships](#) or being selected for certain [on-campus teaching or mentorship programs](#).

## **Updating Personal Information**

If a student's permanent or local address changes, he or she must update that information through Student Services Online (SSOL). All international students must be sure that the main office has on record a copy of their current visa. If a student's visa expires, the student should submit a copy of the renewed visa to the Director of Academic Administration as soon as possible. Students must be cognizant and in strict compliance with any and all applicable laws of the United States federal government and with the requirements and expectations of the U.S. Department of Homeland Security and the United States Citizenship and Immigration Service (USCIS). It is not the responsibility of the DGS, the Chair of the department, the student's dissertation sponsor, or the department's administrative personnel to ensure students' compliance with U.S. legal stipulations.

## FINANCIAL MATTERS

### **Fellowships**

Fellowships are awarded by the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences through individual departments on the basis of demonstrated academic merit, in recognition of current academic achievement, and in expectation of further scholarly success. Fellowship recipients are subject to GSAS rules and regulations.

Fellowship awards provide full tuition, a stipend, and basic health insurance coverage available through the University on a yearly basis. Students are responsible for all other fees, such as the student activity fee, one time transcript fee, international, and university facilities fee on a yearly basis.

Upon admission, students are offered a six-year award that combines fellowships and teaching assistantships. Normally students hold a Graduate Fellowship during year one (no teaching responsibilities) and a Teaching Assistantship in years two, four and six. In year five the student holds a Dissertation Writing Fellowship (DWF), which carries no teaching assistantship. All GSAS students must register during the registration period indicated in the GSAS academic calendar. All students, except those with on a DWF or a specific research fellowship that require them to be away from campus, must reside in New York City or its vicinity during the term of their award in order to devote their full attention to their academic studies.

For more information on fellowships see the [GSAS Fellowship Information](#) web page.

### **Stipend Disbursement**

Students will receive an email notification from GSAS once stipends are deposited. Students must sign up for the direct deposit option via SSOL. Should they decline the direct deposit option, students must be registered and are required to show a valid Columbia University ID card to pick up stipend checks at the Cashier at Kent Hall.

## **Other Forms of Financial Aid:**

- **Departmental Funds to Sponsor Participation in Academic Conferences and Professional Development**

The Department of Latin American and Iberian Cultures awards funds competitively on a yearly basis to students who are either invited to deliver a paper in a scholarly conference or seek to attend a conference or other activity for other professional development purposes. Only one request will be considered per student per year, and never in the first year. A student may only receive funding twice in his or her graduate career; only one of those funding opportunities may be used for an activity other than delivering a paper at a scholarly conference. Funds will not be granted for participation in graduate student conferences. LAIC will accept applications for each academic year and the following summer until May 1.

Students should submit a brief request in writing to the DGS. If presenting at a conference, the request must be accompanied by official information about the conference (a website address or printed publicity), a copy of the abstract submitted to the conference organizers, the message indicating acceptance of the proposed paper, and a detailed budget of estimated travel expenses. If participating in a conference or other professional development activity but not presenting a scholarly paper, the request must be accompanied by official information about the event, explanation of the student's role in the activity, professional reason for attendance, and a detailed budget or estimated travel expenses.

The maximum amount of a departmental travel grant is \$500. If presenting a paper at a scholarly conference, the student should apply simultaneously for the [GSAS Matching Travel Fund](#) subvention, which currently grants a maximum of \$400 toward conference expenses. This award is not guaranteed and requests are considered on a first-come, first-served basis. Please contact [Tianna Hewitt](#), LAIC's Financial Assistant with financial questions.

Upon return to campus, the student should present all original receipts to [LAIC's Financial Assistant](#), along with the GSAS notification of award of a Matching Travel Fund subvention.

- **Funds for Summer Study and/or Research Abroad**

GSAS guarantees summer funding awards of approximately \$6,500 to Ph.D. students during the first five fully funded years in the program (years 1 through 5). These awards are intended for short-term research abroad, for enrollment in summer academic programs, or to advance Ph.D. program requirements while remaining in New York during the summer months. Funds may not be used solely for the purposes of enhancing language proficiency.

## **Saz-Parkinson Memorial Research Fellowship**

Professor Sara M. Parkinson Saz and Professor Carlos Saz established the Saz-Parkinson Fund in 2015 in memory of their son, [Carlos Roberto Saz-Parkinson](#), who earned a Ph.D. at Casa Hispánica in 2007, but passed away only a year later. Here is a description of the Saz-Parkinson Memorial Research Fellowship, as imagined by the funders:

"It is our preference that consideration be given to Ph.D. students who are 1) pursuing a dissertation on Iberian or Iberian related topics in Spanish/Castilian literature and who are in need of additional funding to travel to Iberian archives and libraries to do research; 2) students pursuing a dissertation on Iberian literature, who need to carry out archival research at another institution in the United States or overseas; or 3) students who have been selected to present a paper on Iberian literature at a conference in Spain or elsewhere. The Chair of the Department of Latin American and Iberian Cultures, in consultation with faculty in the Department of Latin American and Iberian Cultures, shall select the recipient students from the departmental call for projects based on these preferences."

The award in recent years has been in the amount of \$2500. The committee occasionally chooses to award two fellowships of \$1250 instead of a single fellowship for \$2500.

- **Other Competitive Fellowships**

For available fellowships, applications, and deadlines see the GSAS Fellowship website. GSAS maintains a searchable database of fellowships and grants available to Columbia graduate students. LAIC's DGS also maintains a collaboratively compiled list of both internal and external fellowships, available [here](#) to LAIC graduate students. Please write to LAIC's DGS for access to this collaborative resource.

- **Summer Term Teaching Assistantships**

A limited number of Spanish language courses are taught on campus during the summer term, administered by Columbia's School of Professional Studies. Students must be in good standing in the program to be considered as summer teaching assistants, and they must be at least in their second year in the program when they apply. Priority for staffing these courses is determined as follows:

- graduate students who have not held a teaching assistantship in summer school, in order of seniority (i.e., starting with sixth-year students, then fifth-year, etc.)
- graduate students who have held a teaching assistantship only once in summer school, again in order of seniority
- graduate students who have held a teaching assistantship twice in summer school, etc.
- no student will be assigned as a teaching assistant to more than one course unit (and this in separate sessions, if at all) unless the entire priority list has been exhausted.

Pedagogical performance by the student in all previous teaching assistantships during the academic year and/or summer term will be factored into the determination of teaching assistantship assignments for the summer session.

- [Student Employment \(GSAS Guidance\)](#)

## **Taxation Issues:**

- **United States Citizens and Permanent Residents**

Income tax is not withheld on fellowship stipends paid to U.S. citizens and Permanent Residents. However, all grant aid (scholarships, fellowships) that exceeds the cost of tuition and required fees, books, and related classroom expenses is subject to U.S. income tax. Also subject to tax are any amounts received representing payments for teaching and research. The Controller's Office at Columbia withholds income tax amounts earned through research or teaching appointments. W-2 forms will be issued for amounts earned and withheld for research or teaching appointments only. The student is responsible for accurately reporting stipend amounts and for making estimated tax payments if appropriate.

- **International Students**

Financial aid received by international students is subject to U.S. income tax. Income taxes for international students are withheld from university payments for teaching and research in the humanities and the social sciences. Fellowships awarded to international students are subject to taxation and 14% federal withholding on the amount in excess of tuition and fees. International students should receive the 1042-S form as tax documentation for their fellowships.

The United States has tax treaties or agreements with roughly 40 countries and territories under which their citizens may be exempt from all or part of U.S. income tax. Treaties are negotiated for the avoidance of double taxation and the prevention of fiscal evasion with respect to taxes on income and capital. Treaties vary from country to country, and tax exemption may vary based on an individual's status (student, professor, etc.) and the number of years that individual has been in the U.S. For more information about tax treaties see the Department Treasury's Publication #901, United States Tax Treaties. Students may contact the International Students and Scholars Office (ISSO) for further information.

## FACILITIES

### **Graduate Lounge**

The graduate lounge is located in room B07. The room contains computers, a networked high-volume laser printer, a small refrigerator, desks, and seating areas. Lockers are also available. Please ask the Administrative Assistant, Kosmas Pissakos, for teaching supplies for the graduate lounge.

### **Teaching Assistants Office**

One office is available for shared use by teaching assistants: B06A. The office includes two desks, WiFi access, and a filing cabinet.

### **Main Office Access**

Office hours at Casa Hispánica are from 9:00 a.m. until 5:00 p.m., from Monday through Friday. If a student is facing an emergency situation that requires access to the office beyond these hours, she or he should call the Department of Public Safety by dialing 99 (on campus) or calling **(212) 854-5555**.

### **Assignment of Carrels in Butler Library**

Carrel space available to graduate students in Butler Library is extremely limited; hence, only students who are in need of using library resources and who are sure that their work habits will adapt effectively to the carrel situation should consider applying. The Graduate School of Arts and Sciences has provided a basic set of requirements for awarding carrels, and has further requested that departments develop criteria for assigning them on a yearly basis. The GSAS guidelines are as follows:

- Students must have earned the M.Phil. in Latin American and Iberian Cultures degree
- The department must support the students' application.
- Students must be within six years of first date of registration in the Ph.D. in Latin American and Iberian Cultures program and must be in good academic standing.
- Students must claim carrel space granted to them in 201 Butler Library. The space will be reassigned to another student if unclaimed after a month.

Toward the end of each summer (generally in late August), the Director of Academic Administration will distribute any available carrel spaces for the following year. The following criteria will determine the department's recommendation to the GSAS on the assignment of available carrel space:

- Carrels will be assigned for a maximum period of two years.
- Priority will be given to fourth or fifth-year students on a Dissertation Writing Fellowship (DWF).
- If any carrels are left, they will be offered to students who have already held a DWF—first to students who have not been assigned a carrel previously, and then to students who have had a carrel previously and who are close to finishing their dissertations.

## RESOURCES

### **IMPORTANT NUMBERS:**

EMERGENCIES: **dial 911**

Department of Public Safety: **(212) 854-5555**

[Counseling and Psychological Services](#): **(212) 854-2878**; available 24/7.

[GSAS Office of Student Affairs](#); main number: (212) 854-8903

- [Emma Johnson](#), Senior Assistant Dean of Student Life & Well-Being: (212) 854-2854
- [Richard Slusarczyk](#), Senior Associate Dean of Academic and Student Affairs: (212) 854-8428

### **International Students and Scholars Office (ISSO):**

- [Samantha Lu](#), Director of International Student Services: (212) 854-3591

[Department of Latin American and Iberian Cultures](#): (212) 854-4187

[GSAS Office of Financial Aid](#): (212) 854-3808

Medical Center | On campus extension: 7-7979; off campus: (212) 305-8100

### **Dossier Service**

The Graduate School of Arts and Sciences and the Center for Career Education uses the Interfolio dossier service to handle all credentials and letters related to the search process. Each student must open an Interfolio account, so that reference providers can either upload or forward their letters of recommendation to the service.

### **Applied Pedagogy Workshops**

The Language Program of the Department of Latin American and Iberian Cultures is home to many linguists and language specialists who are active researchers and well-known references in fields related to second-language acquisition, applied linguistics, and language pedagogy, among many others. The monthly Applied Pedagogy workshops are open to LAIC teaching assistants. The goal of these workshops is to enhance the development of our Language Programs (Spanish, Catalan, and Portuguese) by presenting, discussing, and debating pedagogical approaches to foreign language teaching.

INSTITUTIONAL RESOURCES:

- Graduate School of Arts and Sciences (GSAS)
- Columbia University Center for Teaching and Learning
- [Graduate Student Association @ LAIC \(GALAIC\)](#)
- Arts and Sciences Graduate Council (ASGC)
- Institute for Latin American Studies
- Language Resource Center
- [GSAS Writing Studio](#)
- [Compass | GSAS Career Development Office](#)

LIBRARY RESEARCH:

- Main telephone for Butler Library: (212) 854-2271
- Butler Library Circulation Desk: (212) 854-2235
- [Latin American and Iberian Studies Library](#): (212) 854-1679

PROFESSIONAL RESOURCES:

- Modern Language Association (MLA)
- Northeast Modern Language Association (NEMLA)
- Latin American Studies Association (LASA)
- American Association of Teachers of Spanish and Portuguese (AATSP)
- Brazilian Studies Association (BRASA)
- North American Catalan Society (NACS)
- American Comparative Literature Association (ACLA)
- Consejo Latinoamericano de Ciencias Sociales (CLACSO)
- Universia
- InfoAmérica
- Guía del Investigador Americanista
- Latino Heritage Documentation Project
- Connected Academics (MLA)
- Versatile PhD

PROGRAM CONTACTS

Director of Graduate Studies: [Seth Kimmel](#)

Director of Academic Administration and Finance: [Eunice Rodríguez Ferguson](#)

Administrative Assistant: Kosmas Pissakos | (212) 854-4187

LAIC Chair: [Alessandra Russo](#)