

**Annual Key Assessment Findings and Curricular Improvements**  
**Department of Modern Languages and Literatures/A&S**  
**MA and PhD Programs in Spanish**  
**AY 2009-10**

**Key Assessment Findings**

*Graduate Assessment*

Students graduating with an MA in Spanish take a two-day written comprehensive exam in which they are examined on both material covered in their coursework and readings from the Spanish MA reading list that students are given when beginning the program. PhD candidates take a three-day examination, half of which is devoted to their area of specialization. PhD students are responsible for a much more extensive reading list in the particular area of their specialization. Exams are read and evaluated by all members of the section and discussed in detail.

The number of students taking MA or PhD comprehensive exams in Spanish in AY 2009-2010 was small; therefore data is not presented in this report to preserve confidentiality. Aggregated data will be presented in the five-year report.

**Discussion and Curricular Improvements**

The MA exam this year reflected some important changes to the reading list, which the faculty agreed had grown far too long and unwieldy to constitute a useful guide for students preparing to take the exam. The number of titles was reduced and the list was limited to primary works. Students were advised to consult individual faculty members for recommendations on suitable secondary works, but the new list gives primacy to primary texts. Because the students who took the MA exams this year began their studies under the older system, they were all given the option of either reading list. All chose the new one. This particular set of exams did seem to indicate that the streamlined list resulted in far better quality exams.